



High Peak Borough Council

**Planning Policy Guidance Notes,
Planning Policy Statements &
Regional Spatial Strategies –
Update.**

February 2007



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Introduction

Planning Policy Guidance Notes, Planning Policy Statements & Regional Spatial Strategies.

Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs), and their replacements Planning Policy Statements (PPSs), are prepared by the government after public consultation to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities, and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. They also explain the relationship between planning policies and other policies that have an important bearing on issues of development and land use.

Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs), produced by the relevant Regional Assembly in consultation with the Regional Government Office and other stakeholders, play a similar role in providing a planning policy framework for local authorities. RSSs elaborate on PPGs and PPSs and interpret their policies to address regional issues. High Peak is located within the East Midlands region, and as such, local planning policy must adhere to RSS8: East Midlands. However, consideration is also given to the regional guidance published for the North West as the Borough has close links to this region.

Local authorities must take their contents into account in preparing their development plans. The guidance may also be relevant to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.

This document provides a summary of the remaining PPGs and the newly adopted PPSs that are gradually replacing PPGs as part of the reforms introduced under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The text is designed to assist Members in decision-making and to inform the public of the national and regional planning policy framework that guides the production of the Development Plan for the High Peak. It is intended that further updates will be provided as and when revisions are made to planning policy guidance in the future.

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS1 sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. This PPS replaces Planning Policy Guidance Note 1, General Policies and Principles, published in February 1997. The document states that planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;
- contributing to sustainable economic development;
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;
- ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and,
- ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

Published alongside PPS 1 is 'The Planning System: General Principles'. This provides a general description of key elements of the planning system, including its structure the determination of planning applications and the Secretary of State's role.

PPG2 Green Belts

This PPG outlines the history and extent of Green Belts and explains their purposes. It describes how Green Belts are designated and their land safeguarded. Green Belt land-use objectives are outlined and the presumption against inappropriate development is set out.

The aim of Green Belt policy is the maintenance of areas of open countryside between settlements in order to restrict development to areas specified in development plans, to prevent coalescence of urban areas and to encourage sustainable patterns of development.

PPG2 lists five purposes of including land in the Green Belt:

1. to prevent urban sprawl
2. to prevent the coalescence of settlements
3. to protect the countryside
4. to safeguard historic towns and their character
5. to encourage the redevelopment of Brownfield sites

The land use objectives of PPG2 are:

- to provide access to the countryside for urban dwellers
- to provide opportunities for sport and recreation
- the protection and improvement of landscapes in the vicinity of settlements
- the improvement of Brownfield land
- the protection of nature conservation areas
- the protection of agricultural land uses in general.

PPS3 Housing

This PPS and related advice and guidance replace previous policy and guidance, in particular *Planning Policy Guidance 3: Housing*.

PPS3 sets out the national planning policy framework for delivering the Government's housing objectives. This complements, and should be read together with, other relevant statements of national planning and housing policy (in particular *PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development* and the forthcoming PPS on Climate Change).

A principal aim of the new PPS3 is to underpin the Government's response to the *Barker Review of Housing Supply* and the necessary step-change in housing delivery, through a new, more responsive approach to land supply at the local level.

It reflects the Government's commitment to improving the affordability and supply of housing in all communities, including rural areas, informed by the findings of the Affordable Rural Housing Commission. The delivery of housing in rural areas should respect the key principles underpinning this PPS, providing high quality housing that contributes to the creation and maintenance of sustainable rural communities in market towns and villages.

On publication of this PPS, Local Planning Authorities will need to assess and demonstrate the extent to which existing plans already fulfill the requirement set out in this statement to identify and maintain a rolling five-year supply of deliverable land for housing, particularly in connection with making planning decisions.

Strategic Housing Policy Objectives

The Government's key housing policy goal is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. To achieve this, the Government is seeking:

- To achieve a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing, to address the requirements of the community.
- To widen opportunities for home ownership and ensure high quality housing for those who cannot afford market housing, in particular those who are vulnerable or in need.

- To improve affordability across the housing market, including by increasing the supply of housing.
- To create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas, both urban and rural.

