



**Barnard Castle  
Strategic Vision  
Baseline Report**

**A Report for:**

Teesdale District  
Council

Durham County  
Council

County Durham  
Economic  
Partnership

One NorthEast

Teesdale  
Marketing

Teesdale LSP

**October 2006**

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# Contents

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	Page
<b>1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Barnard Castle Vision.....	4
1.2 The Baseline Audit .....	4
1.3 The Structure of the Report.....	5
<b>2 Community Profile .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Introduction to Barnard Castle.....	6
2.2 Population Profile .....	7
2.3 Population Trends and Forecasts .....	9
2.4 Patterns of Deprivation .....	11
2.5 Commuting Patterns / Travel to Work Data.....	13
2.6 Education, Skills and Qualifications .....	14
2.7 Health .....	16
2.8 Crime.....	17
2.9 Housing and Affordability .....	18
2.10 SWOT Analysis and Summary.....	20
<b>3 Employment and Enterprise.....</b>	<b>23</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	23
3.2 Economic Activity / Inactivity .....	23
3.3 Structure of the Local Economy .....	25
3.4 Analysis of Individual Sectors and Major Employers.....	29
3.5 Enterprise .....	31
3.6 SWOT Analysis and Summary.....	33
<b>4 Property Market Appraisal.....</b>	<b>35</b>
4.1 National Economic Overview .....	35
4.2 Residential Market.....	35
4.3 Office Market .....	40
4.4 Industrial Market.....	41
4.5 Employment Land .....	42
4.6 Retail Market .....	46
4.7 SWOT and Summary .....	51
<b>5 Regeneration and Planning Policy Context.....</b>	<b>52</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	52
5.2 Regeneration Policy .....	52
5.3 Planning Policy.....	55

5.4	Existing and Potential Development Opportunities .....	63
5.5	Planning Constraints .....	65
<b>6</b>	<b>Environmental and Physical Characteristics .....</b>	<b>68</b>
6.1	Introduction.....	68
6.2	Townscape Appraisal .....	68
6.3	Existing and Potential Development Opportunity Sites .....	71
6.4	SWOT Analysis and Summary .....	72
<b>7</b>	<b>Transport and Access Appraisal .....</b>	<b>73</b>
7.1	Introduction.....	73
7.2	Local Transport Policy Review .....	73
7.3	Transport Infrastructure.....	74
7.4	Public Transport .....	75
7.5	Private Transport.....	76
7.6	Cycling / Pedestrian .....	76
7.7	Access Strategy .....	77
7.8	Car Parking .....	77
7.9	SWOT.....	79
7.10	Priorities .....	80
7.11	Summary .....	80
<b>8</b>	<b>Conclusions and Key Issues.....</b>	<b>81</b>
8.1	Conclusions.....	81
8.2	Strengths and Weaknesses .....	82
8.3	Opportunities and Challenges .....	83
8.4	Key Issues: Place, Business and People .....	85

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Barnard Castle Vision

A new economic vision and development strategy is being prepared for Barnard Castle. The aim of the study is to establish a shared 20 year vision for the future economic regeneration and development of the town and its hinterland.

The study has been jointly commissioned by:

- Teesdale District Council;
- Teesdale Local Strategic Partnership;
- Teesdale Marketing Ltd;
- Durham County Council;
- County Durham Economic Partnership; and
- One NorthEast.

EKOS Consulting (UK) Ltd has been appointed to prepare the Vision in collaboration with the commissioning bodies and a wide range of local stakeholders and partners. In preparing the Vision, EKOS Consulting are supported by Building Design Partnership (urban designers, architects and transport consultants) and Donaldsons (property agents).

The research has four key components:

- Component 1 – Ensuring that partners within Teesdale have the capacity to effectively deliver the vision and projects arising through the Investment Plan;
- Component 2 – A visioning exercise which will lead to the production of an aspirational 20 year vision for Barnard Castle including objectives and a strategic plan for sustainable, inclusive economic growth within the whole of the Study area;
- Component 3 – An Implementation and Investment Plan for the first 5 years of activity which identifies a maximum of 10 priority actions with a detailed project plan for each, highlighting size, scale, funding sources and delivery mechanisms; and
- Component 4 – An Economic Strategic Options Study for Teesdale which includes a range of alternative strategies for sustainable economic growth within Teesdale over the period 2007-12, highlighting the preferred option for growth and related Investment Plan.

This report forms the first stage of Component 2, involving a baseline economic, environmental, physical and social appraisal of Barnard Castle which informs the development of the Barnard Castle vision.

## 1.2 The Baseline Audit

This Baseline Audit involves a detailed analysis of existing data sources and reference documents to provide a full economic, environmental, physical and social appraisal of Barnard Castle. This will

provide a comprehensive analysis of the present situation within the town, and an indication of future trends and opportunities relating to economic, social, environmental and physical issues. The research will begin to identify the key issues and opportunities to be explored within the consultation process, which forms an integral part of this visioning exercise.

This Baseline Audit involves analysis of a range of reference documents, baseline data and other information. A significant amount of research on the social, economic and physical situation within the town of Barnard Castle has already been undertaken by a variety of partners. This project does not seek to repeat studies which have previously been undertaken, but attempts to bring together and develop key issues across a range of indicators under one document and utilise the most up to date data to establish the evidence base from which a 20 year strategic vision and investment plan for the town can be created.

### 1.3 The Structure of the Report

The baseline report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2 – Community Profile** – This chapter examines population trends and forecasts, health, crime and deprivation issues and educational achievement within the town.
- **Chapter 3 – Employment and Enterprise** – This chapter provides a detailed breakdown of the Barnard Castle economy in terms of its structure, employment trends, key sectors, major employers, levels of enterprise and opportunities for growth.
- **Chapter 4 – Property Market Appraisal**; This chapter considers Barnard castle within its regional property market perspective in terms of a range of uses, assesses the relative strengths and weaknesses of the town and provides an overview of future demand patterns.
- **Chapter 5 – Planning Policy and Regeneration Context**; This chapter comprises an assessment of the current planning and regeneration policy which affects the area and impacts upon this visioning exercise.
- **Chapter 6 – Environmental and Physical Characteristics**; This chapter provides an initial outline townscape appraisal of the town, identifying the principle design opportunities and development opportunities. It also reviews any development constraints affecting the town; and
- **Chapter 7 – Transport and Access Appraisal**; This chapter outlines the key transportation and access issues affecting development within the town, considering such issues as public and private transport, car parking, movement and connectivity.

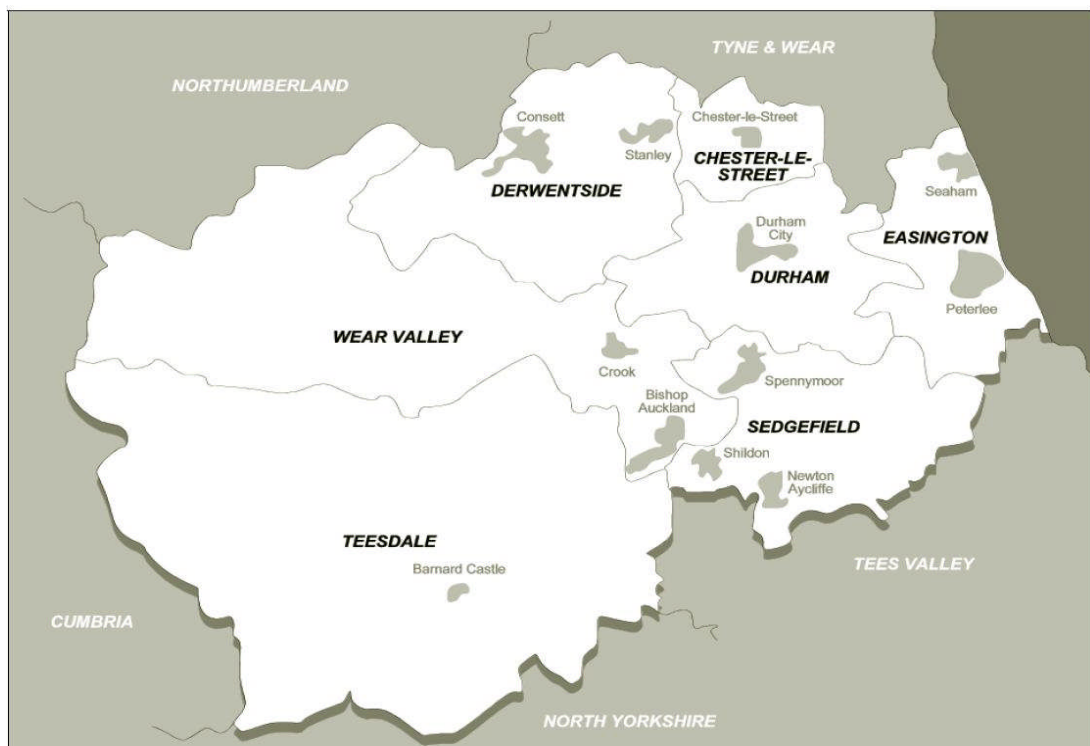
The report is completed with a final chapter that summarises the key issues emanating from this study and how these relate to the preparation of the 20 year vision for Barnard Castle.

## 2 Community Profile

### 2.1 Introduction to Barnard Castle

Barnard Castle is located to the north of the river Tees in the district of Teesdale which is in the west of the County (see figure 1 below). The town forms part of the Bishop Auckland parliamentary constituency and is classed as one of the 12 major centres of County Durham

**Figure 2.1**



Source: Arup County Durham Economic Strategy 2006

Barnard Castle is a market town which acts as a social, economic and service centre for its rural hinterland which extends across the district of Teesdale. It is the main shopping and leisure destination in the district as well as its administrative centre. The town is home to two secondary schools and three small primary schools, a number of banks, a variety of retailers, pubs and restaurants as well as a leisure centre and sports facilities. Tourism is also important to the area, and the Castle and Bowes museum are popular destinations for visitors whilst a number of town centre businesses are also sustained by tourist expenditure.

This section of the report aims to provide a detailed overview of the demographic, social and economic conditions of Barnard Castle, specifically looking at:

- Population trends and forecasts;
- Health and crime;
- Issues of deprivation;

- Education and skills;
- Commuting patterns; and
- Lifestyle trends.

Where possible, data and information within this chapter is provided at a Barnard Castle level, although the town's hinterland and the wider catchment area of South West Durham are also considered. Chapter 3 will look more specifically at the employment and enterprise within the economy.

## 2.2 Population Profile

Barnard Castle is classed as one of the county's 12 major centres by Durham County Council. A variety of different geographical definitions have been provided for Barnard Castle depending upon the study or organisation involved. As a result, a range of population figures for the town have been quoted, from 5,300 to 6,700. After discussions with Teesdale District Council, for the purpose of this report the boundary of Barnard Castle is taken as the 3 wards of Barnard Castle East, North and West. In addition, this report also considers the hinterland of Barnard Castle, considered to be the whole of the Teesdale district. Finally, the focus on investment in Barnard Castle should seek to establish the town as a sub-regional destination, and a hub and service centre serving a much wider area. As a result, the wider South West Durham area is also considered, taking in the Wear Valley district as well as Teesdale.

The population of Barnard Castle was 6,702 at the time of the last census in 2001. By means of comparison table 2.1 compares the population of Barnard Castle with that of the 11 other Durham major centres as identified by Durham County Council. This shows that despite being the only major centre in what is physically the largest of the County's seven districts (Teesdale is 84,000ha in size, covering 40% of the County but is very sparsely populated) Barnard Castle is the smallest of the County's major centres.

<b>Major Centre</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Population (2001)</b>
Durham City	Durham	42,123
Peterlee	Easington	30,093
Consett	Derwentside	27,394
Newton Aycliffe	Sedgefield	25,504
Bishop Auckland	Wear Valley	24,392
Chester-le-Street	Chester-le-Street	23,496
Seaham	Easington	21,714
Stanley	Derwentside	16,306
Spennymoor	Sedgefield	17,241
Sildon	Sedgefield	10,079
Crook	Wear Valley	8,212
<b>Barnard Castle</b>	<b>Teesdale</b>	<b>6,702</b>

Source: Durham City Council

Acting as a service centre for the population of Teesdale, Barnard Castle also serves a significant hinterland. A 10 mile catchment of Barnard Castle covers parts of 3 districts, including Darlington and the Wear Valley, whilst for this report the hinterland of Barnard Castle is considered as the whole of Teesdale. The population of Barnard Castle and its hinterland is detailed in Table 2.2 overleaf.

Area	Districts Covered	Total Population
Barnard Castle	Teesdale	6,702
3 Mile Catchment	Teesdale	8,081
5 Mile Catchment	Teesdale	9,940
10 Mile Catchment	Teesdale, Darlington, Wear Valley	23,686
Barnard Castle Hinterland	Teesdale	24,443
South West Durham	Teesdale and Wear Valley	85,786

Source: Durham County Council / Census 2001

Barnard Castle accounts for approximately one quarter of the district's population, although nearly all of Teesdale's population lives within 10 miles of Barnard Castle and nearly 10,000 people live within 5 miles of Barnard Castle. The breakdown age structure of the both the town's and its hinterland's population is detailed in table 2.3 below

Area	Age 0-15	Age 15-24	Age 25-39	Age 40-64	Age 65 plus
Barnard Castle (Number)	1,205	920	1,149	2,074	1,354
Barnard Castle (%)	18.0	13.7	17.1	30.9	20.2
BC 3 Mile Catchment Area (%)	18.3	12.6	17.6	32.7	18.8
BC 5 Mile Catchment Area (%)	18.2	11.5	17.7	34.1	18.6
BC 10 Mile Catchment Area (%)	17.5	9.0	18.0	36.0	19.0
BC Hinterland (Teesdale) (%)	17.6	9.5	18.3	35.4	19.2
South West Durham (%)	19.1	9.2	19.7	33.9	18.1
County Durham (%)	19.1	11.0	20.6	32.7	16.5
England and Wales (%)	20.2	10.9	22.1	30.8	16.0

Source: Durham County Council / Census 2001

Barnard Castle's population is characterised by a significantly older population than both the rest of the County and nationally. Totalling 20.2%, the proportion of the town's population aged 65 or over is much greater than both County Durham (16.5%) and nationally (16.0%). It is also greater than the town's immediate hinterland, which suggests that the centre of Barnard Castle and its services provides an attractive location for the older population.

Whilst the proportion of people aged 0-15 is less than the rest of the county and nationally, overall the proportion of people aged under 25 is slightly higher in Barnard Castle than elsewhere. In particular there are a much larger proportion of people aged 15-24 resident in the town than the rest of Teesdale, due primarily to the presence of the Young Offender's Unit within the town. In contrast, the town has a low proportion of people aged 25-39. Just 17.1% of the town's population is accounted for in this age group compared with over 22% nationally and 20.6% in County Durham. This highlights the difficulty which the town has in retaining its residents once they reach their mid twenties. Those aged 40-64 within Teesdale display a greater tendency to live outside of the town in the hinterland.

The Major Centres study of Barnard Castle undertaken by Experian provided a profile of the town's population in comparison with elsewhere in Great Britain. Over 40% of the town's population was classed as being in the "Rural Isolation" classification, whilst there were also a particularly high proportion of "Grey Perspectives". These classifications suggest that the town is home to a significant number of older people living within smaller rural communities and also points towards a dominance of self employment and the farming industry. This data is also reflective of the findings from various datasets which are detailed within this report.

**Population Key Points:**

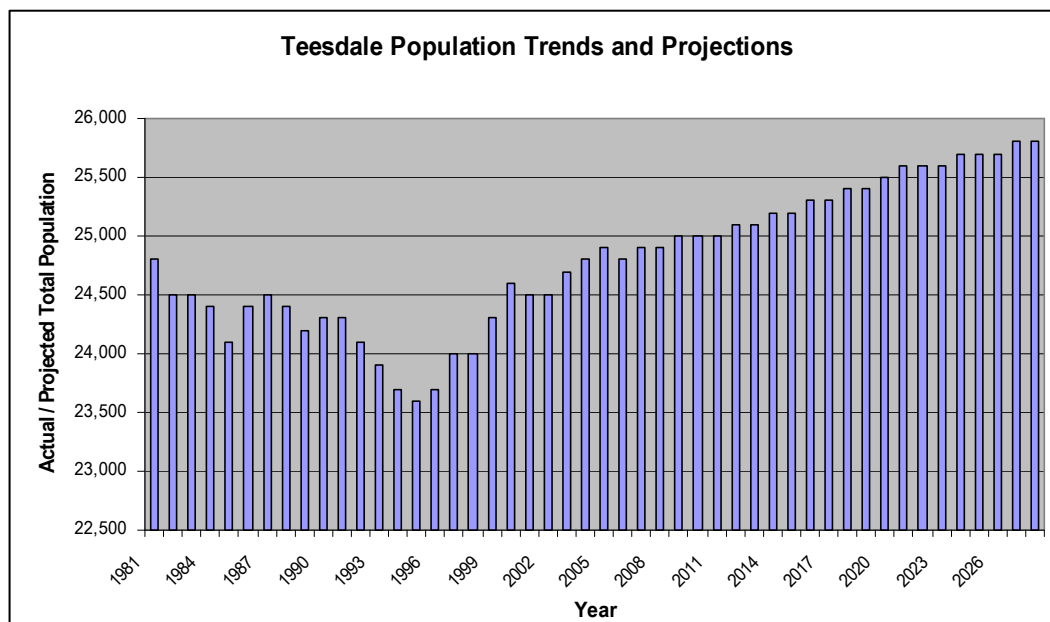
- Barnard Castle is the smallest of County Durham's 12 major centres;
- The town's population is 6,702, whilst nearly 10,000 people live within 5 miles of the town and over 24,000 in its hinterland;
- The town is home to a large proportion of people of retirement age plus and a large proportion of people aged 15-24;
- A large proportion of the district's population which are aged 65 plus live in the town, whilst the rest of the district is home to a greater proportion of those aged 40-64; and
- Significantly, the town struggles to retain people aged 25-39.

## 2.3 Population Trends and Forecasts

Anecdotal evidence has suggested a slight increase in the population of Barnard Castle, reflecting a drift from urban to rural locations particularly through the in migration of retired and older people. There has also been an out migration of young people seeking education, employment, affordable housing and other opportunities.

Exact data to cover the town of Barnard Castle however is only available at the time of each Census. As a result, it is not possible to undertake an accurate and detailed analysis of the town's recent population trends or future projections. However this is possible for the wider district. Recent population trends and future population projections for the Teesdale district are shown in the figure 2.2 below:

**Figure 2.2**



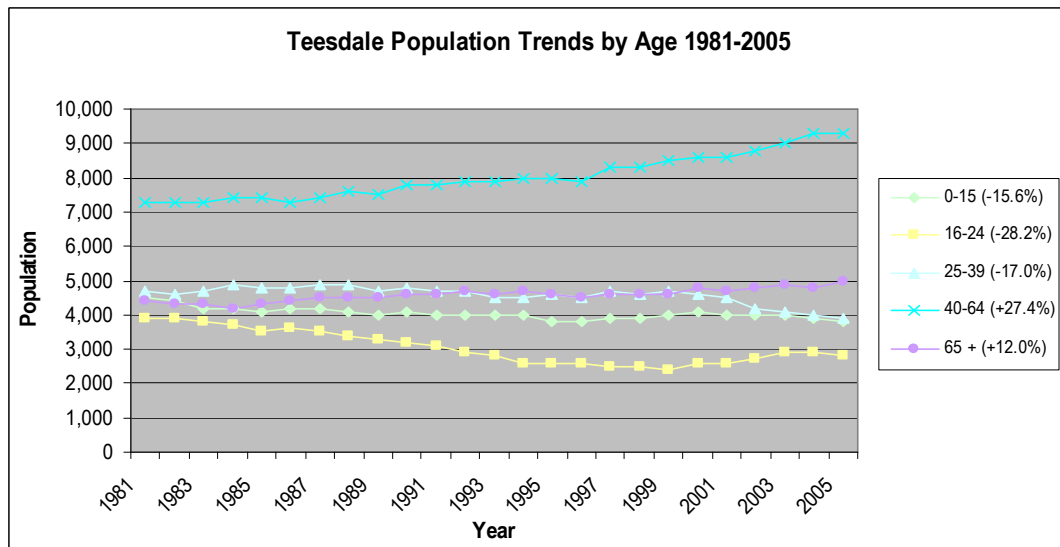
Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections 2003

The population of Teesdale experienced decline in the 1980s from 24,700 in 1981 to 23,700 in 1996. However the late 1990s saw the start of a period of growth which is projected to continue over the next 25 years. The district's current population is at a similar level to that of 1981, though projected growth over the coming years is expected to see this rise to nearly 26,000 by 2028. The majority of this population growth is forecast to be driven by the increase in those aged 65 or over, as detailed in

figure 2.4. If Barnard Castle experiences the same rate of population growth as Teesdale, then its population would be in excess of 7,000 in 2025, with an additional 355 residents.

Figure 2.3 details the recent population trends in the district by age band, covering the period 1981 to 2005. The chart shows the significant recent growth which has occurred in Teesdale amongst those aged 40-64, an increase of 27.4%. This will be particularly significant in the coming years, suggesting a future increase in the proportion of people at retirement age (see figure 2.4). There has also been a steady increase in the proportion of people aged 65 plus within the district over recent years. Conversely the proportion of people aged 16-39, particularly those aged 16-24 has declined rapidly over recent years, highlighting the problems which the district has experienced in retaining its younger population.

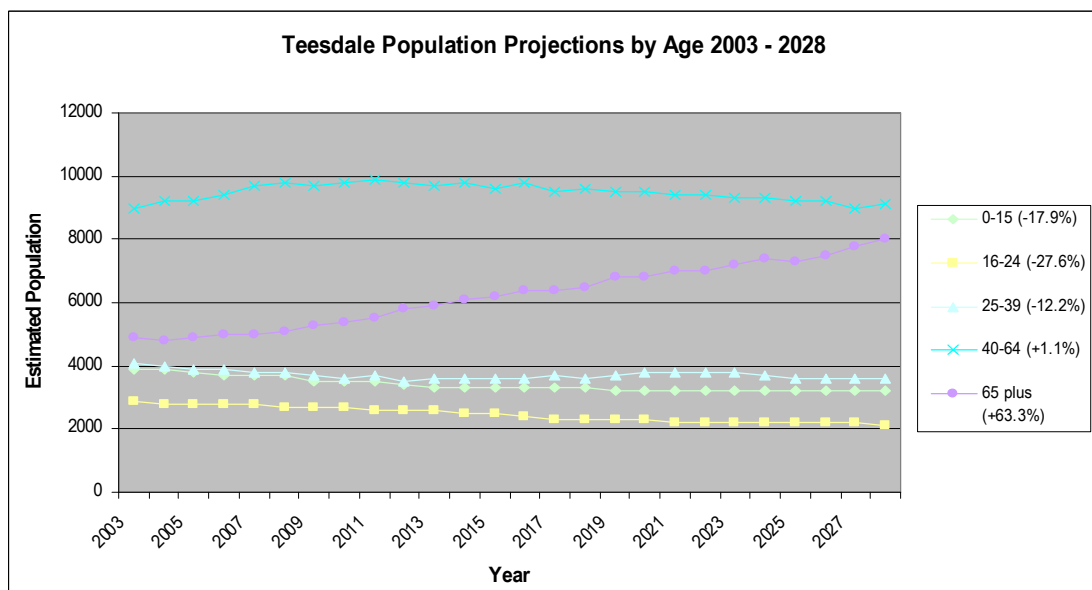
**Figure 2.3**



Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections 2003

Figure 2.4 below shows future population projections within the district through to 2028.

