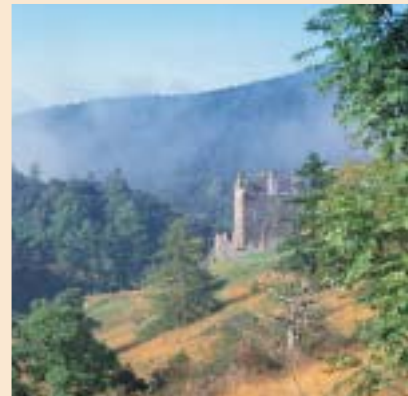


CHAPTER 3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction
Rural resources
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Fishing
- Minerals
Business and industry
Retailing
Tourism



CHAPTER 3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

“Recognising the needs of rural areas is integral to the strategy ...”



Scottish Borders Economic Development Strategy New Ways published in 1999

“The reinstatement of the Borders railway is seen as an important catalyst to achieving economic growth ...”

- 3.1 Providing the right conditions for economic prosperity is a key priority for the Council and its partners and is embodied in the key elements of the development strategy set out in Chapter 1. Economic development encompasses a number of subject areas, many of which overlap other topic chapters of the Plan. This chapter comprises: rural resources (comprising farming, forestry, fishing and mineral extraction); business and industry (jobs in manufacturing, services and offices); tourism; and retailing which is not only a major jobs provider but complements many other areas of economic activity including tourism.
- 3.2 Recognising the needs of rural areas is integral to the strategy and is reflected in policy approaches tailored to rural areas in this Plan. The Government's approach to rural development is set out in its 2000 publication, 'Rural Scotland - A New Approach' which emphasises the role that communities must play in shaping local action.
- 3.3 The context for the Structure Plan policies is set by Government guidance, principally National Planning Policy Guidelines (NPPGs): NPPG2 *Business and Industry*, NPPG8 *Town Centres and Retailing* and NPPG15 *Rural Development*. The local context is set by the Scottish Borders Economic Development Strategy and by the South of Scotland Objective 2 Plan. The Economic Development Strategy is being taken forward by a partnership comprising the Council, local enterprise company and other relevant interests. The Strategy is about managing structural employment change, encouraging diversification of the economy and making the Scottish Borders a competitive place.
- 3.4 The implementation of *New Ways* will be assisted by potential funding secured through the South of Scotland Objective 2 Programme, drawing down funds from the European Union and by Government grants obtained through Assisted Area status which cover large areas of the region. The initial area regeneration priorities under the Objective 2 Programme are Hawick, Selkirk, Innerleithen/Walkerburn, Eyemouth/East Berwickshire and Coldstream. Rural economic development will also be guided by the work of the Scottish Borders Rural Partnership which aims to support communities in addressing a variety of local social, economic and environmental issues.
- 3.5 The reinstatement of the Borders railway is seen as an important catalyst to achieving economic growth in terms of direct and indirect job creation. The railway could be expected to enhance the potential for tourism, open up the Edinburgh labour market and improve the perception of the Scottish Borders as a “connected place”, one of the themes in *New Ways*. The main roles

of the Structure Plan in fulfilling the requirements of national guidance and contributing to the implementation of *New Ways* are:

- ◆ to provide a clear locational strategy for development supported by the necessary transport links and infrastructure
- ◆ to provide for a range and choice of employment sites
- ◆ to encourage appropriate forms of rural economic development
- ◆ to promote priorities for area regeneration and town centre enhancement
- ◆ to provide for complementary land uses including housing, shopping, leisure and community facilities
- ◆ to protect and enhance townscapes and landscapes.

All of the topic chapters in this Plan therefore have a relationship with economic development.