Planning For Housing Policy Objectives

These housing policy objectives provide the context for planning for housing through development plans and planning decisions. The specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver are:

- High quality housing that is well-designed and built to a high standard.
- A mix of housing, both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural.
- A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice.
- Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.
- A flexible, responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously developed land, where appropriate.

Good design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, which contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities. Local Planning Authorities should develop a shared vision with their local communities of the type(s) of residential environments they wish to see and develop design policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the local area, aimed at creating places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, are visually attractive, safe, accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinctive identity and maintain and improve local character whilst promoting designs and layouts which make efficient and effective use of land, including encouraging innovative approaches to help deliver high quality outcomes.

Local Planning Authorities should plan for a mix of housing on the basis of the different types of households that are likely to require housing over the plan period. This will include having particular regard to:

- Current and future demographic trends and profiles.

- The accommodation requirements of specific groups, in particular, families with children, older and disabled people.
- The diverse range of requirements across the area, including the need to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers.

Local Planning Authorities are required to set out in Local Development Documents the likely overall proportions of households that require market or affordable housing, the likely profile of household types requiring market housing, and the size and type of affordable housing required.

PPG4 Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms

This PPG takes a positive approach to the location of new business developments and assisting small firms through the planning system. The main message is that economic growth and a high-quality environment have to be pursued together.

The locational demands of industry should be a key consideration in drawing up plans. Development plans should weigh the importance of industrial and commercial development with that of maintaining and improving environmental quality.

The advice covers mixed uses, conservation and heritage, re-use of urban land and other matters.[The Planning Green Paper identifies this as a priority for early review]

PPG5 Simplified Planning Zones

This PPG outlines the general nature and role of Simplified Planning Zones (SPZs), explaining their benefits in the promotion of particular areas, how SPZ schemes can be created and the nature of their relationship to development plans.

SPZs achieve their effect by granting planning permission for specified types of development. Conforming schemes can go ahead without a separate planning application being made, thus providing speed and certainty for all parties.

Annexes contain detailed guidance on the use, content and effect of SPZs, their relationship to other controls and planning operations, and information on SPZ procedures. (Original release date November 1992 [The Planning Green Paper identifies this PPG as likely to be withdrawn and any new guidance on business planning zones to be part of a revised PPG4])

PPS6 Planning for Town Centres

The Government's key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability by:

- planning for the growth and development of existing centres; and
- promoting and enhancing existing centres, by focusing development in such centres and
- encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all.

There are other Government objectives that need to be taken account of in the context of the key objectives above:

- enhancing consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community, and particularly socially-excluded groups;
- supporting efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity; and
- improving accessibility, ensuring that existing or new development is, or will be, accessible and well-served by a choice of means of transport.

Local Development Documents and Local Planning Authorities respectively should implement the Government's objectives for town centres, by planning positively for their growth and development. They should therefore:

- develop a hierarchy and network of centres;
- assess the need for further main town centre uses and ensure there is the capacity to accommodate them;
- focus development in, and plan for the expansion of, existing centres as appropriate, and at the local level identify appropriate sites in development plan documents;
- promote town centre management, creating partnerships to develop, improve and maintain the town centre, and manage the evening and night-time economy; and
- regularly monitor and review the impact and effectiveness of their policies for promoting vital and viable town centres.

It is not the role of the planning system to restrict competition, preserve existing commercial interests or to prevent innovation. The main town centre uses to which this policy statement applies are:

- retail (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres);
- leisure, entertainment facilities, and the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls);

- offices, both commercial and those of public bodies; and
- arts, culture and tourism (theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels, and conference facilities).

In addition, housing will be an important element in most mixed-use, multi-storey developments.

This Planning Policy Statement replaces Revised Planning Policy Guidance Note 6: Town Centres and Retail Developments (PPG6, 1996) and subsequent policy statements.

PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

This PPS provides guidance on land-use planning in rural areas of England. It sets out the government's general policy approach.

The objectives underlying PPS7 are as follows:-

- To raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas;
- To promote more sustainable patterns of development and support an urban renaissance;
- To make sustainable improvements in the economic performance of all regions; and
- To promote sustainable, diverse and adaptable agriculture sectors.