**Figure 2.4**



Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections 2003

Teesdale is forecast to experience large scale growth in its over 65 population over the next 25 years, from 5,000 in 2005 to 8,000 in 2025. These additional 3,000 residents of retirement age is likely to have significant implications for the provision of health and care services. The forecasts, in contrast, show a steady decline in the number of people aged under 40 over the coming years.

These projections will have significant implications for this visioning exercise in terms of the need to cater for this ever increasing elderly population in the future, and also with regards to issues such as the retention of the town's younger residents.

#### Population Trends and Forecasts Key Points:

- There is evidence of a recent increase in the town's population, driven by an increased older population;
- Within the district there has been significant recent growth within those aged 40-64, whilst at the same time Barnard Castle is struggling to retain its younger population;
- Future population growth is expected within the district and will be driven by a rapidly increasing population aged 65 or over;
- The district's under 40 population is expected to steadily decline over the next 25 years; and
- The visioning exercise needs to carefully consider the implications of a projected growth in the elderly population and decline in the number of younger residents.

## 2.4 Patterns of Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a useful tool from which to provide comparisons between super output areas across the whole of England in terms of how deprivation is distributed at a small area level. The overall measure is made up of 7 domains. Results from the Index of Multiple Deprivation for Barnard Castle and the whole of the Teesdale district are summarised in table 2.4 overleaf. This shows where the super output areas within Teesdale are ranked in relation to those in the rest of the country, with a low ranking representing a high level of deprivation.

Despite being located in the county which is the most deprived of the 34 shire counties, deprivation is not particularly widespread within the town and wider district. Table 2.4 demonstrates that none of the district's super output areas lie within the worst 10% nationally.

National Deprivation Ranking (Total IMD)	Number of SOAs
Top 10%	0
10-20%	2
30-40%	2
40-50%	2
50-60%	5
60-70%	2
70-80%	2
80-90%	1
90-100%	0

**Source:** Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004

All four of the SOAs in Barnard Castle lie within the best 50% in the country, as shown in table 2.5, which also details how the different super output areas within Teesdale are ranked across the different domains.

Super Output Area & 4 Digit Code	National Deprivation Ranking % (0% = most deprived)							
	Total IMD	Income	Employment	Health	Educ, Skills, Training	Housing and Services	Crime	Living Environment
Barnard Castle East – 0852	51.9	39.5	35.1	34.8	49.6	96.1	99.1	66.0
Barnard Castle North – 0853	62.2	70.3	40.6	40.6	48.1	92.7	100.0	90.7
Barnard Castle West – 0854	78.4	62.1	58.3	57.8	76.9	83.7	99.6	71.3
Barnard Castle West - 0855	83.4	67.9	62.1	55.6	67.9	96.6	100.0	98.3
Cockfield – 0856	29.2	53.2	11.8	27.6	26.6	99.9	99.7	52.6
Eggleston – 0857	55.3	23.6	55.6	54.9	72.7	4.4	100.0	46.2
Etherley – 0858	45.6	73.2	26.7	36.2	45.0	89.8	98.4	70.9
Etherley – 0859	66.0	33.1	49.5	44.6	60.8	51.4	95.2	81.4
Evenwood, Ramshaw & Lands – 0860	18.2	60.6	6.5	18.0	15.6	99.6	97.8	67.1
Evenwood, Ramshaw & Lands – 0861	32.6	11.0	15.4	30.1	33.7	51.1	98.1	39.4
Gainford and Winston – 0862	77.2	34.8	67.8	79.7	77.9	25.5	99.9	58.6
Greta – 0863	53.9	72.4	60.2	64.7	87.3	1.9	99.9	36.0
Lynesack – 0864	49.4	52.7	35.0	48.3	56.6	25.9	99.9	40.2
Middleton-in-Teesdale – 0865	55.3	70.0	63.3	72.6	62.4	4.2	99.9	32.2
Middleton-in-Teesdale – 0866	37.6	48.5	50.5	45.6	45.0	2.9	99.9	18.9
Staindrop - 0867	53.9	52.6	46.7	53.8	57.7	19.9	99.9	46.4

**Source:** Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004

The employment and health domains are those which record the poorest scores. However, even for these the town is only just in the worst 50% nationally. For other indicators such as Housing and Services and particularly Crime, parts of Barnard Castle are amongst the least deprived nationally.

Teesdale as a whole is not particularly deprived, with none of its population living in the worst 10% of the country. However within the wider Teesdale district, there are some pockets of deprivation. For instance the SOAs in Cockfield and one part of Evenwood, Ramshaw and Lands are in the worst 30% nationally. These areas perform particularly badly on the employment, health and education, skills and training domains. Eggleton, Greta and Middleton-in-Teesdale all score poorly against the housing and services domain.

#### Deprivation Key Points:

- Deprivation is not a major issue against most indicators within Barnard Castle itself;
- Indeed, some parts of Teesdale perform amongst the best in England against some indicators such as housing and services and crime;
- None of the town's population within the country's 30% most deprived against any indicator;
- Employment and health are the domains where there is the largest concern, though even for these indicators the SOAs in Barnard Castle are only just ranked in the 50% most deprived nationally;
- Despite this positive picture, local level data can mask pockets of deprivation in rural areas;
- Three wards within Teesdale are within the third most deprived nationally; and
- Barriers to housing and services in particular, as well as employment become an issue in some parts of Barnard castle's hinterland.

## 2.5 Commuting Patterns / Travel to Work Data

Durham County Council research focusing on the Barnard Castle Major Centre<sup>1</sup>, included some information on commuting patterns. Whilst a slightly different definition of Barnard Castle is used, it shows that although the Teesdale District has a net outflow of workers, Barnard Castle has a positive flow of workers, totalling 1,686. This occurs across all types of occupation, with the exception of skilled trades. These figures show, unsurprisingly, that the majority of those employed in Barnard Castle are residents from the outlying district of Teesdale. The Wear Valley, Darlington and Sedgefield also contribute a positive number of employees to the Barnard Castle economy. In contrast, more people travel out to the City of Durham and Easington, than travel in to Barnard Castle, although the numbers involved are small.

Recent analysis of commuting patterns within the North East region has been conducted by the University of Durham (Alan Townsend)<sup>2</sup> using Census statistics. Within this is provided a detailed profile of the Teesdale district in terms of where people live and work and how they commute. The main points regarding commuting patterns from this research can be summarised in table 2.6 below.

Area	Self Containment 1991 <sup>3</sup>	Self Containment 2001	Number of Out Commuters	Number of In Commuters	Net Flow	% Home Workers 2001
Teesdale	69	61	4,317	2,522	-1,795	27%
Chester-le-Street	35	30	7,360	4,807	-2,553	26%
Derwenside	60	52	17,200	5,784	-11,416	16%
Durham City	75	62	14,050	24,256	+10,206	13%
Easington	64	57	14,489	8,463	-6,026	12%
Sedgefield	65	54	16,767	11,810	-4,957	13%
Wear Valley	64	56	10,821	6,282	-4,539	17%

Source: Townsend 2005

Of the 11,063 residents of Teesdale who are in employment, 6,746 (61%) work in the district, whilst 4,317 work outside of Teesdale (39%). In terms of in and out flows, there is a net outflow of commuters totalling 1,795, and Teesdale has a significant commuting population at 4,317. Of the total 9,268 people working in Teesdale, some 2,522 (27%) commute in to the district.

The level of self-containment within the district (those who live and work in the same district) is similar to the regional average, though within County Durham Teesdale has the second highest level of self-containment of all the local authorities (behind Durham City). Despite this, the district is a net exporter of labour, with 4,317 residents leaving the town to work compared with just 2,522 entering Teesdale from elsewhere. There is a much greater out-flow of female workers than male workers and the largest exchange of labour occurs with the neighbouring authorities of Darlington and the Wear Valley. Just over half of the out-commuters work in either the Wear Valley or Darlington, whilst one third of the in-commuters are from the Wear Valley, and nearly one quarter are from Darlington.

<sup>1</sup> Barnard Castle Major Centre Area Profile, Durham County Council 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Townsend, A. (2004) *Commuting and Workplace Research: Section A Main Report*. Plus Townsend, A. (2005) *Commuting and Workplace Analysis Research Phase 2*

<sup>3</sup> Self Containment measured as the proportion of residents who are in employment that also work in the district.

It is likely that a significant proportion of commuters are travelling to high skilled and higher paid jobs. The economic profile suggest that Teesdale has only a limited employment base in many of the higher value added service sectors.

Teesdale has the highest proportion of home workers in the County, with over one quarter of those who live and work in Teesdale working mainly at or from home. Other interesting findings from the research are that Teesdale workers have the lowest use of buses and has the highest proportion of small enterprise and own account workers. There is a greater proportion of inflow to industrial jobs than any other local authority in the region (likely to be due to GSK).

In addition, the Centre for Rural Economy at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne<sup>4</sup> has provided a picture of commuting patterns between the rural areas and City Regions of the North East. This research demonstrates that commuting by residents of both remote and accessible rural areas to the region's urban areas has increased rapidly over the period 1991-2001. Within this report, the Upper Tees and Wear Dales is classed as being one of the region's 3 remote rural areas. Of the 9,860 resident workforce here in 1991, nearly three quarters also work within the area, with the majority of the remainder working in urban zones. However, in 2001 just over a half of the 11,639 resident workforce worked within the area, with over one quarter working in other urban zones demonstrating the increased likelihood that residents are prepared to travel to work.

#### Commuting Patterns Key Points:

- Teesdale is relatively self-contained in County Durham terms, though there is still a net outflow of commuters;
- The out-flow of workers from Teesdale is greater amongst women;
- The greatest exchange of labour occurs with neighbouring Darlington and the Wear Valley;
- Teesdale has the highest proportion of home workers in the County;
- Bus use is particularly low amongst Teesdale workers;
- There is a greater proportion of inflow to industrial jobs than any other local authority in the region (due to GSK).
- Within the Upper Tees and Wear Dales, there has been a recent increase in the proportion of residents travelling to work in other urban zones, though over half still work within the area;
- Barnard Castle itself acts as a key service centre for the wider Teesdale district, and is a net importer of jobs, mainly from the Teesdale hinterland.

## 2.6 Education, Skills and Qualifications

The town is home to a total of 6 small primary schools, a comprehensive secondary school and an independent school whilst some FE provision is available at a Bishop Auckland training centre as well as the 6<sup>th</sup> form at Barnard Castle School. These learning establishments are listed in table 2.7 overleaf.

There is a limited amount of FE available at Teesdale Training located at Enterprise House, which primarily involves vocational training courses in IT, business administration and engineering. However the general lack of FE provision within Barnard Castle means that students leaving Teesdale Comprehensive School tend to go to the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College in Darlington or on to Bishop Auckland College.

<sup>4</sup> Centre for Rural Economy Newcastle upon Tyne (2005) *City Regions and Rural Areas in North East England* p41-60.

Name of Establishment	Type of Learning
Cotherstone Primary	Primary
Montalbo	Primary
Startforth Morritt Memorial	Primary
St Mary's RC	Primary
Barnard Castle Primary	Primary
Bowe's Hutchinsons	Primary
Teesdale Comprehensive	Comprehensive
Barnard Castle	Independent (inc sixth form)
Teesdale Training (part of Bishop Auckland College)	FE

On the whole, the quality of education on offer within Barnard Castle is of a good standard as detailed by recent examination results shown in the following tables.

The table below details performance at Key Stage 2 for the town's Primary Schools in 2005.

School	No of Pupils	English	Maths	Science	Average Score
Startforth Morritt Memorial	13	92	92	100	30.1
Montalbo	14	100	86	100	29.4
Startforth Morritt Memorial	13	92	92	100	30.1
St Mary's RC	6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Barnard Castle Primary	52	98	100	100	30.5
Bowe's Hutchinson's	8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Durham LEA average	-	79	77	87	27.7
England Average	-	79	75	86	27.6

Source: DfES

The primary schools within the town, for which data is available, achieved excellent results at Key Stage 2. Results are above both the Durham County and national averages both in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 plus and average scores. Table 2.9 below details the GCSE performance at the 2 secondary schools within the town over recent years.

School	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Teesdale Comprehensive	50	52	58	51	65
Barnard Castle	86	84	85	80	91
Durham LEA average	40.9	41.1	44.6	46.7	51.3
England Average	50.0	51.6	52.9	53.7	57.1

Source: DfES

Barnard Castle school has an excellent reputation, and this is reflected in recent GCSE results which, as expected, are significantly above both the LEA and national averages. In addition, GCSE performance at the town's comprehensive school is also good, with the most recent results placing it above both the County and national average. In summary, Barnard Castle appears to have a good quality education system which is a major positive for the town. Table 2.10 overleaf provides an indication of the qualifications held by the population of Barnard Castle.

The proportion of the working age population holding a Level 4 qualification is higher in Barnard Castle than in the rest of the County, although less than the national average. Those holding higher level skills are more likely to live within the wider Teesdale district where a greater proportion of the population hold level 4 qualifications than in the town itself.

Area	%					
	No Quals	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Other Quals
Barnard Castle	32.4	15.9	20.1	5.7	17.5	8.3
BC Hinterland (Teesdale)	32.5	16.3	19.8	5.9	17.9	7.6
South West Durham	37.7	16.8	18.2	5.6	14.4	7.3
<b>County Durham</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>7.1</b>
<b>England and Wales</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>6.9</b>

Source: Durham County Council / 2001 Census

The proportion of the population holding no qualifications in Barnard Castle is less than in County Durham though it is in excess of the national average. The wider South West Durham area, incorporating the Wear Valley, has a significantly higher proportion of people with no qualifications.

<b>Education, Skills and Qualifications Key Points:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The town is home to six small primary schools, a comprehensive, an independent school and there is a limited amount of FE provision at Teesdale Training ;</li> <li>▪ Educational performance is very good at both Key Stage 2 and GCSE level, and this is a major positive for the town;</li> <li>▪ There is a lack of local FE provision for comprehensive students who tend to go to Darlington Sixth Form College;</li> <li>▪ The Barnard Castle workforce is more skilled than County Durham, but less so than both its immediate hinterland and nationally in terms of higher level qualifications held;</li> <li>▪ The proportion of the working age population holding no qualifications within the town is less than the rest of the county, though it is still greater than nationally; and</li> <li>▪ Although Barnard Castle compares well to County Durham, its skills profile is poor when compared to the national profile, and it has a significant proportion of its workforce with no qualifications.</li> </ul>

## 2.7 Health

The table below provides an indication of the general health of residents within Barnard Castle taken from the findings of the 2001 Census concerning general health.

Area	Good Health	Fairly Good Health	Not Good Health
Barnard Castle	67.5	23.1	9.4
Teesdale	67.2	23.1	9.7
County Durham	62.8	24.1	13.1
England and Wales	68.9	22.1	9.0

Source: 2001 Census

The table demonstrates that the poor general health quality of County Durham residents is not replicated in Barnard Castle, and indeed Teesdale district. The proportion of County Durham

residents who are in good health is significantly behind the national average, whilst a significantly higher proportion are classed as not having good health. However the figures for both Barnard Castle and Teesdale, despite having an older population, are broadly in line with the national figures. In Barnard Castle in 2001, a total of 566 residents were classed as not having good health.

#### Health Key Points:

- Whilst health is poor in County Durham across a range of indicators, on the whole this is not replicated within Barnard Castle where the population's general health is good;
- Despite the presence of a large elderly population, the proportion of households with not good health is similar to nationally, though it is less than elsewhere in the county; and
- The proportion of people with a long term limiting illness is in line with then national average, though significantly less than elsewhere in the County.

## 2.8 Crime

As detailed previously when looking at the Index of Multiple Deprivation, Teesdale and Barnard Castle are ranked as one of the least deprived areas in the country in terms of the crime indicator. Recorded crime information for areas within County Durham is also available from the Durham Police constabulary.

Experian 2006 noted that the number of recorded crimes within Barnard Castle in 2004/05 represented a 6% decrease on the 2002/03 figures and also a 9% decrease on 2003/04 figures. In addition, there has been a significant recent decrease in detected crimes. The table below details the most recent crime information and demonstrates that the likelihood of offences within Teesdale is significantly low compared with elsewhere in County Durham and nationally.

Date	Total No of Offences	Offences per 1,000 Population		
	Teesdale	Teesdale	Co Durham	UK
Apr – June 2004	136	5.5	20.2	27.3
Jul – Sept 2004	99	4.0	19.4	26.3
Oct – Dec 2004	129	5.2	19.6	26.1
Jan – Mar 2005	135	5.5	20.2	25.2

**Source:** Durham Police Constabulary

A brief analysis of available crime figures therefore shows that crime is not a huge issue within the town and its hinterland. The main area of concern is the high fear of crime held by the elderly population within the town. The fact that Barnard Castle and its wider hinterland have low crime figures again demonstrates the attractiveness of the area as a place to live.

#### Crime Key Points:

- Barnard Castle and Teesdale have extremely low crime levels in comparison to both Copunty Durham and nationally;
- There is also some evidence that crime has recently declined within the town;
- The fear of crime by the elderly population is a major concern; and

- In summary, the low crime figures for the town and its hinterland add to its attractiveness as a place to live.

## 2.9 Housing and Affordability

Table 2.13 provides an overview of the housing type within the town and wider district. Barnard Castle housing stock is characterised by a much higher proportion of flats and apartments than elsewhere within Teesdale and the County, and a smaller proportion of detached homes. Semi detached or terraced homes account of two thirds of all stock within the town, which is greater than elsewhere in the County but less than nationally.

The district's housing stock is markedly different to the town, and contains a very high proportion of detached or bungalow homes, over 30%, and a very small proportion of flats or apartments.

Housing Type	Barnard Castle	Teesdale	South West Durham	County Durham	England and Wales
Detached or Bungalow	19.4	31.6	22.1	17.3	23.0
Semi Detached or Bungalow	34.1	28.2	27.9	37.1	32.1
Terraced	33.1	34.2	44.5	40.4	25.9
Flat or Apartment	12.7	5.6	5.2	5.0	18.3
Caravan or Other	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.7

**Source:** 2001 Census

Average earnings within Teesdale are above the County Durham average and have shown a steady increase since 2000, in line with the national increases. The current median average yearly earnings within the district stand at £21,374.

Whilst average earnings are higher in Teesdale than elsewhere, average house prices are also significantly in excess of those in County Durham as detailed below. Barnard Castle itself displays high house prices in comparison with both the Teesdale District and County Durham. House prices within Barnard Castle increased rapidly between 2000 and 2004, though have remained relatively stable over the past few years. Average house prices within Barnard Castle in 2004, at the peak of the boom, were close to the national average.

### Figure 2.5

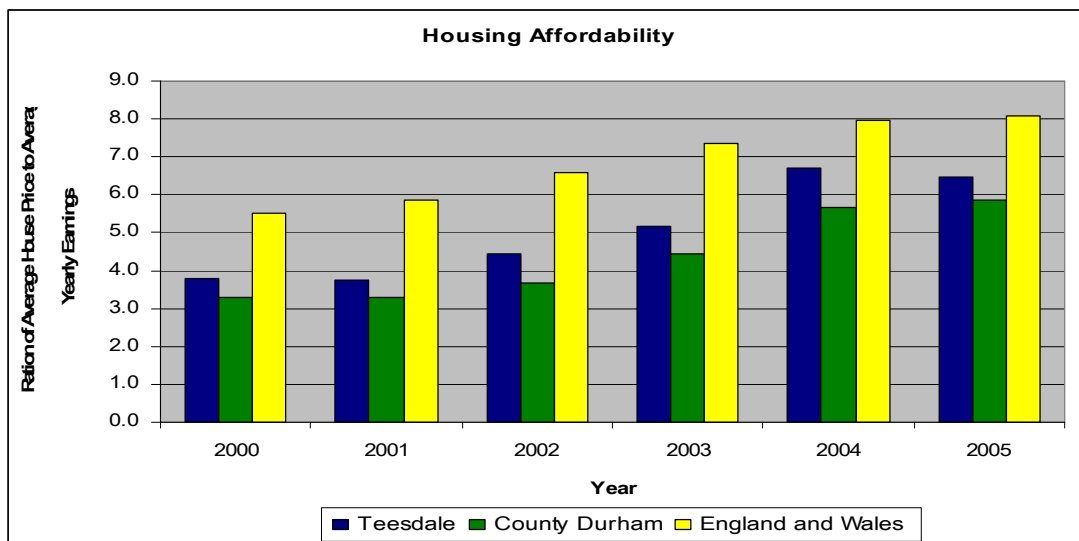


Source: Land Registry and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

The following chart provides an analysis of housing affordability within Teesdale in comparison to County Durham and nationally, by comparing average house prices with average yearly earnings. Not surprisingly the ratio of earnings to average house prices has increase significantly since 2000, the beginning of another sustained increase in house prices.

Housing affordability has consistently been a major issue in Teesdale, with the ration between earning and house prices consistently greater than the equivalent figure of the \county.

Figure 2.6



Source: Land Registry and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

Note: This combines Mean Avg. Yearly Earnings with Avg. House Prices (all sales)

Although average wage levels are unavailable for Barnard Castle, evidence obtained through consultations and the high average house prices in the town suggest that housing affordability is an even greater issue in Barnard Castle.

The table below details the tenure of the housing stock within Barnard Castle.

Tenure	Barnard Castle	Teesdale	South West Durham	County Durham	England and Wales
Owned	70.9	69.2	68.0	66.9	68.9
Social Rented	16.8	14.0	21.2	25.4	19.2
Private Rented	9.8	13.3	8.7	5.9	9.9
Rent Free	2.6	3.5	2.1	1.7	2.1

Source: 2001 Census

This shows that despite the affordability issues discussed above, ownership levels both within the town and the district are slightly higher than the national average. There is a smaller proportion of social housing stock within both the town and district than elsewhere. Teesdale Housing Association manages Teesdale District Council's housing stock following a recent large scale voluntary transfer. The private rented stock in the district is high, although some of this may be visitor accommodation.

As house prices have increased over the past five years, virtually doubling nationally, there has been a marked increase in demand for social and rented accommodation. This is particularly the case in those economies where wages are low, and house prices are fuelled by external sources, such as commuters. It is likely that there will be a demand for affordable accommodation within Teesdale as the population and economy continues to expand.

#### **Housing Key Points:**

- Semi detached or terraced homes account of two thirds of all stock within the town, whilst the proportion of flats and apartments is higher than elsewhere in the County;
- The Teesdale district has a high proportion of detached / bungalow homes;
- There is a lack of social housing within the district, and evidence suggests that it is hard to find new sites for social housing;
- Barnard Castle's most recent house prices are higher than both the wider district and county;
- In 2004, average house prices in Barnard Castle were broadly in line with the national average due to a period of significant growth in the local housing market, however prices have stabilised over the past few years
- Affordability is a particular issue for local residents, and is thought to have a significant impact on the town's ability to retain its younger population;
- Despite this, owner occupancy rates are higher than both the county and nationally;
- Rates of council and other socially rented property is lower in the town than both the county and nationally; and
- Rates of private rental are in line with the national average, though greater than elsewhere in County Durham.

