
OVERVIEW OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Regeneration and Planning Portfolio :-
 - (a) **Conservation Review Group** – We gave consideration to the findings of the Conservation Review Group, which was established by the Environment Scrutiny Committee to investigate the existence of a Conservation Policy within the Borough. The report provided a useful assessment of the conservation issues facing the Council and indicated that there were problems caused by the loss of key staff in the Conservation Section and Environment Scrutiny will draw up an Action Plan in the future.
 - (b) **Maidendale Nature and Fishing Reserve, Geneva Wood, Brankin Moor and Rockwell Proposal** – We gave approval for the designation of Maidendale Nature and Fishing Reserve, Geneva Wood, Brankin Moor and Rockwell as statutory Local Nature Reserves. The four sites are currently being managed to Local Nature Reserve standards, for the benefit of biodiversity and recreation in partnership with North East Community Forests (Tees Forest), are well served by transport networks and rights of way and offer unique opportunities for the people of Darlington to visit areas of good quality, wildlife rich, green space close to where they live.
 - (c) **East Street Car Park** – We approved a proposal to bring the upper deck of East Street car park back into use for car parking to be managed by the Council and for funding to be sought to effect any necessary repairs.
 - (d) **Social Issues Map** - The November edition of the Social Issues Map was circulated to contacts throughout the Council and partner agencies. The latest edition looks includes 2004 GCSE results by ward.
 - (e) **Pedestrian Heart - Single Programme Application** - The Single Programme application for £3.259m has progressed through two key assessment stages, with one final stage to be negotiated. The application has now been approved by the Tees Valley Partnership and One NorthEast's internal Project Executive Panel, and will be presented to the Board of One NorthEast for a final decision at the end of November.
 - (f) **Faverdale Strategic Reserve Site** - An additional application for Single Programme resources has been submitted to the Tees Valley Partnership. If successful, funding will be available to carry out a number of studies such as an Environmental Impact Assessment and Archeological Study on the 120 hectare Strategic Reserve site adjacent to Faverdale East Business Park. Completion of these studies will ensure that

Darlington Borough Council and / or a developer, would be better prepared to submit a planning application should a development opportunity arise.

- (g) **Meet The Buyer - Samsung 3 November** - The Council together with the other Tees Valley authorities co-sponsored the Business Link "Meet The Buyer" event. Representatives from Economic Regeneration and the Policy Unit attended this event. This presented an opportunity for Tees Valley businesses to meet Procurement Officers from the public and private sector, 88 suppliers attended the event seeking to win business from 38 buyers. The Council also publicised the event via the website, and by e-mailing Darlington companies that had attended the "How to Do Business with the Council" event in March 2004.

Councillor David Lyonette
Regeneration and Planning Portfolio