Focusing on agriculture, forestry and farm diversification, it outlines the kind of development appropriate in a rural context and special considerations to be brought to bear in designated areas such as national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Two important policies, which are new to this PPS are:

- Government wishes to see the removal of all local countryside designations; and
- Removes the policy exception to build high quality houses to be built in the countryside.

PPG8 Telecommunications

This PPG gives guidance on planning for telecommunications development, including radio masts and towers, antennas of all kinds, radio equipment housing, public call boxes, cabinets, polls and overhead wires.

The PPG sets out planning policies on telecommunications, including: environmental considerations, such as mast and site sharing and design issues, health considerations and public concern; and pre-application discussions and public consultation.

PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

Published in August 2005, PPS9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation) replaces PPG9 (Nature Conservation) and sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system. Policies include those relating to internationally important sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, regional and local sites, ancient woodlands, natural habitats, previously developed land, biodiversity within developments and species protection. These policies complement, but do not replace or override, other national planning policies and should be read in conjunction with other relevant statements of national planning policy. PPS9 is accompanied by a good practice guide and Circular 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation: Statutory Obligations and their Impact with the Planning System.

PPS10 Planning for Sustainable Waste Management

This Planning Policy Statement replaces Planning Policy Guidance Note 10 (Planning and Waste Management) published in 1999 and forms part of the national waste management plan for the UK.

The policies in this PPS should be taken into account by, waste planning authorities in discharging their responsibilities, regional planning bodies in the preparation of regional spatial strategies, the Mayor of London in relation to the Spatial Development Strategy in London, and local planning authorities in the preparation of local development documents. Planning has an important role in delivering sustainable waste management:

- through the development of appropriate strategies for growth, regeneration and the prudent use of resources; and,
- by providing sufficient opportunities for new waste management facilities of the right type, in the right place and at the right time.

Policies contained within PPS10 may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications. These policies complement other national planning policies and should be read in conjunction with Government policies for sustainable waste management, in particular those set out in the National Waste Strategy 3. A companion guide provides practice guidance on the implementation of the policies set out in this PPS.

PPS11 Regional Spatial Strategies

This Statement replaces Planning Policy Guidance note 11 - Regional Planning

This policy statement sets out the procedural policy on the nature of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) and focuses on procedural policy, on what 'should' happen in preparing revisions to them and explains how this relates to the Act and associated regulations.

The RSS should provide a broad development strategy for the region for a fifteen to twenty year period. The following matters should be taken into account:

- identification of the scale and distribution of provision for new housing;
- priorities for the environment, such as countryside and biodiversity protection; and
- transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals extraction and waste treatment and disposal.

PPS12 Local Development Frameworks

Again, this guidance is being revised and the new guidance will take the form of a Planning Policy Statement PPS12 – Local Development Frameworks. Planning functions at county level, i.e. the County Structure Plan, will be abolished and at the local level, Local Plans will also be phased out. The new system for strategic and local planning will now result in a development plan will consist of:

- Regional spatial strategies prepared by regional planning bodies or, in London the spatial development strategy prepared by the Mayor of London; and
- Development plan documents prepared by district councils, unitary authorities, broads authority, national park authorities, and in the case of minerals and waste development plan documents only, prepared by county councils.

PPS12 sets out the Government's policy on the preparation of the local development documents that will comprise the local development framework. The local development framework is effectively a 'portfolio' of local development documents that collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area.

The LDF will comprise development plan documents, which will form part of the statutory development plan, and supplementary planning documents. Where County Councils have prepared minerals and waste local development documents, these will be contained within a minerals and waste development framework. The preparation of local development documents aims to be a participatory process, the scope of which will be set out in statements of community involvement.

PPG13 Transport

This PPG's objectives are to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level and to promote more sustainable transport choices both for carrying people and for moving freight.

It also aims to promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling and to reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

To deliver these objectives, the guidance says that local planning authorities should actively manage the pattern of urban growth, locate facilities to improve accessibility on foot and cycle, accommodate housing principally within urban areas and recognise that provision for movement by walking, cycling and public transport are important but may be less achievable in some rural areas.

PPG14 Development on Unstable Land

This PPG explains briefly the effects of land instability on development and land use. The responsibilities of the various parties to development are considered and the need for instability to be taken into account in the planning process is emphasised.