## **2.10 SWOT Analysis and Summary**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Forecast population growth	Increasingly elderly population	High quality of life acts as an attractor for visitors and in-migrants	Ageing population – threat to viability of services and businesses
Good Standard of Living – very little deprivation	Relatively poorly qualified workforce within the town	Potential opportunities related to the increasing elderly population	Increased out-commuting could threaten local shops and services

Continued high level of in-commuting to the town	Housing affordability a key issue for young people		
Quality Educational Offer			
High quality of life – good levels of health and low rates of crime			

This chapter of the report has provided an overview of the population and demographic characteristics of Barnard Castle as well as its hinterland. Some of the main issues which the Visioning exercise will need to take into account are detailed below:

- **A Small Town** - Barnard Castle is a relatively small town within a very sparsely populated district.
- **An Older and Ageing Population** - It has a significantly older population than the rest of the County and nationally, with the town centre is a particularly attractive location for the elderly population to live; Teesdale is expected to experience significant population growth over the coming years, particularly amongst the (already large) elderly population.
- **Lack of Deprivation** - although not a prosperous community deprivation is not a serious concern within Barnard Castle and the district as a whole. None of the town's population lives within the 30% most deprived communities nationally.
- **Barnard Castle's Role as Teesdale's Service Centre** - In terms of commuting, Barnard Castle is a net importer of labour, made up of Teesdale residents, and commuters from Darlington and Weardale.
- **The District has a large commuting population** – The district has a greater number of out commuters than in commuters. The number of women who travel outside of the district to work is particularly high.
- **Good Quality of Education, but a less well qualified workforce** - The quality of education at primary and secondary school level and the skills levels of the population are good within Barnard Castle, although the workforce is less well qualified compared to the national profile.
- **Attractive Place to Live** - Good general health levels and the lack of crime within the town support the idea that the town is an attractive place to live; and
- **Housing Affordability Issues** - House prices are high within the town, with affordability seen as a major issue. It is also difficult to find new sites for social housing. These both have implications on the ability of the town to retain young people.

The old and growing elderly population of Barnard Castle is likely to have important implications for the future of the town, particularly in an economic sense. For example, the proportion of older residents increases the possibility that the town acts as a dormitory / retirement town, particularly if current trends continue and projected population trends are accurate.

Out commuting from the district, particularly amongst the female population, is also an issue, although Barnard Castle itself is a net importer of workers. The scale of out commuting reflects in part the range of jobs available locally and the attractiveness of Teesdale as a place to live. Significant

local employment growth through this vision is required to avoid the town turning into a commuter and retail centre.

## 3 Employment and Enterprise

### 3.1 Introduction

This section of the report profiles the town's economy and workforce. In particular it places the town within the context of its wider district, county and nationally, against a series of economic indicators, including worklessness, the structure of the local economy and levels of enterprise. The current position, recent trends and future projections of the town's economy and workforce will have a key influence in the types of challenges and opportunities which will be developed throughout the visioning process. Where available, data is considered at the Barnard Castle level. However, given the small size of the town, many economic datasets are either unavailable or statistically reliable at the Barnard Castle level.

### 3.2 Economic Activity / Inactivity

An analysis of levels of economic activity / inactivity is an important indicator of economic health. High levels of worklessness mean that the supply of labour and skills available to local employers is reduced and, therefore the local economy may not performing to its full potential. Reducing the number of people who are economically inactive and claiming benefit has recently become a key issue within national policy, and high levels of worklessness has been identified as a particular problem within County Durham.

Recent economic activity rates are available at a district level through the Labour Force Survey, however ward level data enabling an overview of the economic activity of Barnard Castle's residents is only available at the time of the Census. As a consequence, the table below provides a comparison of economic activity from the latest Census of 2001.

Area	Working Age Popn	Economically Active					Econ. Inactive
		Econ. Active	Employed	Self Employed	FT Student	Unemployed	
Barnard Castle	3,967	2,842	2,320	317	89	116	1,125
Barnard Castle	3,967	71.6%	58.5%	8.0%	2.2%	2.9%	28.4%
Teesdale	14,700	75.8%	57.0%	14.1%	1.6%	3.2%	24.2%
SW Durham	51,444	73.0%	57.2%	9.4%	1.6%	4.9%	27.0%
County Durham	303,921	70.3%	57.7%	6.1%	2.2%	4.4%	29.7%
Eng. & Wales	31.9m	76.1%	60.0%	9.2%	3.0%	3.9%	23.9%

Source: 2001 Census

The table demonstrates that economic activity within Barnard Castle, at 71.6%, is slightly higher than the County Durham average, which suggests that issues of worklessness may not be as prevalent within Barnard Castle. Indeed the unemployment rate for Barnard Castle was significantly less than both nationally and elsewhere within County Durham at the time of the last Census. However, economic in activity rates are much higher than both Teesdale District and nationally. The self employment rate of Barnard Castle residents is less than in its hinterland and nationally, though at

8.0% is higher than the County Durham average. The table below provides an overview of the nature of the economically inactive population within the town.

Area	Working Age Popn.	Economically Inactive					Economically Active
		Econ Inact.	Retired	Looking after home / family	Perm. Sick / Disabled	Student / Other	
Barnard Castle	3,967	1,125	177	210	209	529	2,842
Barnard Castle	3,967	28.4	4.5	5.3	5.3	13.3	71.6%
Teesdale	14,700	27.0	2.5	8.0	9.1	7.5	75.8%
SW Durham	51,444	24.2	3.4	6.7	6.2	7.8	73.0%
County Durham	303,921	29.7	2.2	7.3	10.7	9.4	70.3%
Eng. & Wales	31,945,284	23.9	2.2	7.4	5.6	8.8	76.1%

Source: 2001 Census

The table shows that the principle reason for the high level of economic inactivity in Barnard Castle compared with elsewhere in Teesdale and nationally is the greater proportion of retired people of working age within the district as well as those in the student/other category. The proportion of Barnard Castle residents who are economically inactive due to looking after the family / home or by being sick or permanently disabled is less than elsewhere.

The table below details the proportion of the Barnard Castle population which is claiming benefits according to the most recent DWP data.

Area	Total Claimants	Total %	Job Seekers total	Job Seekers %	Incapacity Benefit Total	Incapacity Benefit %
Barnard Castle	357	9.0	46	1.2	203	5.1
Teesdale	1,866	12.7	211	1.4	1,115	7.6
South West Durham	10,241	19.9	1,320	2.6	5,941	11.5
County Durham	56,200	18.5	6,675	2.2	13,575	4.5
England and Wales	4,298,650	13.5	727,275	2.2	670,250	2.1

Source: DWP Benefit Claimants Data (NOMIS) 2006 and 2001 Census Population Figures

Benefit Claimant rates in Barnard Castle are low compared with elsewhere in Durham and nationally, reflecting the relative lack of deprivation within the town. In Barnard Castle, an average of 357 people claimed some form of benefit in 2006. This represents 9.0% of the 2001 working age population of the town which is slightly less than the wider Teesdale district, half that of County Durham and also significantly less than the national average.

#### **Economic Activity Points:**

- Economic activity rates for the town of Barnard Castle are higher than County Durham, but lower than nationally, and less than the town's hinterland.
- Worklessness however is not a major issue within Teesdale, except for pockets in the north and east of the district.
- Surprisingly the economic activity rate for women is greater than for men – this is different to the County and nationally.
- The unemployment rate for Barnard Castle is very low. It is significantly less than the national average and less than County Durham

### 3.3 Structure of the Local Economy

Agriculture, tourism and pharmaceuticals are the key drivers of the local economy. Glaxo Smith Klein's contribution to the Barnard Castle economy in particular is significant, currently employing over 1,200, roughly a third of the town's workforce. Further details regarding individual employers can be found in section 3.4, whilst this section provides an overview of the structure of the local economy and its workforce.

Detailed data regarding the structure of the local economy is provided by the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI). Table 3.4 below shows the number of employees at the time of the most recent ABI in 2004. This shows that 3,616 people were employed within Barnard Castle, of which just over two thirds were in full time positions. The split of full time to part time employment within Barnard Castle is broadly in line with national averages.

Area	Total Empl.	Proportion of Total Employment							
		Full Time	Part Time	Male	Female	Male F/T	Male P/T	Female F/T	Female P/T
Barnard Castle	<b>3,616</b>	68.2	31.8	47.9	52.1	41.7	6.2	26.5	25.6
Teesdale	<b>8,011</b>	70.6	29.4	54.3	45.7	47.9	6.5	22.8	22.9
SW Durham	<b>27,920</b>	65.9	34.1	49.0	51.0	42.0	7.0	23.9	27.1
County Durham	<b>161,024</b>	69.2	30.8	51.1	48.9	44.8	6.3	24.5	24.5
Eng. & Wales	<b>23,693,854</b>	68.0	32.0	50.4	49.6	42.3	8.1	25.6	24.0

**Source:** ABI 2004

More women than men are employed in the town, with women accounting for 52.1% of total employment compared with 49.6% nationally. This is broadly evenly split between part time and full time female employment.

Confidentiality restrictions mean that a detailed breakdown of the number of employees and employers by sector is unavailable at the Barnard Castle level. However the Census provides details of the industry in which people worked in the town in 2001, and more recent ABI figures for the Teesdale district are available and quoted within this section.

The key characteristic of the Barnard Castle economy is its reliance on manufacturing sector employment. This reflects the County's position as a whole, though to an even greater extent with over one quarter of the town's population employed within the sector compared with just 15% nationally and 21.6% in County Durham.

Wholesale and Retail Trade accounts for the next largest share of the town's employment, totalling 13.1% though this is lower than both the County and nationally, and education, health and social work accounts for one fifth of Barnard Castle's employment. The Real Estate, Renting and Business Sector is small in Barnard Castle, accounting for just 7.7% of jobs compared with 13.0% nationally. In addition, the Transport, Communications and Storage sector is smaller than elsewhere in the County and nationally.

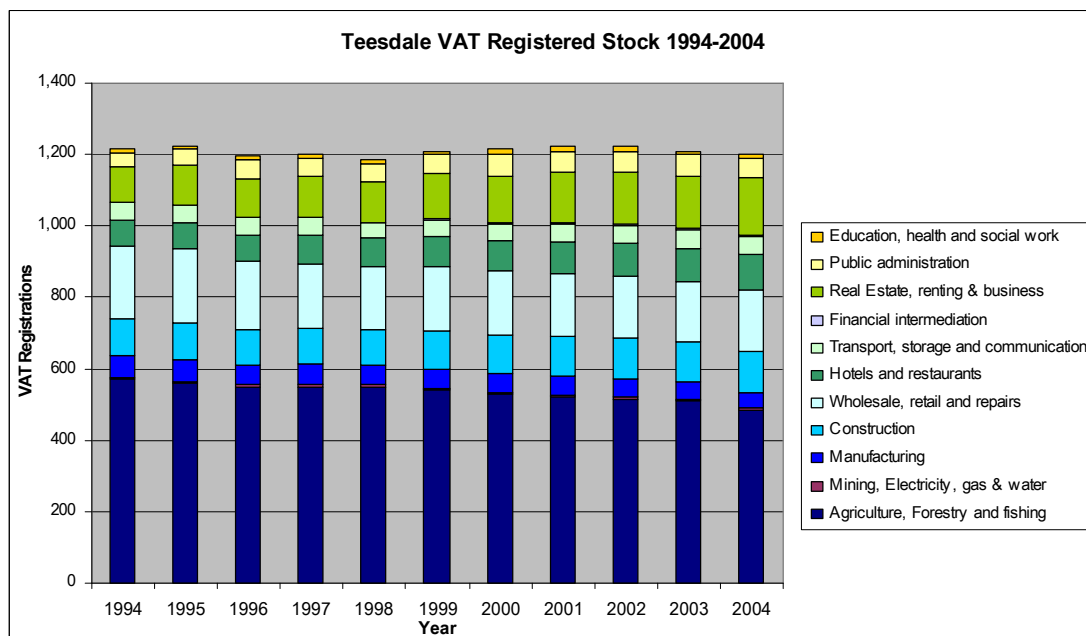
The following table below details the breakdown of employment by industry in Barnard Castle at the time of the last Census.

Industry	Barnard Castle Total	Proportion of Employment				
		Barnard Castle	Teesdale	SW Durham	County Durham	England & Wales
Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry	55	2.0	7.6	3.8	1.6	1.5
Fishing	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mining & Quarrying	24	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.5	0.3
Manufacture	714	25.9	21.0	22.0	21.6	15.0
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	16	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7
Construction	180	6.5	7.8	9.0	7.1	6.8
Wholesale and Retail Trade <sup>5</sup>	361	13.1	12.8	14.3	14.9	16.8
Hotels and Restaurants	164	6.0	5.4	4.7	4.7	4.8
Transport, Storage & Communic.	86	3.1	5.3	5.5	6.4	7.0
Financial Intermediation	37	1.3	1.6	1.8	2.5	4.7
Real Estate, Renting & Business	212	7.7	7.7	6.9	7.5	13.0
Public Administration & Defence	239	8.7	6.3	6.5	7.7	5.7
Education	264	9.6	8.5	7.9	8.7	7.8
Health and Social Work	287	10.4	9.9	11.8	11.8	10.8
Other	117	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.2	5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,756</b>	-	-	-	-	-

Source: 2001 Census

Though not available at the Barnard Castle level, figure 3.1 overleaf provides a useful indication of recent trends regarding VAT registrations<sup>6</sup> within the district by sector.

**Figure 3.1**



Source: SBS VAT Registrations

<sup>5</sup> Plus Motor Vehicle Repair

<sup>6</sup> A business must be registered for VAT if supplied taxable goods and services amount to more than £60 000 in the last 12 month period or if it is anticipated that taxable goods and services amounting to more than £60 000 will be supplied in the next 30 day period alone. The government sets the figures and they may change in the future.

Whilst VAT registrations within the district have fluctuated slightly over this period, they have remained close to the 1,200 figure throughout. This, together with the low business start up rates over recent years detailed in section 3.6 demonstrates that the economy of Teesdale has remained fairly stable throughout this period with a distinct lack of growth or decline of the business base.

Despite the overall stability in terms of business numbers, there have been changes in the sectoral breakdown of the local economy. In particular, the number of agricultural, forestry and fishing businesses has declined steadily over this period, from 570 in 1994 to 485 in 2004.

The table below provides a comparison of the business base within the district with elsewhere. The key findings from this are the exceptionally high proportion of the district's businesses which are in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector (in spite of recent decline in numbers) and the low proportion of businesses within the real estate, renting and business sector compared with nationally.

Sector	Proportion of VAT Registered Stock 2004			
	Teesdale	SW Durham	Co Durham	England & Wales
Agriculture; Forestry and fishing (SIC A,B)	40.4	24.9	11.9	6.5
Mining, Elec, gas & water supply (SIC C,E)	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.1
Manufacturing (SIC D)	3.8	6.6	9.1	8.5
Construction (SIC F)	9.6	12.5	11.9	11.2
Wholesale, retail and repairs (SIC G)	14.2	17.9	23.5	21.3
Hotels and restaurants (SIC H)	8.3	10.1	10.7	7.0
Transport, storage and communication (SIC I)	4.2	5.5	6.7	4.4
Financial intermediation (SIC J)	0.4	0.6	0.4	1.1
Real Estate, renting & business activities (SIC K)	13.3	14.8	17.3	30.2
Public administration and other services (SIC L,O)	4.6	5.4	6.6	8.1
Education; health and social work (SIC M,N)	0.8	1.3	1.7	1.5

**Source:** SBS VAT Registrations

Table 3.7 provides the most up to date guide to employment within Barnard Castle, detailing the number of workplaces and businesses by sector within the town

Over 1,000 people are employed within public admin, education and health jobs and 765 people are employed by the 114 companies operating in distribution or as restaurants or hotels. Key figures regarding manufacturing and transport and communication employment are missing due to confidentiality issues, though manufacturing is a key employer with over 1,000 people working in this sector in Barnard Castle.

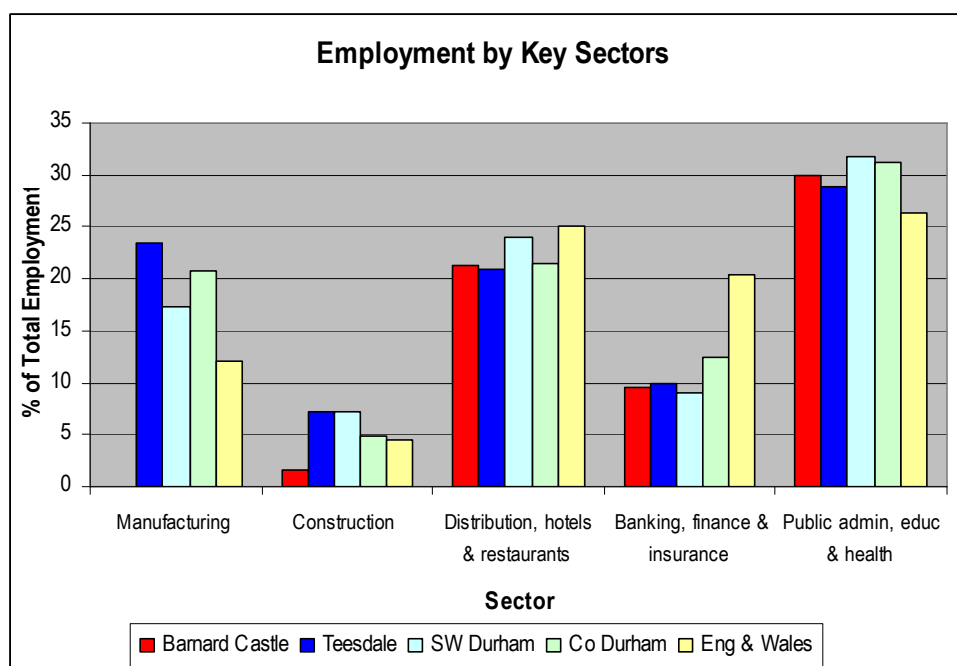
Industry	No of Workplaces	No of Employees	% of Workplaces	% of Businesses
Agriculture and fishing (SIC A,B)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Energy and water (SIC C,E)	0	0	0.0	0.0
Manufacturing (SIC D)	13	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction (SIC F)	27	62	9.0	1.7
Distribution, hotels & restaurants (SIC G,H)	114	765	38.0	21.2
Transport and communications (SIC I)	14	N/A	N/A	N/A
Banking, finance & insurance, etc (SIC J,K)	60	347	20.0	9.6
Public admin, educ. & health (SIC L,M,N)	41	1,085	13.7	30.0
Other services (SIC O,P,Q)	30	146	10.0	4.0

**Source:** Annual Business Inquiry 2004

Manufacturing employment is more important to the Teesdale economy than both the county and national economies, accounting for nearly one quarter of all employment. This is detailed in table 3.8

below which compares this employment breakdown within Barnard Castle and the district to County Durham and Nationally. Within Barnard castle, construction employment is smaller in Barnard Castle than nationally, whilst employment in distribution, hotels and restaurants is broadly in line with the County average, though slightly less than nationally. The Banking, Finance and Insurance Sector in both Barnard Castle and Teesdale is significantly smaller than nationally, accounting for less than 10% of all employment.

**Figure 3.2**



**Source:** Annual Business Inquiry 2004

Note: Manufacturing employment unavailable for Barnard Castle

The Census, again, provides the only source of data at ward level regarding the occupational breakdown of the town's workforce. Data for Barnard Castle is detailed in table 3.8 overleaf.

Occupation	Total No.	Proportion of Total Employment				
	Barnard Castle	Barnard Castle	Teesdale	SW Durham	County Durham	England and Wales
Managers/Senior Officials	389	13.8	14.6	12.3	11.6	15.1
Professional Occupation	323	11.4	10.8	8.9	9.2	11.2
Associate Professional & Technical	402	14.3	11.3	11.1	12.1	13.8
Administrative and Secretarial	259	9.2	9.8	10.4	11.7	13.3
Skilled Trades	377	13.4	17.6	15.6	12.7	11.6
Personal Service	186	6.6	6.5	7.4	7.3	6.9
Sales and Customer Service	172	6.1	5.4	7.0	8.4	7.7
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	304	10.8	11.9	14.1	13.3	8.5
Elementary Occupations	409	14.5	12.1	13.3	13.7	11.9

**Source:** Census 2001

A greater proportion of the town's resident workforce is employed in higher level occupations such as managers, senior officials and professional occupations than in the rest of the County, though less

than nationally. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this may be due, in part, to recent trends in people moving into Barnard Castle to live, but commuting elsewhere to work in higher level occupations. A particularly low proportion of the town's residents are employed in administrative / secretarial roles than elsewhere, whilst a higher proportion of Barnard Castle's workforce work in operative and elementary occupations than nationally.

#### **Economic Structure Key Points:**

- Agriculture, Tourism and Pharmaceuticals are the key drivers of Barnard Castle's local economy;
- There is a significant reliance on one employer which accounts for approximately one third of the town's workforce;
- The female workforce within Teesdale is greater than the male workforce;
- The Real Estate, Renting and Business and Transport, Communications and Storage sectors are under-represented in Barnard Castle;
- The town has a high proportion of workers with higher level occupations than the County, but less than nationally; and
- Compared with nationally, there is also a high proportion of operatives and elementary workers.

### **3.4 Analysis of Individual Sectors and Major Employers**

#### **Retail**

A total of 361 people were classed as working within the wholesale and retail trade sector in Barnard Castle at the time of the last census, which accounted for 13.1% of the town's employment. This is slightly less than both the wider county and nationally. The town's retail offer appears to be divided into two tiers, one catering for higher spenders and visitors, with the other being cheaper and more locally focused. One of the key issues for the town in terms of its ability for expansion within this sector is the lack of larger shop units which are likely to appeal to larger national chains. The town hosts two markets, the weekly market and the farmers market, which act to attract a greater number of shoppers into the town.

#### **Agriculture**

Whilst minimal agricultural employment is found within the actual town itself, the sector plays an important role in the wider district, accounting for 7.6% of the district's total employment and approximately 40% of all businesses. However, farming and traditional land based employment appears to be in decline within the region, as shown by the recent fall in VAT registrations by agricultural businesses. Farm diversification and issues around the ongoing management of the countryside should be considered within the visioning exercise. The Teesdale Farmers' Auction Mart, held within the town, provides sales of breeding sheep and cattle.

#### **Professional / Financial Services**

Employment within in real estate, renting and business activities is significantly less than the national average. However, it accounted for 7.7% of employment within the town in 2001 which is slightly higher than the County as a whole. In addition, there have been a recent increase in the total stock of

VAT registered businesses within the sector, which suggests that the sector is showing signs of expansion.

### **Manufacturing**

Manufacturing is a significant employer within Barnard Castle, accounting for one quarter of the town's workforce which is significantly higher than both the county and nationally. Much of this could be attributed to the presence of one large employer, and its ongoing presence within the town is likely to play a key role in its economic future.

### **Public Services**

Employment within public admin and education is much greater than both the County and nationally, which is due mainly to Barnard Castle being the administrative centre of Teesdale and also the Young Offender's Unit which is also a significant employer within the town.

### **Visitors and Tourism**

Census figures showed that there were 164 people employed in hotels or restaurants in 2001, which accounted for 6.0% of total employment. This is slightly higher than both the County and nationally. Particular tourist attractions within the town include the Bowes Museum and the Castle.

A STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity monitor) report provides a broad analysis of tourism related figures for the Teesdale district. The latest estimate that the total value of tourism expenditure within the district was £57.33m in 2005, which represents an increase of 16% on 2004. Tourist numbers for 2005 (totalling 1.3m) also showed a rise of 8% on 2004 figures. These figures also suggest that just over 1,000 people are employed within jobs supported directly by tourism, the majority in accommodation, together with a further 234 which are indirectly supported by tourism. This is supported by recent analysis indicating that a large proportion of visitor spend is within 'non-tourism' businesses.

Tourist numbers estimated by counting enquiries at the Tourist Information Centre and from the sale of parking tickets suggest that more than 320,000 visitors came to Barnard Castle in 2004/05, according to the Barnard Castle Historic Centre Economic Appraisal and Baseline Assessment. This also states that visitor numbers to the Bowes have increased year on year since 2000, primarily due to new exhibitions and events. Within this report it is also claimed that Teesdale is seen primarily as a destination for self-catering holidays rather than hotel breaks.

