

CHAPTER 10

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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10.0 INTRODUCTION

10.0.1 Community facilities such as schools, libraries, public houses, post offices, health centres, village halls and public utilities all reflect the strength and vitality of settlements.

10.1 SCHOOLS

10.1.1 The provision of schools is the responsibility of the County Council and with falling school roles and an ageing population in the District it is unlikely that any new provision will be required during the Plan period.

10.2 HEALTH AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

10.2.1 The increasing number of elderly persons within the District will make demands upon health and community services. Such facilities are best located centrally with regard to the community they serve.

10.3 FACILITIES

10.3.1 There are no major developments for gas, water or telecommunications services incorporated within the Plan. However, recent legislation in the sewage and electricity industries may result in the necessity to improve sewage facilities and the establishment of renewable energy programmes within the District.

10.4 POLICY OBJECTIVES

10.4.1 The policies of the Plan will aim to achieve the following objectives:-

- ◆ To ensure that all new and existing residential areas are adequately served by educational and community facilities.
- ◆ To encourage and facilitate access by mobility impaired people to new buildings and areas.
- ◆ To ensure that all new developments are served by utilities.

- ◆ To encourage sustainable forms of energy production in appropriate locations.

10.5 LOCATION OF SCHOOL, HEALTH AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

10.5.1 Educational, Medical and Community facilities should be in locations accessible to the whole community. They should be in areas with good links to public transport and include or be close to sufficient car parking facilities. The Council recognise that existing buildings may be inappropriate to modern practices and incapable of extension or adaptation. It is recognised that suitable land or accommodation may be unavailable in the centre of settlements.

10.5.2 Where there is a deficiency of sport and recreational facilities, provision will be encouraged through new development or the dual use of public buildings.

POLICY C1

SCHOOLS, HEALTH CENTRES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES SHOULD BE LOCATED WITHIN OR ON THE EDGE OF SETTLEMENTS.

THEY SHOULD:

A) HAVE LEVEL ACCESS

B) BE WELL SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND BE ACCESSIBLE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT FROM THE CATCHMENT AREAS WHICH THEY SERVE.

A) NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTS OR LAND USE.

10.6 RETENTION OF PUBLIC HOUSES WITHIN SETTLEMENTS

10.6.1 The village pub is important to the community as a social facility, it can be used as a meeting place, or a place to put notices. The local village pub also offers tourist potential and is important in the local economy.

10.6.2 It is important that villages do not lose their last surviving public house because of its importance to the local community. The District Council will therefore resist the change of use from public house where it is the last such facility in the settlement to any other use other than a community based use.

POLICY C2

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE OF USE OF PUBLIC HOUSES, WHERE IT IS THE LAST REMAINING PUBLIC HOUSE IN A SETTLEMENT,

WILL NOT BE PERMITTED EXCEPT WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY THAT THE USE IS NO LONGER ECONOMICALLY VIABLE OR REQUIRED BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE USE IS NO LONGER VIABLE, THE APPLICANT SHOULD HAVE CARRIED OUT THE FOLLOWING;

- A) ADVERTISED THE PREMISES AS A GOING CONCERN, INVITING OFFERS AND HAVE BEEN POSTED WITH TWO SPECIALIST ESTATE AGENTS.**
- B) IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN ADVERTISED AT LEAST FOUR TIMES IN SUITABLE MEDIA CIRCULATING IN THE LOCALITY WITHIN THE LAST YEAR OVER AN EVEN SPACE OF TIME, AND NO REASONABLE OFFER HAS BEEN REFUSED.**

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS POLICY A SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE DEFINED AS ONE STATED UNDER POLICY H4.

10.7 DISABLED ACCESS

10.7.1 Buildings must be designed for all people including those with disabilities and those that suffer from reduced mobility. In order that the buildings used by the public are accessible to everyone, suitable access provision must be included within the scheme.

POLICY C3

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BUILDINGS, EXTENSIONS OR CONVERSION TO BE USED BY THE PUBLIC WILL NOT BE APPROVED UNLESS PROVISION FOR ACCESS BY DISABLED PERSONS HAS BEEN MADE.

10.8 SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS

10.8.1 The provisions of the EC Waste Water Treatment directive are now enshrined in UK legislation as part of the Urban Waste Water (England and Wales) Treatment Regulations 1994. The imposition of strict limits on discharge consent conditions into rivers may result in improved treatment facilities having to be provided at various treatment works in the District.

10.8.2 The provision of new or extended treatment works are a county matter, and any decision will be taken by Durham County Council where the District Council is merely a consultee.

