



## CHAPTER 2: STRATEGY AND AIMS

### A View of the High Peak

- 2.1 Although the Local Plan does not cover the whole of the High Peak, since that part within the Peak District National Park is the responsibility of the Peak District National Park Authority, the Council's overall view of the High Peak provides an important context for understanding the strategy, aims and policies of the Plan.
- 2.2 The High Peak is unique in its location surrounded by five counties (Cheshire, Staffordshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester) and within a sixth; Derbyshire. Its position within 60 miles of one third of the population of England places the Borough under particular pressures. It is vital that these pressures are resisted if the way of life of its people, both rural and small town, is to be preserved. This is not only in the local interest, but to preserve the special character of the wider Peak District.

### A Vision for the High Peak

- 2.3 The Community Strategy for High Peak 2003-2008 is under preparation. The Council's vision for the High Peak is to protect the environment, promote healthy communities and create jobs and prosperity. The Local Plan is a key component of the Council's policies which strive towards this ambition. The Local Plan seeks to create and maintain attractive, thriving towns and villages set within one of the most beautiful landscapes in England
- 2.4 Safeguarding the splendid scenic and architectural heritage of the High Peak can be achieved hand in hand with promoting a healthy local economy. Indeed, encouraging investment and jobs - in the right locations - will be the key to success, as investment will provide and attract the resources needed for high quality, sustainable development. A good quality environment encourages investment which, in turn, provides the resources to maintain and improve the buildings and landscape.
- 2.5 The Council strongly believes in the importance of the values implied in the term 'sustainable development' when considering regeneration projects and encouraging economic growth. Sustainable development is a phrase used to describe development that will not adversely affect the quality of life of current or future generations. The main issue considered when promoting sustainable



development is how to reconcile the need for economic growth with the impact that this may have upon society and the environment. The Local Plan will have an affect upon long-term quality of life issues in High Peak.

- 2.6 The Community Strategy for High Peak will reflect local communities' priorities and aspirations in a comprehensive vision and strategy for the Borough. Key service providers and other stakeholders will work in partnership with the aim of improving the quality of life in High Peak. It will develop work already carried out in connection with Local Agenda 21 (a strategy for the local community in the 21st century). This strategy outlines the main quality of life issues facing High Peak residents and the role that the Council and other partners can play in ensuring that community development is as far as possible 'sustainable'.
- 2.7 Local Plan, as with all the Council's policies, is set within the priorities of the Corporate Plan :
- To enhance the quality of the local and global environment;
  - To promote social inclusion and enable communities and individuals to participate in improving the quality of life in High Peak;
  - To create a thriving local economy that is responsive to the needs of local communities.

## **A Strategy for the High Peak**

- 2.8 The strategy is based on promoting the Borough's economic, social and environmental well-being within an overall context of sustainable development. Based on the Council's own corporate objectives, it also reflects the advice, guidance and associated strategies which provide the wider policy context such as PPG's, RPG, Local Agenda 21 and the Structure Plan. These policy influences can be reduced to six key areas:

### **Environment**

- 2.9 **Aim:** Protect and enhance the High Peak's fine landscape, built environment, and sites of archaeological, geological and nature conservation interest by promoting quality design at all levels and ensuring new development respects the principles of sustainability.
- 2.10 **Delivery:** The plan contains a variety of policies which combine to provide a framework to protect and enhance the High Peak environment. The relationship between the shape, form and character of the natural and man-made landscape is reflected by tightly drawn designations. These include Built-up Area Boundaries, Green Belt, Special Landscape Area and Improvement Corridor designations, and



the newly defined Local Landscape Character Areas which together define the strategically important areas which surround and penetrate settlements.

- 2.11 Policies for listed buildings, Conservation Areas, bio-diversity, wildlife protection, reclamation of derelict land, open play space, trees, woodlands, waste management and landscape features combine to reflect the growing awareness of the important relationships between development form and layout, recreation and amenity space and wildlife diversity.
- 2.12 To deliver sustainable development, new development will where possible be directed towards previously developed sites within built-up areas and by re-using vacant or underused land and buildings. Where there is no option but to build on green field sites, those chosen are in the most sustainable location for access to services and facilities and offer transport choice.

