



**Sustainability Appraisal of the Regional Spatial Strategy for
the North East: – Assessment of Adopted North East RSS**

Prepared for the Government Office for the North East

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NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

THIS REPORT

This is the Non Technical Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report of the Adopted North East Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Readers who wish to read the full Sustainability Appraisal Report should consult the Government Office North East website <http://www.go-ne.gov.uk/>. Please note that this SA Report should be read on conjunction with the SA Report on the Further Proposed Changes to the RSS (ENVIRON, January 2008), the SA Report on the Proposed Changes to the RSS (ENVIRON, May 2007) and the SA Report of the Submission Draft of the RSS (ERM, June 2005). This SA Report is effectively an Annex to these three reports.

BACKGROUND TO THE RSS

The current RSS for the Region was originally published as Regional Planning Guidance (RPG1). This became the RSS for the region in September 2004 following the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A published revision to the RSS will replace this, and ultimately will replace the existing Structure Plans for Northumberland (with the exception of Policy S5), County Durham and Tees Valley. The RSS is part of the statutory Development Plan system and consequently, must be taken into account by local authorities in preparing their Local Development Frameworks and Local Transport Plans. The revised RSS will also incorporate the Regional Transport Strategy.

The Submission Draft of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East (entitled *View-Shaping the North East*) was submitted by the North East Assembly in June 2005. Following public consultation, an Examination in Public was held between March and April 2006. The report of the Independent Panel who conducted the Examination in Public was published in August 2006¹. This report recommended a number of changes to the Submission Draft. Government prepared Proposed Changes to the draft revision, taking into account the recommendations made in the Panel Report and other considerations as set out in Planning Policy Statement 11. These Proposed Changes were published, by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, for public consultation in May 2007. Following the consultation Further Proposed Changes were made to the RSS taking into account information gathered during the consultation process. These Further Proposed Changes were subject to another round of consultation in January 2008. These consultation responses have been considered by the Secretary of State in producing the final Adopted North East RSS.

BACKGROUND TO THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

ENVIRON were appointed by Government Office for the North East (GO-NE) to undertake the sustainability appraisal (SA) of the RSS from the Proposed Changes stage onwards. The purpose this stage of the SA is to ensure that any significant changes to the RSS recommended within the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes documents have been assessed for their effect on sustainability. In addition, the ENVIRON team have been working with Government to ensure that as many opportunities as possible have been taken to make the plan more sustainable as the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes were formulated. The main output of this process is the production of a Sustainability Appraisal Report at each stage which independently assesses the sustainability implications of any significant changes suggested to the RSS. A Sustainability Appraisal Report was produced alongside the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes. This report is the Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Adopted North East RSS which outlines the sustainability effects of the final approved version of the RSS.

Previous versions of the RSS have also been subject to sustainability appraisal. As part of the process of developing the RSS, the North East Assembly commissioned Environmental Resources Management (ERM) to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of the RSS during the course of its development to Submission Draft. The Sustainability Appraisal process ran from December 2003 to June 2005 and included the production of a scoping report, appraisal of broad issues and options, appraisal of each section of the plan and a whole plan appraisal. Policy by policy appraisals were not carried out. The sustainability appraisal helped to ensure that the Submission Draft RSS was based on an approach to spatial development that delivers a balance of broadly positive economic, social and environmental trends in the region, and sets out policies and supporting text that address a wide range of sustainable development issues.

HOW HAS THIS STAGE OF THE SA BEEN UNDERTAKEN?

Update of information from previous SA Report

The significant changes of the RSS have been appraised against an SA framework which sets out the important sustainability objectives for the region. It was not necessary under government guidance and regulations to update this framework from the one used by ERM. However, GO-NE and the SEA Consultation Bodies (English Heritage, Environment Agency and Natural England) felt that this would be a worthwhile process. Therefore, the SA framework has been updated to include further criteria under each of the SA objectives. The SA framework is shown as Table 1 in the full SA Report of the Adopted North East RSS. The other aspects of the ERM report that have also been

¹*Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East. Examination in Public (March to April 2006). Panel Report July*

updated are the information collected on the baseline environment, social and economic conditions and the review of other plans, programmes and policies that affect the RSS and the SA. These updates have been used by the team to support the update of the SA framework. Readers should refer to Appendices A and B in the full SA Report of the Adopted North East RSS to see the review of the baseline data and important policies.

What has been appraised?

The purpose of this stage of the appraisal was to ensure that any final significant changes to the RSS are assessed in terms of their potential impact on sustainability. This approach reflects government guidance which states that sustainability appraisal carried out at this stage of the RSS should focus on the significant changes made by the Secretary of State that have not yet been appraised.

The SA team have reviewed the Adopted North East RSS and analysed whether any of the changes can be considered to be significant changes which warrant appraisal. To do this the team used two guiding questions:

1. Are key changes considered to be minor refinement of existing strategies? If changes made to the RSS are to provide clarity or detail to support an existing policy and will not give rise to changes that will alter the spatial implications of the RSS then re-assessment is not required.
2. Are key changes considered to result in the inclusion of new / different strategies or policies or a significant weakening or strengthening of the spatial strategy of the plan? If so, re-assessment is required. In this case the SA team will undertake a new assessment and this will be reported in this final SA Report.

A scoping analysis in conjunction with GO-NE was carried out between September 2006 and February 2007 as Government developed their Proposed Changes in response to the Panel Report. This is reported in the *SA Report of the NE RSS Proposed Changes* (ENVIRON, May 2007). This scoping assessment was undertaken again on the Further Proposed Changes to ensure that decisions remain valid and again on the Adopted North East RSS. This review has determined that in the main the changes constitute minor strategy and policy modifications that should not have significantly different sustainability effects compared to the Submission Draft of the RSS. However, there are some new areas of policy and strategy and it is these that are the focus of this appraisal. The following policies have been appraised.

- Policy 2: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2a: Climate Change
- Policy 5: Tyne and Wear City Region
- Policy 30: Dwelling Provision
- Policy 38: Air Quality
- Policy 39: Sustainable Construction

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- Policy 6: Tees Valley City Region
 - Policy 18: Employment Land Portfolio
 - Policy 18a: Office Development Outside of City and Town Centres
 - Policy 19: Key Employment Centres
 - Policy 24: Delivering Sustainable Communities
 - Policy 26: Metrocentre
 - Policy 27: Out of Centre Leisure Developments
 - Policy 42: Onshore Wind Development
 - Policy 45: Opencast Coal
 - Policy 51: Regional Public Transport Priorities
 - Policy 53a: Strategic Framework for Demand Management
 - Table of Transport Investment and Management Priorities

RESULTS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

The SA team has worked with GO-NE throughout the production of the Adopted North East RSS and advised them on the sustainability implications of the various changes documents as they were drafted. The results of the appraisal of significant changes (in the form of appraisal matrices) are reported in Appendix C of the full SA Report of the Adopted North East RSS. Within these appraisal matrices the SA team has reviewed the effect of each policy taking into account how it will affect the overall spatial strategy of the plan and also made links to other policy areas, where appropriate. Recommendations are then given within the table to GO-NE regarding areas that should be monitored.

Although this is the final stage of re-drafting of the plan there were still opportunities to incorporate measures that help to improve the sustainability of the plan. The Adopted North East RSS has taken some of the SA recommendations on board and is a stronger plan in terms of sustainability in many areas. Table NTS1 shows the significant changes that have been made to the plan since the Submission Draft and how these have affected the spatial strategy.

The SA has made several recommendations throughout the Proposed Changes stage. Where the SA team feel that these recommendations are still valid they have been included in Table NTS2 which outlines the main results of the SA of the RSS Further Proposed Changes. As can be seen from Table NTS2, most of the issues identified by the appraisal are not considered to be significant effects and amendments are suggested that will make the plan either more complete in its consideration of sustainability or more positive in terms of moving the plan pro-actively towards sustainability goals. However, there are some areas where the SA team consider that there is a risk of significant sustainability effects if changes are not made to the plan. There are also some areas where changes to policies could provide more significant sustainability benefits. These are summarised in Table NTS2.

Table NTS1: Sustainability Effects of the Significant Changes from the Submission Draft onwards

(Please note: For ease of understanding, the appraisal of final changes to policy in the RSS is listed with reference to the policy numbering system used in the SoS's Further Proposed Changes (February 2008), and the final changes being made to RSS are explained in the Statement of Reasons accompanying final RSS. However, in presentational terms some of the policies may have been renumbered in the final publication version of RSS as part of final reformatting).

