



Northumberland National Park Authority

Local Development Framework

**Local Development
Scheme
2009 - 2012**

October 2009

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1 Introduction

The Planning System

The planning system regulates the development and the use of land in the public interest. In the early 1990s the Government introduced the concept of the “plan-led” planning system. It became compulsory for planning authorities to prepare development plans and introduced the requirement that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced major changes to the planning system with the aim of making the plan preparation process fairer and more flexible. One of the changes was the requirement for Local Planning Authorities to prepare a new style development plan called a Local Development Framework (LDF).

This document, the Local Development Scheme outlines how the Northumberland National Park Authority will develop the LDF over the next three years. It tells the public which documents the Authority is proposing to prepare and when, and at what stage they can be involved in the plan making process.

2. The Northumberland National Park Local Development Framework

Background

The LDF essentially is a set of documents which will guide new development in the National Park. It forms a part of a hierarchy of planning policy documents, taking into account national planning policy and guidance and being in general conformity with regional planning policy¹. Policies within the LDF will also need to have clear links with the National Park Management Plan².

LDF Documents

A LDF contains five types of documents:

- The **Statement of Community Involvement** sets out how the Authority will achieve continuous community involvement in the plan-making process and in development control process.
- Documents which contain policies are known as **Development Plan Documents**. As they contain policies, they are subject to significant community consultation and testing by an Independent Inspector;
- Documents which expand on policies and provide more detail, are known as **Supplementary Planning Documents**. They do not require examination by an Independent Inspector, but are subject to community involvement. These documents will be material considerations in the determination of planning applications;
- All Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents are subject to a **Sustainability Appraisal** which tests the environmental, social, and economic effects of policies to ensure sustainability;
- Project management documents – this document, the **Local Development Scheme** and **Annual Monitoring Reports**. Annual Monitoring Reports assess the extent to which development plan policies are being successfully implemented, monitors the timetable for the preparation of the LDF, and identifies areas where new or revised policies may be required; and

Figure 1 illustrates the documents that form the Northumberland National Park LDF. A profile of each of the LDF documents, their subject matter, status, review arrangements, and the periods of public participation is provided in Appendix A.

Statement of Community Involvement

The current SCI was adopted by the Authority in May 2006. The SCI will be revised to include lessons learnt during consultations on the Core Strategy and Management Plan. In addition to setting out the process and methods for involving the community in the planning process the revised SCI will provide a consultation framework for all Northumberland National Park Authority policies.

Development Plan Documents:

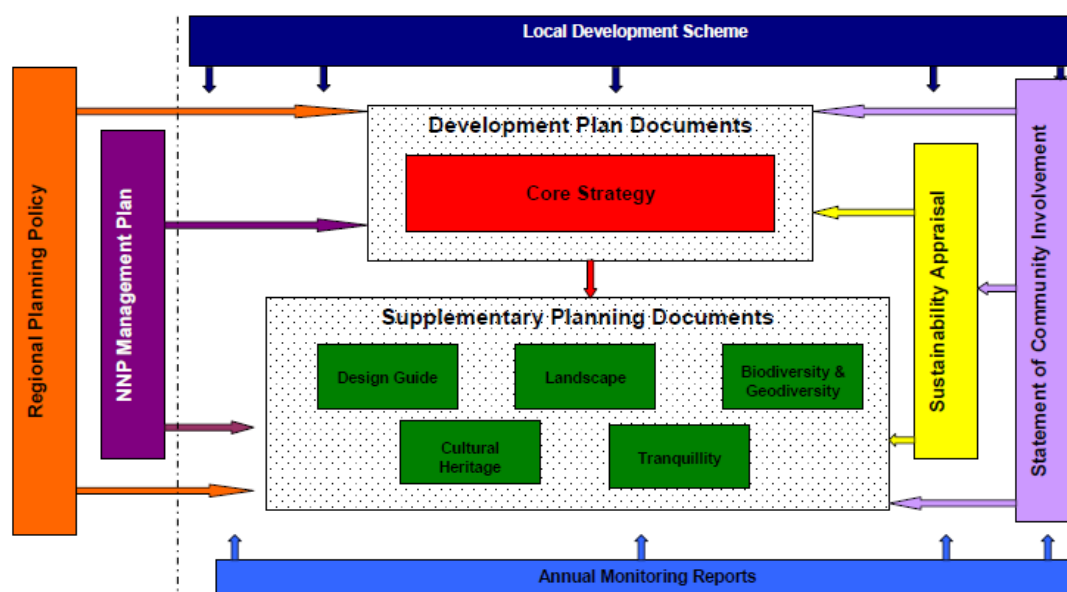
The Northumberland National Park LDF contains one Development Plan Document: The Core Strategy and Development Policies. This is accompanied by a Proposals Map. The **Core Strategy and Development Policies** was adopted by the National