Methods of doing this through development plans and development control are outlined. The role of expert advice is highlighted and various causes of instability are explained and sources of information are given.

Separately published Annexes on Landslides and planning and Subsidence and planning develop this advice with specific reference to those areas and include background information and good practice guidance on identification and assessment of these problems and how they are can be dealt with in the planning system

PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment

This PPG lays out government policies for the identification and protection of historic buildings, conservation areas, and other elements of the historic environment. It explains the role of the planning system in their protection.

The frequently close link between controls over 'listed' buildings and conservation areas and development control decisions means that development and conservation generally need to be considered together. Part One of the PPG deals with those aspects of conservation policy which interact most directly with the planning system.

These include matters of economic prosperity, visual impact, building alterations, traffic and affect on the character of conservation areas. Part Two addresses the identification and recording of the historic environment including listing procedures, upkeep and repairs and church buildings.

PPG16 Archaeology and Planning

This PPG sets out the government's policy on archaeological remains on land and how they should be preserved or recorded both in an urban setting and in the countryside.

It gives advice on the handling of archaeological remains and discoveries through the development plan and development control systems, including the weight to be given to them in planning decisions and planning conditions.

Explanation is given of the importance of archaeology and of procedures in the event of archaeological remains being discovered during development.

PPG17 Sport and Recreation

This PPG describes the role of the planning system in assessing opportunities and needs for sport and recreation provision and safeguarding open space which has recreational value.

The guidance observes that it is part of the function of the planning system to ensure that through the preparation of development plans adequate land and water resources are allocated for organised sport and informal recreation.

It says that local planning authorities should take account of the community's need for recreational space, having regard to current levels of provision and deficiencies and resisting pressures for development of open space which conflict with the wider public interest.

It discusses the role of all levels of plan, planning agreements, and the use of local authority land and compulsory purchase powers. It discusses provision in urban areas, the urban fringe, the Green Belts, and the countryside and particular sports including football stadia, air sports, water sports and golf.

This guidance was revised in 2002 with an emphasis that local authorities should rigorously ensure that communities' needs for open space, playing fields and sports and recreational facilities are met. New legislation is also to be put in place to protect smaller playing fields. The changes also bring down the size threshold upon which Sport England must be consulted when a planning application for development is submitted from 0.4ha to 0.2ha (full to half a football pitch) - a move aimed at boosting grassroots sport in schools and clubs.

PPG18 Enforcing Planning Control

This PPG introduces new and improved enforcement powers given to local planning authorities (LPAs) by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991. The note outlines the general approach to enforcement, including the primary responsibility of LPAs in the matter and the decisive issue of whether a breach of planning control would unacceptably affect public amenity or the existing use of land and buildings meriting protection in the public interest.

Trivial or technical breaches causing no harm should not attract enforcement action, it says, but negotiations over remedial action should not delay enforcement where it is appropriate.

Innovations include the power to issue a 'planning contravention notice' requiring information about land use, a 'breach of condition notice' procedure, the ability to seek a court injunction to restrain any breach and the power to serve a 'stop notice' to prevent the use of land as a caravan site.

There are also increased powers of entry on to land for council officials to obtain information about breaches and higher penalties for enforcement offences.

PPG19 Outdoor Advertisement Control

This PPG explains that the main purpose of the advertisement control system is to help those involved in outdoor advertising to contribute positively to the appearance of an attractive environment in cities, towns and the countryside.

The advice covers pre-application discussions, deemed consent, exemptions from detailed control and temporary as well as permanent advertisements. The role of guidance on design is explained as are criteria for dealing with advertisement applications.

PPG20 Coastal Planning

This PPG covers the character of the coast, designated areas, heritage coasts and the international dimension.

It discusses types of coasts, policies for their conservation and development and policies covering risks of flooding, erosion and land instability, as well as coastal protection and defence.

It outlines policies for developments which may specifically require a coastal location, including tourism, recreation, mineral extraction, energy generation and waste water and sewage treatment plants.

PPG21 Tourism

This PPG outlines the economic significance of tourism and its economic impact. It explains how to deal with the topic in development plans and development control.