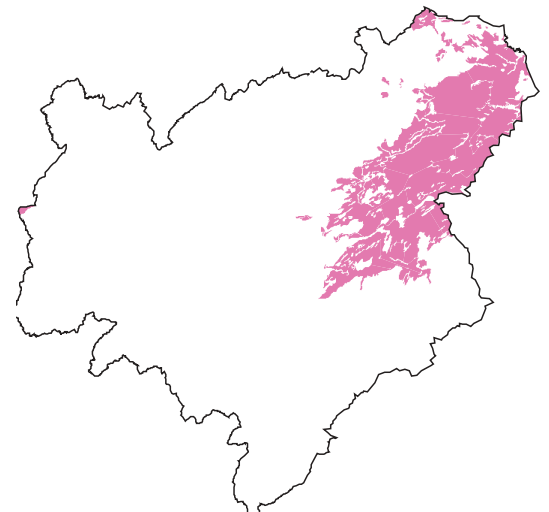
Rural Resources

3.6 The primary industries of farming, forestry, fishing and mineral extraction form the main land uses in the Scottish Borders in terms of the area covered, and their operations have a significant impact on the countryside. These industries have an important role to play in terms of providing rural employment and they also supply commodities or 'rural resources' to serve local and national needs. Whilst employment in the sector remains higher than the Scottish average, the proportion is falling as the industries change and diversify and as jobs in the service industries increase. There are opportunities for adding value to these industries in the Scottish Borders, for example through the processing of timber, the diversification of farming and the processing of agricultural products.

Agriculture

3.7 Agricultural land in the Scottish Borders is a valuable national resource with some 15% being of 'prime' quality (see Diagram 9). National policy continues to require protection of this resource (class 1,2 and 3.1 agricultural land as defined by the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute) but is under review. Existing protection will continue until future options are confirmed and any new measures are in place.

Diagram 9
Prime Quality Agricultural Land



POLICY EI Prime Quality Agricultural Land

The Council will protect prime quality agricultural land from irreversible development, unless it can be demonstrated that the development is essential to the implementation of the development strategy.

CHAPTER 3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Farming at Maxton

3.8 Major changes for UK agriculture are likely to flow from EC agricultural policy restructuring. As a result, the industry in the Scottish Borders is facing a period of considerable adjustment as outputs and profits fall with a consequent loss of direct and indirect jobs.

3.9 It is acknowledged that farm diversification has a part to play in easing structural change in the farming industry, but it is considered that particular encouragement should be given to farming-related diversification: alternative crops, organics and similar. These forms of diversification maintain the farming unit, conserve high quality farmland in accordance with the sustainability principle and are most likely to meet the aspirations of farmers. Other forms of 'diversification' such as tourism-related uses should only be encouraged where they are related to the Tourism Strategy for the Scottish Borders. Short-term measures such as selling farmland for housing should not be seen as diversification and in any case will often be in conflict with the policies of this Plan.

POLICY E2

Farm Diversification

Employment-generating development proposals associated with farm diversification will be supported in principle provided that they are in accordance with the following criteria:

- (i) the environmental impacts can be reconciled with relevant Structure Plan policies,*
- (ii) the benefits to the local economy can be demonstrated,*
- (iii) tourism-related schemes can demonstrate the benefits to tourism and are in line with the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy,*
- (iv) the development meets all other siting and design criteria.*

Proposals for housing development will not be treated as farm diversification and will be assessed under the Housing in the Countryside policy



Guidance note published by the Scottish Executive in 2000

3.10 In addition to farm diversification, grant aid is available, currently under the Rural Stewardship Scheme, to encourage farmers to implement more environmentally aware agricultural practices. The Scottish agri-environment scheme is part of the Government's response to EC Regulations under the Common Agricultural Policy. The Scottish Borders Local Biodiversity Action Plan partnership, on which the farming industry is represented, is a useful mechanism by which farmers can learn new techniques to enhance the biodiversity of their land.

Forestry

- 3.11 Forests rarely serve only a single purpose and at their best provide a combination of benefits such as timber production, opportunities for recreation, enhancement of the landscape and the creation of new habitats. The Council recognises both the importance of forestry as a long-term land use, and the need to balance the economic value of forestry with a need to protect the environment. Forestry may provide an appropriate form of farm diversification, particularly in the uplands, and can often be a suitable form of land cover for land restoration, for example, quarries or waste disposal sites. Attention is now being given increasingly to sustainable forestry practices, guided by the Forestry Commission's UK Forestry Standard (1998), to the multiple use of forests and to community involvement, for example through community woodlands.
- 3.12 Woodland cover in the Scottish Borders comprises some 17% of the total land area, concentrated primarily in the Southern Uplands to the west and south. This concentration reflects the high quality of farmland in the east where forestry is unlikely to be an economic use of the land. The rate of increase of forestry cover has slowed with the removal of tax incentives at the end of the 1980s but there is nevertheless a considerable increase in forest production forecast in the future. Consequently there is potential to add value to the industry through local timber processing rather than exporting the raw product south. It is therefore considered that there is scope for a new or upgraded sawmill in the Scottish Borders. Site options will be investigated through the Local Plan Review.