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
Policy 2: Sustainable Development	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes <u>Changes to the policy:</u> Includes reference to the built fabric as an element of resources / Removed criterion on climate and renewable energy / Removes the need for a sustainability statement to be submitted with major planning applications <u>Changes to supporting text:</u> Reference to the principles in the 2005 UK Sustainable Development Strategy / Addition of information on regional checklist of developments which supports Code for Sustainable Homes</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes <u>Changes to the policy:</u> Criteria on educational achievement has changed to (new text in italics) “to raise educational achievement across the Region and improve the skills of the workforce <i>and of adults who are currently economically inactive, through engagement and training.</i></p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The changes to the policy do not significantly weaken or strengthen the spatial strategy. However, the policy now recognises some important principles that will help to ensure protection of the environment and consideration of sustainable development and wider social issues within development planning. The inclusion of information on a regional development checklist is also positive. The need to submit a sustainability statement for major development has now been removed. However, if implemented fully and its performance (both in terms of uptake and effects) monitored, the regional checklist in association with other policies within the plan should facilitate the move towards more sustainable methods of construction.</p>
Policy 2a: Climate Change	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes None – NEW POLICY and NEW SUPPORTING TEXT</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes The policy now refers to the Climate Change Action Plan and includes text on bringing forward options for adapting existing developments in areas that or are likely to be vulnerable to climate change impacts. The policy now includes a criterion on maximising positive impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan The policy has strengthened consideration of sustainable drainage. Policy now refers to national emissions targets rather than regional ones.</p>	<p>This new policy strengthens the RSS in that it seeks to tackle such a key issue to the region and to ensure that the effect of development on climate change is reduced. It also seeks to ensure that development takes into account the need to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. The addition of the policy makes the plan more comprehensive in terms of coverage of the important issues facing the region. Further Proposed Changes mean that a mechanism may be found through development for ensuring that existing development in areas that are, or are likely to become, vulnerable to climate change might receive funding for some adaptation measures. The final version of the plan has changes to the climate change targets. This is because the current IRF does not include any targets. The policy is comprehensive in that it makes reference to targets within published national Policy (the Energy White Paper) and the supporting text makes reference to forthcoming targets in the Climate Change bill.</p>
Policy 6: Tyne and Wear City Region	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes The policy includes reference to building on the region’s tourism offer; removed reference to development in smaller settlements meeting local aspirations and replaced with a consideration that development in smaller settlements should not adversely impact on the regeneration initiatives in the Tyne and Wear conurbation. It also integrates Green Belt Policy 10 with Policy 6 and includes</p>	<p>The policy will strengthen the spatial strategy by focusing development in the core of the city region and by ensuring that development in smaller settlements will not adversely impact upon this strategy. The policy also strengthens the plan’s consideration of sustainable construction,</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>text on green infrastructure in the Tyne and Wear Region.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Removed named references to larger science and technology developments. Added a requirement for development to achieve high standards of layout, design and energy efficiency. Added a consideration that growth at ports should be sustainable. Environment criteria have been supplemented with details regarding proposals likely to affect Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Amble has been added to the policy.</p>	<p>environmental and green infrastructure issues and focuses on a strategic approach to delivering green infrastructure and environmental improvements.</p>
Policy 7: Tees Valley City Region	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Inserted reference to development in smaller settlements meeting local needs that should not adversely impact on the regeneration initiatives in the Tees Valley conurbation, added section on protecting the line of the East Middlesbrough Transport Corridor primarily for development as a public transport link; provided additional text to clarify the role of strategic gaps and include further strategic gaps around Darlington and other areas.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Environment criteria have been supplemented with details regarding proposals likely to affect Natura 2000 sites. The policy now states that proposals should take account of existing biodiversity and geodiversity interests in these areas. The policy now states that development at Teesport should be sustainable.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Text has been added on the Durham Coalfields Communities Area.</p>	<p>The policy will strengthen the spatial strategy by focusing development in the core of the city region and by ensuring that development in smaller settlements will not adversely impact upon this strategy. The policy also strengthens the plan’s consideration of environmental improvements, strategic gaps and green infrastructure issues and focuses on a strategic approach to delivering green infrastructure and environmental improvements. The Adopted version of the plan recognises specifically the issue of housing renewal in the Durham Coalfields Regeneration Area.</p>
Policy 18: Employment Land Portfolio	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Land assessment now takes into account 25 years likely supply. Policy now considers the ability for regeneration of existing sites to meet need and intensification around transport hubs and on previously developed land in advance of green field options. The policy also requires the de-allocation and constraining of the uses of peripheral sites i.e. in Northumberland and Durham, when there is so much brownfield land available in the urban core.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Key employment land allocation changes – 125ha increase in Darlington; 40ha increase in Sedgefield. General land allocation changes – 40ha increase in Easington; 30ha added to Sunderland, Gateshead and South Tyneside. A criterion has been added to the policy regarding ensuring development is of an appropriate nature and scale.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The changes to the policy will strengthen the spatial strategy through strengthening the encouragement for regeneration of existing sites around transport hubs and on previously developed land. The concentration of development in core areas will lead to the accelerated growth and improved competitiveness needed in the region. The general increase in general land allocation in the Tyne and Wear authorities strengthens this trend and aids accelerated growth.</p>
Policy 18A: Office Development Outside of City and Town Centres	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes None – NEW POLICY</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes None</p>	<p>This new policy strengthens the spatial strategy by helping to concentrate development in core areas which will lead to the accelerated growth and improved competitiveness needed in the region. The insertion of this policy on office development and subsequent refining of the potential uses of Key Employment Locations ensures greater consistency in the plan (especially</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>between this policy and policy 3 on the sequential approach to development and Policy 5 on locational strategy).</p>
<p>Policy 19: Key Employment Locations</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Delete TyneWear Park as a Prestige Employment Site. Limit area of development of NE Technology Park to 13ha. Ensure appropriate development occurs on these sites. Delete reserve sites.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Increased area of development of NE Technology Park to 25ha. Added Heighington Lane West and Faverdale back into the policy as Key Employment Locations. The policy has been strengthened in terms of achieving low carbon emissions and energy conservation measures, ensuring significantly high levels of alternative transport use, discouraging the need to travel by car and the provision of a waste audit. Policy now looks at more general areas rather than sites.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Changed the reference to renewable energy sources to energy supply from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources.</p>	<p>Future economic growth in the region is expected to be generated by small and medium sized enterprises and a significant amount of growth is expected to be accommodated in high density developments in core areas and at transportation hubs. This policy has strengthened this spatial strategy through rationalizing the Key Employment Locations and linking the sites to specialist sectors. The sites that are left offer the kind of scale that town centre locations do not and it is important that these are retained for businesses that need this kind of scale. The deletion of reserve sites has also strengthened this aspect of the spatial strategy.</p>
<p>Policy 24: Delivering Sustainable Communities</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes The policy has had text concerning appropriate provision of infrastructure added and also considers the potential for development to reduce health and social inequalities through design and the provision of facilities.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Has added wastewater treatment as a consideration for development; added criterion to ensure that development has access to green-spaces and woodland.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Amend “f” to read: Linking development to appropriate provision of infrastructure, including green infrastructure, water supply, wastewater treatment and energy supplies</p>	<p>The policy will help to plan for sustainable communities by ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is provided.</p>
<p>Policy 26: Metrocentre</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Policy now says that there should be no further provision for retail or leisure development made at the Metrocentre. Previously the policy stated that that any proposals for the extension to or redevelopment of the Metrocentre are justified in terms of the need for the development within its immediate and wider catchment areas, the sequential approach; and the impact on the vitality and viability of other urban and rural centres.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes None</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The policy changes will further support the RSS spatial strategy of concentrating any additional retail and leisure development in existing urban and rural centres. It will thus provide local employment in these areas, which is likely to involve less travel as retail and leisure will be better spatially distributed across the region rather than being concentrated at a single point. The panel report and Technical Paper 3 (Retail and Leisure) note that the region’s main urban centres have sufficient capacity to address additional need identified in the Regional Retail and Leisure Need Assessment.</p>
<p>Policy 27: Out of Centre Leisure Development</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Policy 27 has been modified to state that proposed regional and sub-regional rural leisure developments will need to be considered and justified through the sequential approach (Policy 3) and locational strategy (Policy 5) of the Regional Spatial Strategy, and</p>	<p>The changes to the policy have made its support of the spatial strategy more subtle and instead of placing a blanket restriction on out of centre leisure developments the policy requires justification through the demonstration of</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>having regard to the manner in which they assist rural regeneration and local communities. This replaces a blanket restriction.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Instead of looking at the way that developments will assist rural regeneration and local communities, the policy now states that LDFs should ensure that leisure developments are of an appropriate scale in relation to nearby settlements, and should not make provision for new out-of-centre leisure developments unless there are demonstrable benefits that would contribute to the sustainable growth of the local economy.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>contribution to sustainable growth of the local economy. The policy is also an improvement in terms of the way it addresses rural regeneration and effects on local communities.</p>
Policy 30: Dwelling Provision	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes 112,000 dwelling forecast has been used instead of 107,000. Division of net additional housing numbers between districts has changed. Allocations for Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley have increased whilst Durham's allocations have decreased.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes 128,900 dwelling forecast has been used. Division of additional housing numbers between districts has changed in some instances but not significantly.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan The word average has been added before annual. Some minor changes have been made to housing numbers to correct inaccuracies.</p>	<p>Focusing dwelling provision in Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley supports the overall spatial and economic strategy of focusing development in these areas. This will help decouple economic growth from emissions and will help to stop the movement of population from core urban areas to more rural areas that has been caused by the absence of viable development opportunities in the core areas. Combined with further strengthening of other policies related to rural housing affordability the policy should help to contribute to the development of more sustainable rural communities.</p>
Policy 31: Delivering and Managing Housing Supply	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes N/A</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes NEW POLICY</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>Increased brownfield land targets will help to ensure that land resources are used sustainably.</p>
Policy 38: Air Quality	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes None – NEW POLICY</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Policy now says that strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should contribute to sustaining the current downward trend in air pollution in the region.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The policy will assist in the consideration of the effect of the spatial strategy on air quality and the effect on internationally designated wildlife sites.</p>
Policy 39: Sustainable Construction	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Policy 39 was a policy on energy use and has been re-titled to a policy on sustainable construction. Require Local Authorities to set thresholds for development which will have to meet 10% renewables target.</p>	<p>The inclusion of a broad policy on sustainable construction will support the sustainable regeneration of the region and the changes made bring it in line with government policy in the form of PPS1 and Building a Greener Future.</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes (this version) A minimum Code and BREEAM rating has been removed. In line with PPS1, the policy has removed the need for major developments to generate 10% of their energy supply from renewable sources and has changed this to an <i>ambitious but viable percentage</i> that should be set by each Local Authority.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Updated wording on ‘securing’ rather than embedded to increase flexibility and also reference to ‘low carbon’ sources as well as renewables.</p>	<p>The inclusion of the requirement for an ambitious but viable target is positive and the change to the setting of renewable energy targets at the local level allows flexibility for local planning to factor in other sustainability benefits such as affordable housing when considering development economics on individual schemes. The inclusion of energy policies and requirements in LDFs should be monitored. The final amendments to the policy allow for both on-site and off-site renewable technologies to ensure that the most appropriate technology is utilised and there is encouragement for larger renewable schemes serving a number of developments.</p>
<p>Policy 42: Onshore Wind Development</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Broadens out the consideration of onshore wind development to areas rather than sites. Specifically, Knowesgate Hill and Kiln Pitt Hill – policy has been reformulated to make these more general areas.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes East Durham Limestone has been added as a potential area for development. The Tees Estuary has been removed.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The policy has broadened out the areas that can be considered for onshore wind development. However, this will not have significant effects on the spatial strategy.</p> <p>The removal of the Tees Estuary will help to protect the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA.</p>
<p>Policy 45: Opencast Coal</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Removes the presumption that open cast coal mining should be in accordance with the principles of sustainable development potentially increasing the likelihood of this kind of development.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes None</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The change in the policy will not have any significant effects on the spatial strategy. It brings the policy in line with government policy.</p>
<p>Policy 51: Regional Public Transport Provision</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Shifts some of the implementation focus off LTPs and onto regional and city regional city strategies. Includes a long term focus for public transport which wasn’t previously present in the policy. This long term focus will be on a revitalised metro system (Tyne and Wear) and a new metro system for the Tees Valley. Introduces a section of policy on encouraging park and ride.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes None</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The policy supports the spatial strategy by including a long term focus for public transport which wasn’t previously present in the policy. This long term focus will be on strategic public transport projects which support development in and connectivity of the city regions. This includes a revitalised metro system (Tyne and Wear) and investigation of the potential for a new metro system for the Tees Valley.</p>
<p>Policy 53A: Strategic Framework for Demand Management</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes NEW POLICY</p>	<p>Studies have shown that in order to lock in the benefits of public transport (promoted by other policies within the RSS), further investment in demand</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes None</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>management is needed. By helping to do this, the policy will help to support the efforts that the RSS is making to encourage public transport use and to provide a sustainable transport system to support the spatial strategy.</p>
<p>Transport Investment and Management Priorities Table</p> <p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes The main change to the table is the increased emphasis on public transport (especially bus based) and the reduction in support of whole scale upgrades of the A66 and A1. The schemes are also presented differently with their links to the spatial strategy and transport issues made more explicit.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes A number of schemes are now under construction and this is acknowledged within the table.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The Transport Investment and Management Priorities Table now has an increased emphasis on public transport ensuring that the policy will help to provide a sustainable transport system to support the spatial strategy. The links of each scheme to the spatial strategy and transport issues are now made more explicit, making the strategy seem more like a coherent whole.</p>

Table NTS2: Summary of the sustainability effects

Summary of effect	Residual effect of Further Proposed Changes ²	Recommended Further Amendments	Residual effect if recommendation taken into account
Policy 2: Sustainable Development			
The new additions to the policy (see particularly f) to promote development that takes account of environmental and social impacts...) could be phrased in a more positive manner in terms of enhancing the environment and sustainability benefits.	0	2.1f) change to: “to promote development that delivers wider economic, social and environmental objectives, is respectful of local environmental context and encourages efficient resource use”	+
One aspect of the policy that could be strengthened is the improvement in people’s satisfaction with their neighbourhoods and general quality of life improvements.	0	2.2a) change to: “to tackle the social, economic and environmental impacts of multiple deprivation and ensure that neighbourhood quality of life is improved”	+
Policy 2a: Climate Change			
The North East as a large energy producer can do much to increase production efficiency in energy generating industries. Although not directly relevant to planning this could be recognised in the supporting text of the policy and support given to improvements in production efficiency in energy production industry and other energy intensive industries (of which the North East has a large number).	0	Encouragement should be given in supporting text to improvements in production efficiency in energy production industry and other energy intensive industries (of which the North East has a large number).	0/+
The North East has a relatively unusual pattern of energy consumption/production and CO ₂ emissions in that it is a large energy producer but relatively small energy user. This is a critical issue as the North East has the largest CO ₂ emissions of any UK region. The supporting text of the policy would benefit from a précis of the situation so readers can quickly reach an understanding of what the key issues in the North East are.	0	Provide more information in the supporting text of the particular situation in the North East regarding energy consumption, production and carbon emissions.	0/+
Subsidence could be a key effect on the building stock and the supporting text to Policy 2a should reference this.	0	The supporting text of the policy should discuss subsidence.	+
Policy 6: Tyne and Wear City Region			
Considering that energy and environment is one of three key business sectors recognised in the North East Strategy for Success, this sector in particular is not mentioned within the policy.	0	It would be appropriate to expand on the potential for the energy and environment sector in the policy, and particularly environmentally led regeneration.	+
The RSS Panel were of the opinion that the Submission Draft emphasis on airports as key economic drivers should be tempered and have recommended that the RSS should reflect the uncertainty over the future role of aviation and the growth forecasts. It is recognised that the RSS has no direct influence on airport growth and only has direct influence over surface access (and we note that Policy 21 has been strengthened in regard to sustainable modes for surface access).	-	The emphasis of airport growth should be tempered in relation to this policy and consideration should be given as to whether the emphasis of 6.4 a) should be changed. At a minimum, the RSS should recognise the uncertainty over growth forecasts. In addition, could 6.4 f) specifically state that promotion of investment in rail services will be included as a replacement for short haul flights within	0