¹ RSS can be viewed at http://www.gos.gov.uk/gone/planning/regional_planning/

² NNP Management Plan <http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/nationalparkmanagementplan>

Park Authority in March 2009³. It sets out the overall strategy for future development in the National Park and includes detailed policies which will be used to assess planning applications. It sets out where development shall occur and provides guidance on the level and type of development to be permitted. It defines the settlement strategy for the area. It also includes a statement of significance, to set out the special qualities of the area, and considers the provision of community facilities and transport. The Core Strategy and Development Policies document forms a key tool in the implementation of the National Park Management Plan, whilst drawing upon other National Park strategies. All other Development Plan Documents have to be in conformity with the Core Strategy and Development Policies document.

Figure1: Northumberland National Park Local Development Framework



Supplementary Planning Documents:

The Northumberland National Park LDF currently contains three Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs); Building Design Guide, Otterburn Camp and the Historic Village Atlas. Following the adoption of the Core Strategy and Development Policies Document in March 2009 the current set of SPDs will require revision or deletion as they refer to policies within the old Development Plan. It is proposed to revise the current Building Design Guide SPD, delete the Otterburn Camp SPD and consolidate the information within the Historic Village Atlas into a new SPD. The National Park LDF will therefore contain five SPDs:

Design Guide – The adopted Building Design Guide⁴ is a very popular SPD and is well used by planning applicants and Planning Officers. However advances in building technology, changes to Permitted Development Rights and shortfalls identified through its use, it is necessary for the document to undergo a full revision. A review will also take account of changes to policy following adoption of the Core Strategy.

Landscape – This document will provide information on the landscape character of the Park relevant to the assessment of planning applications, establishing guidelines

³<http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/livingin/planning/planningpolicyandguidance/developmentplan/corestrategy.htm>

⁴<http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/livingin/planning/planningpolicyandguidance/developmentplan/buildingdesignguide.htm>

for particular types of development. The SPD will be based on the Northumberland National Park Landscape Character Assessment.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity – Extensive areas of the Park have been designated for their international importance for nature conservation and geological importance. Biodiversity is of particular importance in considering planning applications. Applicants are often required to provide Biodiversity Surveys, with mitigation measures being secured by condition. It is therefore considered that additional guidance should be provided in the form of an SPD clearly linked to these special qualities of the Park as outlined in the Core Strategy.

Cultural Heritage – One of the National Park's special qualities is its historical legacy. This SPD will provide guidance on how the planning process can conserve and enhance both the physical remains left to us by past societies and the living inheritance of local people. The information contained within the adopted Historic Village Atlas SPD⁵ will be embedded within this new SPD.

Tranquillity - Tranquillity, freedom from noise and visual disturbance, is a key component of experiencing the National Park. It is an emotional and spiritual quality which is difficult to assess and monitor by standard methods however this SPD will build upon the methodology produced by the Campaign to Protect Rural England and offer guidance as to how Tranquillity can be conserved and enhanced through the planning process.

Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment:

The sustainability appraisal process provides key evidence base for the LDF and informs the evaluation of different policy options. It fully incorporates the requirements of the European Directorate on Strategic Environmental Assessment. It provides a detailed assessment of the environmental, economic, and social, effects of proposed plans and policies.

The Habitats Directive requires that an Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken on all emerging Development Plan Documents and SPDs. This is a mechanism for providing protection of nature conservation sites of European importance. These are sites which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species.

As part of the consultation on each Development Plan Document and SPD the National Park Authority will also consult on the Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment. These assessments will be proportionate to the document and will not repeat the appraisal of higher level policy.