“... there is potential to add value to the industry through local timber processing ...”

POLICY E3 Timber Processing Facilities

Development of opportunities for timber processing will be encouraged, the location to be guided by the following criteria:

- (i) proximity to sources of timber, in order to minimise vehicle movements,*
- (ii) compatibility with the development strategy, with preference given to the Primary Hub,*
- (iii) accessibility to the strategic road and rail transport network, with preference given to the line of the former Waverley Railway line, and the Kielder Branch line,*
- (iv) avoidance of excessive disturbance to communities through noise and vibration.*

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Diagram 10
**Indicative Forestry
Strategy**
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3.13 Although forestry is not subject to planning control, local authorities are consulted on proposed plantings under the 'Woodland Grants Scheme'. Consultations are guided by a number of considerations which include the Indicative Forestry Strategy (IFS). The current version of the IFS, which also aims to identify opportunities for new forestry planting, guided by environmental constraints, is contained in the 1991-2001 Structure Plan (See Diagram 10). A revised IFS will be produced during this Structure Plan period to take account of the most up-to-date Government guidance.

POLICY E4 Forestry Proposals

The Council will assess forestry proposals against the Scottish Borders Indicative Forestry Strategy; the Scottish Borders Landscape Assessment; the Local Biodiversity Action Plan; local forest design plans, and Forestry Authority Guidelines.

Fishing

3.14 Fishing is a small but still important part of the local economy particularly in the Eastern Borders with Eyemouth forming a focus of activity. The development of a modern fish handling facility in the town's harbour area has boosted employment and complemented other investment by the Council, the Local Enterprise Company and other partners. As part of the Eastern Development Hub, Eyemouth should continue to be the focus for investment in fishing-related employment.

POLICY E5 Fishing Industry

Employment-generating development related to the fishing industry will be supported in principle in Eyemouth provided that it is in accordance with the Development Strategy and meets siting and design criteria.

Minerals

3.15 Mineral development potential within the Scottish Borders is principally restricted to sand and gravel deposits, hard rock outcrops, and a limited amount of peat and opencast coal. The location of mineral deposits is determined by geology and such deposits can only be worked where they exist.



Eyemouth Fish Market

3.16 National guidance is set out in National Planning Policy Guidelines (NPPGs): NPPG16 *Opencast Coal and Related Minerals* and the Opencast Coal Direction 1999 in relation to opencast coal, and NPPG4 *Land for Mineral Working* for all other minerals.

3.17 Mineral extraction has three principal implications for development in the countryside. First, there is a need to avoid the sterilisation of potentially economic deposits (where extraction could be environmentally acceptable or beneficial to local communities) through other forms of development which would render deposits unworkable. Second, mineral extraction can have a severe adverse impact on the environment and there is a need to ensure that this negative impact is kept within acceptable limits, taking account of the benefits that will arise from working the deposit. Third, consideration needs to be given to the effect of extraction on people living in the vicinity of the activity.

POLICY E6

Safeguarding Mineral Deposits

Mineral deposits will be safeguarded from development that would prevent or seriously hinder their future extraction where the deposits are of sufficient scale or quality to be of potential commercial interest and their extraction is technically feasible and may be carried out in a way that is environmentally and socially acceptable. Exceptions will only be considered where the reasons for the development are of over-riding public interest.

3.18 The Council is conscious of the need to recycle mineral products wherever practicable so as to reduce demand for virgin material. Whilst opportunities for recycling in the Scottish Borders are currently limited, the Council supports any opportunity for recycling or reprocessing which reduces the need for additional primary extraction or disposal of mineral waste to landfill sites elsewhere.

POLICY E7

Minerals and Sustainability

In accordance with the general principle of sustainability, the Council will support and encourage:

- (i) the re-use of mineral waste and arisings from demolitions and road schemes, and
- (ii) the extraction of minerals as close as possible to the area of use.



Kinnegar Sandpit, Cockburnspath

CHAPTER 3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3.19 From a minerals perspective, the Scottish Borders operates within the wider Lothian Market area. The Scottish Borders retains only just over half of its production, with the bulk of the remainder being exported to the Lothians. The Council is committed to ensuring that an adequate supply of minerals exists to meet local needs.

POLICY E8 **Local Market Areas for Minerals**

The Council will, in consultation with other local authorities, the minerals industry and the Scottish Executive, continue to seek the establishment of a mechanism for defining appropriate local market areas, for assessing demand and for ensuring the availability of an adequate supply.