² 0 = neutral effect, + = positive effect and - = negative effect

Summary of effect	Residual effect of Further Proposed Changes ²	Recommended Further Amendments	Residual effect if recommendation taken into account
<p>However, in line with the RSS panel the SA concludes that a tempering of the emphasis on airport growth would lead to a more sustainable plan and at the least the RSS should recognise the uncertainty over growth forecasts. Consideration should also be given to changing the emphasis of 6.4 f) to promote rail over short haul flights. Although the criterion in itself is positive, the change in emphasis will help to highlight the sustainability benefits of rail over short haul flights.</p>		<p>the UK.</p>	
Policy 7: Tees Valley City Region			
<p>The RSS Panel were of the opinion that the Submission Draft emphasis on airports as key economic drivers should be tempered and have recommended that the RSS should reflect the uncertainty over the future role of aviation and the growth forecasts. It is recognised that the RSS has no direct influence on airport growth and only has direct influence over surface access (and we note that Policy 21 has been strengthened in regard to sustainable modes for surface access). However, in line with the RSS panel the SA concludes that a tempering of the emphasis on airport growth would lead to a more sustainable plan and at the least the RSS should recognise the uncertainty over growth forecasts. Consideration should also be given to changing the emphasis of 7.4 e) to promote rail over short haul flights. Although the criterion in itself is positive, the change in emphasis will help to highlight the sustainability benefits of rail over short haul flights.</p>	-	<p>The emphasis of airport growth should be tempered in relation to this policy and consideration should be given as to whether the emphasis of 7.4 a) should be changed.</p> <p>In addition, could 7.4 e) specifically state that promotion of investment in rail services as a replacement for short haul flights within the UK?</p>	0
Policy 19: Key Employment Locations			
<p>The policy has been changed to state that developments should reach a high level of sustainability. Environmental assets will be protected and the policy also states that sustainable construction and design methods should be used in order to deliver biodiversity benefits. The sites, however, might have local impacts on sites designated for their ecological importance. The supporting text should encourage the use of a sustainability appraisal process to test different masterplan options. The detailed masterplan should set out how sustainability benefits will be maximised and environmental harm reduced. This sustainability appraisal process will formalise the good intentions of the policy and will provide an opportunity for developers to demonstrate the sustainability credentials of their development (over and above the information usually provided in an environmental statement).</p>	0	<p>The supporting text should encourage the use of a sustainability appraisal process to test different masterplan options as well as to demonstrate that sustainable construction and design methods are being used. Masterplans should be required to set out how sustainability benefits will be maximised and environmental harm reduced particularly with relation to sites designated for their conservation importance.</p>	+
Policy 24: Delivering Sustainable Communities			
<p>The policy might benefit from an explicit recognition that affordable housing is a key element of sustainable communities.</p>	0	<p>The policy might benefit from an explicit recognition that affordable housing is a key element of sustainable communities.</p>	0/+
Policy 39: Sustainable Construction			

Summary of effect	Residual effect of Further Proposed Changes ²	Recommended Further Amendments	Residual effect if recommendation taken into account
Water resource issues are currently addressed by policy 36, which addresses SUDS but not water conservation measures in developments. However, sustainable construction is usually taken to include water conservation and SUDS. For example, it is included in the “ten commandments” in the North East Guide to sustainable construction.	0	Ensure that Policy 36 addresses water use as well as water quality as there is no guarantee that minimum BREEAM / Code standards will be set within LDFs.	+
If the “checklist for developments “idea is progressed (see supporting text for policy 2) minimum standards should be set.	0	Ensure that the checklist for development sets minimum standards related to important sustainability effects.	+
Policy 42: Onshore Wind Development			
There is a possibility of securing social benefits from wind farm development (and make it locally more acceptable) by developers setting up funds for local community projects. This may be best addressed by adding additional text before policy 41.	0	Include discussion in the text prior to policy 41 on the value of encouraging wind farm developers to fund local community projects.	+
The early involvement of local communities in planning for wind farm development is particularly important because of public attitudes to wind farms. This is best addressed in the text prior to policy 41.	0	Include in the text before policy 41 discussion on the importance of the early involvement of local communities in planning for wind farm development.	+
Policy 45: Opencast Coal Mining			
Significant areas within the exposed coalfields of Durham, Tyne & Wear and Northumberland have been subject to opencast coal working over recent times. In order to specifically recognise this issue the policy could make specific reference to potential cumulative impact with existing and proposed development.	0	The policy could make specific reference to potential cumulative impact with existing and proposed development.	0/+
Policy 51: Regional Public Transport Provision			
The focus on innovative solutions to reduce social exclusion in rural and urban areas and support for improvements in affordability should assist those living in more deprived areas within the region. It would be useful if the supporting text of the policy could give more guidance on the types of innovative measures that could be promoted.	0	It would be useful if the supporting text of the policy could give more guidance on the types of innovative measures that could be promoted.	0
Policy 53a: Strategic Framework for Demand Management			
The policy may have a negative effect on road freight particularly serving rural businesses and therefore the viability of rural businesses.	0	The policy should ensure that demand management measures do not inhibit freight transport to and from rural businesses where alternatives are not possible.	0/+
Transport Investment and Management Priorities Table			
In order to make the best use of resources, in the short term the strategy should focus on smaller scale lower cost schemes and should aim to maximise the potential of existing transport networks. In this way the priorities would benefit from more steer on which schemes are a priority or a likely time scale for when schemes should be progressed (i.e. short, medium and long term).	0	The priorities would benefit from more steer on which schemes are a priority or a likely time scale for when schemes should be progressed (i.e. short, medium and long term).	0/+

Final Conclusions and Statement of Residual Effects

It is the role of the SA to provide an independent review of effects and propose changes to the plan that may strengthen its sustainability performance. The plan authors may decide not to implement a SA recommendation for many reasons. These include recommendations being outside the scope of what the plan can propose or recommendations that may not adhere to the strategy approach being taken. In the main the RSS authors have used the SA recommendations to good effect to improve the sustainability of the plan.

The only residual negative sustainability effect relates mainly to policies 6 and 7 (Tyne and Wear City Region and Tees Valley City Region) (N.B. the SA also notes that the transport priorities of the plan also support the spatial strategy emphasis on airports). These policies have a negative sustainability effect because of their emphasis on airport growth as an economic driver. The RSS Panel were of the opinion that the Submission Draft emphasis on airports as key economic drivers should be tempered and have recommended that the RSS should reflect the uncertainty over the future role of aviation and the growth forecasts. It is recognised that the RSS has no direct influence on airport growth and only has direct influence over surface access (and we note that Policy 21 has been strengthened in regard to sustainable modes for surface access). However, in line with the RSS panel the SA concludes that a tempering of the emphasis on airport growth would lead to a more sustainable plan and at the least the RSS should recognise the uncertainty over growth forecasts. If the policies did reflect the uncertainty over growth forecasts then they would have a neutral score.

Notwithstanding this residual effect, the SA that ENVIRON has undertaken has demonstrated that in the main, the later stages of the North East RSS have moved the spatial strategy for the region towards a stronger model of sustainability which embraces environmental, social and economic facets of sustainable development.

1 INTRODUCTION

The current RSS for the Region was originally published as Regional Planning Guidance (RPG1). This became the RSS for the region in September 2004 following the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A published revision to the RSS will replace this, and ultimately will replace the existing Structure Plans for Northumberland (with the exception of Policy S5), County Durham and Tees Valley. The RSS is part of the statutory Development Plan system and consequently, must be taken into account by local authorities in preparing their Local Development Frameworks and Local Transport Plans. The revised RSS will also incorporate the Regional Transport Strategy.

The Submission Draft of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East (entitled *View-Shaping the North East*) was submitted by the North East Assembly in June 2005. Following public consultation, an Examination in Public was held between March and April 2006. The report of the Independent Panel who conducted the Examination in Public was published in August 2006³. This report recommended a number of changes to the Submission Draft. Government prepared Proposed Changes to the draft revision, taking into account the recommendations made in the Panel Report and other considerations as set out in Planning Policy Statement 11. These Proposed Changes were published, by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, for public consultation in May 2007. Following the consultation Further Proposed Changes were made to the RSS taking into account information gathered during the consultation process. These Further Proposed Changes were subject to another round of consultation in January 2008. These consultation responses have been considered by the Secretary of State in producing the final Adopted North East RSS.

ENVIRON were appointed by Government Office for the North East (GO-NE) to undertake the sustainability appraisal (SA) of the RSS from the Proposed Changes stage onwards. The purpose this stage of the SA is to ensure that any significant changes to the RSS recommended within the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes documents have been assessed for their effect on sustainability. In addition, the ENVIRON team have been working with Government to ensure that as many opportunities as possible have been taken to make the plan more sustainable as the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes were formulated. The main output of this process is the production of a Sustainability Appraisal Report at each stage which independently assesses the sustainability implications of any significant changes suggested to the RSS. A Sustainability Appraisal Report was produced alongside the Proposed Changes and Further

Proposed Changes. This report is the Sustainability Appraisal Report for the Adopted North East RSS which outlines the sustainability effects of the final approved version of the RSS.

This sustainability appraisal report outlines the process and outcomes of the sustainability appraisal carried out on the Further Proposed Changes to the RSS. The report contains the following:

- Section 2 sets out details of the NE RSS process, its purpose and objectives;
- Section 3 outlines how sustainability appraisal has been integrated into the production of the RSS;
- Section 4 sets out the broad methodology and approach taken for the sustainability appraisal of the Adopted North East RSS and details the main assumptions and limitations in undertaking the assessment;
- Section 5 reports how the scope of the SA was determined; and
- Section 6 outlines the results of the sustainability appraisal of the Adopted North East RSS and outlines the aspects of the RSS that will require monitoring under the terms of the SEA Regulations.

In addition, three appendices are included:

- Appendix A sets out a review of plans, strategies and programmes and the objectives they contain;
- Appendix B sets out an updated baseline of environmental, social and economic conditions in the North East; and
- Appendix C presents the appraisal matrices for each significant change to the RSS.

³*Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East. Examination in Public (March to April 2006). Panel Report July 2006.*

2 REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE NORTH EAST

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North East sets out a broad spatial development strategy for the North East region for the period 2004-2021. The RSS sets out:

- The region's scale of housing provision to 2021; and
- the priorities for economic development, retail growth, transport investment, the environment, minerals, and waste treatment and disposal.

The RSS supersedes existing Regional Planning Guidance (RPG1) which became the RSS in September 2004 following the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. The RSS also replaces the existing Structure Plans for Northumberland, County Durham and Tees Valley. It must be taken into account by local authorities in preparing their Local Development Frameworks and Local Transport Plans.

2.2 PURPOSE AND AIMS OF THE RSS

Section 39 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act sets an objective for the RSS to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The RSS provides a spatial framework to inform the preparation of LDDs, Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land use activities.

The North East RSS promotes a common vision that has been established to guide the process of development within the region. This vision is also shared by the Regional Economic Strategy and the Integrated Regional Framework. According to this Vision:

'The North East will be a region where present and future generations have a high quality of life. It will be a vibrant, self reliant, ambitious and outward looking region featuring a dynamic economy, a healthy environment, and a distinctive culture. Everyone will have the opportunity to realise their full potential.'

The RSS is also guided by a set of values, as follows:

- Nurturing the human, cultural and environmental assets of the region;
- accelerating the renaissance of communities in urban and rural areas;
- recognising global responsibilities;
- raising the aspirations and profile of the region; and

-
- promoting leadership, good governance and corporate responsibility.

The RSS is structured as follows:

- Section 1 (entitled *Shaping the Region*) outlines the role and the structure of the RSS and a vision of how, if the RSS is successfully implemented, the North East will look in 2021. It summarises the Region's main characteristics and the key challenges, and the international, national and regional planning policy context and growth assumptions.
- Section 2 (entitled *Development Principles and Locational Strategy*) introduces the main planning principles and four main themes under which the locational strategy for the Region is developed. It sets out overarching policies, and the locational strategy on which the rest of the RSS is based. It introduces broad, high level policies on sustainable development, climate change, the sequential approach, connectivity and the environment. It then amplifies the locational strategy by setting out information and policies on the Region's two city regions and the rural areas. Policies in this section show how the four themes of the RSS are to be applied to sub-regional areas. The four themes of the RSS are:
 - Delivering economic prosperity and growth;
 - delivering sustainable communities;
 - conserving, enhancing and capitalising upon the region's natural and built environment, heritage and culture; and
 - improving connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the region.
- Section 3 (entitled *Delivering and Urban and Rural Renaissance*) contains thematic policies on matters such as Sustainable Communities, Environment and Transport.
- Section 4 provides a Monitoring Framework incorporating targets and indicators, and introduces elements of the RSS Implementation Plan, which is a separate but related document. A monitoring report will be prepared each year by the North East Assembly to assess progress; update the assumptions; assess changes in other strategies and consider the need to revise the RSS policies.
- Section 5 contains the key diagram and other maps.

2.3 RSS PROCESS

The RSS process is shown below. This sustainability appraisal is being carried out on the Secretary of the adopted revised RSS (Stage 7).

- Stage 1: Identify the issues for a revision and prepare a project plan, including a statement of public participation;
- Stage 2: Develop options and policies, taking account of assessed effects, and develop the draft revision;
- Stage 3: Publish and formally consult on the draft RSS revision;
- Stage 4: Examination-in-Public;
- Stage 5: Publication of the Panel Report;

-
- Stage 6: Consultation on the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes – where these have not been subject to SA, the SA Report will need to be updated to take account of these changes;
 - Stage 7: Issue of revised RSS; and
 - Stage 8: Implementation, monitoring and review.