It discusses the impact of tourism, the nature of tourist activity and likely future trends, while showing what the planning system can do to cope with it. The use of planning powers to both regulate and facilitate tourism development is also dealt with, as is the role of regional tourist boards.

Locational factors in tourism development are discussed with emphasis on designated areas, historic towns and cities, seaside resorts and the countryside. Environmental factors, design problems and outdoor advertisements are also considered.

PPS22 Renewable Energy

This PPS aims to encourage further development of renewable energy resources. It states that all Regional Spatial strategies and local development documents should contain policies designed to promote and encourage the development of renewable energy resources. Planning authorities should set out the criteria that will be applied in assessing applications for planning permission for renewable energy projects.

The Regional Spatial Strategy should include the target for renewable energy capacity in the region, where appropriate this can be disaggregated into subregional targets.

Local planning authorities may include policies in local development documents which require a percentage of the energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy developments.

PPS23 Planning and Pollution Control

This document replaces 'PPG23 - Planning and Pollution Control'.

The policies in this statement and the advice in the accompanying Annexes (Annex 1: Pollution Control, Air and Water Quality and Annex 2: Development on Land Affected by Contamination) should be taken into account by Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs) and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in preparing Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) and Local Development Documents (LDDs) - referred to in this Statement as "development plans".

They are also material to decisions on individual planning applications. Where these policies are not reflected adequately in local development documents, or taken into account in relevant development control decisions, the First Secretary of State may use his powers of direction to seek changes to the documents or may intervene in the consideration of planning applications.

This PPS and its associated annexes carry equal weight. A third Annex on Planning and Light Pollution will be prepared for public consultation in due course.

PPG24 Planning and Noise

This PPG guides local authorities in England on the use of their planning powers to minimise the adverse impact of noise. It outlines the considerations to be taken into account in determining planning applications both for noise-sensitive developments and for those activities that generate noise.

It explains the concept of noise exposure categories for residential development and recommends appropriate levels for exposure to different sources of noise.

It also advises on the use of conditions to minimise the impact of noise. Six annexes contain noise exposure categories for dwellings, explain noise levels, give detailed guidance on the assessment of noise from different sources, gives examples of planning conditions, specify noise limits, and advise on insulation of buildings against external noise.

PPS25 Development and Flood Risk

The aims of PPS25 on development and flood risk are to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas at highest risk. Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in such areas, policy aims to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible, reducing flood risk overall.

Regional planning bodies (RPBs) and local planning authorities (LPAs) should prepare and implement planning strategies that help to deliver sustainable development by:

Appraising risk

- identifying land at risk and the degree of risk of flooding from river, sea and other sources in their areas;
- preparing Regional Flood Risk Appraisals (RFRAs) or Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs) as appropriate, as freestanding assessments that contribute to the Sustainability Appraisal of their plans;

Managing risk

- framing policies for the location of development which avoid flood risk to people and property where possible, and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change;
- only permitting development in areas of flood risk when there are no reasonably available sites in areas of lower flood risk and benefits of the development outweigh the risks from flooding;

Reducing risk

- safeguarding land from development that is required for current and future flood management eg conveyance and storage of flood water, and flood defences;
- reducing flood risk to and from new development through location, layout and design, incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SUDS);

- using opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding eg surface water management plans; making the most of the benefits of green infrastructure for flood storage, conveyance and SUDS; re-creating functional floodplain; and setting back defences;

Local planning authorities will adopt a partnership approach, working effectively with the Environment Agency, other operating authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that best use is made of their expertise and information so that plans are effective and decisions on planning applications can be delivered expeditiously; and ensuring spatial planning supports flood risk management policies and plans, River Basin Management Plans and emergency planning.

Regional Planning Guidance and Regional Spatial Strategies

In each region, Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs), in consultation with the Government Offices (GOs) and other regional stakeholders, are responsible for preparing draft RPG and the recently introduced RSS. It is intended that RSSs will eventually replace all RPG documents as part of the ongoing planning system reforms.

The draft RPG / RSS is then subject to public examination before being issued in final form, following public consultation, by the Secretary of State. Once approved by the Secretary of State, RPG / RSS provides the strategic framework within which each region's development plans and local transport plans are prepared.