Teesdale Tourism businesses were particularly successful at the recent North East tourism awards, reflecting the long-term support and investment of officer time provided by Teesdale DC, with successes in various categories for Teesdale Marketing, Raby Castle, the Foresters in Middleton-in-Teesdale, Barnard Castle Camping and Caravan Club and the Mill Granary. The visioning exercise should consider the possibilities for the continued expansion within the tourism industry. Potential tourism related developments which need to be considered include the Rope Bridge, the Hamsterley Forest Mountain Bikes project and the redevelopment of the Parish Church.

### **Knowledge Economy**

The development of a knowledge economy in County Durham is a strategic priority for the County Durham Partnership. Knowledge based businesses include the financial and professional services sector, creative and digital industries and other businesses where innovative ideas and technology are embedded in services and manufactured products. Whilst the financial and professional services sector remains relatively small within the district, there has been some evidence of an increase in the number of creative and digital industries being attracted to the area.

Broadband connections have been successfully rolled out by British Telecom in County Durham. This represents an important step in providing the necessary environment to encourage knowledge based businesses to develop within Teesdale.

### **Major Employers**

GlaxoSmithKline is the largest employer within Teesdale. Its industrial estate at Barnard Castle was established over 60 years ago currently employs approximately 1,200, which accounts for approximately one third of the town's employment. This however represents a reduction in the company's presence within Barnard Castle, a result of job losses totalling 400 in 2001 as a result of restructuring and mergers within the pharmaceutical industry. It is unlikely that production capacity or workforce within Barnard Castle will increase significantly, although there appears to be some recruitment occurring at the moment.

Deerbolt Young Offenders Institute is located on a former army camp, employing around 400 people. This is the principle reason for the higher than average public sector employment within the district. The town is also the administrative home for Teesdale with approximately 150 people employed directly by Teesdale District Council in public sector administration roles.

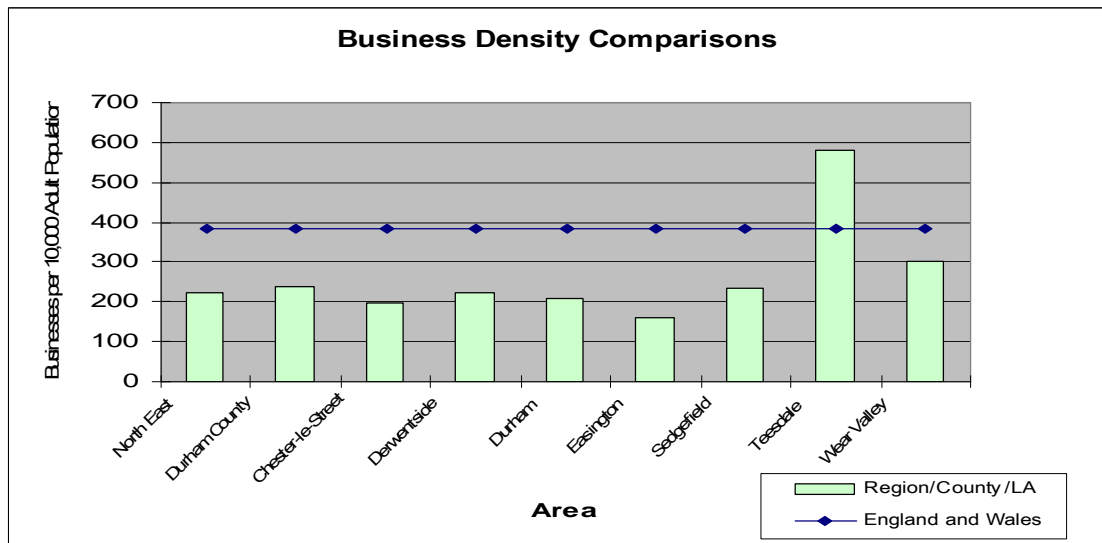
Recent expansions on Harmire Business Park include Honeymans, a pharmaceutical process support company, whilst other key employers in the town include: Oldfields Restaurants, Anthony Nixon Furniture, Norman Richardson House, Private Childcare Businesses, Morrisons Supermarket.

## **3.5 Enterprise**

An enterprising and dynamic culture in which new ideas and ways of working are developed helps to create a competitive environment and one in which new businesses are created, thus improving an area's economic performance. In contrast, economies perform less well in areas where there is a lack of business dynamism and there are fewer firms and lower business start up rates than elsewhere. There is a need to improve business birth rates through generating, attracting and retaining entrepreneurs and investment is required in order to help to create the conditions in which enterprise can flourish.

Teesdale has the highest number of businesses per head of all the districts in County Durham, and is considerably above the England and Wales average, as detailed in figure 3.1 below.

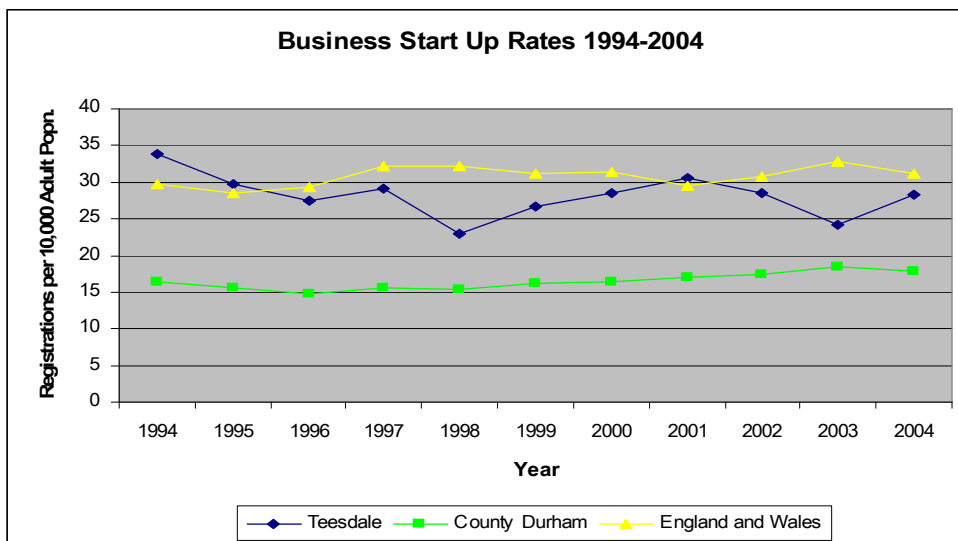
Figure 3.1



Source: SBS VAT Registrations and 2004 Mid Year Population Estimates

There are nearly 600 businesses per 10,000 population within the district, which is a far greater ratio than even the national average and reflects the significant number of micro businesses which operate within Teesdale, particularly in the agriculture sector.

Figure 3.2



Source: SBS VAT Registrations / Census Mid Year Population Estimates

Note: Calculated by using VAT registrations per 10,000 adult population

The high business density rate within Teesdale suggests that there is an entrepreneurial culture in the district. Further evidence of this is provided in figure 3.2 which shows that business start up rates within Teesdale are significantly higher than the rest of the County, and are similar to national rates.

Whilst business survival rates are unavailable at a Barnard Castle / Teesdale level, within County Durham they are good and the likelihood of new businesses surviving in County Durham has increased markedly over recent years.

**Enterprise Key Points:**

- There is evidence of an entrepreneurial culture within the district;
- Teesdale has a high number of businesses per head;
- Business Start up Rates are also high within Teesdale; and
- Business Survival Rates within the County are good and have improved significantly over recent years.

### 3.6 SWOT Analysis and Summary

A number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have been identified in relation to employment and enterprise in Barnard Castle.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Quality of the Environment is attractive to business	Narrow employment and economic base	Developing tourism into a 12 month business and focusing on higher value added markets	High dependency on small number of large employers
Good Standard of Living attracts entrepreneurs / commuters	Distance to and scarcity of suppliers	Becoming a regional hub for local food, culture and heritage	Continued change in land-based sector may affect local businesses
Large multinational company located within the town	Competition from neighbouring towns – Bishop Auckland and particularly Darlington	Knowledge-based industries including creative and cultural sectors	
Evidence of an entrepreneurial culture	Lack of industrial land for expansion		

An analysis of Barnard Castle's economy has revealed the following issues which should be considered within the visioning exercise;

- **Economic Activity is Relatively High** – Economic activity rates are higher than elsewhere in the County and worklessness is not a huge issue for Barnard Castle. The issues for the town concern how the labour force is being used rather than a need to tackle economic inactivity;
- **Notable Key Economic Drivers** - Agriculture, Tourism and Pharmaceuticals (Manufacturing) are the town's main economic drivers. Manufacturing employment is particularly high, whilst in contrast the Real Estate, Renting and Business Sector is particularly small. Developing the knowledge economy is a strategic priority for the County, and the roll out of broadband can be used to encourage knowledge based businesses to develop within the town;
- **The Presence of a Large Multinational** – Glaxo Smith Klein employs approximately one third of the town's workforce. The presence of a large multinational within the town, attracted particularly by the area's good environmental quality, is a big positive. The Visioning exercise should consider how this success can be built on whilst also guarding against over-reliance on one firm;

- **Other Key Employers** – Other key employers within the town include the Young Offender's Unit and Teesdale District Council which account for the high employment within public administration. Harmire Business Park is a key employment site,
- **Use of the Female Workforce** – Significant employment opportunities are available for the female workforce within Barnard Castle, with female employees accounting for over half of the workforce;
- **Occupational Structure** – The town is home to a greater proportion of managers, senior officials and professional occupations than elsewhere in the County, although there are also a relatively high proportion employed in lower quality jobs; and
- **Enterprising Culture** – The high proportion of businesses per head within the district and the business start up rates are evidence of an entrepreneurial culture within the town.

The economic element of the visioning exercise for Barnard Castle should seek to build upon the town's strengths as detailed above, particularly the active workforce, the presence of an entrepreneurial culture, the large multinational company in the area and the development of broadband within the town. In addition it should look to tackle its weaknesses which include an over reliance on one firm for employment, a declining agricultural industry and the lack of employment within key growth sectors.

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## 4 Property Market Appraisal

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### 4.1 National Economic Overview

The latest Economic Brief produced by the RICS for September 2006 commented that a solid economy is likely to lead to another rise in the Bank of England base rate in November. The UK economy is growing solidly, driven in the most part by consumer spending in the last year. Despite fears over debt levels and utility costs, consumer spending should continue to grow, albeit it at a slower pace than in the second quarter, supported by a healthy labour market.

Manufacturing output is also enjoying a revival, supported by climbing export and business investment. Indeed with global growth forecast to remain robust, it is likely that the Bank of England will choose to raise interest rates before the end of the year.

#### **Commercial Property**

Occupier demand in the commercial property market expanded moderately in the summer months, supporting rental growth. Rent rises have generally been in line with consumer price inflation since early 2005 with both trending moderately higher.

However, strengthening in rental growth has almost entirely reflected the recovery of the health of the office sector, with rent rises in July reaching 3.3% almost double the rate seen in March and falls in early 2005.

#### **Construction**

Figures released by DTI for the second quarter confirmed that the construction industry continued to grow solidly. The industry is justifiably in an optimistic mood.

The outlook for the industry as a whole remains bright with new orders at levels last seen in the late 1980's boom. Investment in the construction sector has also been rising year-on-year for two consecutive quarters after a year and a half of decline. Rising activity levels have also kept demand for labour on a rising trend.

#### **Residential Property**

The latest figures from RICS showed that house price growth accelerated for the fifth consecutive month in August, hitting the fastest pace since May 2004.

Buyer enquiries rose for the fifteenth consecutive month in August, up at the fastest pace since September 2003. Above trend economic growth driven mainly by consumer spending combined with a strengthening employment and wage picture is supporting buyer confidence.

### 4.2 Residential Market

The Halifax produces a quarterly commentary on the National and Regional House Price Index. We have reviewed the most recent publications and highlight the key figures from the National Index commentary below before looking at the Regional commentary.

### **National Perspective**

House prices rose by 1.0% in August 2006. There are signs, however, that house price growth continues to moderate. The overall increase in house prices over the three months from May to August is only 0.2% compared with a 2.9% rise in the preceding three months.

In addition, the annual rate of house price inflation eased to 8.2% from 9.4% in June. This pattern is expected to continue over the coming months.

The market is underpinned by sound fundamentals. A number of developments are nonetheless expected to constrain housing demand and moderate house price inflation over the remainder of 2006. Further substantial increases in utility bills will put pressure on householders' finances.

Recent mortgage rate increases – both fixed rates and following the Bank of England's increase last month - are likely to dampen housing demand. The annual rate of house price inflation is expected to ease to 5% by the end of 2006.

Housing market activity is firm. According to the Halifax, the number of loans approved for house purchases in the three months to July 2006 is up 24% compared with the same period a year earlier (Bank of England figures). There is, however, evidence that activity has reached a plateau with the latest RICS survey reporting little change in completed property sales in July for the third consecutive month.

### **Regional Perspective**

House prices in the North (as defined by the Halifax and including the North West and North East regions) rose by 0.9% in Q2 2006. On an annual basis prices rose 9.6%, just above the UK average of 9.4%.

Over the past five years, however, house prices in the North have risen by 144% with the average price of a house in the North currently standing at £141,530. This compares to the UK average of £177,962. The strongest house price growth in the region was in Stockton on Tees in Cleveland, where prices rose by 15% over the past year.

Greater London house prices are now only 1.9 times higher than those in the North, compared with 2.9 times in Q2 2002.

Regional Manager, Halifax Estate Agency, Chris Stonock commented:

"The housing market in the North has remained fairly stable over the past six months, consolidating gains made in the second half of 2005. The strongest house price growth in the region over the past year has been in Stockton on Tees, where prices have risen by 15%. Billingham, Whitley Bay and Durham have also seen house price increases of more than 10%."

Prices shown in the tables below are the arithmetic average prices of houses on which an offer of mortgage has been granted. These prices are not standardised and therefore can be affected by changes in the sample from quarter to quarter. Figures include properties sold for £1 million plus.

Over the last ten years flats & maisonette properties in the North have seen the strongest growth, increasing by 229% from £33,238 in Q2 1996 to £109,351 in Q2 2006.

POST TOWN	AVERAGE HOUSE	AVERAGE HOUSE	%
	PRICE - £	PRICE - £	CHANGE
	2005*	2006*	2005-2006*
STOCKTON ON TEES	125,290	144,067	15%
WHITLEY BAY	164,281	187,892	14%
BILLINGHAM	133,947	153,300	14%
DURHAM	134,919	151,807	13%
BLYTH	104,072	116,189	12%
NORTH SHIELDS	143,984	159,346	11%
CHESTER LE STREET	133,907	148,048	11%
SOUTH SHIELDS	113,510	126,362	11%
PETERLEE	87,432	97,174	11%
KENDAL	162,827	176,687	9%
SEAHAM	127,105	138,047	9%
BARROW IN FURNESS	100,013	109,124	9%
REDCAR	128,214	137,121	7%
SUNDERLAND	124,879	133,246	7%
ASHINGTON	105,532	112,766	7%
BLAYDON ON TYNE	108,179	115,040	6%
MIDDLESBROUGH	120,920	126,448	5%
BISHOP AUCKLAND	128,792	133,479	4%
WALLSEND	106,026	110,426	4%
NEWTON AYCLIFFE	129,048	132,490	3%
CRAMLINGTON	124,076	127,870	3%
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	154,493	158,102	2%
SALTBURN BY THE SEA	124,015	126,754	2%
GATESHEAD	124,011	125,908	2%
CONSETT	135,624	136,650	1%
DARLINGTON	134,719	134,965	0%
HARTLEPOOL	127,916	128,436	0%
CARLISLE	132,159	130,524	-1%
HOUGHTON LE SPRING	131,824	128,449	-3%

Source: Halifax

North	1996-Q2 (£)	2006-Q2 (£)	1996 Q2 - 2006 Q2 Average Annual % Change
Bungalows	61,365	153,470	150%
Detached	87,335	235,063	169%
Flat & Mais.	33,238	109,351	229%
Semi-Detached	53,007	143,134	170%
Terraced	41,586	119,050	186%

Source: Halifax

	1996-Q2 (£)	2006-Q2 (£)	1996 Q2 - 2006 Q2 Average Annual % Change
<b>North</b>			
Bungalows	61,365	153,470	150%
Detached	87,335	235,063	169%
Flat & Mais.	33,238	109,351	229%
Semi-Detached	53,007	143,134	170%
Terraced	41,586	119,050	186%

Source: Halifax

Although still only around 81% of the rest of the UK, average earnings in the north have risen by a slightly higher rate since 2003.

April	North	UK
2003	23,252	28,807
2004	24,421	30,209
2005	25,765	31,485
% increase since 2003	10.8%	9.3%

Source: Halifax

#### **Residential Sales – Barnard Castle**

We have analysed sale prices in the market in 2006 using the Nethouseprices website ([www.nethouseprices.com](http://www.nethouseprices.com)) to identify trends in residential values within Barnard Castle. This must be treated with some caution due to the lack of information regarding the specification of individual units / sales and also the fact that average sale prices in any one year may be distorted where there are a small number of sales.

#### **Detached Sales**

Detached	Sale Price	No. of Sales
Demesnes, Barnard Castle	£315,000	1
Hawthorn Drive, Barnard Castle	£285,000	1
North Field, Barnard Castle	£249,950	1
Raby Avenue, Barnard Castle	£200,000	1
Ullathorne Rise, Barnard Castle	£181,500	2
Victoria Road, Barnard Castle	£206,000	1
<b>Total Sales Value</b>	<b>£1,437,450</b>	
<b>Average Sale Price</b>	<b>£239,575</b>	

Source: [www.nethouseprices.com](http://www.nethouseprices.com)

7 sales of detached houses have gone through in 2006 to date with an average sale price achieved of £239,575.

### Semi-detached properties

<b>Semi Detached</b>	<b>Sale Price</b>	<b>No. of Sales</b>
Churchill Road, Barnard Castle	£112,000	1
Commercial Yard, Barnard Castle	£170,000	1
Dale Road, Barnard Castle	£92,500	1
Dawson Road, Barnard Castle	£128,000	1
Harmire Road, Barnard Castle	£155,000	1
High Riggs, Barnard Castle	£158,317	3
Horsemarket, Barnard Castle	£130,000	1
Old School Close, Barnard Castle	£245,000	1
Priory Yard, Barnard Castle	£136,000	1
Startforth Park, Barnard Castle	£158,000	1
The Bank, Barnard Castle	£172,017	1
Ullathorne Rise, Barnard Castle	£145,000	1
Victoria Court, Barnard Castle	£175,000	1
Woodside, Barnard Castle	£256,000	1
Zetland Road, Barnard Castle	£125,000	1
<b>Total Sales Value</b>	<b>£2,357,834</b>	
<b>Average Sale Price</b>	<b>£157,189</b>	

Source: [www.nethouseprices.com](http://www.nethouseprices.com)

17 transactions of semi-detached have taken place so far in 2006 with an average sale price of £157,189.

### Terraced Properties

<b>Terraced</b>	<b>Sale Price</b>	<b>No. of Sales</b>
Baliol Street, Barnard Castle	£103,500	1
Birch Road, Barnard Castle	£118,000	1
Bridgegate, Barnard Castle	£120,000	1
Churchill Road, Barnard Castle	£118,500	1
Crook Lane, Barnard Castle	£98,000	1
Galgate, Barnard Castle	£154,000	1
High Riggs, Barnard Castle	£120,000	1
Hilton Road, Barnard Castle	£110,000	2
Marwood Drive, Barnard Castle	£137,750	1
Newgate, Barnard Castle	£183,000	1
Priory Yard, Barnard Castle	£118,500	3
Raby Avenue, Barnard Castle	£212,500	1
Temperance Terrace, Barnard Castle	£108,000	1
Thorngate Place, Barnard Castle	£335,710	1
Vere Road, Barnard Castle	£219,000	1
Victoria Court, Barnard Castle	£157,500	1
<b>Total Sales Value</b>	<b>£2,413,960</b>	
<b>Average Sale Price</b>	<b>£150,873</b>	

Source: [www.nethouseprices.com](http://www.nethouseprices.com)

19 sales of terraced properties have taken place so far in 2006 with an average sale price of £150,873.

**Flats / Apartments**

Terraced	Sale Price	No. of Sales
Bouch Way, Barnard Castle	£124,999	1
Grove Park, Barnard Castle	£94,500	1
Thorngate, Barnard Castle	£222,500	1
<b>Total Sales Value</b>	<b>£441,999</b>	
<b>Average Sale Price</b>	<b>£147,333</b>	

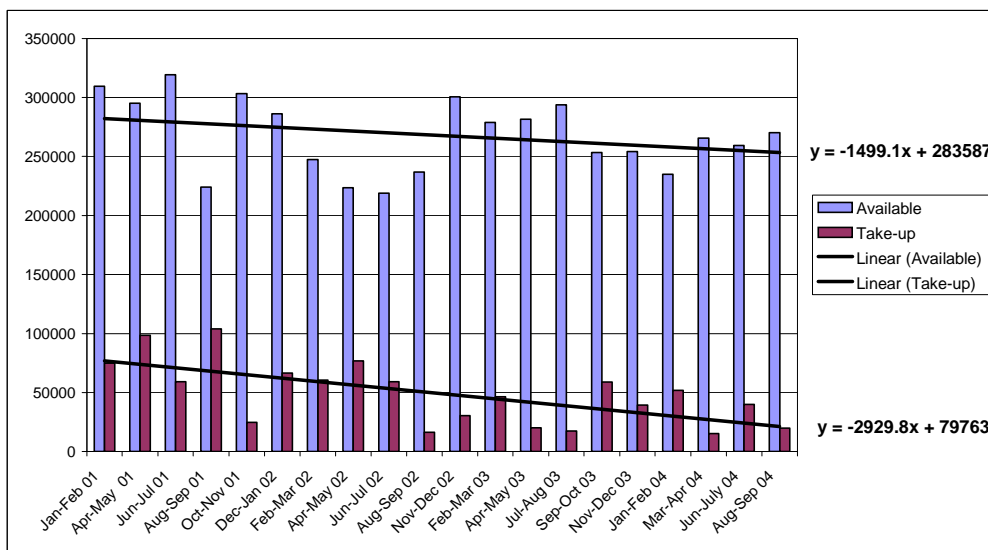
Source: [www.nethouseprices.com](http://www.nethouseprices.com)

3 flats have been sold in 2006 to date in Barnard Castle with an average sale price of £147,333.

**4.3 Office Market**

The County Durham Sites and Premises Study (Donaldsons, 2005) recorded take-up and availability of office premises in the County between 1999 and 2004 using Council statistics. This allowed an analysis of the data to monitor trends at both County and District levels. This is illustrated graphically below - for the purposes of analysis we did not consider the data prior to January 2001 because a single peak in the figures dramatically affected the trend analysis:-

**Figure 4.1**



Source – County Durham Employment Sites and Premises Study, Donaldsons 2005

It can be seen from the graph that the total amount of available office floorspace in the County was reduced, on average by 834 m<sup>2</sup> (8,977 sq.ft.) per annum. Take-up of offices also reduced over the period on average by 1,632 m<sup>2</sup> (17,560 sq.ft.) per annum. Take-up has been relatively cyclical over the five-year period.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>Sq.m.</b>	2,490	6,008	2,672	1,575	1,093
<b>Sq.ft.</b>	26,801	64,668	28,759	16,949	11,765

Source – County Durham Sites and Premises Study – Donaldsons 2005  
 (\* Figures for 2000 and 2004 are for the 9 months of the respective years only)

The average annual take-up of office premises for the County over the five-year period was 2,767 m<sup>2</sup> (29,788 sq.ft.) although only 9 month figures were available for 2000 and 2004. Had yearly figures been available in these years, the average annual take-up is likely to be in the region of 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> (32,290 sq.ft.).