3 *SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE RSS SO FAR*

As part of the process of developing the RSS, the North East Assembly commissioned Environmental Resources Management (ERM) to undertake a sustainability appraisal of the RSS during the course of its development. The sustainability appraisal process ran from December 2003 to June 2005 and included the production of a scoping report, appraisal of broad issues and options, appraisal of each section of the plan and a whole plan appraisal. The sustainability appraisal helped to ensure that the Submission Draft RSS was based on an approach to spatial development that delivers a balance of broadly positive economic, social and environmental trends in the region, and sets out policies and supporting text that address a wide range of sustainable development issues. Many of the changes that arose from the sustainability appraisal were subtle, and while many of these changes appear to be relatively minor, collectively they have helped to ensure that regional and national sustainability issues were addressed by the RSS. There are, however, a number of obvious changes that were made to the Submission Draft RSS as a result of the appraisal and these include:

- *Sustainability Statements*: Policy 2 of the Submission Draft was revised to require applicants for certain development types to complete a ‘Sustainability Statement’ in support of their applications.
- *Sustainable Communities*: Policy 24 of the Submission Draft was revised to require land being assessed for its suitability for development to address crime/community safety issues, health issues, and resource consumption.
- *Geodiversity*: Policy 35 of the Submission Draft was revised to cover both biodiversity and geodiversity issues.
- *Aquatic Environment*: This section of the RSS was revised to ensure that Integrated Coastal Zone Management, groundwater resources, sustainable drainage systems and improving degraded aquatic environments and water quality were addressed.
- *BREEAM*: Policy 39 of the Submission Draft was revised to require that new developments achieve BREEAM ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ ratings.
- *Renewables*: Policy 40 of the Submission Draft was revised to require that local thresholds be set for new developments to have embedded within them a minimum of 10% of energy supply from on-site renewables.

The Submission Draft of the plan (with the changes made as a result of the appraisal discussed above) was then discussed at the Examination in Public. The Panel Report recommended that further changes be made to the Submission Draft RSS Revision. These changes were made and published as the *Secretary of State's Proposed Changes* and the *Secretary of State's Further Proposed Changes*. The consultation responses received on these documents have now been taken into account in the publication of the *Adopted North East RSS*.

ENVIRON and Treweek Environmental Consultants (TEC) were employed to undertake the sustainability appraisal and appropriate assessment of the later stages of the RSS process (from the Proposed Changes stage onwards). A sustainability appraisal was carried out at the Proposed Changes and the Further Proposed Changes stage to ensure that any significant changes were assessed for their effect on sustainability. Through the drafting of the Proposed and Further Proposed Changes stages the ENVIRON team worked with GO-NE to ensure that as many opportunities to make the plan more sustainable were taken.

4 APPROACH TO THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL FROM PROPOSED CHANGES ONWARDS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this stage of the appraisal is to assess any significant changes that have been made during the drafting of the final Adopted North East RSS. Many changes have been made to the RSS since the Further Proposed Changes stage but most of these are relatively minor and will not have a significant impact on sustainability. ODPM guidance on sustainability appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies (2005) states that sustainability appraisal carried out at this stage of the RSS should focus on the significant changes made by the Secretary of State that have hitherto not been appraised. Therefore, the appraisal has focused on those changes that are deemed significant and will not deal with those changes that are not considered significant (for example minor changes to policy or supporting text). Section 5.1 describes how decisions regarding significance and the definition of the scope of the assessment were made.

4.2 THE APPROACH TO THE REVIEW OF PLANS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

It is not necessary under SEA regulations or SA guidance to update the review of plans, policies and programmes. However, GO-NE felt at the Proposed Changes stage that some updating would be useful in recognition of the fact that some new policies and plans have been developed since the original SA Report was written. Therefore, the review undertaken as part of the SA of the Submission Draft RSS has been updated to include the significant plans, policies and programmes that have been published since June 2005. Taking the advice of Government, the policy review update has drawn on several appraisal reports that have been published in the North East in recent years. The main report that has informed this review is the *SA Scoping Report of the Draft RES Action Plan* (URSUS, September 2006) – *Newly Identified Sustainable Development Policy Objectives*. Informal consultation with the SEA Consultation Bodies (which because of the RSS process was confined to the scope of the SA framework) has also highlighted the fact that some other plans and programmes were not included in the original SA Report and should be taken into account. These include the *Consultation draft of North East Strategy for the Environment, City Region Development Plans, Rural Development Plan for England, PPG9 amended to PPS9 and the Local Government White Paper 2006*. These have also been included in the review. Since publication of the sustainability appraisal report on the Proposed Changes other policies have been published and these have also been added to this version of Appendix A. The policies that were added to Appendix A are PPS 1: Climate Change and PPS 25: Development and Flood Risk.

4.3 THE APPROACH TO THE REVIEW OF BASELINE DATA

As with the review of policies and programmes, it is not necessary under SEA regulations or SA guidance to update the sustainability baseline. However, GO-NE felt that some updating would be useful where easily obtainable data was available. Therefore, the baseline data has been updated. Taking the advice of Government, this review has referenced other appraisal reports such as the *SA Scoping Report of the Draft RES Action Plan Sustainability Appraisal* (URSUS, September 2006) and the *SA Scoping Report of the North East of England ERDF Operational Programme Sustainability Appraisal* (WSP, September 2006).

Of key importance in updating the baseline is the report written by Treweek Environmental Consultants - *Appropriate Assessment of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East: Issues Affecting the Integrity of European Sites* (TEC, 2006). This report reviews the main issues affecting the integrity of European Sites in the North East Region which are likely to be influenced by the North East RSS. However, it is also useful in helping to outline what the general environmental trends are in the region. To avoid repetition, detailed baseline information within this report has not been repeated here.

Some further updating of the baseline has been carried out between the publication of the Proposed Changes and the Further Proposed Changes. This has been in response to comments made by consultees and mainly involves updating some of the socio-economic data, SSSI condition data and information on heritage coasts.

All new policy and baseline information has been used by the appraisal team to update the appraisal framework and when carrying out the appraisal of significant changes.

4.4 THE APPROACH TO UPDATING THE SA FRAMEWORK

An updated SA framework was used for the appraisal of the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes and this same framework has been used for the appraisal of the Adopted North East RSS. Discussions were held with DCLG who have indicated that the same SA framework used for previous assessments of the Draft RSS should continue to be used as changing the framework at this stage changes the view of what is a sustainable plan and what is not. However, GO-NE and the SEA Consultation Bodies felt that the SA Framework would benefit from a refresh in terms of some of the more detailed criteria and targets included as part of the SA framework. Preliminary discussions were held with the SEA Consultation Bodies and they made some detailed and valid suggestions for changes that could be made. The final SA framework that has been used for the Proposed Changes stage onwards is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Final SA framework

IRF Objective and Criteria
1. To ensure high and stable levels of employment so everyone can share and contribute to greater prosperity
<p>1.1 Ensure the provision of sufficient employment land in, or accessible to, those wards in the region that are currently in the bottom 20% in terms of IMD?</p> <p>1.2 Ensure the provision of sufficient employment land in, or accessible (particularly on foot or by cycling or public transport)? to, rural areas and market towns, particularly through buildings conversions?</p> <p>1.3 Ensure the provision of employment land on previously developed land (provided they are not of biodiversity, landscape or public access importance), as opposed to greenfield sites (in line with the sequential approach)?</p> <p>1.4 Ensure that the future impacts of globalisation on employment in the region are addressed?</p> <p>1.5 Ensure that rural employment opportunities related to changes in agricultural policy and to the need for land management are recognised?</p> <p>1.6 Capitalise on opportunities for employment provided by the environment, heritage and creative industries?</p>
2. To achieve high and sustainable levels of economic growth
<p>2.1 Ensure all economic growth is respectful of its context, especially where it is of landscape, biodiversity, cultural or heritage value.</p> <p>2.2 Promote economic development that delivers wider economic, social and environmental objectives?</p> <p>2.3 Promote economic development that builds the potential for future/long-term prosperity and quality of life in both rural and urban areas?</p> <p>2.4 Promote monitoring and data analysis to inform and support actions aimed at delivering economic growth in the region?</p> <p>2.5 Capitalise on the economic potential of the region's high quality environmental assets, and on the economic potential associated with environmental management and enhancement?</p> <p>2.6 Promote heritage-led regeneration, make the best use of existing buildings and physical infrastructure, increase the social and/or economic benefit derived from the historic environment, promote heritage based sustainable tourism and ensure that restoration, repair and maintenance is sympathetic towards the local environment?</p> <p>2.7 Decouple economic growth from emissions?</p>
3. To raise educational achievement across the region
<p>3.1 Promote use of the planning process as a means of building community capacity?</p> <p>3.2 Promote access to education and training for all?</p> <p>3.3. Promote education and training as a key component of regional economic development as identified by the RES?</p> <p>3.4. Promote ongoing education/skills learning for all?</p> <p>3.5. Maximise the potential of research and the knowledge economy?</p> <p>3.6. Ensure supply of skills, including higher-level skills, to meet needs of the economy?</p>
4. To ensure everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent and affordable home
<p>4.1 Ensure the provision of a range of housing in, or accessible (particularly on foot or by cycling or public transport) to, those wards in the region that are currently in the bottom 20% in terms of IMD?</p> <p>4.2 Ensure the provision of a range of housing in, or accessible (particularly on foot or by cycling or public transport) to, rural areas and market towns?</p> <p>4.3 Ensure the provision of a mixture and range of housing to meet increasingly varied housing requirements, including affordable housing?</p> <p>4.4 Ensure the attainment of the 'decent homes' (i.e. in terms of design and building construction, water and energy consumption etc) standard for all social housing by 2010?</p> <p>4.5 Ensure the provision of new housing on previously-developed land and through conversion of existing buildings, aiming for 65% by 2016?</p> <p>4.6 Promote the development of sustainable communities and sustainable resource efficient housing and improve the satisfaction of people with their neighbourhoods as places to live?</p> <p>4.7 Develop policies that deal with changes in demographic structures in the region?</p> <p>4.8 Recognise the housing and social infrastructure needs of excluded and disadvantaged groups?</p> <p>4.9 Help to enable new homes/refurbishments to be resource efficient (materials, energy, water, transport, procurement etc) in construction and operation?</p>
5. To ensure good local air quality for all
<p>5.1 Reduce congestion on the inter-urban trunk road network in large urban areas below 2000 levels by 2010</p> <p>5.2 Reduce traffic levels and promote more sustainable transport patterns across the region, particularly focusing on areas with low air quality (e.g. Air Quality Management Areas)?</p> <p>5.3 Promote development that takes into account the causes of poor air quality such as traffic congestion and promote integrated development in terms of access to public transport?</p> <p>5.4 Promote the reduction of energy consumption and reduction of emissions from industry?</p> <p>5.5 Promote good air quality?</p>
6. To protect and enhance the quality of the region's ground, river and sea waters
<p>6.1 Promote integrated catchment management?</p> <p>6.2 Promote efficient use of water in construction and operation of new housing and employment infrastructure?</p> <p>6.3 Achieve good (class A or B) biological water quality on 91% of watercourses by 2010?</p> <p>6.4 Protect the quality of groundwater resources?</p> <p>6.5 Protect the quality of sea water?</p> <p>6.6 Encourage industry to adopt good practice in managing water (ecological and water quality and quantity) effectively?</p> <p>6.7 Recognise the importance of water quality, terrestrial and marine, as a key feature of many of the region's natural and</p>