Annual Monitoring Reports:

The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) assesses the extent to which policies are being successfully implemented, monitors the timetable for the preparation of the LDF, and identifies areas where new or revised policies or Supplementary Planning Documents may be required. Since 2005 the Authority has produced three AMRs. In 2007 the Authority took the decision to prepare a State of the Park Report which incorporates the AMR⁶.

⁵<http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/livingin/planning/planningpolicyandguidance/developmentplan/localdevelopmentframework/historicvillagealtasspd.htm>

⁶<http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/livingin/planning/planningpolicyandguidance/developmentplan/annualmonitoringreports.htm>

Deletion of Documents Included within the Previous LDS

The previous LDS adopted by the National Park Authority in March 2007 also included a Land Allocations DPD, Area Action Plan for the Otterburn Training Area and a SPD for the Otterburn Camp.

Land Allocations DPD

The main purpose of the Land Allocations document was to define settlement envelopes for the 14 settlements identified in the Core Strategy. Public consultation on the Land Allocations Preferred Options Document, which took place between October and December 2007, highlighted strong opposition from local communities and other stakeholders to the proposal for defined settlement envelopes. Only a very small number of local residents considered envelopes to be a good approach and where there was support the main reason was to prevent further development.

Most residents and stakeholders were concerned that drawing envelopes too tightly would restrict development that may be needed in the future and drawing them too wide may encourage speculative development which is not actually needed by the local population.

As a result of the consultation responses the Authority decided this DPD was not required as the Core Strategy policies would be sufficient to enable the assessment of sites for development.

Area Action Plan for the Otterburn Training Area

The Otterburn Training Area covers 23,085 hectares in Northumberland, comprising 23% of the Northumberland National Park. Being in the sole ownership of the Ministry of Defence, the Area Action Plan offered the opportunity to proactively implement policies contained within the development plan.

Consultation on the draft Area Action Plan for the Otterburn Training Area in June 2008 highlighted that policies within the Core Strategy were sufficient to address future development on the Training Area. Therefore the Authority agreed not to progress with the production of the document.

Otterburn Camp SPD

In April 2007 the Authority adopted a Supplementary Planning Document to guide development on the Otterburn Camp. Since its adoption it has only been used in the consideration of one planning application, and this was for non military development. Following the adoption of the Core Strategy, the Authority considered that the policies within the Core Strategy and the Building Design Guide SPD provided adequate guidance to assess planning applications on the Camp, and there is no longer any need for this document.

3. Management and Resources

Project Management

The preparation of the Northumberland National Park LDF is led by the Forward Planning and Performance Manager, reporting to the Director of Policy and Resources. The LDF process is steered by the Local Development Framework Working Group, which comprises 6 Members of the National Park Authority and 3 Officers, with other Members and Officers invited to take part as necessary. Meetings of the Working Group are organised around the key milestones set out within this document, with members discussing draft documents and making recommendations to National Park Authority Meetings.

Staff Resources

The National Park Authority is committed to the delivery of the LDF. The key staff resource comprises the Forward Planning and Performance Manager; 50% of a Planning Officer; and 50% of a Policy Officer. External consultants will be commissioned where the need for specialist services or additional capacity are identified. Specialist staff from other teams within the Authority will contribute to the preparation of LDF particularly the Landscape and Recreation Team, Development Control Team, and the Visitor Development Team. The Area Operations Directorate will provide a crucial link in communicating the LDF to communities.

Financial Resources

Northumberland National Park has historically low numbers of planning applications and associated fees; therefore it is necessary to identify alternative funding streams for the work associated with this LDS. Previously a significant proportion of the funding was Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. However the new allocation criteria of the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant will see this source of income reduce. Funding for the delivery of this LDS is identified in the Northumberland National Park Authority's 3 year financial plan. The Authority endeavours to achieve a balanced budget over the medium-term (3-years). Efficiency and effectiveness savings targets (including generation of additional income) are an integral part of this process.