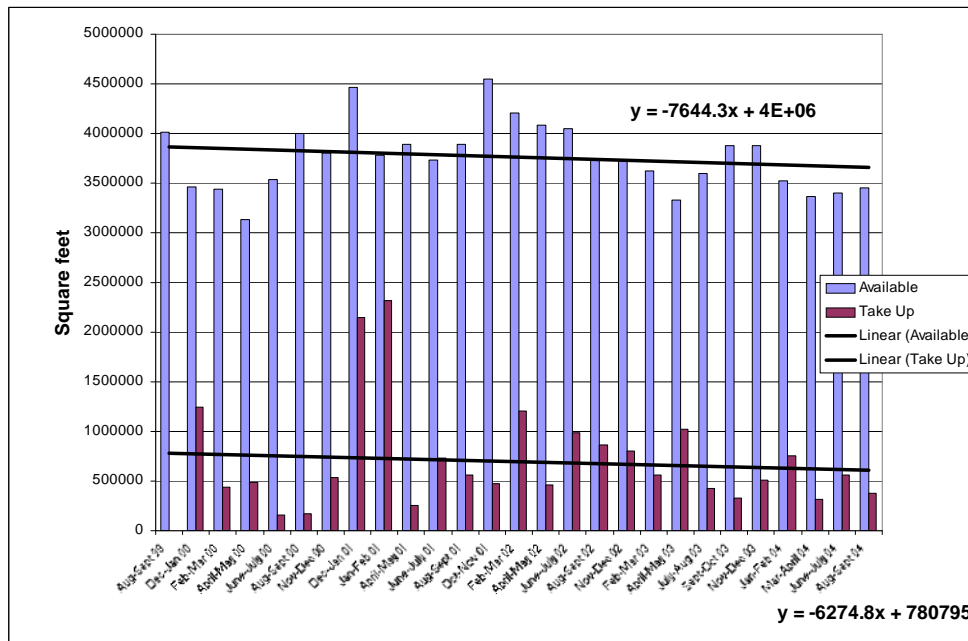
**Rents and yields**

It is considered that prime office rents in the County are in the region of £161.50 per m<sup>2</sup> (£15 per sq.ft.). Prime investment yields are likely to be in the region of 6.5%.

**4.4 Industrial Market**

Take-up and availability of industrial premises were also monitored in the County Durham Sites and Premises Study. This was then represented graphically (below):-

**Figure 4.2**



Source – County Durham Sites and Premises Study – Donaldsons, 2005

From the graph above it can be seen that vacant industrial stock has reduced, on average, by approximately 2,840 m<sup>2</sup> (30,576 sq.ft) per annum. It can also be seen that the trend of take-up of industrial premises has also reduced, on average, by 3,497 m<sup>2</sup> (37,645 sq.ft). Take-up of industrial property over the five year period fluctuated between periods and was relatively cyclical in nature, albeit relatively short term cycles.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Sq.m.</b>	281,680	602,300	402,140	265,142	186,950*
<b>Sq.ft.</b>	3,031,975	6,483,097	4,328,595	2,853,962	2,012,370*

Source – County Durham Sites and Premises Study – Donaldsons, 2005

(\* Figures for 2004 are for the 9 months up to September 2004 only)

Average annual take-up of industrial premises in the County over the five-year period was 347,642 m<sup>2</sup> (3,741,988 sq.ft) although if 12-month figures were available for 2004, the average annual take-up is likely to be in the region of 358,000 m<sup>2</sup> (3,850,000 sq.ft.).

### Rents and yields

It is considered that prime rents in the County are in the region of £48.45 per m<sup>2</sup> (£4.50 per sq.ft.). Prime investment yields are likely to be in the region of 7%.

## 4.5 Employment Land

### Employment Land Take Up

The King Sturge Regional Sites and Premises Study considered the total employment land in the County and analysed take up. The Sites and Premises Study, however, differentiated employment land available in the short-to-medium term from total employment land in the County in order that a realistic analysis could be undertaken. It was found that of a total of 652 ha (1,611 acres) of employment land, 469 ha (1,158 acres) was available in the short-to-medium term. Take-up of employment land between 2002 and 2004 was estimated at 17 ha per annum. This would indicate a total of 27 years supply of employment land in the County.

This has to be viewed with some caution, however, as particularly large sites are included which may have certain problems which delay their being brought forwards for development (for example, 47 ha at Heighington Lane West which has on-site restrictions and is currently treated as a strategic reserve site).

### Strategic Sites

The Sites and Premises Study considered the County's portfolio of existing employment land and identified a matrix of strategic development priorities. These sites were:-

**Table 4.11 County Durham Strategic Employment Land**

<b>Site</b>	<b>Area (Ha)</b>	<b>Area (Acres)</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Area (Ha)</b>	<b>Area (Acres)</b>
Aycliffe / Heighington Lane	47.2	116.6	Greencroft Industrial Estate	15.0	37.1
Beechburn Industrial Estate	14.6	36.1	Harmire Enterprise Park	6.4	15.8
Belmont Industrial Estate	10.7	26.4	Hownsgill Industrial Estate	12.8	31.6
Berry Edge, Consett	-	-	Low Willington Industrial Estate	9.8	24.2
Bowburn Industrial Estate	19	47.0	Meadowfield Industrial Estate	38.6	95.4
Bracks Farm, Bishop Auckland	9	22.2	Mount Oswald	13.1	32.4
Chilton Prestige Extension	20.4	50.4	NETPark	27	66.7
Drum Industrial Estate	23.5	58.1	Peterlee Industrial Estates	10.5	25.9
Former Hawthorn Cokeworks	25	61.8	South Church Industrial Estate	10.6	26.2
Foxcover / Dawdon	16.4	40.5	Tanfield Lea Industrial Estate	16.5	40.8
Green Lane Industrial Estate	24.2	59.8	Tursdale	188	464.6

Source – County Durham Employment Sites and Premises Study – Donaldsons, 2005

Note: Berry Edge forms part of the Genesis Project which covers some 283 ha (700 acres)

### **Employment Land – Office Development**

Traditionally the County has been somewhat overshadowed in terms of demand for office space by the larger conurbations in the North East. There are also a number of significant new developments in the region which will compete for enquiries.

The County has traditionally suffered from a lack of prime office development, albeit some modern office development has taken place at Dawdon and Foxcover (now re-branded as Spectrum Business Park) and at Peterlee (Whitehouse Point) under previous Enterprise Zone status. It is questionable, however, whether these locations are sustainable given that the premises are no longer rate-free for occupiers, the lack of supporting services and the availability of skilled workers in the area.

Belmont Business Park is another good example of office development. Its proximity to Durham City Centre is a key component to its success.

As the administrative centre of the County and having the best access to labour and most prosperous economy, Durham has a surprising lack of high quality office space. Mount Oswald represents the only real opportunity to develop office space within the city and hence is a key site to which priority should be given.

Whilst we have some reservations regarding the location of NETPark, the development that has been delivered so far on the site is of an excellent standard and is complemented by good quality residential development to the south. It is likely that further development on this site may come from university / research type uses or for business incubation or expansion space.

### **Employment Land – Industrial Development**

The County has some long-established industrial sites of Regional importance including the various industrial estates at Peterlee, Drum Industrial Estate in Chester-le-Street and Belmont Industrial Estate on the outskirts of Durham. Belmont is, however, close to capacity whilst further development at Drum is restricted by a number of highways constraints which may require significant (and costly) junction improvements at the A693. The large Aycliffe Industrial Estate and the Heighington Lane sites to the south with immediate access to the A1(M) provide a significant opportunity to encourage development of high quality industrial / warehouse / distribution space.

Some of the sites identified, such as Harmire Enterprise Park (including Stainton Grove Industrial Estate, which has historically acted as a feeder for Harmire), Beechburn, Low Willington and Tanfield Lea are important, albeit relatively small scale, local employment sites.

Other sites such as TurSDale, Berry Edge (Consett) and the Former Hawthorn Coke Works require significant infrastructure and / or land ownership resolution before they can be developed out and are likely, therefore, to be developed in the medium-to-long term. The Sites and Premises Study recommends that the County Council encourage investment at TurSDale as a high priority, given its potential strategic importance as a site at the centre of the County and immediately adjacent to Durham Services (Junction 61 of the A1).

Generally speaking, across the County, the areas of high demand suffer from a lack of adequate supply of employment land. Conversely, areas which have seen relatively lower levels of demand for space (in particular Bishop Auckland and Consett), have an apparent over-supply of employment land relative to the size (and potential size) of their markets.

### **Key Issues**

The Sites and Premises study identified that the County currently suffers from a lack of employment land along the central corridor, which itself is determined by the A1(M) and the A19. This has meant

that the County has not been able to capitalise on some of the emerging industries such as logistics and distribution, in the way that it potentially could.

### **Highway Restrictions**

Current problems exist with junction capacity at A1(M) intersections in restricting delivery of new development. The cost of meeting these improvements will render development uneconomic – especially for industrial use, where rental levels make development marginal in terms of viability. This position has already caused significant problems in bringing forward development at Drum and will more than likely cause similar problems elsewhere.

### **A1(M) / A19 Corridor**

The County has a wide and diverse geographic coverage, the nature of modern business, however, dictates that access to the national road network, railway connections – both passenger and freight – along with increasing focus on port related transportation are becoming increasingly important. This coupled to policy changes particularly in relation to office development mean that out of town business parks are no longer favoured, and industrial/distribution users will place greater importance on access to the road and, in time, rail freight network.

Relative to this, Durham's strengths are a vibrant and well connected City close to the A1 with excellent rail connectivity, and established industrial parks close to the A1 and A19. Market forces dictate that these locations are best placed to capitalise on demand. Conversely, there are key settlements located away from this corridor with an employment need. The supply of land in these areas is good but demand for these locations is more and more becoming restricted to that of local businesses, and those for when locational attributes are not a key consideration. The owner occupier market is also attracted to these locations due to cheaper land prices.

This position is further complicated by the fact that the number of sites and the availability of land which can be delivered in the short to medium term in those areas of high demand is limited.

These attributes were a key consideration in arriving at our opinions of how the County can improve its market position in terms of the wider regional hierarchy. Developers have been reluctant to develop speculatively without a financial incentive. It was considered that the Local Authority/County should take a more pro-active approach in bringing sites to the market, perhaps through a developer selection route. One significant advantage which the Council has over its competitors is ownership and control of large development sites. This will afford greater flexibility in terms of how potential transactions are structured.

In some instances this is not the case and there is an overriding need for the Local Authority to intervene in order to assemble land for development – for example at Mount Oswald where the owner's aspirations appear to be preventing the site from being brought forward for employment use.

The key opportunity sites which we believe offer real potential for Durham to compete with the wider market are:-

- Newton Aycliffe – Heighington Lane
- Drum – Major Highways Constraint
- TurSDale – Currently farmland
- Bowburn – Will require infrastructure
- Mount Oswald

- NETpark

### Employment – Barnard Castle

**Harmire Enterprise Park** is the primary employment location within Barnard Castle. It is set in an attractive estate close to the town centre and is situated opposite the large GlaxoSmithKline plant. GlaxoSmithKline located in Barnard Castle during the war period. Were they to be locating such a facility today, it is unlikely that they would choose such a rural setting.

The development of Harmire includes some small office buildings and some light industrial uses. This development should be seen as key to Barnard Castle, and will provide for spin off development from GlaxoSmithKline in the future, as well as local demand from small businesses.

Although relatively limited expansion land is now available at the Harmire site for further development, the district does suffer from a shortage in supply of high quality office and industrial premises. It is considered, therefore, that any such further development in the District should be encouraged at the estate, in order to provide expansion space for existing businesses and potential new businesses from the wider region.

The estate is supported by **Stainton Grove Industrial Estate**, located on the outskirts of Barnard Castle, in the village of Stainton. This estate is made up, at present, of 16 units with older premises dating from the 1940's and some more modern premises from the 1990's and early 2000's. Units range in size from 50m<sup>2</sup> (540 sq.ft) to 335m<sup>2</sup> (3,600 sq.ft), although the estate has a number of development plots (in addition to the potential redevelopment of the existing older stock) upon which new units could be constructed.

The estate has acted historically as a feeder for Harmire, with several businesses setting up at Stainton Grove, expanding, and then moving to Harmire. This estate, therefore, is considered to be of significant local importance.

**Enterprise House**, located on Harmire Enterprise Park in Barnard Castle, was constructed in 2003, and provides 11 business incubation offices suites ranging in size from 10.6m<sup>2</sup> (114 sq.ft) to 20.4m<sup>2</sup> (220 sq.ft), with on-site conference and meeting room facilities.

The development was opened in 1998 although expanded in October 2003 to provide furnished office space with conferencing and on-site facilities in a managed environment. Quoting rents are in the region of £215 m<sup>2</sup> (£20 sq.ft) which includes heating, utilities, reception staffing, call handling, cleaning and maintenance, and high-speed broadband Internet connection. Teesdale Training is based on site, and can provide training courses on information technology, business administration, retail and light engineering.

There is a limited provision of office units in Barnard Castle. The market is considered limited although there are clearly a number of offices located above shops and A2 premises. Some managed workspace has been delivered although this was procured by the Council and it is likely, due to low rental levels, that it continues to require revenue funding. It has long been our view that the Local Authority should seek to introduce a private sector partner to bring forward accommodation of this type.

We have recently undertaken discussions with Evans Easyspace with regard to both opportunities and as to the management arrangements which they have in respect of their portfolio. A number of key points were drawn from this. In circa 80% of their portfolio of existing premises, Evans have increased rental levels over a relatively short period of time to a commercially acceptable. This makes the delivery of further space viable in the future and brings greater stability in the market. It also proves that small businesses are not as price sensitive as it is perhaps thought. Evans believe that a

financial model can be developed where the Council transfers the asset to Evans, and they take on the majority of the risk, expand where appropriate and deliver back an income to the Local Authority. This is something which we would like to explore further and are happy to facilitate a meeting with the Local Authority and Evans.

Evans also display significant management competence. Their level of rental arrears is virtually zero. This is down to sheer economies of scale and a large management team managing all rental collections centrally as opposed to County Durham's system with each Local Authority holding its own centres. There is a wider opportunity here to transfer a portfolio of managed workspace across the County to a private sector partner albeit that there will be issues surrounding funding agreements and associated transfer of assets.

We anticipate that demand for this type of product – either pure offices or hybrid units would be good and, with the correct financial model, deliverable.

## 4.6 Retail Market

### Location

Barnard Castle is located to the west of County Durham in the district of Teesdale. The town is located west of Bishop Auckland, just off the A66 which links the A1 at Scotch Corner to Penrith and the north west. The town is approximately 42 kilometres (26 miles) from Durham and 36 kilometres (22 miles) from Darlington – one of Barnard Castle's key competitors in retail terms. Barnard Castle's unique selling point over other, competitor retail destinations is the pleasant market town feel to the shopping environment.

### Prime Shopping Street

The main shopping streets are Horsemarket and Market Place. Indeed the location of most of the national retailers present in the town (as identified above) – supported by further provision on Galgate and The Bank. The Morrisons supermarket is located to the rear of Horsemarket and Galgate, and undoubtedly brings shoppers into the town centre.

Galgate provides an extension to the retail core although is more secondary in offer with a predominance of smaller units accommodating a number of service retailers (post office, florists, pubs, hair salons, hot food takeaways etc.) and some financial services offices / building societies. Galgate is also home to the new Mackays ladieswear store which adds to the existing comparison offer in the town.

The Barnard Castle Retail Distinctiveness Study identifies The Bank as having a “*diverse, quality offer*” although “*it is showing signs of under-performing and losing its identity*”. It provides a number of boutique, niche or specialist retail outlets including antique, haberdashery, art gallery and ladieswear type outlets, many of which are not present elsewhere in the town and will be attractive to tourists and those seeking specialist goods. The street is somewhat distinct from the remainder of the town's retail offer however as it is separated by the Market Cross and the topography of the street which slopes away to the south, hiding many of the shops from view.

The Distinctiveness Study also identifies that Newgate is a “critical link” with the Bowes Museum although we consider that this street currently has little to offer in retail terms and the entrance to the museum is around 500 metres further down Newgate.

In addition to the primary retail activities in the town, there is also a weekly market on Market Place (Wednesdays) and a monthly Farmers' Market. Both of these add to the diversity of the town centre

offer and are reasonably popular – the Farmers' Market in particular which attracts customers from a wide area. The town also hosts an annual Food Festival at Bowes Museum although we consider that this should be held in the town centre in order to raise awareness of the retail offer.

According to the Distinctiveness Study, many local businesses believe the weekly market has a detrimental impact upon trade because it attracts shoppers seeking bargains (rather than those who would normally shop in the town centre) and because it uses space normally used for car parking: this is however a common view point that we come across on most services. In contrast most believe that the Farmers' Market attracts a different type of customer and that it has a positive impact on trade.

### Retail Rankings

We have analysed Barnard Castle's position in terms of retail rankings compared to other centres which compete for consumer expenditure in the region, using Management Horizons rankings (over three periods) and the Venuescore rankings for 2006. These are illustrated in the table below.

Town	Management Horizons Rankings			Venuescore Rankings
	2003 / 04	2000 / 01	1998 / 99	2006
Bishop Auckland	301	279	300	306
Darlington	83	98	90	61
Durham	154	142	177	193
Newton Aycliffe	685	572	614	569
Richmond	1268	828	826	1127
<b>Barnard Castle</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>1173</b>

Clearly Barnard Castle is ranked relatively low in comparison to its direct geographical competitors albeit it represents a slightly different retail environment due to its rural nature and the subsequent attraction of tourist visitors. In this sense, it is perhaps more directly comparable with Richmond although Barnard Castle is ranked considerably higher in the Management Horizons rankings but lower in the Venuescore rankings.

Barnard Castle has fallen lower in the rankings recently – particularly between 2000/01 and 2003/04 – although the last few years have seen a general trend in the continued polarisation towards larger centres and the provision of larger stores in such places. Many smaller centres, unless able to create niche markets or diversify their retail offer, have tended to decline.

### Retail Floorspace

The provision of retail floorspace is below in the table above although this dates from Experian data from 2004.

Barnard Castle	Number
Number of outlets	209
Floorspace (sq.ft.)	481,800

Source: Experian (2004)

Barnard Castle is a key market town and tourist destination in the County. The town has approximately 44,760 m<sup>2</sup> (481,800 sq.ft.) of retail floorspace. In total, there are some 209 retail outlets (the Distinctiveness Study identifies a total of 225 units in the town centre), of which 16 were vacant

as at mid-2004, accounting for 2,518 sq.m. (27,100 sq.ft.) or 5.6% of floorspace or a vacancy rate of 7.6% of units at this time (see below).

The floorspace in the town can be broken down as follows:-

Use	Sq.ft	Rank (major centres in County Durham)
Multiple	122,100	9
Retail	307,200	5
Service	353,400	1
Comparison	321,100	2
Convenience	85,000	7

**Source:** Experian, 2004

Barnard Castle has the highest amount of service floorspace out of the major retail centres in the County. It also has a relatively large amount of comparison floorspace – unsurprising given its popularity as a tourist location.

### **Retailer Representation**

Focus produces Town Reports for many large towns in the UK within which they identify the level of representation in each town of the top 20 retailers (ranked by ORC's forecast of average town centre sales). Although Focus do not produce a Town Report for Barnard Castle, it is possible to identify which of these retailers are present in the town in order to draw conclusions.

The town is currently home to Boots (ranked 1<sup>st</sup>) and Woolworths (4<sup>th</sup>) and whilst this is perhaps slightly low for a town of Barnard Castle's size, there are a number of national retailers who do not feature within the Focus-defined top 20 retailers list who have presence in the town centre and which are identified below.

The Barnard Castle Retail Distinctiveness Study identifies the following national retailers currently present in the town centre:-

**Table 4.15 National Retailers in Barnard Castle**

Bakers Oven	HSBC
Blockbuster	Johnsons Dry Cleaners
Boots	Mackays
Brittania Building Society	Morrisons
Clinton Cards	Natwest
Co-op Welcome	Savers
Corals	Stead & Simpson
CTN	Travel Care
Done Bookmakers	Victoria Wine
Edinburgh Woollen Mill	Woolworths
Finlays	

There are however, several other national retailers operating in the town including Barclays Banks, Boyes Department Store, Clarks Shoes and Saks Hairdressing Salon. There are several other regional operators with stores either in County Durham or the wider north east region. These include Darlington Building Society, Newcastle Building Society and the Crusty Loaf Bakery.

The Barnard Castle Retail Distinctiveness Study identifies that the town is reasonably well catered for in terms of fashion goods although acknowledges that menswear and young people's fashion is underprovided for. Fashion is key to any successful shopping location as it attracts people to the centre and encourages longer dwell times – crucial to stimulating expenditure. One of Barnard Castle's key competitors in retail terms, Darlington, has a number of national stores (including Marks and Spencer, BHS, Next, Primark, New Look, Top Shop, Bay Trading, Monsoon, Benetton, Principles, Evans, Dorothy Perkins and Bon Marche) all of which will draw shoppers seeking these types of goods away from Barnard Castle. In addition to fashion, the study identifies that young people have stated that they have to travel elsewhere for music and entertainment.

A view exists that Barnard Castle needs another supermarket / foodstore. Clearly this requires careful retail capacity analysis to determine need, if not already undertaken. In addition, the desire for a new supermarket perhaps goes against the focus on increasing the distinctiveness of the town's retail offer. The brands of which could be suggested to be homogeneous. However, a key point here is what is best for the economy of Barnard Castle. A supermarket will ultimately offer greater choice and reduce leakage of spending.

Some will argue that a supermarket may impact upon the trade / viability of some of the existing small, independent retailers in the town (butchers, bakers, grocers etc.) However, we consider that improving choice often leads to an improvement in the quality of the independent offer as retailers seek to differentiate themselves from this main stream. Careful planning of a supermarket to other retail premises in Barnard Castle are a reality and could ultimately improve the local economy overall.

In addition to the above, the study also identifies that the town suffers from a lack of provision of electrical and bulky goods. Additional comparison goods provision in the town would undoubtedly improve the range of goods available in the town.

The study also recommends an improved and diversified public house / restaurant offer within the town. We would endorse this view in order to attract and retain tourists and families in the town centre and to improve the town's evening economy.

### **Retailer Requirements**

It is possible to consider the Focus database of retailer requirements to provide an indication of potential demand from retail occupiers not currently represented in the town or from those with compromised space seeking to relocate into alternative premises.

This should be treated with caution, however, as not all of these requirements are necessarily for the town centre. Some fast food restaurant operators for instance may register requirements for a particular town although these are often for units of a size synonymous with out-of-town or retail park locations. Furthermore, operators may circulate requirements for every town where they are not represented, without having necessarily a genuine intention to locate there. Nevertheless, the Focus requirements database can be a useful guide to evaluating potential demand for retailer representation within a town centre and allow comparison between centres.