IRF Objective and Criteria
<p>manmade tourism assets?</p> <p>6.8 Recognise the importance of ecological and water quality as a key component of the region's image and quality of life?</p> <p>6.9 Protect and enhance ecological and water quality</p>
7. To reduce the causes and the impacts of climate change
<p>7.1 Promote a 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010 and 60% by 2050 and ensure developments constitute a 23.5% improvement in energy efficiency standards compared with the pre-April 2006 standards?</p> <p>7.2 Aim to meet the target of 13-16% of electricity from onshore renewable sources by 2010 (and 16-21% by 2020) by promoting the development and deployment of a wide range and scale of renewable energy technologies (egg by identifying broad areas within the region for renewables, by incorporating renewables within developments and by focusing on the hierarchy of likely technology identified in the Regional Renewable Energy Strategy)?</p> <p>7.3 Promote high standards of energy efficiency in construction and operation of new housing and employment infrastructure?</p> <p>7.4 Ensure that developments are not exposed to current or future flood risk and that developments are climate proofed?</p> <p>7.5 Ensure that floodplains are used for their natural purpose, function effectively and are protected from inappropriate development?</p> <p>7.6 Decouple economic growth from transport and other emissions?</p> <p>7.7 Plan for the successful adaptation to the effects of climate change and the maximisation of potential economic, environmental and social opportunities?</p> <p>7.8 Protect carbon sinks?</p> <p>7.9 Promote sustainable drainage?</p> <p>7.10 Promote good design principles e.g. Ecohomes, (BREEAM, for developments other than housing), sustainable urban planning, adaptable to climate change</p>
8. To protect and enhance the region's biodiversity
<p>8.1 Safeguard and enhance the condition of SSSIs and ensure there are no significant negative effects on N2K sites</p> <p>8.2 Contribute to a reversing of the long-term decline in the number of farmland birds by 2020?</p> <p>8.3 Promote the achievement of Regional Biodiversity Targets?</p> <p>8.1 Recognise the importance of biodiversity and geodiversity and natural processes (including regional biodiversity targets)?</p> <p>8.2 Promote investment in Green Infrastructure incorporating best practice design/implementation?</p> <p>8.3 Have regard to the conservation of biodiversity according to the duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006?</p> <p>8.4 Recognise the importance of maintaining or restoring natural ecological processes in the terrestrial and marine environment?</p> <p>8.5 Enhance biodiversity and geodiversity?</p> <p>8.6 Promote the delivery of Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans?</p> <p>8.7 Recognise the cross-border implications for biodiversity/geodiversity and landscape conservation?</p> <p>8.8 Does the RSS promote good design to secure biodiversity benefits?</p>
9. To reduce the amount of waste produced and increase the amount recycled
<p>9.1 Promote sustainable waste management practices in all sectors and at all levels in line with the waste management targets included in the Regional Waste Management Strategy?</p> <p>9.2 Promote the use of recycled materials in construction?</p> <p>9.3 Minimise the amount of waste produced, particularly in areas of high waste arisings or low waste management capacity?</p> <p>9.4 Ensure new development supports sustainable waste management?</p>
10. To make better use of our resources
<p>10.1 Promote an increase in the area of organically-farmed land?</p> <p>10.2 Promote resource efficiency as a key component of business competitiveness?</p> <p>10.3 Promote the growth of businesses in the environment sector?</p> <p>10.4 Minimise consumption of resources in new development?</p> <p>10.5 Make best use of the environmental capital within existing buildings?</p> <p>10.6 Promotion of industrial symbiosis?</p>
11. To protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the region's rural and urban land and landscapes
<p>11.1 Promote good design to create attractive, high quality environments where people will choose to live?</p> <p>11.2 Conserve, protect and enhance the region's natural environmental assets (e.g. the green belt, parks and green spaces, common land, woodland and forests, National Parks, AONBs, Heritage Coasts, ESAs etc)?</p> <p>11.3 Promote the reclamation and use of previously developed land and re-use of buildings within the context of Government Policy in PPS 9.</p> <p>11.4 Protect 'tranquil' areas (e.g. areas free from visual intrusion, noise, light pollution etc)</p> <p>11.5 Promote land management skills?</p> <p>11.6 Promote good design principles e.g. BREEAM/Ecohomes, Biodiversity by Design?</p> <p>11.7 Improve the quality of the built environment and promote high quality urban design?</p> <p>11.8 Promote access to natural assets?</p> <p>11.9 Promote the reclamation and use of previously-developed land and reuse of buildings while conserving and enhancing biodiversity and heritage value?</p> <p>11.10 Protect and enhance landscapes, distinctive historic landscapes, locally important buildings and townscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place?</p>

IRF Objective and Criteria
12. To protect and enhance the region's cultural heritage and diversity.
12.1 Conserve, protect and enhance the region's cultural and heritage assets (e.g. locally important buildings, Heritage Coasts, archaeological remains, World Heritage Sites, SAMs, Listed Buildings and structures and their settings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and their settings and Conservation Areas)?
12.2 Promote accessibility and understanding of the region's cultural and heritage assets and historical environment in sustainable and well-managed ways, engage communities in identifying culturally important features and
12.3 Promote actions that will safeguard the region's heritage assets?
12.4 Recognise the value of the historic environment for social and economic benefit?
13. To reduce crime and the fear of crime
13.1. Promote the application of Secured by Design in development projects?
13.2 Promote 'safety by design' as a principle in the development of sustainable communities?
14. To improve health and reduce inequalities in health
14.1 Ensure that developments are accessible (particularly on foot or by cycling or public transport) to primary health care services, egg through the incorporation of services within new developments?
14.2 Protect and develop facilities for sporting and recreational activities (e.g. playing fields, sports facilities, footpaths etc)?
14.3 Promote approaches to sustainable communities that address the social determinants of health?
14.4 Contribute to promoting a healthier workforce?
14.5 Contribute to reducing health inequalities?
14.6 Target investment to create healthy communities?
15. To ensure good accessibility for all to jobs, facilities, goods and services in the region
15.1 Promote compact, mixed use urban development with good accessibility (particularly on foot or by cycling or public transport) to local facilities and services (e.g. jobs, education, health services, shopping, leisure, green spaces, culture etc)?
15.2 Improve access to broadband internet infrastructure, e.g. by focusing developments in areas with broadband infrastructure or potential for broadband development?
15.3 Reduce the need to travel, including through more sustainable patterns of development and reduced car use?
15.4 Promote the provision of economic opportunities accessible to those wards in the region that are currently in the bottom 20% in terms of IMD?
15.5 Promote the growth of sustainable communities in the areas of critical need in the region both urban and rural, including access to public transport, access to jobs, services and facilities and access to green space?
15.6 Promote more sustainable transport patterns across the region, including greater use of public transport?
15.7 Improve connectivity and accessibility to employment, learning, health facilities and services, particularly for disadvantaged and excluded groups?
15.8 Recognise the role of air travel in economic growth?
15.9 Reduce and minimise the impact of airports?
16. To increase public involvement in decision-making and civic activity
16.1 Promote the involvement of communities and stakeholders in the planning process?
16.2 Recognise the importance of social, business and community networks and the environment sector
16.3 Seek to increase social and community engagement in economic activities, including social enterprise activity and volunteering?
16.4 Support community activity, raise aspirations and build social capital?
16.5 Involve voluntary and community organisations closest to disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups in the development of policy?
17. To reduce adverse impacts on global communities
17.1 Promote the use of local suppliers and locally-produced materials in construction?
17.2 Recognise the importance of eco-footprinting in specifying the environmental implications of current consumption and production activities?
17.3 Recognise the global opportunities for and the global impacts of growth?
17.4 Produce data which will assist the region in developing a sustainable growth model in terms of the region's global impacts?

4.5 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT

SA practice is still relatively new and few RSSs have reached the stage of appraising the final Adopted RSS. Therefore, the SA team feel it is worthwhile to outline the assumptions and limitations which have influenced the scope, methodology and reporting of the assessment.

4.5.1 Assumptions and limitations regarding the scope of the assessment

The scope of the initial assessment was set by the SA team and GO-NE at the outset of the appraisal process for the Proposed Changes. Both GO-NE and the SA team felt that it was important that the

appraisal focussed on those areas where suggested changes would be likely to alter the spatial strategy and therefore mean that the RSS has different strategic effects than was reported by the SA of the Submission Draft. In order to focus the assessment, a detailed scoping assessment was made of each policy in the RSS that has substantially altered since the Submission Draft version. This exercise has been re-done at each drafting and consultation stage. This scoping assessment would have benefited from discussion with consultees and the SA team were keen to undertake scoping in conjunction with the SEA Consultation Bodies. Unfortunately, due to restrictions on consultation that are inherent in RSS process at this stage, the SA team were unable to discuss these scoping decisions with consultees.

The same scope of the assessment has been kept for this appraisal. The reason for this is that the policies that were assessed at the Proposed Changes stage are those where significant changes were still being made and where sustainability effects are likely to be focused. However, all policy changes have been reviewed by the appraisal team to ensure that this scoping decision remains valid. Please see Section 5.1 for more details.

4.5.2 Assumptions and limitations regarding the methodology of the assessment

The appraisal has assessed the significant changes against the SA objectives using the criteria as guidance rather than reporting against each individual criterion. This is slightly different to the SA Report of the Submission Draft (undertaken by ERM) which assessed the effects of each section of the plan (and then the plan as a whole) against each criterion. Appraising against the SA objectives enabled the team to focus on the detail of each policy and the identification of the specific impacts of each policy rather than having to report against each criterion (when many of which would not be relevant for every policy (due to the sheer number and diversity of SA objectives)). Our approach was agreed with GO-NE and the SEA Consultation Bodies.

A decision was also made by the SA team not to use the scoring system that had been utilised in earlier versions of the appraisal due to the nature of the assessment being undertaken at this stage. Each policy has various and complex impacts on sustainability and this complexity is not always well presented with the use of a simple scoring system. Instead, the SA team has included a detailed commentary which focuses on the key impacts of the policy in question.

4.5.3 Assumptions and limitations regarding the reporting of the assessment

The results of the assessment of significant changes to the RSS are reported in Appendix C. Within these appraisals the SA team has reviewed the effect of each policy taking into account how it will affect the overall spatial strategy of the plan and also made links to other policy areas, where appropriate.

In accordance with SEA/SA regulations and guidance, the SA team (in agreement with GO-NE) recognised that it was important to focus efforts at this stage on where improvements can be made. With this in mind, it was not within the scope of this assessment to undertake a full appraisal of the plan overall.

5 SCOPE OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Task D2 in the ODPM Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks is “Appraising any significant changes proposed by the Secretary of State.” This guidance does not define what is meant by significant changes, stating “Where the Secretary of State proposes changes that have not already been subject to sustainability appraisal, it will be important to keep the implications for the SA Report under review.”

To augment this guidance two key scoping questions have been developed to assist the SA team in deliberations regarding scoping the SA changes to determine whether they can be considered to be significant:

1. Are key changes considered to be minor refinement of existing strategies? If changes made to the RSS are to provide clarity or detail to support an existing policy and will not give rise to changes that will alter the spatial implications of the RSS then re-assessment is not required.
2. Are key changes considered to result in the inclusion of new / different strategies or policies or a significant weakening or strengthening of the spatial strategy of the plan? If so, re-assessment is required. In this case the SA team will undertake a new assessment and this will be reported in the final SA Report.

A scoping analysis in conjunction with GO-NE was carried out as Government developed their Proposed Changes in response to the Panel Report. This is reported in the *SA Report of the NE RSS Proposed Changes* (ENVIRON, May 2007). This scoping assessment was undertaken again on the Further Proposed Changes to ensure that decisions remain valid. This is reported in *SA Report of the NE RSS Further Proposed Changes* (ENVIRON, January 2008). These analyses led to the following policies being subject to re-assessment.

- Policy 2: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2a: Climate Change
- Policy 6: Tyne and Wear City Region
- Policy 7: Tees Valley City Region
- Policy 18: Employment Land Portfolio
- Policy 18a: Office Development Outside of City and Town Centres
- Policy 30: Dwelling Provision
- Policy 31: Managing and Delivering Housing Supply
- Policy 38: Air Quality
- Policy 39: Sustainable Construction
- Policy 42: Onshore Wind Development
- Policy 45: Opencast Coal

- Policy 19: Key Employment Locations (previously Prestige Employment Sites)
- Policy 24: Delivering Sustainable Communities
- Policy 26: Metrocentre
- Policy 27: Out of Centre Leisure Developments
- Policy 51: Regional Public Transport Priorities
- Policy 53a: Strategic Framework for Demand Management
- Table of Transport Investment and Management Priorities

In order to ensure that a final check has been made on the sustainability of the significant changes in the final Adopted North East RSS this exercise has been carried out for a final time.

Please note: For ease of understanding, the appraisal of final changes to policy in the RSS is listed with reference to the policy numbering system used in the SoS's Further Proposed Changes (February 2008), and the final changes being made to RSS are explained in the Statement of Reasons accompanying final RSS. However, in presentational terms some of the policies may have been renumbered in the final publication version of RSS as part of final reformatting.

Table 2: The scope of the sustainability appraisal for the Adopted North East RSS

Policy changes (* denotes where policies were assessed as part of the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes)	Approach to re-appraisal	Justification
NORTH EAST RENAISSANCE	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Proposed Changes version.
*SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
*CLIMATE CHANGE The policy has strengthened consideration of sustainable drainage. Policy now refers to national emissions targets rather than regional ones.	Revise appraisal table produced for the Further Proposed Changes stage	Re-appraise due to potential changes to targets.
THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
PHASING & PLAN, MONITOR AND MANAGE	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
LOCATIONAL STRATEGY	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT Has included the consideration of coastal squeeze in the policy.	Does not require appraisal	This will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
*TYNE AND WEAR CITY REGION Amble has been added to the list of settlements in 6.1c. The status of a further proposed crossing of the River Wear and improved transport connections along the river in Sunderland have been strengthened.	Reproduce appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further	The policy has been re-assessed but it did not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the

Policy changes (* denotes where policies were assessed as part of the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes)	Approach to re-appraisal	Justification
	Proposed Changes	Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
*TEES VALLEY CITY REGION Further consideration has been added to the Durham Coalfields Communities Area.	Reproduce appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	The policy has been re-assessed but it did not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
RURAL AREAS Remove Amble from list of Rural Service Centres	Does not require appraisal	This will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
BROWNFIELD MIXED-USE LOCATIONS Cross refers to the Metrocentre policy. No other changes.	Does not require appraisal	This will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
SUPPORTING FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY NETWORKS	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
CULTURE AND TOURISM	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
CASINO DEVELOPMENT Now states that need for development must be established outside of town centres.	Does not require appraisal	This will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
*EMPLOYMENT LAND PORTFOLIO	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
*OFFICE DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE OF CITY AND TOWN CENTRES	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
*KEY EMPLOYMENT LOCATIONS Changed the reference to renewable energy sources to energy supply from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources.	Reproduce appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	The policy has been re-assessed but it did not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
AIRPORTS	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
PORTS Reword bullet point b to read: b. supporting railway loading gauge to Teesport and the Port of Tyne	Does not require appraisal	This will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
CHEMICAL & STEEL INDUSTRIES	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
*DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES Amend "f" to read: Linking development to appropriate provision of infrastructure, including green infrastructure , water supply, wastewater treatment and energy supplies.	Reproduce appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	The policy has been re-assessed but it did not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
URBAN AND RURAL CENTRES	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.