10.8.3 Proposals for new, or improvement to existing, sewage works to meet appropriate standards of treatment will not normally be resisted, provided that the proposal does not have an adverse effect on neighbouring occupancies or the area as a whole.

POLICY C4

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW SEWAGE FACILITIES AND EXTENSION TO EXISTING TREATMENT PLANTS AND ADDITIONAL SEWAGE TREATMENT FACILITIES, TO ENSURE THAT APPROPRIATE STANDARDS OF SEWAGE TREATMENT MAY BE MET, WILL NOT BE RESISTED, PROVIDED THAT:

- A) THERE IS NO LOSS OF AMENITY TO NEIGHBOURING OCCUPANCIES, FROM INCREASES IN NOISE, SMELL OR TRAFFIC; AND**
- B) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY OR LANDSCAPE.**
- C) PROPOSALS CONFORM WITH POLICIES ENV5, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8 AND BENV11.**

10.9 RENEWABLE ENERGY

10.9.1 WINDFARMS

10.9.2 It is likely that in some locations within the District the average wind speed will be such that the generation of electricity from wind farms is likely to become a commercially viable proposition. Single wind turbines supplying specific uses are dealt with under the terms of Policy C6.

10.9.3 Higher wind speeds are often found on the higher areas of land. The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is typified by its open moorland appearance devoid of breaks in the landscape. Development of wind farms in the AONB would have a dramatic impact on that landscape and thereby affect an area of acknowledged importance. In the south-western part of the district, whether inside or outside the AONB, wind farms could also impact upon the landscape of the adjoining parts of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

10.9.4 Whilst the Council supports the concept of renewable energy, wind farms and their associated infrastructure will have an impact on the landscape and environment. The overall approach is to encourage the development of such renewable energy resources where economically viable and environmentally acceptable.

10.9.5 The need for and contents of an Environmental Impact Assessment for wind farms are governed by the T&CP (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England & Wales) Regulations 1999. Where an EIA is

required, this should include photo montages of the turbines from distances of 5, 10 and 20, KMS, a noise study, an ecology study, the likelihood of electromagnetic interference and shadow flicker. Full details of the grid connection, turbine colour and the service road together with details of any community benefit must also be submitted. The impact upon the performance of military radar installations and upon low flying activity should also be included where appropriate.

POLICY C5A

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WIND FARMS OF TWO OR MORE TURBINES WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE NORTH PENNINES AONB WHERE DEMONSTRATED TO BE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST, HAVING REGARD TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE IMPACT, NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT IN TERMS OF NATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND THE IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND THE COST OF AND SCOPE FOR DEVELOPING ELSEWHERE OUTSIDE THE AONB OR MEETING THE NEED IN SOME OTHER WAY, AND WHERE SPECIFICALLY:

- a. THERE WOULD NOT BE UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO THE AMENITY OF NEARBY RESIDENTIAL OCCUPIERS BY REASON OF NOISE EMISSION, VISUAL DOMINANCE, SHADOW FLICKER OR REFLECTED LIGHT; AND**
- b. THE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING SERVICING ROADS, ANY BUILDINGS AND ALL TRANSMISSION LINES BETWEEN THE DEVELOPMENT AND POINT OF CONNECTION TO THE GRID WOULD NOT UNACCEPTABLY HARM THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; AND**
- c. THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT UNACCEPTABLY HARM THE LANDSCAPE OF THE DESIGNATED AREA, NOR UNREASONABLY DAMAGE THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF AN ADJACENT PART OF THE YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK; AND**
- d. THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SITE HAS BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR THE LOCALITY; AND**
- e. THERE WOULD NOT BE UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO WILDLIFE; AND**
- f. THERE WOULD NOT BE UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO AN AREA OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE; AND**
- g. THE TURBINES WOULD NOT CAUSE UNREASONABLE HARM TO THE PERFORMANCE OF MILITARY RADAR OR HAZARD TO MILITARY LOW FLYING OPERATIONS.**

PROPOSALS SHOULD INCLUDE PROVISIONS THAT THE TURBINES ARE PAINTED IN A SUITABLE COLOUR, THAT ANY ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS ARE CONSTRUCTED IN MATERIALS APPROPRIATE TO THE LOCALITY, AND THAT ANY TRANSMISSION LINES BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL TURBINES AND ANY ASSOCIATED TRANSFORMER