Diagram 11
**Minerals Development -
Zones of Sensitivity**
Page 107

3.20 Whilst mineral working is a temporary use of land, the period of working is often extensive and the impact upon the landscape is generally permanent. During the extraction period, there is the potential for considerable environmental and community disruption and these possibilities have to be addressed in the consideration of any application for development.

3.21 Diagram 11 gives a strategic indication of zones of sensitivity to mineral developments in the Scottish Borders. The criteria used to develop the diagram are outlined in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Zones of Sensitivity to Mineral Development

Primary Constraints (Score = 3)	Secondary Constraints (Score = 2)	Tertiary Constraints (Score = 1)
Natura 2000 sites	Scheduled Monuments	Areas of Great Landscape Value
Category A Listed Buildings and their settings	Category B and C Listed Buildings and their settings	Proximity to Settlements
Ramsar Sites	Conservation Areas and their settings	Visual Sensitivity
National Scenic Areas	Gardens and Designed Landscapes	Water Catchment Areas
National Nature Reserves	Prime Quality Agricultural Land	
Sites of Special Scientific Interest		

3.22 Where constraints coexist, scores are added together to arrive at the zone of sensitivity shown in Diagram 11. The zone described as the “Area of Interest” contains fewest constraints. The scoring mechanism used to derive the various zones is as follows:

Area of Interest	= 0
Intermediate Zone	≥ 1
Sensitive Zone	≥ 2
Highly Sensitive Zone	≥ 3

3.23 Applications for mineral development will be considered against the constraints which lie behind Diagram 11 (Zones Of Sensitivity - p.107) and the criteria contained in Policy E9 below.

POLICY E9 Mineral Developments

The Council will assess applications for mineral development against the following criteria:

- (i) the level of impact on the environment, biodiversity, landscape or archaeology,*
- (ii) the level of impact on water resources, drainage or fishery interests,*
- (iii) the level of impact on local communities or residential properties as a result of noise, dust or traffic generation,*
- (iv) the level of impact on tourism, leisure or recreational facilities,*
- (v) the level of impact on potential investment.*

The cumulative impact of development proposals in an area will also be a consideration. Applications for mineral development will be required to be accompanied by a quarrying or extraction plan setting out the proposed methods of extraction, phasing, drainage, soil storage, restoration and after-use of the site. Consideration will be given to the impact of the other regulatory controls on the impacts of mineral extraction.

The Council will make use of conditions attached to planning consents and seek planning agreements, where appropriate, to control the physical extent, impact, phasing, length of operation and restoration of mineral sites.

3.24 Whilst the Scottish Borders contains limited resources of opencast coal and related minerals (minerals which can be extracted at the same time, notably fireclay and peat), Scottish production of such resources is currently important to the country's coal-fired power stations. The Government is committed to ensuring secure, diverse and sustainable supplies of energy at competitive prices, and has set no targets or limits to the supply of coal from opencast mines, preferring to leave it to market forces.

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Opencast coal differs from other minerals in a number of important respects:

- ◆ recycling is not an activity that is compatible with coal extraction as the mineral is destroyed in the process of energy generation,
- ◆ the concepts of supply, demand and market areas are not relevant planning considerations, and
- ◆ the nature of the mineral and methods of extraction mean that there is a greater potential for significant environmental and community impacts.

3.25 Broad areas of search where opencast coal and related minerals development may be acceptable if consistent with other Structure Plan policies are indicated on the Key Diagram. These broad areas, the exact locations of which will be defined in Local Plans, are:

- ◆ north west, near Carlops; and
- ◆ south west, near Newcastleton

POLICY E10

Opencast Coal and Related Minerals

The following broad areas of search are indicated on the Key Diagram. Their exact locations will be defined in Local Plans.

- ◆ north west - near Carlops
- ◆ south west - near Newcastleton

The following tests will be applied to applications for all new or extended workings of opencast coal and related minerals:

- whether the proposal is environmentally acceptable, taking account of the use of planning conditions and/or agreements to offset or mitigate any adverse impacts,*
- whether, if the proposal is not so acceptable, there are any local or community benefits related to the proposal, that sufficiently outweigh any material risk of disturbance or environmental damage.*

If the proposal passes neither test, planning permission should be refused unless there are exceptional circumstances which justify consent being granted.