Policy changes (* denotes where policies were assessed as part of the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes)	Approach to re-appraisal	Justification
*METROCENTRE	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
*OUT-OF-CENTRE LEISURE DEVELOPMENTS	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
*GROSS AND NET DWELLING PROVISION The word average has been added before annual. Some minor changes have been made to housing numbers to correct inaccuracies.	Reproduce appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	The policy has been re-assessed but it did not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
*DELIVERING AND MANAGING HOUSING SUPPLY	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
IMPROVING INCLUSIVITY AND AFFORDABILITY	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER Amend f to read: Incorporate the findings of Shoreline Management Plans and Catchment Flood Management Plans.	Does not require appraisal	This will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
BIODIVERSITY & GEODIVERSITY	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
THE AQUATIC & MARINE ENVIRONMENT	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
FLOOD RISK	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
TREES, WOODLANDS AND FORESTS	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
*AIR QUALITY	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
*SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION Re-introduced the interim 10% target for major developments to secure renewables / low carbon technologies and has changed the policy in that it now refers to 'securing' renewable and low carbon energy rather than embedding it in developments.	Revise appraisal table produced for the Further Proposed Changes stage	Re-appraise due to potential change in scope of the delivery of renewable and low energy.
RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
PLANNING FOR RENEWABLES The policy has strengthened its consideration of landscape areas	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
*ONSHORE WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.

Policy changes (* denotes where policies were assessed as part of the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes)	Approach to re-appraisal	Justification
OVERALL MINERALS STRATEGY	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
AGGREGATE MINERALS PROVISION	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
*OPENCAST COAL	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
WASTE MANAGEMENT PROVISION Updated recycling and composting targets to 2016.	Does not require appraisal	The policy will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording as it is just an updating of which national targets to refer to.
HAZARDOUS WASTE	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
INTERNATIONAL GATEWAYS	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
REGIONAL TRANSPORT CORRIDORS Change to supporting railway loading gauge enhancements to Teesport	Does not require appraisal	The policy will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
*REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
STRATEGIC PUBLIC TRANSPORT HUBS	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
*STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR DEMAND MANAGEMENT	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.
DEMAND MANAGEMENT MEASURES	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
PARKING AND TRAVEL PLANS Now includes consideration of promoting car sharing	Does not require appraisal	The policy will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
ACCESSIBILITY WITHIN AND BETWEEN THE CITY REGIONS	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
ACCESSIBILITY IN RURAL AREAS	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version.
SUSTAINABLE FREIGHT DISTRIBUTION Change to supporting railway loading gauge enhancements to Teesport	Does not require appraisal	The policy will not have significantly different sustainability effects to the previous wording.
*Major Regional Transport Priorities	Does not require appraisal	No changes since Further Proposed Changes version. However, for completeness the appraisal table completed for the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes has been included in Appendix C.

6 RESULTS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The results of the appraisal of significant changes (in the form of appraisal matrices) are reported in Appendix C of this report. Within these appraisal matrices the SA team has reviewed the effect of each policy taking into account how it will affect the overall spatial strategy of the plan and also made links to other policy areas, where appropriate. Recommendations are then given within the table to GO-NE regarding where monitoring may be needed.

Although this is the final stage of re-drafting of the plan there were still opportunities to incorporate measures that help to improve the sustainability of the plan. The Further Proposed Changes version of the plan has taken some of the SA recommendations on board and is a stronger plan in terms of sustainability in many areas.

Table 3 shows the significant changes that have been made to the plan since the Submission Draft and how these have affected the spatial strategy. However, it should be noted that there are some recommendations that were made at the Proposed Changes and Further Proposed changes stages by the SA team that have not been taken on board by the GO-NE for various reasons. Where the SA team feel that these recommendations are still valid they have been included in Table 4 which outlines the main outstanding recommendations of the SA of the North East RSS.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS – FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND STATEMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS

Table 4 outlines the main findings and recommendations of the SA of the RSS Further Proposed Changes. As can be seen from Table 4, most of the issues identified by the appraisal are not considered to be significant effects and amendments are suggested that will make the plan either more complete in its consideration of sustainability or more positive in terms of moving the plan pro-actively towards sustainability goals.

The only residual negative sustainability effect relates mainly to policies 6 and 7 (Tyne and Wear City Region and Tees Valley City Region) (N.B. the SA also notes that the transport priorities of the plan also support the spatial strategy emphasis on airports). These policies have a negative sustainability effect because of their emphasis on airport growth as an economic driver. The RSS Panel were of the opinion that the Submission Draft emphasis on airports as key economic drivers should be tempered and have recommended that the RSS should reflect the uncertainty over the future role of aviation and

the growth forecasts. It is recognised that the RSS has no direct influence on airport growth and only has direct influence over surface access (and we note that Policy 21 has been strengthened in regard to sustainable modes for surface access). However, in line with the RSS panel the SA concludes that a tempering of the emphasis on airport growth would lead to a more sustainable plan and at the least the RSS should recognise the uncertainty over growth forecasts. If the policies did reflect the uncertainty over growth forecasts then they would have a neutral score.

Notwithstanding this residual effect, the SA that ENVIRON has undertaken has demonstrated that in the main, the later stages of the North East RSS have moved the spatial strategy for the region towards a stronger model of sustainability which embraces environmental, social and economic facets of sustainable development.

Table 3: Sustainability Effects of the Significant Changes from the Submission Draft onwards

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
Policy 2: Sustainable Development	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes <u>Changes to the policy:</u> Includes reference to the built fabric as an element of resources / Removed criterion on climate and renewable energy / Removes the need for a sustainability statement to be submitted with major planning applications <u>Changes to supporting text:</u> Reference to the principles in the 2005 UK Sustainable Development Strategy / Addition of information on regional checklist of developments which supports Code for Sustainable Homes</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes <u>Changes to the policy:</u> Criteria on educational achievement has changed to (new text in italics) “to raise educational achievement across the Region and improve the skills of the workforce <i>and of adults who are currently economically inactive, through engagement and training.</i></p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The changes to the policy do not significantly weaken or strengthen the spatial strategy. However, the policy now recognises some important principles that will help to ensure protection of the environment and consideration of sustainable development and wider social issues within development planning. The inclusion of information on a regional development checklist is also positive. The need to submit a sustainability statement for major development has now been removed. However, if implemented fully and its performance (both in terms of uptake and effects) monitored, the regional checklist in association with other policies within the plan should facilitate the move towards more sustainable methods of construction.</p>
Policy 2a: Climate Change	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes None – NEW POLICY and NEW SUPPORTING TEXT</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes The policy now refers to the Climate Change Action Plan and includes text on bringing forward options for adapting existing developments in areas that or are likely to be vulnerable to climate change impacts. The policy now includes a criterion on maximising positive impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan The policy has strengthened consideration of sustainable drainage. Policy now refers to national emissions targets rather than regional ones.</p>	<p>This new policy strengthens the RSS in that it seeks to tackle such a key issue to the region and to ensure that the effect of development on climate change is reduced. It also seeks to ensure that development takes into account the need to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. The addition of the policy makes the plan more comprehensive in terms of coverage of the important issues facing the region. Further Proposed Changes mean that a mechanism may be found through development for ensuring that existing development in areas that are, or are likely to become, vulnerable to climate change might receive funding for some adaptation measures. The final version of the plan has changes to the climate change targets. This is because the current IRF does not include any targets. The policy is comprehensive in that it makes reference to targets within published national Policy (the Energy White Paper) and the supporting text makes reference to forthcoming targets in the Climate Change bill.</p>
Policy 6: Tyne and Wear City Region	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes The policy includes reference to building on the region’s tourism offer; removed reference to development in smaller settlements meeting local aspirations and replaced with a consideration that development in smaller settlements should not adversely impact on the regeneration initiatives in the Tyne and Wear conurbation. It also integrates Green Belt Policy 10 with Policy 6 and includes text on green infrastructure in the Tyne and Wear Region.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Removed named references to larger science and technology developments. Added a requirement for development to achieve high standards of layout, design and energy efficiency. Added a consideration that growth at ports should be sustainable. Environment criteria have been supplemented with details regarding proposals likely to affect Natura 2000 sites.</p>	<p>The policy will strengthen the spatial strategy by focusing development in the core of the city region and by ensuring that development in smaller settlements will not adversely impact upon this strategy. The policy also strengthens the plan’s consideration of sustainable construction, environmental and green infrastructure issues and focuses on a strategic approach to delivering green infrastructure and environmental improvements.</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Amble has been added to the policy.</p>	
<p>Policy 7: Tees Valley City Region</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Inserted reference to development in smaller settlements meeting local needs that should not adversely impact on the regeneration initiatives in the Tees Valley conurbation, added section on protecting the line of the East Middlesbrough Transport Corridor primarily for development as a public transport link; provided additional text to clarify the role of strategic gaps and include further strategic gaps around Darlington and other areas.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Environment criteria have been supplemented with details regarding proposals likely to affect Natura 2000 sites. The policy now states that proposals should take account of existing biodiversity and geodiversity interests in these areas. The policy now states that development at Teesport should be sustainable.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Text has been added on the Durham Coalfields Communities Area.</p>	<p>The policy will strengthen the spatial strategy by focusing development in the core of the city region and by ensuring that development in smaller settlements will not adversely impact upon this strategy. The policy also strengthens the plan's consideration of environmental improvements, strategic gaps and green infrastructure issues and focuses on a strategic approach to delivering green infrastructure and environmental improvements. The Adopted version of the plan recognises specifically the issue of housing renewal in the Durham Coalfields Regeneration Area.</p>
<p>Policy 18: Employment Land Portfolio</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Land assessment now takes into account 25 years likely supply. Policy now considers the ability for regeneration of existing sites to meet need and intensification around transport hubs and on previously developed land in advance of green field options. The policy also requires the de-allocation and constraining of the uses of peripheral sites i.e. in Northumberland and Durham, when there is so much brownfield land available in the urban core.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Key employment land allocation changes – 125ha increase in Darlington; 40ha increase in Sedgefield. General land allocation changes – 40ha increase in Easington; 30ha added to Sunderland, Gateshead and South Tyneside. A criterion has been added to the policy regarding ensuring development is of an appropriate nature and scale.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The changes to the policy will strengthen the spatial strategy through strengthening the encouragement for regeneration of existing sites around transport hubs and on previously developed land. The concentration of development in core areas will lead to the accelerated growth and improved competitiveness needed in the region. The general increase in general land allocation in the Tyne and Wear authorities strengthens this trend and aids accelerated growth.</p>
<p>Policy 18A: Office Development Outside of City and Town Centres</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes None – NEW POLICY</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes None</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>This new policy strengthens the spatial strategy by helping to concentrate development in core areas which will lead to the accelerated growth and improved competitiveness needed in the region. The insertion of this policy on office development and subsequent refining of the potential uses of Key Employment Locations ensures greater consistency in the plan (especially between this policy and policy 3 on the sequential approach to development and Policy 5 on locational strategy).</p>
<p>Policy 19: Key Employment Locations</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Delete TyneWear Park as a Prestige Employment Site. Limit area of development of NE Technology Park to 13ha. Ensure appropriate development occurs on these sites. Delete reserve sites.</p>	<p>Future economic growth in the region is expected to be generated by small and medium sized enterprises and a significant amount of growth is expected to be accommodated in high density developments in core areas and at</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Increased area of development of NE Technology Park to 25ha. Added Heighington Lane West and Faverdale back into the policy as Key Employment Locations. The policy has been strengthened in terms of achieving low carbon emissions and energy conservation measures, ensuring significantly high levels of alternative transport use, discouraging the need to travel by car and the provision of a waste audit. Policy now looks at more general areas rather than sites.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Changed the reference to renewable energy sources to energy supply from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources.</p>	<p>transportation hubs. This policy has strengthened this spatial strategy through rationalizing the Key Employment Locations and linking the sites to specialist sectors. The sites that are left offer the kind of scale that town centre locations do not and it is important that these are retained for businesses that need this kind of scale. The deletion of reserve sites has also strengthened this aspect of the spatial strategy.</p>
<p>Policy 24: Delivering Sustainable Communities</p> <p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes The policy has had text concerning appropriate provision of infrastructure added and also considers the potential for development to reduce health and social inequalities through design and the provision of facilities.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Has added wastewater treatment as a consideration for development; added criterion to ensure that development has access to green-spaces and woodland.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan Amend “F” to read: Linking development to appropriate provision of infrastructure, including green infrastructure, water supply, wastewater treatment and energy supplies</p>	<p>The policy will help to plan for sustainable communities by ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is provided.</p>
<p>Policy 26: Metrocentre</p> <p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Policy now says that there should be no further provision for retail or leisure development made at the Metrocentre. Previously the policy stated that that any proposals for the extension to or redevelopment of the Metrocentre are justified in terms of the need for the development within its immediate and wider catchment areas, the sequential approach; and the impact on the vitality and viability of other urban and rural centres.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes None</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The policy changes will further support the RSS spatial strategy of concentrating any additional retail and leisure development in existing urban and rural centres. It will thus provide local employment in these areas, which is likely to involve less travel as retail and leisure will be better spatially distributed across the region rather than being concentrated at a single point. The panel report and Technical Paper 3 (Retail and Leisure) note that the region’s main urban centres have sufficient capacity to address additional need identified in the Regional Retail and Leisure Need Assessment.</p>
<p>Policy 27: Out of Centre Leisure Development</p> <p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Policy 27 has been modified to state that proposed regional and sub-regional rural leisure developments will need to be considered and justified through the sequential approach (Policy 3) and locational strategy (Policy 5) of the Regional Spatial Strategy, and having regard to the manner in which they assist rural regeneration and local communities. This replaces a blanket restriction.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Instead of looking at the way that developments will assist rural regeneration and local communities, the policy now states that LDFs should ensure that leisure developments are of an appropriate scale in relation to nearby settlements, and should not make provision for new out-of-centre leisure developments unless there are demonstrable benefits that would contribute to the sustainable growth of the local economy.</p>	<p>The changes to the policy have made its support of the spatial strategy more subtle and instead of placing a blanket restriction on out of centre leisure developments the policy requires justification through the demonstration of contribution to sustainable growth of the local economy. The policy is also an improvement in terms of the way it addresses rural regeneration and effects on local communities.</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	
<p>Policy 30: Dwelling Provision</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes 112,000 dwelling forecast has been used instead of 107,000. Division of net additional housing numbers between districts has changed. Allocations for Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley have increased whilst Durham's allocations have decreased.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes 128,900 dwelling forecast has been used. Division of additional housing numbers between districts has changed in some instances but not significantly.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan The word average has been added before annual. Some minor changes have been made to housing numbers to correct inaccuracies.</p>	<p>Focusing dwelling provision in Tyne and Wear and Tees Valley supports the overall spatial and economic strategy of focusing development in these areas. This will help decouple economic growth from emissions and will help to stop the movement of population from core urban areas to more rural areas that has been caused by the absence of viable development opportunities in the core areas. Combined with further strengthening of other policies related to rural housing affordability the policy should help to contribute to the development of more sustainable rural communities.</p>
<p>Policy 31: Delivering and Managing Housing Supply</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes N/A</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes NEW POLICY</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>Increased brownfield land targets will help to ensure that land resources are used sustainably.</p>
<p>Policy 38: Air Quality</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes None – NEW POLICY</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes Policy now says that strategies, plans and programmes and planning proposals should contribute to sustaining the current downward trend in air pollution in the region.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>The policy will assist in the consideration of the effect of the spatial strategy on air quality and the effect on internationally designated wildlife sites.</p>
<p>Policy 39: Sustainable Construction</p>	
<p>Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes Policy 39 was a policy on energy use and has been re-titled to a policy on sustainable construction. Require Local Authorities to set thresholds for development which will have to meet 10% renewables target.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes (this version) A minimum Code and BREEAM rating has been removed. In line with PPS1, the policy has removed the need for major developments to generate 10% of their energy supply from renewable sources and has changed this to an <i>ambitious but viable percentage</i> that should be set by each Local Authority.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan</p>	<p>The inclusion of a broad policy on sustainable construction will support the sustainable regeneration of the region and the changes made bring it in line with government policy in the form of PPS1 and Building a Greener Future. The inclusion of the requirement for an ambitious but viable target is positive and the change to the setting of renewable energy targets at the local level allows flexibility for local planning to factor in other sustainability benefits such as affordable housing when considering development economics on individual schemes. The inclusion of energy policies and requirements in LDFs should be monitored. The final amendments to the policy allow for both on-site and off-site renewable technologies to ensure that the most</p>