As at September 2006, the Focus database registered 2 requirements for Barnard Castle (this compares with 64 requirements in Durham, 42 in Darlington, 20 in Bishop Auckland, 9 in Richmond and 7 in Newton Aycliffe). The current requirements in Barnard Castle are:-

<b>Retailer</b>	<b>Size (sq.m.)</b>	<b>Size (sq.ft.)</b>
Aldi Stores	1,360	14,600
Whittard of Chelsea	45 - 185	500 - 2,000

We note that Alder King undertook an interview of national retailers as part of the Distinctiveness Study in to establish whether there is interest in locating in Barnard Castle. We understand that four retailers showed interest (subject to finding the correct location, unit size, servicing requirements etc.) including a coffee house, a bookshop and a fashion outlet – although clearly these do not appear as formal requirements in the Focus database. We would consider that all of these would be welcome additions to Barnard Castle's retail offer either as customer attractors or for increasing dwell times in the town centre. In view of this, we would recommend a dialogue be established with these retailers in order to assess their requirements and to attempt to identify suitable premises/development opportunities, and further retailers be approached in a similar way.

There is recognition that many national retailers would not be drawn to Barnard Castle because of its remote location and the current state of the retail market although we would suggest this is also because of the local demographic profile.

### **Vacant Premises**

The Distinctiveness Study identifies that at the time of the survey there were a total of 18 vacant out of a total of 225 units indicating a vacancy rate of 8%. As previously discussed, we identified that the vacancy rate as at 2004 (using Experian data) was around 7.6%. For a market town of this size we would consider this to be relatively normal – indeed of all the centres for which Experian survey, the average vacancy rate in 2005 was around 10%.

There are a number of vacant outlets in the prime area of Horsemarket which may represent something of an opportunity to attract new, high quality tenants into the town centre, as referred to above.

### **Rents and Yields**

The following section considers the retail rents prevalent in the primary shopping areas of the town centre. This is based on comparable information collected and analysed to provide the Zone A rental value in terms of zone A (ITZA). In Terms of Zone A is an expression of the rental value of a retail property. Zoning is the method of measurement of a shop which attributes greater value to the first 6 metres of sales space from the shop front and proportionately smaller values to progressive 6 metre strips of sales space towards the rear of the premises (with lower values being attributed to ancillary space, upper floors and basements).

Measurement by this method is a useful benchmark as it allows comparison of rents across different parts of the town centre and is the normal basis on which retailers consider the rental cost of traditional town centre shops.

Prime Zone A rents in the town centre are considered to be approximately £430 to £485 per m<sup>2</sup> (£40 to £45 per sq.ft.). According to Experian data, between 1993 and 2004, top retail rents in the town increased by around 84% which represents the highest percentage increase of the major centres in County Durham over the period, indicating considerable and significant growth over this period.

We consider that prime retail yields for property in the town centre are likely to be in the region of 5.75% – 6.00%.

### **Development Pipeline / Opportunities**

Barnard Castle currently had 4 applications for retail development in mid-2004 (Experian, May 2004), accounting for approximately 9,988 sq.m (107,510 sq.ft.) of potential retail floorspace.

## 4.7 SWOT and Summary

We have considered the SWOT analysis for Barnard Castle undertaken as part of the Retail Distinctiveness Study and added further comments based on our property market analysis.

<b>Strengths</b>
Good employment base
Town Centre Environmental Quality
Tourist destination (Bowes Museum, Castle)
Isolation protects identity
Glaxo Smith Kline - key employer
Harmire Enterprise Park
Some national retailer presence
Good independent retailer presence

<b>Opportunities</b>
Create niche / specialist retail offer
Expand Markets and speciality / local produce
Maximising the use of redundant community buildings

<b>Weaknesses</b>
Overshadowed in retail terms by other centres (Darlington etc.)
Lack of family / tourist focussed pubs / restaurants
Limited office market (and supply)
Physical restrictions on growth of town
Limited expansion land at Harmire
Car park management / enforcement
Bowes Museum detached from town centre
Lack of quality multiples

<b>Threats</b>
Loss of employment should Glaxo Smith Kline close, spin-off businesses relocating
A66 Dual Carriage - ease of access elsewhere
Marginal viability of shops
High house prices
Retail market worsens and national retailers relocate
Falling visitor numbers
Developments in other urban centres, increasing competition
Lack of servicing for shops
Traffic around Butter Market
Lack of units of right size and configuration for modern retailers

The key issues arising from this property market appraisal are as follows:

- The town is a key market town in the County
- Tourism is important for the local economy;
- Town has seen high rental growth in recent years;
- Some development may be required / recommended to strengthen its position as a key local and regional centre;
- Retailer requirements exist;
- Unlikely that existing vacant stock will be sufficient to meet the needs of current requirements;
- Leakage of spending to Darlington is a key issue – especially as Darlington is in the process of implementing major public realm work and shopping centre development;
- Car parking is an issue in the town centre which may act as a deterrent to potential customers;
- Need to improve public realm / accessibility.

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## 5 Regeneration and Planning Policy Context

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### 5.1 Introduction

In order to understand the policy context underpinning the strategic vision for Barnard Castle this section of the report includes:

- An appraisal of the local regeneration context.
- A summary of the national and regional planning policy context; and
- A summary of the local planning policy context.

### 5.2 Regeneration Policy

#### **City Regions and Urban / Rural Interdependencies**

The Northern Way Growth Strategy for the northern regions of England – the North East, the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber – sets out a series of proposals to raise productivity in the three northern regions, and foresees growth largely being driven by the city regions centred, in the North East, on the Tees Valley and Tyne and Wear.

Research by the Centre for Rural Economy (CRE)<sup>7</sup> has identified Teesdale as one of four rural districts in the North East which are outside the region's two city regions. The relationship between Barnard Castle and the urban areas of Darlington and Durham City is less straightforward than in some of the Northumberland market towns where there is a close commuting relationship with Newcastle.

The authors of the study argue that there is a need to re-invent the role of market towns, which they see as an important niche in the region's spatial economy. The market towns play an important role in attracting in-migrants to the North East, many of whom are relatively prosperous and entrepreneurial individuals who bring new skills and generate wealth for the region. The market towns also provide an attractive image for the region, which is widely used in promotional literature and marketing, and attract many day visitors from outside the North East, as well as acting as local service centres for the residents and businesses both within the towns and their hinterlands.

#### **Leading the Way – The Regional Economic Strategy**

The Regional Economic Strategy sets out how the partners in the region will deliver greater and sustainable prosperity in the region. Along with the Regional Spatial Strategy (see below) it sets a strategic framework for the development and delivery of the Barnard Castle Vision.

The economic geography of the North East means that the conurbations, smaller settlements and rural areas all have a role to play in contributing to the step change in regional economic development that the RES is seeking to deliver. Whilst the city regions are seen as the main drivers of economic growth, the region is also seeking to build on its assets with regard to quality of place to generate

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<sup>7</sup> City Regions and Rural Areas in North East England, Centre for Rural Economy, 2005

sustainable economic growth, recognising the importance of rural areas and market towns in offering a complementary alternative to the more urban areas for knowledge based business, as well as their recognised contribution to tourism and the region's image. The role market towns such as Barnard Castle play in providing employment, business and services to the more remote rural areas is recognised.

A number of principles are outlined which will underpin the investment arising from the RES, and these apply to the investment which will be made through the Barnard Castle Vision. These include:

- Investing only in areas where the maximum return on investment can be achieved. In rural areas this means investing in key market towns such as Barnard Castle, where more deprived and remote rural areas can be linked to the opportunities created.
- Intervening only where the market outcome is less than optimal for society.
- Investing with an understanding of the prospects of levering in private sector funding.
- Ensuring that all people are able to benefit from the resulting economic growth, and that the long-term consequences of growth are appreciated.

The RES recognises Barnard Castle as one of the key rural settlements which can drive regional growth, with the Vision study determining the focus of that growth. A focus on the knowledge economy facilitated through ICT provision is highlighted as an option.

### **A Strategy for Investment in Rural Service Centres**

Following the end of the Countryside Agency-led Market Town Initiative and reflecting One NorthEast's enhanced responsibility for economic and social development in the rural parts of the North East, ONE is working with partners to develop a strategy for investment in rural service centres. The approach recognises the importance of market towns in providing employment and services to their rural hinterlands and is aligned with the RES principle of achieving the maximum return on public investment.

The strategy will build on the good practice identified in the evaluations of the Market Towns Initiative in the region, including in Barnard Castle, and will adopt an evidence-based approach to investment which will ensure that the targeted market towns make the maximum possible contribution to achieving the RES. A rolling programme of investment in the region's key market towns will be developed. The Barnard Castle Vision is a pilot project under this approach.

### **West Durham Rural Pathfinder**

The West Durham Rural Pathfinder is one of eight regional pilot projects established in the wake of the 2004 Modernising Rural Delivery White Paper, to explore how to achieve improved rural service delivery in West Durham, covering Teesdale and Wear Valley. The Pathfinder has worked to improve processes of service delivery and has focussed on four themes for rural development: community capability building and strengthening social enterprise; skills and enterprise development in support of sustainable tourism; health and quality of life of young people; and development of the Knowledge Economy. These themes are also important for the future development of Barnard Castle although there may be a different emphasis in terms of the priorities for investment and action.

### **Teesdale Community Strategy**

Teesdale Local Strategic Partnership developed a Community Strategy in 2004 which set out a vision of Teesdale as a place where young people will stay and raise their families. The LSP has recognised a number of limitations of the existing Community Strategy and is in the process of producing a revised one. The LSP Theme Groups have been tasked with developing key elements of the revised Strategy and the Economic Theme group has identified a number of strategic objectives under the broad headings of business, people and place.

Whilst there is still considerable work to be done to fully develop the issues and opportunities related to these objectives, they are shown in draft form in the table below:

<b>Business</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Raising aspirations &amp; developing a culture of enterprise.</li> <li>2. Increasing the birth rate of sustainable new businesses</li> <li>3. Supporting the expansion of existing businesses</li> <li>4. Improving business performance &amp; competitiveness</li> <li>5. Encourage relocation of high value businesses through Inward investment</li> <li>6. Identifying and investing in the key industry sectors likely to create employment opportunities</li> <li>7. Business Support</li> <li>8. financial Resources (revenue &amp; capital) to support the expansion &amp; growth</li> <li>9. Developing Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations &amp; Social Enterprises</li> </ol>
<b>People</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishing current and anticipated skills needs</li> <li>2. Tackling the current worklessness agenda</li> <li>3. Preparing the community to meet future employment needs</li> </ol>
<b>Place</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning</li> <li>2. Land, Sites &amp; Premises</li> <li>3. Physical Development</li> <li>4. ICT Infrastructure</li> <li>5. Transport</li> <li>6. Developing Teesdale as an all year round visitor destination</li> <li>7. Marketing</li> </ol>

### **County Durham Tourism Partnership**

County Durham Tourism Partnership has recently been established as the Area Tourism Partnership (ATP). The ATP is working on behalf of the businesses and public agencies in County Durham to encourage more people to visit and enjoy the area.

As part of the process for developing a working ATP, a draft Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP) and a draft Business Plan have been developed. The draft ATMaP establishes a series of priorities to develop the tourism industry in County Durham. These include:

- The need to adopt a strategic approach in promoting the area;
- Establishing a fresh approach to visitor information provision;
- Improving the activities, experiences, attractions and accommodation available;
- The need to develop an efficient business work force; and
- Developing an integrated transportation system to support tourism.

CDTP is working in the short term to improve the quality of management information relating to the visitor economy in County Durham, in order to provide a robust base on which decisions about future priorities can be made. A branding exercise is underway to establish a brand for the County. CDTP has also developed a series of criteria against which potential tourism projects in the County will be assessed before a decision is made on whether they should be included in the ATMaP. This will apply to all tourism projects being developed in Teesdale, including the Rope Bridge and Hamsterley Forest developments. The criteria include factors such as: fit with regional objectives and County vision; deliverability; sustainability; risk assessment; and requirement for public funding.

## 5.3 Planning Policy

### **National Policy**

Central government is currently in the process of delivering a planning reform agenda which includes the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, changes to secondary legislation, reviews of planning policy guidance and a broad step-change in the culture of the planning system.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2005) introduces what the government believes is a more flexible plan making system at the regional and local level. It focuses on improving the compulsory purchase regime in support of policies on investment in major infrastructure and regeneration.

As part of the government reform, Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) are gradually replacing Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs). They aim to explain statutory provisions and provide guidance to local authorities and others involved in the planning system. Those likely to inform a Strategic Vision for Barnard Castle are detailed below.

### **Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)**

PPS1 replaces Planning Policy Guidance Note 1 as the Government's overarching planning policy on the delivery of sustainable development. The key principles include:

- Achieving an integrated approach to sustainable development;
- Addressing environmental issues, including climate change;
- The promotion of high quality, inclusive design;
- Encouraging mixed use development;
- Early consideration of access issues; and
- A commitment to involving the community in decision making.

**Planning Policy Guidance note 3: Housing (2000)**

PPG3 includes a statement of the government's housing objectives based on the “plan, monitor and manage” approach to housing provision. This approach advocates the general importance of monitoring to achieve successful forward planning.

Explanations of affordable housing policy and emphasis on re-use of urban land and buildings are included. A substantial section explores the creation of sustainable residential environments, highlighting the role of public transport provision, making the best use of land and planning necessary greenfield development.

**Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres (2005)**

The key message contained in PPG6 is that healthy town centres require both vitality and viability. To achieve this involves:

- Forward planning for the growth of existing centres;
- Focusing development in existing centres;
- Encouraging a broad range of services in a good quality environment;
- Establishing a thriving evening economy;
- Creating centres that are accessible by all; and
- Promoting the retention and enhancement of town centre markets.

**Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (2004)**

PPS7 outlines the Government's objectives for rural areas. It focuses on establishing sustainable rural communities by:

- Promoting sustainable economic growth and diversification;
- Respecting and enhancing local distinctiveness;
- Protecting the open countryside and our most valued landscapes;
- Focusing development in existing towns and villages; and
- Encouraging mixed use development.

**Planning Policy Guidance note 13: Transport (2001)**

PPG13 aims to promote more sustainable transport choices for both the carrying of people and for moving freight. This requires an integrated planning and transport system to be established which addresses sustainable transportation at the national, regional and local level.

The guidance note promotes environmental sustainability through increased accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling.

**Planning Policy Guidance note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994)**

This guidance note lays out the Government's 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 Government supports the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. PPG15 recognizes the importance of the historic environment in sustaining local distinctiveness and

supporting leisure and recreation. It also establishes a need to view sustainable economic growth and conservation as complementary to each other, rather than in opposition.

#### **Planning Policy Guidance note 16: Archaeology and Planning (1990)**

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.

The guidance note encourages archaeological remains to be viewed as finite, non-renewable resources which require appropriate management to ensure that they survive in good condition. Advice is provided on the handling of archaeological remains and discoveries through the development plan and development control systems.

#### **Planning Policy Guidance note 25: Planning and Flood Risk (2001)**

PPG25 explains how flood risk should be managed by the planning and development process. It emphasises the importance of management and reduction of flood risk in planning. The susceptibility of land to flooding is specified as a material planning consideration in the guidance.

The PPG states that the Environment Agency has the lead role in providing advice on flood issues, and that developers should fund flood defenses, where they are required because of the development. It also stipulates that flood management scheme should be employed in an environmentally sensitive manner.

#### **Regional Policy**

Following the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) became part of the statutory development plan and has been renamed as Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). These regional strategies are intended to support the Government's commitment to sustainable development by providing a longer-term planning framework which considers strategic land-use and transport issues.

At the strategic level, Barnard Castle is included in the north-east region. An RPG note for this area was adopted in 2002 and, in line with government guidance, is currently under review.

#### **Regional Planning Guidance note 1: North-East**

This guidance note was prepared around four key themes: regeneration, opportunity, accessibility and conservation. Together these themes are an essential element of the RPG strategy for the distribution of development in the North East.

The broad aim for the North-East is to create:

*"...a dynamic economy, a healthy environment and a society where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential."*

To achieve this, the RPG proposes a strategic vision for the area. The elements of this vision of particular relevance to Barnard Castle are noted below.

- To adapt and revitalise the region's town and city centres;
- To secure rural regeneration;
- To improve accessibility to employment, retail, education, health and social facilities;
- To tackle social exclusion;
- To recognise the region's cultural heritage as an important resource;
- To enhance the role of market towns; and

- To provide additional housing in line with economic development.

### **Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East**

A draft RSS has been produced for the North-East. It is anticipated that comments will be produced in the winter of 2006 with a view of the final document being published in spring 2007.

The draft document establishes planning principles for the north-east under four key themes. The themes are to:

- Deliver economic prosperity and growth;
- Deliver sustainable communities;
- Conserve, enhance and capitalise upon the region's diverse natural and built environment, heritage and culture; and
- Improve connectivity and accessibility within and beyond the region.

### **County Durham Structure Plan**

The County Council adopted the current Structure Plan in March 1999. This sets out a strategic vision for County Durham up to the year 2006. In Central Government's reform of the planning system, Structure Plans are currently being phased out. Once published, the RSS for the North-East will provide planning input at the strategic level.

By 2006, the Structure Plan aimed to;

- Generate and provide development to meet the social and economic needs of the county's residents in a way which does not compromise the quality of the environment;
- Improve the quality of life for people living in the county, assisting those with particular disadvantages in particular; and
- Improve and protect the built and natural environment.

The Structure Plan intended to meet these aims by addressing the particular needs and opportunities of individual strategic planning areas in the county. Barnard Castle falls within The Dales Sub-Area of the Structure Plan. It is identified as the leading service and employment provider in the area. The plan also mentions the importance of maintaining the historic character of the market town.

### **Local Policy**

A range of local policy and strategy documents will be referenced in developing a Strategic Vision for Barnard Castle. This section of the report intends to highlight any aims and objectives within the documents which are relevant to the future of the area. The key messages identified in these documents will be carried forward as an action plan for the area is developed.

### **Teesdale District Local Plan**

Teesdale Local Plan, adopted in 1998, contains a number of policies of relevance to the preparation of a visioning and development strategy for Barnard Castle. The policies contained in the plan are intended to guide new development to the period to 2010.

*Employment and the Local Economy*

In the context of Teesdale District, Barnard Castle adopts a central position economically; acting as the dominant employment centre in the area. This is reflected in Chapter 6 of the Local Plan which recognises the importance of sustaining Barnard Castle's employment base and encourages the diversification of its economy.

In line with the Government's objectives to achieve sustainable communities, the Local Plan seeks to allocate employment land at key settlements which: maximise the use of previously developed land, adjoin key settlements, and connect with public transport links.

#### *Shopping and Commerce*

According to the Local Plan, the key challenges that face shopping and office uses in Barnard Castle are: the growth of out of town shopping and the growth in car ownership. Despite these trends, Barnard Castle has maintained its status as the major shopping and commercial centre for the district.

Improving the appearance of Barnard Castle's Primary Shopping Area is identified as a priority in the Local Plan. The need to establish the Primary Shopping Area as the 'heart' of commercial activity in the town is supported by Policy SC3 in the Local Plan which states:

*"Within the primary shopping area of Barnard Castle... proposals for change of use of ground floor frontages from Class A1 will not be permitted where they would be materially harmful to the primary shopping function, vitality and viability of the town centre."*

Further, the Local Plan highlights major new retail and leisure development as a priority within the Barnard Castle Town Centre Boundary. Policy SC1 establishes a presumption against this level of development outside the Town Centre.

#### *Tourism and Recreation*

Teesdale District benefits from a high quality natural and built environment. These natural and physical assets attract visitors and a number of tourist attractions, including Barnard Castle, support significant tourist flows. The Local Plan highlights the importance of tourism to the local economy and encourages a sustainable, balanced approach to tourism development. It states that tourism is:

*"... an activity that will be encouraged in a way which maximises the benefits to visitors and residents alike, and minimises potential impact on social, economic and environmental interests."*

Policy TR1 requires new development associated with tourism to:

- Satisfactorily respect the form, character and setting of the settlement;
- Provide adequate servicing and access;
- Not adversely affect the amenity of occupants in adjoining properties; and
- Be designed sympathetically in terms of the scale, proportion, materials and architectural detail of its surroundings.

#### *Built Environment*

The Local Plan identifies Barnard Castle's historic character as unique and the Castle itself has been recognised as being of national importance. The Plan seeks to protect the town's historic assets by designating a large proportion of the town as a Conservation Area. The district's Conservation Areas are protected by Policy BENV4 which requires development within and/or adjoining Conservation Areas to:

- respect the quality and character of the area;
- use materials and landscaping appropriate to and sympathetic with the characteristics of the area;
- minimise traffic noise and other environmental impacts that could be detrimental to the character of the area; and
- maintain trees, hedgerows, landscape features, views and undeveloped areas which contribute to the appearance of the area.

The Local Plan allocates Barnard Castle as an Area of Archaeological Interest which, according to Policy BENV12, should be safeguarded. Development proposals for this area must therefore include measures to prevent the loss of archaeological remains and/or information.

#### *The Natural Environment*

The Local Plan recognises that the high quality environment in Teesdale District attracts visitors to the area, provides a pleasant living and working environment and enhances the image of County Durham. Barnard Castle is allocated in the Plan as an Area of High Landscape Value. In accordance with Policy ENV3, development in this area would only be permitted where it does not detract from the area's special character.

#### **Teesdale Local Development Framework**

Over the next few years, the Council's Local Plan will be updated and replaced with a Local Development Framework (LDF). This process has begun with the Teesdale District Council Local Development Scheme (July 2006) which outlines how the LDF will develop over the next five years.

It is anticipated that the Core Strategy will be adopted in December 2009. This strategy will be the key document in the LDF, establishing the vision and strategic policies for development in the District. All the other documents in the LDF will conform to the Core Strategy.

As part of the LDF, Area Action Plans (AAPs) will be produced. These plans are intended for areas of major change or areas of conservation. Though no programme is yet in place, it is intended that an AAP for Barnard Castle will be developed.

#### **Teesdale District Council Statement of Community Involvement**

In line with the Government's reform of the planning system, Teesdale District Council have produced a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which sets the standards for stakeholder and community consultation throughout the Local Development Framework process. The Teesdale SCI was adopted in June 2006 following consultation.

The structure for community consultation is defined within the SCI, which establishes four key stages of public engagement during the development of the LDF:

- Information – assist those with no previous experience of the planning system, inform the public about how the structure of consultation and feedback, and negotiate with objectors.
- Consultation – consultation takes place at all stages of producing the Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).
- Participation – the district council will engage with the public through established community groups, the use public notices, the council's website and public meetings.

- Feedback – providing feedback to the public is intended to help local communities become more involved in the planning process.

The SCI considers community involvement in the processing of planning applications as equally important to the development of policy. Developers are encouraged to enter pre-application discussions with planning officers in order to establish any need for additional community involvement.

### **Barnard Castle Conservation Area Appraisal**

The Third Draft (December 2005) appraises the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (CA), providing a number of pointers of relevance to this study.

The 1981 CA covers 110 Ha and includes 234 listed buildings, of which seven are Grade I and eleven are Grade II\*. The inner and outer Walls of the Castle and Barnard Castle Bridge are Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

#### *Origins and Development*

Following the grant of an estate covering upper Teesdale by William II, the de Baliol family made Barnard Castle its centre by building a small fort overlooking the roman fording point. Bernard de Baliol built a stone castle about 1130, hence his name was attached to the place.

The medieval town was set out with long narrow Burgage plots to maximise road frontage, which established the structure and road pattern of the town. The building of the bridge across the Tees in 1596 created a new route into the town, and allowed development along the new Bridgegate. The Market Cross was erected in 1747 and remains a visual focal point today. The economic boost provided by the textile industry resulted in a series of fine Georgian dwellings along main roads. In similar fashion, the railway generated business and in the 19th Century town houses were constructed off Galgate, Newgate and Back Lane. Many important local buildings were built in this period including Witham Hall, the NE Counties School, the Bowes Museum and the Wesleyan Church.