Risk Assessment

The timetable for the production of the LDF has been prepared on a realistic basis and takes into account the other competing demands on the staffing and financial resources available. It is however recognised that there are a number of factors that could adversely impact on the delivery of the Local Development Scheme, including:

- Staff recruitment and retention – there is currently a high demand for planning staff, nationally and regionally which could result in recruitment difficulties;
- National and Regional Planning Policy – changes in legislation and guidance could require background work already completed to be revised;
- Funding – cuts in core funding from the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs coupled with changes in the allocation of Housing and

Planning Delivery Grant could result in the Authority having less money available to fund the production of Local Development Documents;

- Capacity of Statutory Consultees, including the Planning Inspectorate – the delivery of the LDF within the timetable specified relies on the capacity of others to deliver their input to the process. This is not something that is within the remit of the National Park Authority but it could have implications on the timetable.

Evidence Base

A key feature of the LDF is that policies are based on reliable, relevant and up-to-date information. The Northumberland National Park State of the Park Report provides the key evidence base for the LDF. It establishes a detailed picture of the current situation, identifies trends and issues for a range of topics, and defines indicators used to monitor change over time. The State of the Park Report is prepared annually and provides the evidence base for the key policy documents for the National Park produced by the National Park Authority and partners.

The key studies that have informed the preparation of the LDF are:

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Landscape Character Appraisal
- Housing Needs Survey
- Local Facilities Survey
- Business Needs Survey
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Appropriate Assessment

Monitoring

Each year the State of the Park Report (combined with AMR) will assess the progress on the delivery of the key milestones within the LDS and review the effectiveness of LDF policies. In assessing policy performance the AMT will identify any necessary amendments to Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. It will also identify any areas where further research is required.

Appendix A LDF Document Profiles

Table 1

Title: STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	
Purpose	Sets out the standards and approach to engaging the community in the production of LDF documents and other National Park Authority Policies. It also sets out consultation procedures for all planning applications
Status	Non Development Plan Local Development Document
Conformity	The SCI sets out how the Authority intends to meet the consultation requirements prescribed by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regulations 2004 and the Amendment Regulations of 2008 and 2009. It also takes account of the aims and objectives of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan and the Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy. Consultation for all Local Development Documents must conform with the SCI.
Geographical Coverage	Whole of the Northumberland National Park
MILESTONES	
Assess effectiveness of adopted SCI	July – September 2009
Formal notification of production	October 2009
Initial consultation on issues	October – November 2009
Preparation of consultation draft SCI	October 2009 – March 2010
Consultation on draft SCI	May 2010
Amendments to SCI	June – August 2010
Adoption and publication	September 2010
RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT	
Led by	Policy Officer (Forward Planning)
Management	LDF Working Group, supervised by Forward Planning and Performance Manager
Resources required	LDF Working Group plus key staff from NNPA Area Operations Directorate and Communication staff. Costs of printing, publicising, and public participation
Community and stakeholder involvement	Public consultation on Draft SCI.
POST PRODUCTION	
Monitoring and Review	Full review five years post adoption – the document will be kept under review as part of the AMR process and amended if necessary should significant changes occur in the techniques for engagement of as a result of legislative/planning process changes.

Table 2

Title: CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES	
Purpose	Sets out the overall spatial planning strategy for Northumberland National Park to 2024. Provides the principles and policies that guide the development and use of land. Determines the broad location of new housing, employment development and environmental protection measures. Sets out national and regional policy objectives in the local context.
Status	Development Plan Document
Conformity	In general conformity with national planning policy and guidance, regional planning policy, the National Park Management Plan and the Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy.
Geographical Coverage	Whole of Northumberland National Park
MILESTONES	
The Core Strategy was adopted in March 2009. It is now subject to monitoring (see below).	
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Led by	Forward Planning and Performance Manager
Management	LDF Working Group
Evidence base	Includes: Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Landscape Character Appraisal, Housing Needs Survey, Local Facilities Survey, Business Needs Survey, Sustainability Appraisal, Appropriate Assessment
Resources required	Produced by the Forward Planning and Performance Team, steered by the LDF Working Group. Input will also be required from the other teams within the Authority, particularly the specialist policy officers. Area Operations Directorate to assist with community engagement. Corporate Services to assist with communications and administration. Costs of printing, publicising, and public participation. Northumberland County Council to be employed to undertake Sustainability Appraisal.
Community and stakeholder involvement	In accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement
POST PRODUCTION	
Monitoring and Review	Full review five years post adoption. Subject to monitoring through the AMR process. Review to be undertaken as necessary as a result of significant changes in local circumstances or revision of national or regional planning policy.