3.26 The Scottish Borders has a number of areas containing significant quantities of peat. Some of these are protected by national nature conservation designations and, elsewhere, opportunities for commercial peat extraction may be comparatively limited. Nonetheless the Council's commitment to biodiversity, sustainability and archaeology is not consistent with the extraction of peat. The Council will liaise with Scottish Natural Heritage and Historic Scotland over the nature conservation, archaeological or palaeoenvironmental value of any particular peat resource.

POLICY E11 Peat Extraction

The Council will only permit the commercial extraction of peat in instances where neither Scottish Natural Heritage nor Historic Scotland has concerns regarding the nature conservation, archaeological or palaeo-environmental value of the resource.

Business and Industry

- 3.27 Employment in manufacturing, services and commerce forms an increasingly important part of the Scottish Borders' economy. The loss of manufacturing jobs in the area, particularly textiles, has been significant during the 1990s and into the 2000s, reflecting structural change at the national level. New opportunities are however emerging, notably in electronics, food processing, telephone-based services and research-based facilities linked to Heriot-Watt University.
- 3.28 There are some 75 hectares of employment land currently allocated in Local Plans and with planning permission which comprise the 'marketable land supply' of which around half is 'effective' or available in the short term. In addition to the marketable supply, there are a further 40 hectares of employment land, some of which is allocated in local plans but whose take-up is restricted in terms of availability. In total therefore the employment land supply amounts to over 100 hectares although this masks issues of quality as explained below.
- 3.29 The quantity of land in gross terms generally outstrips what would be needed if estimated rates of past take-up were to continue. It is only in Kelso and Coldstream that inadequate supply is currently an issue. Take up is, however, only one indicator of future demand and the apparent over-supply of land masks issues of size, range, quality and serviceability. Indeed, when quality is taken into account, there is a shortage of sites in certain locations to meet modern business needs. The overall supply also hides the uneven distribution of land with two thirds of the marketable supply being located at Selkirk (Riverside) and Charlesfield. Quality is a particular issue for the available supply of industrial property, much of which was designed for very different business needs.
- 3.30 Addressing the quantity and quality of sites on offer will be a priority for Local Plans. It is likely that the process of site identification will result in some sites being surplus to requirements with potential scope for reallocation for other uses. Whilst brownfield sites will be sought in preference to greenfield, it is recognised that, for the Scottish Borders to be sufficiently competitive to attract modern industry, greenfield solutions may be required in some locations.



Factory constructed by Scottish Borders Council for Plexus at Pinnaclehill, Kelso

POLICY E12

Employment Land Supply

The Council, working in association or in partnership with other agencies, will seek to secure the provision of a range of marketable sites, of the right size and quality to meet the requirements of business and industry. Local Plans will identify appropriate sites to meet those requirements, taking particular account of the following criteria:

- (i) The relationship of the site to the development hubs and the principal public transport corridors
- (ii) The opportunities for brownfield development.

Diagram 12
Assisted Areas



3.31 As a strategic document, the Structure Plan focuses on employment sites in locations which are of particular importance for the implementation of the strategy. Policies E13-E15 highlight opportunities which can best serve existing and planned centres of population and which can take advantage of strategic transport links, including the proposed rail link. The sites listed within Policies E13-E14 comprise the strategic employment sites. It should be noted that the net developable area may be significantly less than the total figures in the tables indicate; this is particularly the case for Riverside in Selkirk. Opportunities for new inward investment may include 'single user' development, business parks, science parks or similar. Site identification will be influenced by the availability of Regional Selective Assistance within designated Assisted Areas (see Diagram 12). This may increase the attractiveness to investors of sites falling within the designated area because of the potential for grant aid.

POLICY E13

Business and Industry

Development of the following strategic employment sites will be encouraged for business and industrial uses (figures relate to the marketable supply). Uses other than Classes 4, 5 and 6 of the Use Classes Order will not normally be permitted.

Site	Location	Available Site Area (ha)
Charlesfield	St Boswells	10.6*
Tweedside Park	Galashiels	5.2
Galalaw	Hawick	8.4
Pinnaclehill	Kelso	2.1
Cavalry Park	Peebles	6.0
Gungreen	Eyemouth	5.7

* additional land is available adjacent to this site.