Therefore much of the town's core was in place by the beginning of the 20th Century. Recent change has seen the redevelopment of the Bridgegate area in the 1950s, and the opening of a supermarket and large car park to the rear of Galgate. The growth of car ownership has impacted on the centre of the town, and similarly the increase in road haulage has led to traffic problems.

#### *Character and Appearance*

The CA is notable for the following key features:

- The survival of the mediaeval plan form
- A fine stone built town with linear Georgian stone facades
- High concentration of listed buildings
- The impressive Castle on its rocky outcrop
- The imposing Bowes Museum
- Dramatic vistas both into and out of town
- Steep gradients, changing levels and sense of enclosure
- Busy shopping area
- Surprise views and corners

- Pedestrian route ways

#### *Special Features and Areas of Concern*

The CA presents relatively few sites with potential for major redevelopment, with the main threats to its character are of a smaller more detailed nature including:

- Special features such as shop fronts, signage, open space, trees and views into and out of the CA;
- Levels of traffic and parking, which affect the pedestrian experience and the visual qualities of the CA;
- Pressures for residential development on smaller backland sites;
- The need for more visual information to enhance the tourist experience of the town.

#### *The Way Forward*

The CA provides guidance to build upon that in the County Council shopfronts design guide, and recommends potential extensions to the CA boundary.

#### **Barnard Castle Conservation Area Partnership**

Operated by Teesdale DC, English Heritage and Durham County Council, this provides financial assistance for the repair of historic buildings of townscape importance within the town's Conservation Area.

#### **Market Towns Local Distinctiveness Study**

The role of market towns within the region has been identified by One NorthEast Regional Development Agency as a key factor in the overall economy of the region. Therefore the agency has commissioned consultants to investigate what makes market towns distinctive from other towns and cities. The project is a pilot initiative under the Rural Environment team's Enterprising Market Towns programme. Phase 1 seeks to understand what makes a successful market town retail experience, identify gaps and design a package of measures including delivery mechanisms and funding to ensure implementation. Phase 2 will deliver the package of measures.

The brief specifies the aim of the project as:

*“to carry out action research into creating a more distinctive retail experience that will result in an improved contribution by market towns to the wider economic development agenda.”*

The Key Findings Report presents the results of the consultation and work to date, which highlights the following issues of particular relevance:

- Generally, participants from Barnard Castle were very much more positive about their own town than those in either Alnwick or Guisborough;
- There was a strong awareness of what the town has to offer and a palpable sense of community and civic pride;
- There was also an awareness of factors such as the high quality environment, the Bowes Museum, the Castle and the river providing a strong attractor to visitors;

- Trips further afield to Richmond or Darlington are only necessary for larger items and for clothes, music and entertainment in the case of younger people;
- There was some feeling that shops and outlets geared towards tourism tended to be expensive for the local market;
- In terms of retail distinctiveness, local participants felt that the many antique shops in town and the renowned furniture makers provided goods that could not be found elsewhere, whilst the specialist food shops could be distinctive by making more of local produce;
- There is a perceived lack of leisure facilities;
- There is a perception of a lack of parking and of free parking in particular;

The research phase of the study concluded that the “mix” that creates retail distinctiveness is based on:

- The quality of the historic market town environment and its setting within a rural landscape;
- The good range of small independent shops with a focus on arts, crafts, gifts and specialist food, yet underpinned by a good range of shops and services for local people that needs to comprise national retailers;
- The presence of a Market, with farmers’ markets and speciality markets supplementing the overall attractiveness of market towns; and
- Strong theme of local produce, which is linked into the appeal of events, festivals and rural shows that celebrates community life and acts as a tourism attractor.

The Survey Report for Barnard Castle (which will present the results of the study for the town) will be made available on 6 October following presentation to the client group.

## 5.4 Existing and Potential Development Opportunities

### Introduction

There are a number of existing and potential development opportunities which are being brought forward in the District, both by the public and private sectors. These include developments which have planning permission, or are in the public domain and are being actively pursued.

### Recent developments

Recent developments have sought to sustainable economic, environmental and social development in Barnard Castle and include residential developments at Thorngate, the former Council Depot and Woodside. A number of successive schemes have helped to revitalise the public realm of Galgate in particular, but also other streets within the town centre Conservation Area. The public realm improvements on Galgate were funded largely by Durham CC, with additional funding from the Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme and Teesdale DC.

Planned and potential development opportunities within the town are summarised below. There are also a number of other potential developments further outside the town, including tourist developments such as at Hamsterley Forest and the Rope Bridge, which could have a significant impact on the town itself.

### **Witham Hall**

Redevelopment scheme comprising refurbishment of listed Hall fronting Market Place, new events and community hall, theatre, disabled access and ancillary facilities. Listed building planning approval reference: 6/2003/0553/DM/LB. Plans of the scheme have been seen by the team, but cannot be reproduced here as they have received planning approval and therefore the copyright is now held by the applicant.

Funding is being sought to deliver this scheme. The redevelopment would provide disabled access and a comprehensive refurbishment of the existing facility, enable use by a wide range of groups, and would diversify the evening economy by providing a theatre and a much-improved community hall with ancillary facilities.

### **Parish Hall**

A preferred redevelopment scheme has been selected through a design competition. It is understood that any planning application for the site will need to reflect the design aspirations of the preferred scheme. Funding sources are currently being sought and a decision is required on the best means of delivery of the scheme.

The existing building has a poor relationship with the listed church behind, and with Newgate. A well-designed replacement building could promote pedestrian movement along Newgate to more successfully link the Bowes Museum to the town centre and the Castle.

### **Harmire Business Park**

The business park is a successful local employer, and at present is fully occupied. Some plots within the park have been designed to provide expansion space, for example Enterprise House. Therefore some additional floorspace could be accommodated within the existing bounds of the business park. However, it is understood from Teesdale DC that this limited increase could only provide for current and not future demand for additional floorspace.

### **Bowes Museum**

The Bowes Trust has successfully bid for £3.3 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund to improve the entire museum experience for visitors of all ages with a complete makeover. Significant repairs are to be carried out to the Grade 1 listed building in order to protect the unique collections inside. The comprehensive works include:

- A redesigned entrance hall
- Improved visitor amenities including a new lift and toilets
- New signage and displays
- A new library, archive and study centre
- A lifelong learning space incorporating two classrooms and an office
- Space developed on the second floor suitable for lectures, workshops and events

### **Smiths Grove Works**

Located on Queen Street, this site is currently occupied by a manufacturing works. Being close to the historic heart of the town and one of the few previously developed sites, it is an ideal location for residential development. Therefore it is allocated in the Local Plan for new housing, with part of the site allocated for car parking. The current occupiers of the site are being assisted by Teesdale DC to

relocate to Stainton Grove in order to release the site for private housing, plus sheltered housing for the elderly.

#### **Stainton Grove**

Stainton Grove is a former military base, including housing and light industrial units. ONE and their partners are funding the redevelopment of some of the units, which do not suit the needs of modern occupiers. It is understood from Teesdale DC that a range of unit sizes will be provided, to assist business start-ups in the area.

#### **Glaxo Smith Klein (GSK)**

It is understood that GSK are recruiting additional staff at present, although whether this could involve the construction of any additional floorspace or the redevelopment of any existing buildings is not known at present.

#### **Startforth Park**

It is understood from Teesdale DC that the site between Bowes Road and the HM Young Offenders Institution off Startforth Park could have potential for future residential development. Consequently this site is identified as such on the Vision Options plans included in Section 8.

## **5.5 Planning Constraints**

### **Introduction**

Stage 2 of the Visioning exercise aims to provide an aspirational 20 year holistic strategic vision for Barnard Castle. Therefore the team are investigating all potential factors which could promote or hinder the sustainable development of the District in an economic, environmental and social sense.

Barnard Castle has a number of constraints which prevent or make development undesirable, including the River Tees and the location of historically important buildings such as the Castle and Bowes Museum where development should not detract from their settings.

Whilst the designation of permitted land uses in the Local Plan is a useful tool for the facilitation of development, there are circumstances in which development can be prevented in certain locations due to planning policy. It is therefore necessary to explore ways in which suitable development can be promoted, and whether over the 20 year timescale established for the Visioning exercise local planning policies would benefit from amendment.

### **Development Limits**

The development limits established by the Local Plan prevent the development of additional sites outside the existing built-up area of Barnard Castle. Whilst this policy protects the rural landscape setting and preserves the established physical framework of the town, it also constrains the development of greenfield land for additional residential or employment use which could promote a more sustainable future for town and the district.

### **Heritage and Design**

As shown on the attached Heritage Plan, the Barnard Castle Conservation Area covers the historic core of the town. Within this area, development is constrained by the need to reflect the unique historic character of the town. Policies BENV1, 2 and 3 relate to Listed Buildings, and Policy BENV4 relates to the Conservation Area. Policies BENV8 (Shopfronts) and BENV9 (Advertisements)

establish the need for appropriate design of these elements. The impact of development on Archaeological remains must be taken into account under Policy BENV12.

### Employment Land Availability

The expansion of Harmire Business Park to provide additional employment floorspace is largely constrained by the development limits established by the Local Plan and the reserved bypass route to the north (see attached plans). The existing pattern of land use will also constrain future expansion including the golf course and reserved bypass routes to the north, GSK to the east, residential development to the south and the Percy Beck County Wildlife Site to the west.

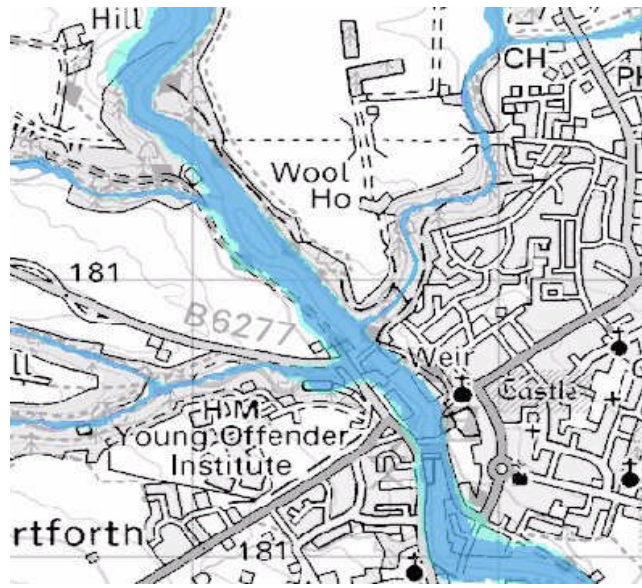
### Flooding

The Environment Agency floodplain designations are shown on the plan below. Blue indicates flooding where defences are not present, green indicates the extent of extreme flood. As the plans show, parts of Bridgegate, Thorngate and Bank are susceptible to flooding and new development would require a flood risk assessment to be submitted with any planning application.

*Flood Risk Plan 1: Wider Context*



*Flood Risk Plan 2: Barnard Castle centre*



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## 6 Environmental and Physical Characteristics

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### 6.1 Introduction

In establishing a 20-year vision for the future of Barnard Castle it is necessary to understand the physical characteristics of the town. This section presents a physical appraisal of Barnard Castle focusing on townscape, heritage and environmental assets and issues. The attached photographic appraisal sheets and plans should be read in conjunction with this section of the report.

### 6.2 Townscape Appraisal

Barnard Castle is an attractive market town with medieval origins built to the northern side of the River Tees in the rural District of Teesdale. It is a popular visitor destination, due to its location as a base for discovering the district, and for its significant townscape assets. Land use in the town is shown the figure below.

#### **Figure 6.1 Land Use**

See Appendix I

#### **Historic Character**

Barnard Castle's historic character is unique. The town has been recognised nationally as one of the 51 most historically and architecturally important towns in Great Britain. The plan below highlights the principal phases in the development of the town, from the Castle and medieval core to the twentieth century industrial and residential developments which expanded the town northwards.

#### **Figure 6.2 Historic Development: Character Areas**

See Appendix II

The medieval town was set out with long narrow Burgage plots to maximise road frontage, which established the structure and road pattern of the town. This structure is still evident today to the backs of the historic streets of Bank, Market Place and Horse Market, where numerous narrow alleyways divide gardens or backland development.

As highlighted by the Conservation Area Appraisal (Third Draft) the town centre is notable for the following key features:

- The survival of the mediaeval plan form;
- A fine stone built town with linear Georgian stone facades;
- High concentration of listed buildings;
- The impressive Castle on its rocky outcrop;
- The imposing Bowes Museum;
- Dramatic vistas both into and out of town;

- Steep gradients, changing levels and sense of enclosure;
- Busy shopping area;
- Surprise views and corners; and
- Pedestrian route ways.

### **Character Areas**

The town can be divided into areas with a similar urban form, land uses and character, based upon periods of historical development as shown on the Character Areas Plan above.

#### *Castle and medieval core*

From the River Tees the Castle ruins are an imposing feature against the skyline, with the surviving tower and walls forming a visual landmark and physical barrier. The setting within the landscape accentuates the presence of the castle, being in the curve of the river and set atop the Scar Top natural embankment. However, the castle is barely visible from the town side of the river as development to the western side of the Market Place and Horse Market have obscured the view. Hence there is a need for prominent signage and visitor interpretation points to enable pedestrians to easily find the Castle. Significant improvements have been made to the pedestrian environment of the approaches to the Castle, which now provide pleasant routes to the river and County Bridge.

#### *Market Place and Horsemarket*

Market Place and Horsemarket were developed from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century along the line of the former Castle wall. Today this remains the heart of the town centre, with Georgian buildings forming strong built frontages. All the buildings in Market Place are listed, with eight being listed Grade II\*. Many of the buildings on Horsemarket are also listed. Development is of a more substantial scale than elsewhere in the town, being generally 3 stories and with many four-bayed frontages. The highway, parking bays and pedestrian footways together provide some distance between built frontages, providing a sense of scale to the route. Either end terminates in a key node (both pedestrian and vehicular) for the town: the Market Cross (or Buttermart) to the south, and the junction with Galgate to the north. There is a vibrant feel to the area, especially on market days held on the cobbled area to the north side of the street. Some vacancy exists, in particular the prominent Partners store on Horsemarket.

#### *Galgate, Newgate, Bank expansion*

The town expanded significantly during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century, with the construction of a total of 77 listed buildings on Galgate alone. The distance between buildings widens to 45m as the land drops towards the west, affording a long view towards the listed Methodist church and the countryside beyond as one travels into Barnard Castle from the east. The street has a wide, formal character, and is lined with Victorian and Georgian properties which are now largely retail uses or guest/public houses. The area is generally in good condition following recent street scene and parking improvements, however there are some lower value retail uses and some (albeit limited) vacancy.

The gradient and interesting roofscape of Bank affords good views to the south towards open countryside, and to the north towards the Market Cross. As stated in the Conservation Area Appraisal (Third Draft), of the fifty properties 33 are listed including the Grade I listed Tudor building Blagraves House. Two blocks of 1950s housing do not positively contribute to the otherwise dramatic nature of the street. Thorngate is again a historic street, albeit with a number of more recent developments on Thorngate Wynd which do not successfully address the corner between the two.

Bridgegate retains little of its historic character, following demolition in the 1950s due to flood risk. This area now has an open nature affording views of the County Bridge and Castle.

Newgate remains a pleasant primarily residential area and an important route into town from the east, with an increasingly leafy character towards the edge of town. St Marys Church forms a major landmark, and the grounds provide a green backland route to Bank. However there are a number of features which do not preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area:

The 1950s church hall close to the Market Cross does not match the character of the street;

The low wall enclosing the unsurfaced "Hole in the Wall" car park (accessed off Queen Street) forms a break in the built form;

The Land Rover garage and workshops behind create another break in the character of the area.

The Livestock Mart is an important resource for the town, although it is understood that the volume and size of traffic accessing the site cause congestion and other problems. Being close to the town centre, the site is in a prime location for residential development should the facility relocate.

#### *19<sup>th</sup> Century: Bowes Museum*

The Bowes Museum is a magnificent French château-style museum is set in parkland, and houses one of the country's greatest private collections of fine and decorative art. It is a major gateway into the town and a significant draw of visitors, however the pedestrian linkages between it and the town are weak. Many visitors drive to the museum, even though it is located just 800 metres from the Market Cross.

### **Figure 6.3 Heritage Areas**

See Appendix III

#### *Views, Landmarks and Nodes*

As shown on the attached plan below, there are a number of important views out of Barnard Castle including to surrounding countryside. The most significant are from Galgate, Bank and the Bowes Museum to the southwest.

Landmarks include St Mary's church from the south, the Castle from the riverside and from Startforth, and the Bowes Museum from Newgate and the Demesnes to the south.

### **Figure 6.4 Barnard Castle Views and Vistas**

See Appendix IV

#### *Landscape Qualities and Assets*

The Demasenes is a large area of open space to the south east of the town, owned by the District Council. Although it is a pleasant and substantial area, accessibility and facilities are limited, such that it is an under-utilised resource for the town.

The River Tees establishes a green corridor to the south and west of the town, with its tributaries forming green fingers to provide access into the open countryside beyond.

### **Figure 6.5 Landscape**

See Appendix V

### **Figure 6.6 Historic Character**

See Appendix VI

**Figure 6.7 Townscape Character**

See Appendix VII

**6.3 Existing and Potential Development Opportunity Sites**

As outlined in figure 6.8 overleaf, the development opportunity sites could comprise of the following:

- Garage site on Newgate
- Livestock Mart
- Smiths Grove Works on Queen Street
- Workshops off Back Road
- Working Mens Club, Morrisons car park
- Startforth Park
- Former Partners store, Horsemarket

In addition, there are opportunities to improve the public realm, signage and connectivity of the town through the opportunities below:

- Car park between Queen Street and Newgate;
- Perimeter of Morrisons car park;
- Linkages to and use of the Demesnes;
- Alleyways between Bank and Old School Close;
- Alleyways and back yards off Market Place and Hall Street;
- Improve linkages to Bowes, Castle and River; and
- Corner of Thorngate or Thorngate Wynd.

**Figure 6.8 Existing and Potential Development Opportunities**

See Appendix VIII

**Figure 6.9 Connectivity And Public Realm Opportunities**

See Appendix IX

## 6.4 SWOT Analysis and Summary

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Unique historic character	Pockets of 1950s and later development which do not respect the town's historic character	Development or redevelopment of opportunity sites	Increased levels of traffic
234 listed buildings: 7 Grade I 11 Grade II*	Heavy levels of HGV traffic	Enhancement of pedestrian connectivity, particularly to the Castle, the Bowes Museum and the Demesnes	Vacancy leading to poor maintenance of historic properties
Landscape setting	Weak linkages between the Bowes Museum and Castle	Continued careful management of the historic environment	Insensitive infill development
Strong sense of local distinctiveness	Weak signage between the Horsemarket/Galgate junction and the Castle	Improvement of perimeter to Morrisons car park	Continuing weak linkages between Bowes Museum, Castle and
Views of open countryside	Some prominent vacancies	Improved signage and lighting to make better use of the numerous burgage plot alleyways	
Vibrant town centre, particularly on market days			

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## 7 Transport and Access Appraisal

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### 7.1 Introduction

In order to understand transport and access issues influencing the direction and content of a strategic vision for Barnard Castle this section of the report provides:

- A summary of the local transport planning policy context, and
- An appraisal of local transport access and infrastructure facilities and issues.

### 7.2 Local Transport Policy Review

#### ***Durham County Council Second Local Transport Plan 2006-2011***

Durham County Council's (DCC) Second Local Transport Plan (LTP2) has the following aims pertinent to rural areas such as Barnard Castle:

- Bring about equality and social inclusion through better accessibility;
- Fulfil the transport role in the delivery and support of a vibrant and efficient economy;
- Instil a culture of safety;
- Contribute to the improvement of peoples' health and access to health services; and
- Protect the environment.

Schemes and measures that may be implemented in rural areas through LTP2, depending on funding priorities, are listed below:

- Community Transport schemes;
- Disabled Access Improvements;
- Concessionary fares;
- Walking and cycling routes – LTP2 will give priority to routes in built-up areas that have the potential to gain modal shift;
- Support for the parish paths programme – to provide improvements, including interpretation on signing and the creation of circular walks, on the existing footpath network around rural villages to attract tourists to the area, hence contributing to the local economy;
- School Travel Plans; and
- Speed Management.

LTP2 also sets out the way in which public parking will be managed in the county. On-street and public parking will be managed in order to:

- Provide sufficient (but not excessive) supply of short term visitor parking to sustain town centres and the local economy;
- Allow for an enforcement regime that will avoid significant traffic management and road safety problems;
- Deter commuter parking in main towns and other built up areas adequately served by public transport;
- Provide sufficient parking facilities for cycles and motorcycles; and
- Reduce parking outside schools.

### **Teesdale District Local Plan**

The following Local Plan policies are of relevance to Barnard Castle:

*Policy T1 – Land will be safeguarded from development for the A67/A688 Barnard Castle bypass.*

*Policy T3 – Where new development is proposed in the town centre area of Barnard Castle, or will involve the change of use of existing buildings parking provision will be assessed against the following criteria: -*

- A) *The number of parking spaces which can be provided;*
- B) *The proximity of existing public car parking provision;*
- C) *The road safety implications of a leaner parking requirement; and*
- D) *The merits of the development within the historic setting.*

*Policy T5 – Land at the Smiths Grove Works, Barnard Castle is allocated for car parking.*

*Policy T9 – Through planning conditions and planning agreements, the Council will seek to provide secure cycle parking facilities in Barnard Castle town centre, in all areas connected with cycle routes and associated with social and community facilities.*

Policy T8 also commits to encourage cycling in the District with the provision of off-road cycle routes pursued.

## **7.3 Transport Infrastructure**

Barnard Castle is located at the intersection of the A67 and A688 and at a strategic crossing point of the River Tees. The A67 and A688 link Barnard Castle with Darlington to the east and Bishop Auckland to the north-east. The A67 and A688 also provide important links between the A1(M) and the A66 cross-country route which runs to the south of the town.

The main river crossing on this route is the County Bridge which is an Ancient Monument and has a camera monitored 7.5 tonne weight limit. Due to the narrow width of the bridge, traffic movement is controlled by shuttle-working signal system. As the bridge is an Ancient Monument it would not be possible to widen it.

## Figure 7.1 Transport and Movement

*See Appendix X*

The town centre has four main access points or gateways - Galgate, Newgate, Thorngate and Bridgegate. Galgate, the principal through-route provides access from the north and east at the confluence of the A67, A688 and B6278. Galgate largely follows the route of the former Bowes to Binchester Roman road before diverting round the line of the old castle wall into Horse Market and the Market Place. The unclassified Newgate links the town centre with the Bowes Museum, whilst Thorngate leads to a footbridge across the river. Bridgegate leads to the County Bridge and links to the strategic A66 cross-country route.

The Teesdale District Local Plan identifies problems of heavy traffic movement on east-west routes through the District, particularly at Barnard Castle due to the weight restriction on the County Bridge. The town centre is understood to experience relatively high traffic flows, especially during the summer months as tourists explore the town and surrounding Dales area. The A67 through the town centre is a popular cross-country route connecting with the A66.

To relieve the town centre of through traffic there are long-standing proposals to develop a bypass to the north of the town. A general alignment for the bypass is protected by Policy T1 of the current Teesdale District Local Plan. The development would require a new river crossing to the north of the existing County Bridge. However, the proposal has not been included in either the first or second Local Transport Plan (LTP), and it is understood that there is uncertainty over the viability of the development. Whilst a bypass would remove through traffic from the town centre, this could also impact upon passing trade for local shops and services. It is also noted in the Local Plan that “any future bypass of Barnard Castle would result in an increase in traffic, especially heavy goods vehicles, with the resulting pressure on other settlements on the east-west routes”. It is understood that there are further concerns that the proposed alignment will shape future expansion of the town and detract from views from County Bridge and the Castle. Although the bypass is still viewed as a potential future highways project by Durham County Council, it is currently ranked as a very low priority scheme, and would be likely to be the subject of a Public Planning Inquiry.