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
Updated wording on 'securing' rather than embedded to increase flexibility and also reference to 'low carbon' sources as well as renewables.	appropriate technology is utilised and there is encouragement for larger renewable schemes serving a number of developments.
Policy 42: Onshore Wind Development	
Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes	
Broadens out the consideration of onshore wind development to areas rather than sites. Specifically, Knowesgate Hill and Kiln Pitt Hill – policy has been reformulated to make these more general areas.	The policy has broadened out the areas that can be considered for onshore wind development. However, this will not have significant effects on the spatial strategy.
Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes	
East Durham Limestone has been added as a potential area for development. The Tees Estuary has been removed.	The removal of the Tees Estuary will help to protect the Teesmouth and Cleveland Coast SPA.
Significant Changes to Adopted Plan	
None	
Policy 45: Opencast Coal	
Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes	
Removes the presumption that open cast coal mining should be in accordance with the principles of sustainable development potentially increasing the likelihood of this kind of development.	The change in the policy will not have any significant effects on the spatial strategy. It brings the policy in line with government policy.
Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes	
None	
Significant Changes to Adopted Plan	
None	
Policy 51: Regional Public Transport Provision	
Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes	
Shifts some of the implementation focus off LTPs and onto regional and city regional city strategies. Includes a long term focus for public transport which wasn't previously present in the policy. This long term focus will be on a revitalised metro system (Tyne and Wear) and a new metro system for the Tees Valley. Introduces a section of policy on encouraging park and ride.	The policy supports the spatial strategy by including a long term focus for public transport which wasn't previously present in the policy. This long term focus will be on strategic public transport projects which support development in and connectivity of the city regions. This includes a revitalised metro system (Tyne and Wear) and investigation of the potential for a new metro system for the Tees Valley.
Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes	
None	
Significant Changes to Adopted Plan	
None	
Policy 53A: Strategic Framework for Demand Management	
Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes	
NEW POLICY	
Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes	
None	Studies have shown that in order to lock in the benefits of public transport (promoted by other policies within the RSS), further investment in demand management is needed. By helping to do this, the policy will help to support the efforts that the RSS is making to encourage public transport use and to provide a sustainable transport system to support the spatial strategy.
Significant Changes to Adopted Plan	
None	
Transport Investment and Management Priorities Table	
Significant Changes from Submission Draft to Proposed Changes	
	The Transport Investment and Management Priorities Table now has an

Summary of changes made in Proposed Changes and Further Proposed Changes	How the change in the policy affects the overall spatial strategy (compared to the Submission Draft)?
<p>The main change to the table is the increased emphasis on public transport (especially bus based) and the reduction in support of whole scale upgrades of the A66 and A1. The schemes are also presented differently with their links to the spatial strategy and transport issues made more explicit.</p> <p>Significant Changes from Proposed Changes to Further Proposed Changes A number of schemes are now under construction and this is acknowledged within the table.</p> <p>Significant Changes to Adopted Plan None</p>	<p>increased emphasis on public transport ensuring that the policy will help to provide a sustainable transport system to support the spatial strategy. The links of each scheme to the spatial strategy and transport issues are now made more explicit, making the strategy seem more like a coherent whole.</p>

Table 4: Summary of the sustainability effects and recommended amendments

Summary of effect	Residual effect of Further Proposed Changes ⁴	Recommended Further Amendments	Residual effect if recommendation taken into account
Policy 2: Sustainable Development			
The new additions to the policy (see particularly f) to promote development that takes account of environmental and social impacts...) could be phrased in a more positive manner in terms of enhancing the environment and sustainability benefits.	0	2.1f) change to: “to promote development that delivers wider economic, social and environmental objectives, is respectful of local environmental context and encourages efficient resource use”	+
One aspect of the policy that could be strengthened is the improvement in people’s satisfaction with their neighbourhoods and general quality of life improvements.	0	2.2a) change to: “to tackle the social, economic and environmental impacts of multiple deprivation and ensure that neighbourhood quality of life is improved”	+
Policy 2a: Climate Change			
The North East as a large energy producer can do much to increase production efficiency in energy generating industries. Although not directly relevant to planning this could be recognised in the supporting text of the policy and support given to improvements in production efficiency in energy production industry and other energy intensive industries (of which the North East has a large number).	0	Encouragement should be given in supporting text to improvements in production efficiency in energy production industry and other energy intensive industries (of which the North East has a large number).	0/+
The North East has a relatively unusual pattern of energy consumption/production and CO ₂ emissions in that it is a large energy producer but relatively small energy user. This is a critical issue as the North East has the largest CO ₂ emissions of any UK region. The supporting text of the policy would benefit from a précis of the situation so readers can quickly reach an understanding of what the key issues in the North East are.	0	Provide more information in the supporting text of the particular situation in the North East regarding energy consumption, production and carbon emissions.	0/+
Subsidence could be a key effect on the building stock and the supporting text to Policy 2a should reference this.	0	The supporting text of the policy should discuss subsidence.	+
Policy 6: Tyne and Wear City Region			
Considering that energy and environment is one of three key business sectors recognised in the North East Strategy for Success, this sector in particular is not mentioned within the policy.	0	It would be appropriate to expand on the potential for the energy and environment sector in the policy, and particularly environmentally led regeneration.	+
The RSS Panel were of the opinion that the Submission Draft emphasis on airports as key economic drivers should be tempered and have recommended that the RSS should reflect the uncertainty over the future role of aviation and the growth forecasts. It is recognised that the RSS has no direct influence on airport growth and only has direct influence over surface access (and we note that Policy 21 has been strengthened in regard to sustainable modes for surface access).	-	The emphasis of airport growth should be tempered in relation to this policy and consideration should be given as to whether the emphasis of 6.4 a) should be changed. At a minimum, the RSS should recognise the uncertainty over growth forecasts. In addition, could 6.4 f) specifically state that promotion of investment in rail services will be included as a replacement for short haul flights within	0

⁴ 0 = neutral effect, + = positive effect and - = negative effect

Summary of effect	Residual effect of Further Proposed Changes ⁴	Recommended Further Amendments	Residual effect if recommendation taken into account
<p>However, in line with the RSS panel the SA concludes that a tempering of the emphasis on airport growth would lead to a more sustainable plan and at the least the RSS should recognise the uncertainty over growth forecasts. Consideration should also be given to changing the emphasis of 6.4 f) to promote rail over short haul flights. Although the criterion in itself is positive, the change in emphasis will help to highlight the sustainability benefits of rail over short haul flights.</p>		<p>the UK.</p>	
Policy 7: Tees Valley City Region			
<p>The RSS Panel were of the opinion that the Submission Draft emphasis on airports as key economic drivers should be tempered and have recommended that the RSS should reflect the uncertainty over the future role of aviation and the growth forecasts. It is recognised that the RSS has no direct influence on airport growth and only has direct influence over surface access (and we note that Policy 21 has been strengthened in regard to sustainable modes for surface access). However, in line with the RSS panel the SA concludes that a tempering of the emphasis on airport growth would lead to a more sustainable plan and at the least the RSS should recognise the uncertainty over growth forecasts. Consideration should also be given to changing the emphasis of 7.4 e) to promote rail over short haul flights. Although the criterion in itself is positive, the change in emphasis will help to highlight the sustainability benefits of rail over short haul flights.</p>	-	<p>The emphasis of airport growth should be tempered in relation to this policy and consideration should be given as to whether the emphasis of 7.4 a) should be changed.</p> <p>In addition, could 7.4 e) specifically state that promotion of investment in rail services as a replacement for short haul flights within the UK?</p>	0
Policy 19: Key Employment Locations			
<p>The policy has been changed to state that developments should reach a high level of sustainability. Environmental assets will be protected and the policy also states that sustainable construction and design methods should be used in order to deliver biodiversity benefits. The sites, however, might have local impacts on sites designated for their ecological importance. The supporting text should encourage the use of a sustainability appraisal process to test different masterplan options. The detailed masterplan should set out how sustainability benefits will be maximised and environmental harm reduced. This sustainability appraisal process will formalise the good intentions of the policy and will provide an opportunity for developers to demonstrate the sustainability credentials of their development (over and above the information usually provided in an environmental statement).</p>	0	<p>The supporting text should encourage the use of a sustainability appraisal process to test different masterplan options as well as to demonstrate that sustainable construction and design methods are being used. Masterplans should be required to set out how sustainability benefits will be maximised and environmental harm reduced particularly with relation to sites designated for their conservation importance.</p>	+
Policy 24: Delivering Sustainable Communities			
<p>The policy might benefit from an explicit recognition that affordable housing is a key element of sustainable communities.</p>	0	<p>The policy might benefit from an explicit recognition that affordable housing is a key element of sustainable communities.</p>	0/+
Policy 39: Sustainable Construction			