Table 3

Title: BUILDING DESIGN GUIDE SPD	
Purpose	Provide design guidance for the area to improve the quality of the built environment, to contribute to safeguarding the special qualities of the area and to promote sustainable construction. The Building Design Guide was adopted by the Authority in November 2006 and is now in need of revision.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Conformity	Core Strategy and Development Policies 1 and 3.
Geographical Coverage	Whole of Northumberland National Park
MILESTONES	
Assess effectiveness of adopted BDG	August - September 2009
Preparation of draft SPD, including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	October 2009 – August 2010
Consultation on draft SPD and sustainability appraisal	November – December 2010
Amendments to SPD following consultation including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	January – May 2011
Adoption and publication of SPD	Jun 2011
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Led by	Planning Officer
Management	Forward Planning and Performance Manager
Evidence required	Best practice in sustainable rural development, energy efficiency and of how to accommodate successfully contemporary design into a protected area.
Resources required	Produced by the Forward Planning and Performance Team, steered by the LDF Working Group. Input will also be required from the other teams within the Authority, particularly specialist officers. Area Operations Directorate to assist with community engagement. Corporate Services to assist with communications and administration. Costs of printing, publicising, and public participation. Northumberland County Council contracted to undertake Sustainability Appraisal.
Community and stakeholder involvement	In accordance with the SCI
POST PRODUCTION	
Monitoring and Review	The AMR will assess the take up and effectiveness of the SPD.

Table 4

Title: LANDSCAPE SPD	
Purpose	To provide information on the landscape character of the Park relevant to the assessment of planning applications. The SPD will be based on the Northumberland National Park Landscape Character Assessment and will establish guidelines for particular types of development.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Conformity	Core Strategy and Development Policy 20
Geographical Coverage	Whole of Northumberland National Park
MILESTONES	
Preparation of draft SPD, including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	October 2009 – August 2010
Consultation on draft SPD and sustainability appraisal	November – December 2010
Amendments to SPD following consultation including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	January – May 2011
Adoption and publication of SPD	Jun 2011
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Led by	Forward Planning and Performance Manager
Management	Forward Planning and Performance Manager
Evidence required	Landscape Character Appraisal.
Resources required	Steered by the LDF Working Group. Input will be required from the other teams within the Authority, particularly the Landscape and Recreation Team. Area Operations Directorate to assist with community engagement. Corporate Services to assist with communications and administration. Costs of printing, publicising, public participation. Northumberland County Council to undertake Sustainability Appraisal.
Community and stakeholder involvement	In accordance with the SCI
POST PRODUCTION	
Monitoring and Review	The AMR will assess the take up and effectiveness of the SPD.

Table 5

Title: BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY SPD	
Purpose	To provide guidance on the requirements and opportunities for biodiversity and geodiveristy in development proposals.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Conformity	Core Strategy and Development Policy 17
Geographical Coverage	Whole of Northumberland National Park
MILESTONES	
Preparation of draft SPD, including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	April – November 2010
Consultation on draft SPD and sustainability appraisal	February – March 2011
Amendments to SPD following consultation including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	April – August 2011
Adoption and publication of SPD	September 2011
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Led by	Planning Officer
Management	Forward Planning and Performance Manager
Evidence required	Habitat Mapping; Biodiversity Action Plan; Geodiveristy Audit; and Planning Application statistics.
Resources required	Steered by the LDF Working Group. Input will also be required from the other teams across the Authority, particularly the Landscape and Recreation Team. Area Operations Directorate to assist with community engagement. Corporate Services to assist with communications and administration. Costs of printing, publicising, public participation. Northumberland County Council to undertake Sustainability Appraisal.
Community and stakeholder involvement	In accordance with the SCI
POST PRODUCTION	
Monitoring and Review	The AMR will assess the take up and effectiveness of the SPD.