BUILDING ARE LOCATED UNDERGROUND. PROPOSALS SHOULD CONFORM WITH POLICIES GD1, ENV5 ENV6, ENV7, ENV8, AND BENV11

POLICY C5B

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WIND FARMS OF TWO OR MORE TURBINES WILL BE PERMITTED OUTSIDE THE NORTH PENNINES AONB WHERE:

- a. THERE WOULD NOT BE UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO THE AMENITY OF NEARBY RESIDENTIAL OCCUPIERS BY REASON OF NOISE EMISSION, VISUAL DOMINANCE, SHADOW FLICKER OR REFLECTED LIGHT; AND**
- b. THE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING SERVICING ROADS, ANY BUILDINGS AND ALL TRANSMISSION LINES BETWEEN THE DEVELOPMENT AND POINT OF CONNECTION TO THE GRID WOULD NOT UNACCEPTABLY HARM THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; AND**
- c. THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT UNACCEPTABLY HARM THE LANDSCAPE OF THE AREA, NOR UNREASONABLY DAMAGE THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF ADJACENT LAND FALLING WITHIN THE NORTH PENNINES AONB AND/OR YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK; AND**
- d. THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SITE HAS BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR THE LOCALITY; AND**
- e. THERE WOULD NOT BE UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO WILDLIFE; AND**
- f. THERE WOULD NOT BE UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO AN AREA OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE; AND**
- g. THE TURBINES WOULD NOT CAUSE UNREASONABLE HARM TO THE PERFORMANCE OF MILITARY RADAR OR HAZARD TO MILITARY LOW FLYING OPERATIONS.**

PROPOSALS SHOULD INCLUDE PROVISIONS THAT THE TURBINES ARE PAINTED IN A SUITABLE COLOUR, THAT ANY ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS ARE CONSTRUCTED IN MATERIALS APPROPRIATE TO THE LOCALITY, AND THAT ANY TRANSMISSION LINES BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL TURBINES AND ANY ASSOCIATED TRANSFORMER BUILDING ARE LOCATED UNDERGROUND. PROPOSALS SHOULD CONFORM WITH POLICIES GD1, ENV5, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8, AND BENV11.

10.9.7 OTHER FORMS OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

10.9.8 The reduction in emissions from the burning of fossil fuels is important for the reduction of pollution and global warming. Alternative sources of renewable energy are important in order to achieve this goal. The use of energy generated from renewable resources, is expected to increase during the plan period. Developments such as those associated with solar power and hydro power may have little impact on amenity.

10.9.9 Whilst recognising the importance of renewable energy sources, proposals may be intrusive in the landscape, and adversely affect neighbouring residents or wildlife. Any application for such an installation should be accompanied by an Environmental Assessment indicating its likely effect on neighbouring residents, flora, fauna, soil, water, air, climate and the landscape, including areas of archaeological interest.

10.9.10 Proposals for one wind turbine to serve an individual user or group of users will be considered under the following policy.

POLICY C6

PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES, INCLUDING SINGLE WIND TURBINES, WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THEY DO NOT RESULT IN UNACCEPTABLE HARM TO:

- A. THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA; AND**
- B. THE AMENITY OF OCCUPANTS OF NEARBY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY; AND**
- C. THE ECOLOGY OF THE AREA; AND**
- D. AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE; AND**
- E. THE PERFORMANCE OF MILITARY RADAR OR MILITARY LOW FLYING OPERATIONS**

PROPOSALS SHOULD CONFORM TO POLICIES GD1, ENV5, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8, AND BENV11.

10.10 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

10.10.1 The Council recognises that the Government's general policy on telecommunications is to facilitate the growth of new and existing systems whilst being fully committed to environmental objectives, including policies for the protection of the countryside, in particular Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special

Scientific Interest (SSSI) and areas and buildings of architectural or historic importance. Due to operational requirements such developments often require elevated hill-top locations. The Council when faced with an application, will attempt to ensure that prominent and intrusive locations are resisted especially within the AONB and AHLV.

10.10.2 The growth of terrestrial satellite telecommunications systems across all areas of human activity have been manifested in large scale developments such as supporting towers for antennae and relatively small scale but proliferating installations, mainly satellite dishes. The express requirement to create fail safe telecommunications systems, based upon national east coast and west coast loops, has resulted in the District being identified as a strategic location for towers. Wherever possible the District Council has encouraged operators to share masts and towers.