Summary of effect	Residual effect of Further Proposed Changes ⁴	Recommended Further Amendments	Residual effect if recommendation taken into account
Water resource issues are currently addressed by policy 36, which addresses SUDS but not water conservation measures in developments. However, sustainable construction is usually taken to include water conservation and SUDS. For example, it is included in the “ten commandments” in the North East Guide to sustainable construction.	0	Ensure that Policy 36 addresses water use as well as water quality as there is no guarantee that minimum BREEAM / Code standards will be set within LDFs.	+
If the “checklist for developments “idea is progressed (see supporting text for policy 2) minimum standards should be set.	0	Ensure that the checklist for development sets minimum standards related to important sustainability effects.	+
Policy 42: Onshore Wind Development			
There is a possibility of securing social benefits from wind farm development (and make it locally more acceptable) by developers setting up funds for local community projects. This may be best addressed by adding additional text before policy 41.	0	Include discussion in the text prior to policy 41 on the value of encouraging wind farm developers to fund local community projects.	+
The early involvement of local communities in planning for wind farm development is particularly important because of public attitudes to wind farms. This is best addressed in the text prior to policy 41.	0	Include in the text before policy 41 discussion on the importance of the early involvement of local communities in planning for wind farm development.	+
Policy 45: Opencast Coal Mining			
Significant areas within the exposed coalfields of Durham, Tyne & Wear and Northumberland have been subject to opencast coal working over recent times. In order to specifically recognise this issue the policy could make specific reference to potential cumulative impact with existing and proposed development.	0	The policy could make specific reference to potential cumulative impact with existing and proposed development.	0/+
Policy 51: Regional Public Transport Provision			
The focus on innovative solutions to reduce social exclusion in rural and urban areas and support for improvements in affordability should assist those living in more deprived areas within the region. It would be useful if the supporting text of the policy could give more guidance on the types of innovative measures that could be promoted.	0	It would be useful if the supporting text of the policy could give more guidance on the types of innovative measures that could be promoted.	0
Policy 53a: Strategic Framework for Demand Management			
The policy may have a negative effect on road freight particularly serving rural businesses and therefore the viability of rural businesses.	0	The policy should ensure that demand management measures do not inhibit freight transport to and from rural businesses where alternatives are not possible.	0/+
Transport Investment and Management Priorities Table			
In order to make the best use of resources, in the short term the strategy should focus on smaller scale lower cost schemes and should aim to maximise the potential of existing transport networks. In this way the priorities would benefit from more steer on which schemes are a priority or a likely time scale for when schemes should be progressed (i.e. short, medium and long term).	0	The priorities would benefit from more steer on which schemes are a priority or a likely time scale for when schemes should be progressed (i.e. short, medium and long term).	0/+

6.3 MONITORING

The final SA report should set out the measures to be taken to monitor the significant effects of the implementation of the plan or programme. The purpose of this monitoring is to identify unforeseen effects of the implementation of the plan. It is the responsibility of the North East Assembly as the Regional Planning Body to carry out this monitoring and review in liaison with Government Office North East and other partners. The latter, which among others include One NorthEast, the Regional Observatory and the statutory agencies, have important roles to play in monitoring the progress of the RSS. Their roles should be co-ordinated by the Assembly in order that, where possible, a common evidential base is created and duplication avoided.

The North East Assembly will publish an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), which will be submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of February each year. The Annual Monitoring Report, together with Government's headline and good practice guide indicators will provide the context for measuring progress towards the key objectives of the RSS.

The SA Report of the Submission Draft RSS (ERM, June 2005) set out the Sustainable Development Indicators that were required to monitor the effects of the Submission Draft of the plan. This is shown in Table 5. ENVIRON have added additional indicators to this to reflect the residual effects and uncertain effects of the changes made after the Submission Draft. These additional indicators are shown in red italic.

Table 5: Monitoring Indicators

IRF objective	Relevant IRF indicators	Existing RSS Monitoring Framework Indicators		Additional Indicators
		Policy	Indicator	
To ensure high and stable levels of employment so everyone can share and contribute to greater prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate of economic inactivity Percentage of people in workless households 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IMD Overall Index of Deprivation IMD Employment deprivation <i>Growth in air passenger miles (and comparison to growth forecasts).</i>
To achieve high and sustainable levels of economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GVA per head 	1.	Gross Value Added growth rate	
To raise educational achievement across the region	It is not proposed that any indicators be proposed for education, as the RSS will have little or no influence over trends or the achievement of objectives.			
To ensure everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent and affordable home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of housing stock unfit Provision of affordable housing Homelessness Households in fuel poverty 	1.	Volume of housing property sales	
		28.	Dwelling completions over a five year period or since the start of the RSS period, whichever is the longer	
		28.	Dwelling completions for the current year	
		28.	Projected dwelling completions up to the end of 2021	
		28.	The annual dwelling requirement	
		28.	Annual average number of completions needed to meet overall housing requirements having regard to previous years performances	
		29.	% of total number of dwellings vacant, and those vacant for more than 6 months	
		30.	Percentage of new dwellings completed at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 30 dwellings per hectare (net) Between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare (net), and Above 50 dwellings per hectare (net by local authority area) 	
32.	% of local authority areas with affordable housing provision targets			
To ensure good local air quality for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Days when air pollution is moderate or high Levels of road traffic 	1.	Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambient air quality – SO₂, NO₂, PM₁₀
To protect and enhance the quality of the region’s ground, river and sea waters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incidents of water pollution Percentage of river length of good quality Number of beaches meeting 	1.	Water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemical and biological quality assessment of rivers
		35.	Number of planning applications permitted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency where the objection was made on flood risk grounds and water quality grounds.	

IRF objective	Relevant IRF indicators	Existing RSS Monitoring Framework Indicators		Additional Indicators
		Policy	Indicator	
	bathing water guideline standards	35.	Number of planning permissions, by local authority area granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on grounds of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flood defence; and • water quality 	
To reduce the causes and the impacts of climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed capacity for energy produced from renewable sources • Estimate of principal greenhouse gas emissions 	39.	Regional energy consumption. [MW]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development in flood zone • <i>Progress towards the targets contained in the Draft Climate Change Bill including the 2020 target.</i> • <i>Inclusion of energy policies and targets in LDFs</i>
		39.	Number of planning permissions granted for developments that embed renewables in the development and MW installed.	
		39.	Capacity, by sub region, of Combined Heat and Power and District Heating installed.	
		39.	Number of planning permissions granted for developments that exceed building regulation requirements on insulation for energy efficiency.	
To protect and enhance the region's biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of wild birds • Area of land designated as SSSIs in favourable condition • Progress towards meeting Regional BAP targets • Changes to the condition of local wildlife sites 	35.	Progress on reducing habitat fragmentation and species isolation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Monitoring of air quality and its effects on key sensitive nature conservation sites alongside the A66 and A19</i>
		35.	Number of landscape scale habitat creation projects, and number taking place within the habitat creation and enhancement areas.	
		35.	Proportion of the region's area of SSSIs in an unfavourable condition but recovering.	
		35.	Change in areas of biodiversity importance, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority Habitats and Species (by type); and • Areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional or sub regional importance. 	
		38.	% of development plans/ local development frameworks that inclusive of policies maximising the public benefits of trees woodland and forests. (Process Indicator)	
		38.	Area (ha) of woodland covered created in environmental regeneration initiative areas - the Great North Community, the Tees Community Forest and the Greening for Growth area.	
		38.	Total area of woodland cover in the Region.	
		38.	Area of ancient and semi natural woodland in the North East Region.	
		38.	Amount of woodland created on derelict land or brown field land.	
		To reduce the amount of waste produced and increase the amount recycled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of household waste recycled or composted • Volume of municipal waste going to landfill 	
46.	Amount of household waste collected per head of population			
46.	% of construction and demolition waste landfilled			
46.	% of industrial and commercial waste landfilled			

IRF objective	Relevant IRF indicators	Existing RSS Monitoring Framework Indicators		Additional Indicators
		Policy	Indicator	
		46.	Capacity of new waste management facilities, by type and by waste planning authority. (Regional Core Indicator)	
To make better use of our resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water usage 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per capita consumption of water Water supply headroom
To protect and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the region's rural and urban land and landscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of new homes built on PDL Extent of contaminated land Extent of dereliction Greenbelt additions/deletions Number/area of designated sites Loss or damage to designated sites Accessibility to open space 	2.	% of dwellings and amount of land developed for housing within existing settlements, (with brownfield/Greenfield split).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IMD Living Environment
		3.	% of development plans/ local development frameworks adopting the sequential approach to land identification.	
		3.	Amount of Previously Developed Land identified for all development.	
		30.	Total number of houses with planning permission per development on Greenfield and previously developed land	
		31.	% of development plans with policies on the managed release of land for housing in accordance with the locational strategy and sequential approach	
To protect and enhance the region's cultural heritage and diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Grade I and II buildings at risk 	16.	% of development plans/ local development frameworks that include policies that seek the promotion of appropriate cultural and tourism facilities	
		34.	% of the region's World Heritage Sites with management plans	
To reduce crime and the fear of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of crime Incidents of theft of/from a vehicle, burglary, violent crimes 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IMD Crime and Disorder
To improve health and reduce inequalities in health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life expectancy at birth 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IMD Health Deprivation
To ensure good accessibility for all to jobs, facilities, goods and services in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of rural households within 13 minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service Number of cycling trips Bus passenger journeys 	1.	Businesses connected to internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IMD Barriers to Housing and Services Average daily traffic flow
		1.	Households connected to the internet	
		1.	Distance travelled by person by mode of transport	
		12.	% of all residential areas to have full broadband coverage	
		12.	% of employment sites to have full broadband coverage	
		50.	Amount of congestion and number of accidents along the A1 north of Newcastle.	
		51.	Number of passengers on buses, trains and the Tyne & Wear Metro. (Output Indicator)	

IRF objective	Relevant IRF indicators	Existing RSS Monitoring Framework Indicators		Additional Indicators
		Policy	Indicator	
		51.	Number of new public transport services by mode. (Output Indicator)	
		51.	% of overall trips made by public transport. (Output Indicator)	
		51.	Progress on developing a region-wide ticketing system.	
		51.	% of households within 13 minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service, rail or Metro service.	
		52.	% of development plans/ local development frameworks incorporating policies to support the development of a core and feeder Public Transport Interchanges, sub regional and local interchanges in the main towns, main towns in regeneration areas and main rural service centres.	
		53.	Progress on study of pricing measures	
		53.	Number of Park and Ride Schemes and patronage.	
		53.	Number of Car Sharing Schemes	
		53.	% of development plans/ local development	
		53.	frameworks incorporating car parking standards	
		53.	Number of workplace parking levies	
		53.	Number of road user charging schemes	
		53.	Annual rate of increase in total person miles travelled by car in the Region.	
		54.	% of development plans/ local development frameworks setting maximum parking standards by non-residential use, per local authority	
		54.	% of completed non-residential development by type complying with the car parking standards set out in the Regional Transport Strategy; by local authority area.	
		54.	% by total trips to work and school in the Region made by walking, cycling and public transport.	
		54.	Number of school travel plans implemented.	
		54.	Number of business existing and new, with Travel Plans	
		55.	Extent of road space reprioritisation, by mode, per local authority, by the following measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of new no car lanes • Length of new bus lanes; and • Length of new cycle lanes. 	

IRF objective	Relevant IRF indicators	Existing RSS Monitoring Framework Indicators		Additional Indicators
		Policy	Indicator	
		55.	Total level of congestion on primary road networks in the Region.	
		55.	Extent of improvements to the public transport service on the following corridors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcastle – Sunderland • Sunderland – Durham Coast Regeneration Area – Tees Valley • Tees Valley – East Cleveland Regeneration Area • SW Durham Regeneration Area – Darlington • Tyne Valley – Newcastle • Durham – Tees Valley • Wear Valley Regeneration Area – Durham • SE Northumberland Regeneration Area – Tyne & Wear. 	
		56.	Extent of public transport services between the region’s rural service centres and the rural hinterlands.	
		56.	% of households within a 13 minute walk of an hourly or better bus service.	
		56.	Progress on the development of existing and implementation of new demand responsive public transport schemes in remote rural areas.	
		57.	Amount of freight carried by road, rail and water.	
To increase public involvement in decision-making and civic activity	It is not proposed that any indicators be proposed for public involvement in decision-making, as the RSS will have little or no influence over trends or the achievement of objectives.			
To reduce adverse impacts on global communities	This objective relates primarily to fair trade, local trade and links to global communities (eg through volunteering). It is not proposed that any indicators be proposed for this issue, as the RSS will have little or no influence over trends or the achievement of objectives.			
Additional issues		2.	% of development plans/ local development frameworks prepared integrating independent sustainability appraisals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Sustainability Statements submitted • Population size, distribution, change etc • <i>Implementation of the North East checklist for developments</i>
		25.	Number of development plans reviewed integrating independent sustainability appraisals.	