Table 6

Title: CULTURAL HERITAGE SPD	
Purpose	Provide guidance on how the planning process can conserve and enhance both the physical remains left to us by past societies and the living inheritance of local people. The information contained within the adopted Historic Village Atlas SPD will be embedded within this new SPD.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Conformity	Core Strategy and Development Policy 18
Geographical Coverage	Whole of Northumberland National Park
MILESTONES	
Preparation of draft SPD, including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	April – November 2010
Consultation on draft SPD and sustainability appraisal	February – March 2011
Amendments to SPD following consultation including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	April – August 2011
Adoption and publication of SPD	September 2011
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Led by	Planning Officer
Management	Forward Planning and Performance Manager
Evidence required	Tranquillity Mapping; CPRE Methodology; Visitor Survey
Resources required	Steered by the LDF Working Group. Input will also be required from the other teams within the Authority, particularly the Ecologist. Area Operations Directorate to assist with community engagement. Corporate Services to assist with communications and administration. Costs of printing, publicising, public participation. Northumberland County Council to undertake Sustainability Appraisal.
Community and stakeholder involvement	In accordance with the SCI
POST PRODUCTION	
Monitoring and Review	The AMR will assess the take up and effectiveness of the SPD.

Table 7

Title: TRANQUILLITY SPD	
Purpose	Provide guidance as to how Tranquillity can be conserved and enhanced through the planning process.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Conformity	Core Strategy and Development Policy 19
Geographical Coverage	Whole of Northumberland National Park
MILESTONES	
Preparation of draft SPD, including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	April – November 2010
Consultation on draft SPD and sustainability appraisal	February – March 2011
Amendments to SPD following consultation including targeted engagement and sustainability appraisal	April – August 2011
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Led by	Policy Officer
Management	Forward Planning and Performance Manager
Evidence required	Tranquillity Mapping; CPRE Methodology; Visitor Survey
Resources required	Steered by the LDF Working Group. Input will also be required from the other specialist officers within the Authority. Area Operations Directorate to assist with community engagement. Corporate Services to assist with communications and administration. Costs of printing, publicising, public participation. Northumberland County Council to undertake Sustainability Appraisal.
Community and stakeholder involvement	In accordance with the SCI
POST PRODUCTION	
Monitoring and Review	The AMR will assess the take up and effectiveness of the SPD.

Appendix B Schedule of Documents

Document title	Status	Conformity	Consultation		Consideration of Representations	Date for submission		Proposed date for adoption
Statement of Community Involvement	LDD	Town and Country Planning (Local Development) Regs 2004	Reg 26	Oct – Nov 09 May – Jun 10	Dec 09 – Feb 10 Jul – Aug 10	N/A		Sept 2010
Core Strategy and Development Policies	DPD	National and regional planning policy, National Park Management Plan, Sustainable Community Strategy	Reg 25	N/A	N/A	Reg 30	N/A	N/A
			Reg 27	N/A	N/A			
Building Design Guide SPD	SPD	Core Strategy and Development Policies 1 and 3.	Reg 17	Nov – Dec 10	Jan – May 11	N/A		Jun 2011
Landscape SPD	SPD	Core Strategy and Development Policy 20.	Reg 17	Nov – Dec 10	Jan – May 11	N/A		Jun 2011
Biodiversity & Geodiversity SPD	SPD	Core Strategy and Development Policy 17	Reg 17	Feb – Mar 11	Apr – Aug 11	N/A		Sept 2011
Cultural Heritage SPD	SPD	Core Strategy and Development Policy 18.	Reg 17	Feb – Mar 11	Apr – Aug 11	N/A		Sept 2011
Tranquillity SPD	SPD	Core Strategy and Development Policy 19	Reg 17	Feb – Mar 11	Apr – Aug 11	N/A		Sept 2011

Appendix C Local Development Framework Timetable

	2009				2010								2011								2012																			
	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
SCI							E						A																											
Core Strategy & Development Policies DPD																																								
Building Design Guide SPD													E										A																	
Landscape SPD																																								
Biodiversity & Geodiversity SPD																E												A												
Cultural Heritage SPD																E												A												
Tranquillity SPD																E												A												
State of the National Park/ AMR										E												E													E					

Document Preparation		Public Consultation		Endorsed by Authority	E
Adopted & Published	A	Monitoring			