POLICY E14

Area Regeneration¹

The Council will give priority to the development and promotion of industrial and business uses in areas which have experienced the adverse effects of structural employment change. Current strategic site priorities are:

Sites	Location	Total Site Area (ha)
Commercial Road area	Hawick	8.4
Riverside	Selkirk	34.6

In the case of both Commercial Road and Riverside, a multi-use approach combining industrial, commercial, residential and recreational uses will be encouraged.



Regeneration of Riverside Industrial Area, Selkirk, by Scottish Enterprise Borders and Scottish Borders Council, aided by European Community funding.

POLICY E15

Inward Investment

Opportunities for single user industrial and business development and business park developments will be identified through the Local Plan Review with the preferred location being the Primary Hub.

3.32 The changes affecting the primary sector described in the previous section highlight the need to encourage appropriate job-generating development to enhance the vibrancy of rural communities. The Plan therefore seeks to encourage appropriate forms of development.

POLICY E16

Rural Economic Development

Business and industrial development will be encouraged which will support the rural economy provided it can be achieved in accordance with the Plan's other policies, particularly those on the environment. Particular encouragement will be given to proposals which:

- (i) provide employment in villages or the countryside,
- (ii) contribute to the wider rural economy,
- (iii) are part of farm diversification schemes,
- (iv) re-use vacant and derelict buildings.

¹ Policy E13 also includes sites that fall within the Council's Area Regeneration priorities. Reference should also be made to Policy E19 and paragraph 7.3.

CHAPTER 3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Retailing

3.33 Shops are important community facilities and provide the main land use in town centres, which, themselves, are focal points for a range of commercial and leisure activities. The Scottish Borders, unlike most other local authority areas in Scotland, does not possess a single, dominant retailing centre. The draw of Edinburgh and to a lesser extent, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Carlisle and Newcastle/Gateshead also exercise a considerable influence on shopping in the region. The key issue for the Structure Plan is the need to enhance shopping facilities in the Scottish Borders to reduce the leakage to other areas of spending by residents, employees and visitors. Improving the scale and quality of retail facilities is needed to complement planned housing development and employment provision, particularly in the Primary Hub.

3.34 The two largest shopping areas are located within the town centres of Hawick and Galashiels. Galashiels has the widest shopping catchment, partly reflecting the growth of superstores and retail warehouse developments. The other towns within the Primary Hub, particularly Kelso, provide important complementary shopping facilities while Peebles, Duns and Eyemouth provide important local shopping facilities to serve the smaller development hubs. Eyemouth has shown the greatest retailing growth since the last Structure plan period, consistent with its expanding role as a service centre and the investment which has been made in the town. The scale and quality of the retail facilities provided in Galashiels and Kelso are particularly important in reducing leakage to Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed respectively.

3.35 Government guidance on retailing, National Planning Policy Guideline 8 *Town Centres and Retailing* encourages more high quality shopping development in town centres and seeks to discourage inappropriate out-of-centre and out-of-town developments, especially when heavily reliant on private transport. Town centres are therefore the first choice for new retail development using a 'sequential approach' as set out in Policy E17.



Duns: town centre improvements

POLICY E17

Location of Retailing Developments

In assessing applications for retailing development, both for food and non-food shopping, the Council will seek to support and enhance the role of town centres. Town centre locations will be preferred to edge-of-centre locations which, in turn, will be preferred to out-of-centre locations. An out-of-centre location will only be considered favourably if there is no suitable site available in a town centre or edge-of-centre location.

3.36 There may be limited instances, such as retail units selling bulky, non-food items, where the identification of town centre, or edge of centre, locations is not possible or appropriate. In such instances, any planning application would be required to meet established criteria in order to ensure that it did not have an adverse impact on the development strategy.

POLICY E18

Out of Centre Retail Development

The Council will have regard to the following considerations in assessing any application for out-of-centre retail development:

- (i) the individual or cumulative impact of the proposed development on the vitality and viability of existing town centres,*
- (ii) the availability of a suitable town centre or edge-of-centre site,*
- (iii) the ability of the proposal to meet deficiencies in shopping provision which cannot be met in town centre or edge-of-centre locations,*
- (iv) the impact of the proposal on travel patterns and car usage,*
- (v) the accessibility of the site by a choice of means of transport,*
- (vi) the location of the proposal. Sites will be located within existing settlements and, within them, preference will be given to applications on vacant or derelict sites, or on sites deemed to be surplus to requirements.*

3.37 Although shopping makes the largest single contribution towards town centre activity, town centres are also important focal points for a range of commercial, cultural and community activities. Sustaining and enhancing the mix of uses, the quality of the environment and the accessibility of town centres will help to maintain their 'vitality and viability': a key element of Government policy. Appropriate non-retail uses, such as residential, office, health, recreational and tourist-related can also add to diversity and thus the attractiveness of centres to residents, visitors and investors. Enhancement of town centre environments and of the range of facilities on offer can play an important role in area regeneration schemes.