There is a perception amongst some local residents that Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) use the town centre as a through route. The 7.5 tonne weight limit on County Bridge prevents large HGVs from entering the town from the west. However, the Market Cross at the junction of the A67 and Newgate has been damaged on a number of occasions by HGVs, particularly by vehicles making the tight right-turn from Newgate to the Market Place. Durham County Council and the Police have investigated concerns over HGV through-traffic in the past, stopping all HGVs entering the town and recording their origin and destination. They found that the majority of HGVs had a legitimate reason to be in the town such as servicing local shops and businesses, or accessing the Harmine Road Industrial Estate or Cattle Market on Vere Road, to the north of Galgate.

A Traffic Management Working Group currently operates in Barnard Castle. This involves Teesdale District Council, Durham County Council and the local community, and addresses issues of traffic management giving consideration to the implications for the physical environment.

## 7.4 Public Transport

Bus stops are located on all main routes into the town. The principal routes are to Darlington, operating to an hourly frequency, and to Middleton-in-Teesdale and the upper Dales area. Other routes operate infrequent services. In addition there is a Rural Ride service that operates to a set

route but on a hail and ride basis around Barnard Castle. A major scheme proposal within LTP2 would lead to the improvement of existing bus services to Darlington. The 'Transit 15' scheme would develop a high quality, high frequency and integrated bus network to connect the main towns and through to the city regions. Implementation of this proposal would lead to improved service frequency on the Barnard Castle to Darlington route from 60 minutes to 15 minutes. The service would be express with a limited number of stops which would be upgraded with Real-Time Information. The Transit 15 proposal would be implemented in the latter years of the LTP2 period.

LTP2 includes an Accessibility Strategy; the accessibility planning process has highlighted the specific issue of access to Hospital and outpatient facilities from Barnard Castle. Journey times to the nearest hospital can be 60 minutes and more from Barnard Castle and the surrounding area. This access issue is being addressed through the Durham and Darlington Transport for Health Partnership and the Rural Bus Challenge. Examples of this include bus route 70 from Barnard Castle to Darlington via the Memorial Hospital, with a passenger assistant on board.

Darlington is the nearest mainline railway station and is served by intercity, cross-country and regional trains (including transpennine) operating on the East Coast Main Line. A heritage line operates between Darlington and Bishop Auckland.

The characteristic of dispersed towns and villages presents problems for the viability of public transport services, and it is important that community transport is available to fill the gap. LTP2 identifies the following community transport schemes operating in the Barnard Castle area - Barnard Castle GP-RSVP Voluntary Car Scheme, Access Bus Dial-a-Ride (for mobility impaired persons) and TCR-Teesdale, a Community Transport mini-bus operator.

## 7.5 Private Transport

The 2001 Census revealed that 21% of households within Teesdale did not have access to a car or van. This compared to 36% of households within the North East, and 27% of all households within England. As Teesdale District is predominantly rural with an average population density of 30 people per square kilometre, the need for a car to access employment and services is greater than in more urban districts with associated public transport facilities and service provision. Consequently the percentage of households without a car is lower in Teesdale than at the regional and national level, and correspondingly the percentage of households with 1, 2, 3 or more cars is higher in Teesdale.

Analysis of 2001 Census Journey to Work data has revealed that the vast majority (64%) of people living within Barnard Castle also work within the town. 30% of people living and working within the town (defined as the Barnard Castle East, North and West wards) travel to work by car either as driver or passenger. A further 53% of people who lived and worked in Barnard Castle at the time of the Census walk to work and 3% cycle to work.

Of all people aged 16-74 in employment and resident in Barnard Castle, 48% travel to work by car. 38% walk to work and 2% cycle to work. Just 1% travel to work by bus.

## 7.6 Cycling / Pedestrian

Two signed cycle routes run along roads through the town. The routes link the town with surrounding areas, leading northwards, eastwards and westwards from Scar Top. In addition the LTP2 Cycling Strategy includes proposals to develop a new cycle route connecting Barnard Castle

with Bishop Auckland via the disused railway. It is also understood that a new National Byway is proposed to the north of the town.

During the five year programme of LTP1 DCC introduced cycle stands at a number of strategic points in the town centre, including in the Market Place and outside the Post Office and Leisure Centre.

There are a large number of alleyways between, and in some cases beneath, buildings linking streets. These alleyways aid pedestrian permeability and are well used by residents during the daytime. However, they do not appear to be well used during the evenings and by visitors to the town due to a lack of lighting and signage. Therefore whilst these alleyways already add to local distinctiveness and aid pedestrian permeability, there is scope to increase their usage and importance through potential public realm, lighting and signing improvements.

LTP2 reports that a survey on crime and anti-social behaviour undertaken by the Wear and Tees Community Safety Partnership has shown that half of all respondents from the Teesdale area said they feel unsafe walking in rural built-up areas at night.

## 7.7 Access Strategy

Durham County Council has demonstrated that the majority of HGVs in Barnard Castle are accessing local shops, businesses and services. The location of the Cattle Market on Vere Road leads to large vehicles passing through the town centre on Wednesdays in particular. It is understood that proposals to relocate the Market to an edge-of-town site have recently been refused planning permission. It is also understood that incidents of HGVs striking the Market Cross when turning from Newgate to the Market Place result from HGVs avoiding the County Bridge weight limit and rerouting via Abbey Bridge near Egglestone Abbey before joining Newgate. The alternative route for HGVs wishing to enter Barnard Castle from the west is a large detour via Scotch Corner and the A1(M).

As a popular tourist town, Barnard Castle attracts large number of visitors every year. The majority of visitors travel to the town by car or coach. Whilst signage to car and coach parking appears to be adequate, signage for pedestrians is not as comprehensive with very few signs indicating the direction and distance to attractions. Therefore although the Bowes Museum is approximately 800 metres from the junction of Galgate and the Horse Market, it is understood that the majority of visitors to the town centre travel on to the museum by car rather than on foot.

Due to kerb heights, cobbles, the lack of formal crossing points and the topography of the town, access for disabled persons on certain sections of road can be difficult. DCC works with the Teesdale Disability Access Forum to identify required access improvements such as dropped kerbs. Money has been allocated through the LTP process for such improvements, although no locations have yet been identified.

## 7.8 Car Parking

There is a perceived lack of parking in the town, particularly during the summer months when tourists visit the town. Two hour limited stay on-street parking is available along Galgate, the Horse Market and Market Place. In addition, there is a free off-street car park on Queen Street, known locally as the 'Hole in the Wall' car park, and Pay and Display parking to the rear of the Morrisons supermarket. Both off-street car parks are within a short walk of all town centre attractions. Within the Teesdale District Local Plan there is also provision for a new car park on land currently occupied by the Smiths

Grove Works. The development of the public car park is linked to the relocation from the site by its current occupants; consequently no timescale is set for this development.

Illegal parking has been a longstanding problem in the town centre, with vehicles parked for long periods in time limited bays, bus stops/loading bays and on Double-Yellow Lines. Due to deficiencies in Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) covering the town the enforcement of offences has been complicated. Consequently, indiscriminate parking offences often could not be ticketed, and the town centre failed to achieve a high turnover of parked vehicles. Recent rationalisation of TROs for the town will make enforcement easier and should lead to a reduction in parking offences. Furthermore, Durham County Council is set to decriminalise parking enforcement on a district by district basis from 2007 onwards. If this rollout is successful it is expected that parking enforcement in Teesdale will be handed over to a private contractor in the future.

Improved parking enforcement should help to increase the turnover of short-stay on-street parking spaces in the town centre, and force traders and office workers to park off-street in long stay car parks. This will free up parking spaces for visitors to the town and pass-by trade, but may increase competition for off-street parking. It is understood that Teesdale District Council is set to carry out improvements to the 'Hole in the Wall' car park later this year. As part of the improvement work it is possible that charges will be introduced to cover management and maintenance. The car park is not surfaced and has no demarcation of parking bays, but is well used seven days a week at approximately 80% of capacity.

Off-street parking to the rear of Morrisons is subject the charges detailed in table 7.1 below between 0800 and 1800 hours 7 days a week. Disabled drivers can park for up to 3 hours free of charge.

<b>Duration of Stay</b>	<b>Charge</b>
Up to 1 hour	£0.60
Up to 2 hours	£1.00
Up to 3 hours	£1.50
Up to 4 hours	£2.50
Over 4 hours	£3.00

There is designated coach parking within the car park to the rear of Morrisons, to the rear of the Bowes Museum and on the roadside outside the Museum gates. There is also a coach drop-off point outside the Tourist Information Centre, although this is unavailable on Market Days. It is understood that many coach drivers would prefer to park at an out-of-town location having dropped passengers off within the town centre.

## 7.9 SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
64% of people who live in Barnard Castle also work in the town.	Historic nature of town presents constraints to physical infrastructure improvements – e.g. County Bridge, Market Cross.	More residents living and working within the town could be encouraged to walk or cycle to work given appropriate infrastructure improvements.	Decline of local employment would increase traffic flows as more people commute out of Barnard Castle to work.
Self contained nature of town results in a high percentage of residents walking to work.	County Bridge prevents HGVs entering Barnard Castle from the east, and results in either a long detour or inappropriate routing via Newgate and Market Cross.	Rationalisation of TROs should help to relieve parking pressures on Galgate, Horse Market and Market Place, and free up parking for visitors and pass-by trade.	Rationalisation of TROs will lead to increased competition for long-stay parking.
Traffic flows on the A67 and on-street parking bring benefit of pass-by trade.	Existing competition for car parking amongst residents and visitors and for short-stay/long-stay purposes. This situation has not been helped by difficulties enforcing parking restrictions.	Potential bypass would provide an alternative through-route reducing traffic flows through the town centre, and provide an alternative access to the town for HGVs from the west, particularly to the Harmine Road Industrial Estate.	Bypass would not eliminate problems of HGV movements – minority of HGVs are through traffic.
	Lack of signage for pedestrians to visitor attractions and local services.	Improvements to existing network of alleyways could encourage use by visitors.	Problems delivering Smiths Grove Works car park may detract from the attractiveness of the town for visitors and business start-ups.
	Lack of visitor information to access the town – poor bus timetable and routing information and lack of sustainable travel advice on tourist information website.	Historic nature of town encourages concentration on softer measures such as encouraging walking and cycling, in line with policy objectives.	

	Lack of cycle routes through town.	Proximity to Darlington for employment and mainline rail services will be enhanced by proposed Transit 15 high frequency bus service.	
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## 7.10 Priorities

All priorities should be addressed in consultation with the Barnard Castle Traffic Management Working Group.

- Investigate need for additional off-street parking, potential sites and means of delivery;
- Develop cycle infrastructure;
- Improve public realm, lighting and signage for existing pedestrian routes and alleyways;
- Improve sustainable transport information availability, particularly through the internet;
- Consider the development of a HGV rerouting strategy; and
- Continue to improve accessibility for the mobility impaired.

## 7.11 Summary

Barnard Castle town centre experiences relatively high traffic flows due to its location at the confluence of the A67, A688 and A66; its role as a strategic river crossing point and its attractiveness as a tourist destination. High traffic flows bring both advantages and disadvantages. Given its historic nature there are few opportunities for physical infrastructure improvements. The proposed bypass would reduce traffic in the town centre, but would increase the attractiveness of the east-west route thereby having a knock-on effect on neighbouring villages, and would not eliminate problems with HGVs in the town centre.

A large proportion of the resident population of Barnard Castle also work within the town. Furthermore, because of the self-contained nature of the town, walking is a popular means of getting to work. A Vision for Barnard Castle should seek to continue the concentration of residential areas, employment and services, and encourage walking and cycling to employment and visitor attractions through infrastructure improvements and soft measures.

It is difficult to judge the perceived problem of parking before the effect of increased enforcement is felt. It is hoped by DCC that the rationalisation of TROs and the potential future move to decriminalised parking enforcement will help to ensure a healthy turnover of parking spaces in the main shopping areas and close to visitor attractions. However, another consequence of this may be the need to provide additional off-street long-stay car parking.

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## 8 Conclusions and Key Issues

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### 8.1 Conclusions

This section draws together the findings of the baseline review of Barnard Castle and explores some of the strengths and weaknesses exhibited by the town, and some of the opportunities and challenges which will need to be faced over the next twenty years. Some of the key issues in relation to place, business and people are then outlined.

Barnard Castle is a market town which acts as a social, economic and service centre for its rural hinterland which extends across the district of Teesdale. It is the main shopping and leisure destination in the district as well as its administrative centre. The town is home to two secondary schools and three small primary schools, a number of banks, a variety of retailers, pubs and restaurants as well as a leisure centre and sports facilities. Tourism is also important to the area, and the Castle and Bowes Museum are popular destinations for visitors whilst a number of town centre businesses are also sustained by tourist expenditure.

Acting as a service centre for the population of Teesdale, Barnard Castle also serves a significant hinterland. A ten mile catchment of Barnard Castle covers parts of three districts, including Darlington and the Wear Valley. The town's population is 6,702, whilst nearly 10,000 people live within five miles of the town and over 24,000 in its hinterland.

Barnard Castle is well placed to set out a path towards a more robust, well balanced economy, building upon key strengths and assets. These are reviewed in more detail in the following section, but include the built environment and heritage assets of the town, a strong culture of local enterprise, and the town's attractive location.

## 8.2 Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths and weakness relevant to each of the areas examined in the baseline report have been identified in the relevant sections. The table below highlights some of the over-arching issues for Barnard Castle.

The principal strength is the town itself. It is very attractive, in many ways a classic market town, and although there are restrictions in terms of its physical development, it is a town with a number of interesting attractions and a considerable number of retail outlets to hold visitors.

The town is also large enough to accommodate a smaller office market, and there is considerable potential with regard to creative and knowledge based industries, drawn from the many highly skilled people living locally and who could be attracted to the area.

As with any historic town, there are also a number of weaknesses. Some of these relate to the built environment, in terms of vehicle movement and access, and the variable nature of the retail offer. Of equal importance is the challenge with regard to affordable housing and the lack of space for office based businesses. There is a need to reconcile the need for some new development with protecting and enhancing the built environment which underpins the attractiveness of the town for residents and visitors alike.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Built / Heritage Environment - Attractive Market Town setting	Historic nature of town presents constraints to physical infrastructure improvements – e.g. County Bridge, Market Cross.
Large retail base (independents and national)	Empty retail units in prime locations, and quality of some of the larger retailers
Strong enterprise culture	Viability of many businesses, particularly retail, and opportunities for growth
Key tourism assets within the town	Issues with car parking restricting visitor numbers, and regular congestion off-putting
Attractive housing and good local schools	Affordability of housing and effects on population mix
Strong sense of community	Ageing population
Major manufacturer providing well paid jobs	Over-dependence on a few economic sectors
Proximity to outstanding countryside – North Yorkshire and the Dales	Poor visitor infrastructure, including visitor accommodation and children friendly restaurants
Large number of people working from home	Lack of office and other business accommodation

### 8.3 Opportunities and Challenges

Barnard Castle is fortunate to have the potential to pursue a number of opportunities over the next twenty years, and these are set out in the Issues and Options Report. The table below sets out some of the key opportunities for the town to build on its current strengths and some of the challenges associated with each.

A **continuation of current trends** would see the continued growth of the older population and decline of the number of young people, but the town would preserve its heritage and built environment assets. The current problem of increasingly unaffordable housing would continue.

A focus on the **visitor economy** would see the town increasing its role as a Gateway to the Dales and acting as a focus for high value tourism. There would be opportunities to create jobs and businesses in the tourism sector although challenges would include raising the quality of the existing offer and the limited scope to redevelop the town centre.

**Growing the employment base** in the town would provide an opportunity to diversify the economy to reduce dependence on a narrow range of sectors and employers. It would increase the sustainability of the town but would depend on the development of appropriate sites and premises and the provision of support to help small companies grow.

Developing the role of Barnard Castle as a **rural service centre** would increase its importance to the wider district and provide a sustainable future for the town. However, there would be considerable challenges in providing a range of services which could reduce leakage of expenditure of the Dale and into the larger service centres of Darlington and Bishop Auckland.

An intensification of current trends would lead to Barnard Castle becoming a **dormitory / retirement town**. This would build on the town's attractiveness as a location for retired people and prosperous commuters and would protect the current attractive nature of the town. There would be associated challenges such as a lack of young people in the town leading to difficulties for businesses and some services becoming unviable.

The major change in developing these opportunities is the functioning of the town itself, and the infrastructure assets, in terms of retail and office accommodation and high quality visitor accommodation and attractions.

Opportunities	Challenges
Increase the town's population by continuing to attract a prosperous in-migrant community	Continued increase in house prices would change population mix and potentially threaten the viability of some services
Maintain the current high quality built and historic environment	
Capitalise on increasing leisure and tourist markets by seeking to increase the role of the visitor economy	Limited scope for redevelopment in town centre (ownerships, Listed status etc)
Develop role as gateway to the Dales	Matching the quality of the North Yorkshire offer
Develop the town as a food and drink centre of excellence	Scale, range and quality of visitor accommodation would need to be improved
Respond to existing demand from employers for more employment sites within / close to Barnard Castle	Difficulty of finding appropriate sites for development
Encourage business growth to diversify the local economy and reduce reliance on large employers	Removing constraints to growth related to premises and availability of an appropriately skilled labour force
Build on entrepreneurial culture by enhancing conditions to attract highly skilled and motivated people from outside the area	Ensuring new businesses are provided with the support they need to grow and create employment
Increase Barnard Castle's importance to its rural hinterland through improved local shops and services	Providing an offer which is an attractive alternative to Darlington / Bishop Auckland
Exploit the opportunities of an ageing population in terms of disposable income, provision of goods and services	May be difficult to provide appropriate labour in the absence of affordable housing

## 8.4 Key Issues: Place, Business and People

There are three inter-related elements which support sustainable and mixed communities and a robust and thriving local economy. These are:

- Place
- Business
- People

This section highlights some of the key issues facing the town in relation to each of these factors.

### Place

Barnard Castle and Teesdale offer a **high quality of life**, as a result of the attractive historic and natural environment, the low rates of crime, good levels of health, low rates of deprivation and decent local schools. The area's popularity has been reflected in a **growing population** and **rising house prices** in recent years, which has had an impact on both people and businesses in the town (see below).

The historic environment means that Barnard Castle is subject to a **number of constraints affecting development**, including the River Tees and the location of historically important buildings such as the Castle and the Bowes Museum. The large number of listed premises in the town means opportunities for development are limited, and the existing premises do not always meet modern requirements, with many of the **retail units too small** to attract national retailers. Often these are owned by local landlords who have limited scope to invest to improve their quality, making it difficult to achieve a more vibrant retail offer in the town.

There is **limited modern office space** available within Barnard Castle although a number of current development proposals include the provision of some small scale office units. The **provision of additional employment land at the Harmire Business Park is constrained** by the reserved by-pass route, existing commercial and residential development to the east and south and a wildlife site to the west, although there is some scope to increase the density of the existing development. Whilst employment land is available elsewhere it does not offer the same high quality environment provided by Harmire.

There are a number of issues relating to **traffic and movement around the town** which will have an important influence on the future development of Barnard Castle. For a number of reasons the town experiences **relatively high traffic flows** which bring both advantages and disadvantages. Given the historic nature of the town there are few opportunities for physical infrastructure improvements. The proposed bypass would reduce traffic in the town centre, but would increase the attractiveness of the east-west route thereby having a knock-on effect on neighbouring villages, and would not eliminate **problems with HGVs in the town centre**, many of which are servicing local needs.

Parking is perceived as a major issue in the town although enforcement has been an issue and it is hoped that improved enforcement will increase result in a healthy turnover of parking spaces in the main shopping areas and close to visitor attractions. Additional off-street long-stay car parking may be needed as a result.

## Business

Barnard Castle is a **major provider of employment and enterprise within Teesdale**, with nearly 50% of the district's jobs located in the town. At the time of the last Census nearly 1,700 people commuted into the town to work, the majority from the rest of Teesdale.

The town has a **narrowly based economy** with a small number of major employers – GSK, Deerbolt YOI and the District Council – accounting for a high proportion of total employment. Some **key sectors are at risk of further decline** with continuing adjustments with regard to agriculture and land management industries presenting a medium term challenge, and larger centres with a more attractive offer providing a threat to retail employment. There are also **opportunities associated with these established sectors**, for example to establish a distinct and high quality retail offer serving both local people and a higher value tourist market, diversifying agricultural activity into local food and produce and developing Barnard Castle as a renowned centre for food and drink.

Other sectors present considerable opportunities, with **tourism estimated to support over 1,200 jobs** directly and indirectly across the district and supporting many Barnard Castle businesses, including shops, restaurants and accommodation providers. There is potential to diversify the economic base by **growing knowledge based sectors** including higher value services and the cultural and creative industries, **capitalising on the attractive environment and quality of life offer** to attract entrepreneurs including those interested in working from home, although this will depend on the provision of **appropriate ICT infrastructure** and the **availability of suitable premises**.

The Teesdale economy is an **enterprising** one in which the number of businesses per head is significantly higher than the national average. However, a **large proportion of these businesses are very small**, which may reflect constraints on growth such as the lack of available premises or workforce to support expansion, or a preference on the part of local entrepreneurs to keep their businesses small.

## People

The high quality of life and resulting popularity of Barnard Castle and Teesdale has **changed the nature of the population** within the district. There has been considerable population growth over the past twenty years and this has been driven by an increase in the number of local residents aged 40-64. In the future this will result in a corresponding **increase in the population aged over 65**. At the same time both the proportion and absolute number of **people aged 16-24 living in the district has declined** and this is forecast to continue as young people leave to access employment, education and affordable housing opportunities elsewhere. The level of out-commuting from Teesdale has also risen over the past ten years although the district remains relatively self-contained compared to other parts of the County.

A continuation of these changes could have a number of implications for the nature of Barnard Castle as a town, the provision of local services and the success of local businesses. There is potential for Barnard Castle to become almost exclusively a retirement / dormitory town, with an increasingly elderly population, a growing number of residents who commute to well-paid work elsewhere and young people increasingly priced out of living locally. This could undermine the viability of some local services, such as some smaller schools, and could constrain the growth of local businesses by restricting ability to recruit suitable workers, with an increasing proportion of the town's population retired from the labour market. It could also result in some economic opportunities in the provision of products, services and care to an elderly population.

The working age population in Barnard Castle is **relatively poorly qualified** compared to the country as a whole, with nearly one-third holding no formal qualifications. This is **reflected in the employment structure**, with over one quarter of Barnard Castle residents working as process, plant or machine operators or in elementary occupations, limiting income levels. This is unlikely to be sustainable in the longer term as businesses increasingly demand qualified workers and competition from abroad limits opportunities for those with few skills.

Local schools perform relatively well but the lack of significant further and higher education opportunities locally means **many of the more able young people leave** the area following the completion of formal education. Partnership working between local employers and education providers may be required to increase opportunities for young people to participate in high quality training and raise participation in learning.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that **those who move into Barnard Castle** from outside the district are more likely to **hold higher levels of qualifications** – often required to earn the levels of income required to afford local house prices. However, once in-migrants are resident in Barnard Castle, these skills are not always fully utilised due to retirement, semi-retirement and ‘down-shifting’, representing a lost opportunity for the town.