POLICY C7

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE ERECTION OF TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT WILL BE APPROVED PROVIDED THAT:

- A) IT IS LOCATED AT AN EXISTING MAST SITE; OR**
- B) IT IS SITED AND DESIGNED TO MINIMISE ITS IMPACT ON A BUILDING, STRUCTURE AND/OR THE AREA AS A WHOLE; AND**
- C) THE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT UNACCEPTABLY HARM THE LANDSCAPE OF THE AREA; AND**
- D) PROPOSALS CONFORM WITH POLICIES ENV5, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8. AND BENV11.**

IN THE NORTH PENNINES AONB PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED WHERE THE APPLICANT CAN SHOW THAT THE PROPOSAL IS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST AS PART OF A NATIONAL NETWORK, AND THAT THERE IS NO SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE SITE.

IN THE AHLV THE PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED WHERE THE APPLICANT CAN SHOW THAT THERE ARE NO SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE SITES.

TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT WHICH BECOMES REDUNDANT WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE REMOVED FROM ITS SITE WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF BECOMING REDUNDANT, AND THE SITE RESTORED TO ITS ORIGINAL CONDITION.

10.10.3 Individual satellite dishes on buildings are now very much a part of life and as such there are specific permitted development rights to allow siting on dwellings. The proliferation of these dishes can however have an adverse effect on the amenity of areas, this especially so in Conservation Areas. Individual satellite dishes should therefore be sited in locations to minimise the impact on buildings or an area.

POLICY C8

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE ERECTION OF SATELLITE DISHES WILL BE APPROVED PROVIDED THAT:

- A) WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS AND THE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, NO ANTENNA SHALL BE LOCATED ON A WALL FRONTING ON TO A HIGHWAY UNLESS ALL OTHER LOCATIONS HAVE BEEN EXPLORED AND REJECTED AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE DISTRICT COUNCIL.**
- B) IN AREAS OTHER THAN CONSERVATION AREAS AND THE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY, IT WILL RARELY BE NECESSARY TO SITE ANTENNA ON A WALL FRONTING ON TO A HIGHWAY AND ALL APPLICANTS MUST ENSURE THAT AN ANTENNA IS SITED, SO FAR AS IS PRACTICABLE, SO AS TO REDUCE / MINIMISE ITS EFFECT ON THE BUILDING.**
- C) ALL ANTENNAS SHOULD BE PAINTED A COLOUR TO MATCH THE WALLING OF THE BUILDING TO WHICH THEY ARE ATTACHED UNLESS A TRANSPARENT OR MESH DISH IS PROPOSED.**
- D) IN RELATION TO ALL NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS OF MORE THAN FIVE DWELLING UNITS, PROVISIONS SHALL BE MADE FOR A COMMUNAL ANTENNA TO SERVE THE WHOLE DEVELOPMENT AND THAT ANTENNA SHALL BE INSTALLED AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT TOGETHER WITH CABLING LINKS TO ENABLE RECEPTION BY ALL DWELLINGS IMMEDIATELY UPON OCCUPANCY.**

10.11 CEMETERIES

10.11.1 In most locations existing cemeteries can be extended into adjoining fields without creating any disturbance or adverse affects on environmental considerations. Where new locations are required, Department of Environment guidance advises that cemeteries should be located close to centres of population and places of worship and should not be in locations where surface and ground water can be polluted. The Local Authority should maintain a level of burial space which allows a supply for up to 30 years. Barnard Castle cemetery is approaching its capacity and there is therefore a

need to look at the short term and long term requirements for the settlement and District as a whole.

- 10.11.2 Existing cemetery capacity including the allotment land is now under 10 years in Barnard Castle. As guidance states local authorities should maintain supply of 30 years the Plan needs to identify further cemetery provision. After examining the town and its various topographical constraints, land at Newgate was identified as the most appropriate site for an allocation for cemetery provision. Because of the sensitive nature of the site a design brief/ management plan will need to be produced to protect the character of the area and to ensure the access for adjoining land uses. The use of the land could be phased allowing the continuing farming of the land up until the land was required.

POLICY C9

THE EXTENSION OF EXISTING CEMETERIES INTO ADJOINING FIELDS WILL BE ALLOWED WHERE IT WILL NOT RESULT IN POLLUTION OF GROUND AND/OR SURFACE WATERS, AND DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH OTHER POLICIES OF THE PLAN.

POLICY C10

PROVISION WILL BE MADE IN BARNARD CASTLE FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE CEMETERY INTO THE ADJOINING ALLOTMENTS. FOR THE LONGER TERM PROVISION, LAND ADJACENT TO SPRING LODGE, NEWGATE (AS SHOWN ON INSET MAP 1) WILL BE ALLOCATED FOR USE AS A CEMETERY.