## Community Development

- 2.13 **Aim:** Promote the development of local communities by encouraging the provision of services, facilities and a better balance between housing and employment in local areas in order to help reduce the need to travel and to support the creation of more self-sustaining communities.
- 2.14 **Delivery in Glossop and the Central Area:** The Local Plan proposes to contain new housing development over and above existing planning permissions to urban capacity sites within the existing built-up areas of settlements. However, in Glossop a small greenfield site has been allocated at Gamesley for housing to support provision of a rail halt.
- 2.15 Wherever possible, new employment development in both areas will be directed to derelict, despoiled or underused land, though some development on greenfield sites will be necessary to meet the Structure Plan requirements and to assist in providing more jobs locally.
- 2.16 **Delivery in Buxton:** Plan policies are designed to stimulate steady growth in Buxton to encourage investment in its splendid architectural and cultural heritage. Growth in a combination of housing, employment and services is needed to bring greater prosperity to the town so that vital conservation aims can be achieved. A larger population will help support the town's shops, recreation and cultural facilities, such as the Pavilion Gardens and the Opera House.
- 2.17 Buxton is sufficiently distant for growth to take place without significantly affecting the urban regeneration of Greater Manchester. It is also well placed to accommodate pressures which may arise from demands which cannot be met in adjoining Macclesfield Borough or the Peak District National Park. Growth will also support the investment by the University of Derby in the town.
- 2.18 Channelling development to Buxton also avoids the need for further major development in smaller, nearby towns, particularly Whaley Bridge and Chapel-en-le-Frith which have seen significant housing development over the last



decades. To this end the plan allocates a number of major housing and employment sites to deliver the necessary growth.

## **Employment and Economic Prosperity**

- 2.19 **Aim:** Promote the growth of employment through the development of industry, commerce, tourism and leisure where this capitalises on and complements the individual assets and characteristics of the Borough and maintains and improves the quality of the environment.
- 2.20 **Delivery:** In complementing the focus on creating more self sustaining communities the plan seeks to redress the balance between housing and local availability of jobs. A number of large sites are allocated for employment related development. These are mainly in Buxton, Chapel-en-le-Frith and Glossop. Although, allocation will not necessarily lead to rapid development because of site constraints. The range and number of sites is sufficient to allow for indigenous businesses to expand and diversify and to provide for businesses looking to relocate in the Borough. As well as providing new sites the plan also places an emphasis on retaining existing industrial and employment land designated as Primary Employment Zones. It is important to note that 'gap funding' will be necessary to release a number of the allocated sites for development, as site conditions are such that, without it, development is unlikely.

## **Town Centres and Regeneration**

- 2.21 **Aim:** Promote the improvement and regeneration of town centres and urban areas by seeking the creation of clean, secure and attractive environments with a diversity of use and activity and good accessibility whilst ensuring the most efficient use of land and buildings.
- 2.22 **Delivery:** The plan's policies provide for increased job opportunities and improved shopping and recreation facilities within the High Peak. Attractive, lively and prosperous towns and villages will help provide more jobs and facilities closer to home, and so reduce the need for commuting. The policy emphasis on restraining housing development in the Central and Glossopdale sub-areas will assist in redressing this balance. Regeneration areas have been allocated at vacant or underused sites and buildings close to or within town centres which will assist in regenerating the towns. Some of these allocations will be accompanied by the publication of site development briefs to assist developers in the regeneration of the sites and focus efforts towards land uses which will provide key elements for a vibrant town centre. Where appropriate, conservation-led regeneration is encouraged.

## **Tourism**

- 2.23 **Aim:** Support the development of a viable tourism industry that plays a key role in the economic regeneration of the area, respects the natural environment



on which it depends, is supported by local residents and provides a high-quality visitor experience.

- 2.24 **Delivery:** The Local Plan supports an integrated approach to tourism management, working in partnership with other agencies to ensure the long-term sustainability of the tourism industry. The plan and its policies recognise the growth in interest in outdoor activities and support this growth where it is compatible with the aim of environmental protection. A key policy in delivering sustainable tourism is encouraging and controlling the location of new tourist attractions to locations that support more sustainable forms of transport and reduce the dependency on the car.

## Transport

- 2.25 **Aim:** Promote a more integrated transport system which gives a better choice of modes for movement, including public transport, cycling and walking and which offers a convenient and safe alternative to the private car. To seek the maintenance and improvement of public transport services catering for residents and visitors and so reduce reliance on the car.
- 2.26 **Delivery:** New sites allocated for housing and employment development have been chosen, where practicable on their ability to keep travel distances to a minimum. Where new development is proposed, policies seek to ensure it will be accessible by a choice of transport modes. To reduce traffic congestion, improve highway safety and improve environmental conditions a number of road schemes are proposed during the plan period. Policies safeguard the land required for these schemes. The plan promotes and protects the public rights of way network and multi-user trails in urban and rural areas, such as the Trans Pennine Trail.