It should provide a broad development strategy for the region over a fifteen to twenty year period. The RPG / RSS provides a regional land-use and transport context for the government's sustainable development policy and it should also provide the longer term planning framework for the Regional Development Agencies' strategies.

The GOs and more recently the RPBs check draft development plans in their area to make sure they accord with national and regional guidance.

RSS8 East Midlands

Following the enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) has become part of the statutory development plan and has been re-named as a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). RPG8 has therefore become RSS8.

The document provides a broad development strategy for the East Midlands up to 2026. It covers the scale and distribution of new housing, priorities for

the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals extraction, waste treatment and disposal.

The Strategy is divided into two parts:

Part 1: Regional Strategy

Part 2: Sub-Regional Strategies

The Regional Strategy comprises of a number of sections.

Section 1: Core Strategy

The Core Strategy sets the Regional Plan firmly within the framework of the Region's Integrated Regional Strategy and outlines 10 regional Core Objectives. These establish the context for the delivery of sustainable development in the Region.

Core Objectives

- a) To reduce social exclusion
- b) To protect and enhance the environmental quality of urban and rural settlements
- c) To improve the health of the Region's residents
- d) To improve economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness
- e) To improve accessibility to jobs, homes and services
- f) To protect and enhance the environment
- g) To achieve a 'step change' increase in the level of the Region's biodiversity
- h) To reduce the causes of climate change
- i) To reduce the impacts of climate change
- j) To minimise adverse environmental impacts of new development and promote optimum social and economic benefits

Section 2: Spatial Strategy

The Spatial Strategy is based on a revised approach to 'development form'. This provides the framework for meeting the Region's development needs in a way that promotes a more sustainable pattern of development.

The Spatial Strategy outlines regional priorities for both urban and rural communities. It defines the designations of Principal Urban Areas (PUA) and

Sub-Regional Centres (SRC), and outlines priorities for their development. The strategy also contains policies in respect of the Region's 5 sub-areas.

These are:

- Eastern Sub-area
- Northern Sub-area
- Peak Sub-area
- Southern Sub-area
- Three Cities Sub-area

Section 3: Topic Based Priorities

Included within this section are a number of focus areas for development including Housing, the Economy and Regeneration, Natural and Cultural Resources and the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). The section also includes an Implementation Framework.

The Sub-Regional Strategies Section comprises of:

MKSM Sub-Regional Strategy

Contains policies and proposals for sustainable growth in Northamptonshire as part of the MKSM Growth Area.

Three Cities Sub-Regional Strategy

Contains policies and proposals to create more sustainable patterns of development and movement within (and between) Derby, Leicester and Nottingham and their hinterlands, and to promote overall economic competitiveness. It also includes proposals to review of the Nottingham/Derby Green Belt.

Northern Sub-Regional Strategy

Contains policies and proposals to provide a clear vision for regeneration following the decline of the coal mining industry, and takes account of the delivery of the 'Northern Way' initiative.

Lincoln Area Sub-Regional Strategy

Contains policies and proposals to strengthen the regional role of Lincoln within its rural hinterland.

The RSS is currently in draft format having gone through a series of reviews and public consultations. It is the product of strong partnership working involving local authorities, business, environmental, voluntary and community groups. An 'Examination in Public' is due to start in May 2007 where proposed changes will be issued for a further round of public consultation before the final Regional Plan is adopted by the Secretary of State in early 2008.

RPG13 North West

This current RPG was issued in March 2003 and is currently the subject of a partial review. The Draft Revised RPG retains many significant elements of the of the current RPG which comprises:

The core development principles and a spatial development framework covering seven strategic themes:

- Economic growth and competitiveness
- Urban renaissance
- Enhancing the costal zone
- Enhancing rural areas
- Management of environmental resources
- Environmental quality
- Accessible region with integrated transport system

Other key strategy and policy areas include overall housing targets for the region, targets for brownfield development and affordable housing.

Proposed revisions involve the following areas:

- Transport
- Regional Park Resources
- Strategic Views along River Mersey
- Climate Change and Regional Guidance
- Waste Management
- Sustainable Energy

A full review of the RPG was commenced in July 2004 with a view to converting the RPG to an RSS under the new 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The draft North West RSS was submitted to Government in January 2006, a period of public consultation on the document is scheduled to begin in March 2006.