The Hawick traffic relief scheme has resulted in major benefits to the main shopping areas in the town.

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Douglas Bridge, Galashiels Town Centre.

POLICY E19 Town Centre Enhancement

Town centre enhancement, including the provision of new retail facilities and complementary non-retail uses, will be particularly encouraged in centres which:

- (i) are Council priorities for area regeneration because of special economic difficulties and/or population decline,*
- (ii) are subject to significant retail spending leakage,*
- (iii) play an important role in areas planned for substantial development under the development strategy.*

3.38 The centres which will be prioritised for action through the Local Plan Review currently comprise Hawick, Selkirk, Kelso, Galashiels, Innerleithen/Walkerburn, Eyemouth and Coldstream. These reflect the Council's current Area Regeneration priorities and the potential for retail development.

3.39 Shops in villages, particularly single outlets, provide a vital function in catering for everyday shopping requirements. Their provision therefore helps to reduce, though not eliminate, the need to travel for shopping purposes. They also provide an important ancillary social role, especially for the elderly or less mobile sectors of the community.



Jedburgh Abbey - an example of the Scottish Borders' outstanding heritage that draws thousands of tourists every year.

POLICY E20 Village Shops

The Council will encourage the retention and development of small shops serving villages, particularly single village shops.

Tourism

3.40 Tourism is an important sector of the Scottish Borders economy which has the potential for significant growth based on the area's assets. These assets comprise a high quality natural and built environment, an interesting history with unique customs and events, and a geographical location as a Scottish 'gateway' and within easy reach of the population of three major cities.

3.41 The context for the Structure Plan policies is the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy which was developed by Scottish Borders Tourist Board in partnership with the Council and others. The Strategy is under continuing review, reflecting the evolving national tourism framework and other changes to the overall policy context. The four major objectives of the strategy are based on marketing,

facilities, people and information. Of these, the Structure Plan has the most direct influence on facilities - covering townscapes, landscapes and countryside access; and information - which includes signposting. Walking and golf are currently seen by the Tourist Board as priorities for identifying customer needs. The Structure and Local Plans together can help in providing a framework to encourage appropriate new facilities complementary to the Tourism Strategy and to improve the quality of existing facilities.

3.42 The following core policies are intended to encourage appropriate development which will maintain the quality of the Scottish Borders' key asset for tourism development - its environment. In line with the Plan's principal aim on Sustainable Communities, the policy approach is also aimed at encouraging traffic-generating development to locate near the strategic public transport network or potential railway stations. Policy E21 recognises that certain types of developments which generate significant environmental impacts will require rigorous assessment to ensure protection of tourism: that is the tourist industry as a whole and individual tourist related facilities.



Walking is one of the Scottish Borders Tourist Board's current priorities.

POLICY E21 Tourism Development

The Council will support the development of new tourism-related activities and facilities in accordance with the Structure Plan development strategy, and the expansion and improvement of existing activities and facilities. In assessing applications for tourism-related development, the Council will have regard to the following considerations:

- (i) the impact on the local economy,*
- (ii) the contribution to the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy,*
- (iii) the accessibility of the new development to the strategic public transport network and the location of potential railway stations,*
- (iv) the location and design of the proposal and its environmental and visual impact,*
- (v) the impact on infrastructure.*



Neidpath Castle, Peebles
The Plan's policies aim to maintain the quality of the environment - a key asset for tourism.

CHAPTER 3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

POLICY E22

Protection of the Tourist Industry

Development proposals which are considered likely to have a significant and sustained adverse impact on tourism will not be permitted.

3.43 There are a number of policies in other chapters of the Plan which impact on tourism, in particular; within Chapter 2, Environment; Chapter 5, Community Facilities which covers countryside access; and Chapter 6, Infrastructure which deals with transport and parking. Policy E19 in this chapter relating to town centre enhancement is also important, given the role of clean, litter-free and attractive environments in promoting tourism. The Scottish/English border crossing points and 'gateway' towns, notably at Jedburgh, Coldstream and Hawick, will be considered individually to determine any action needed to enhance their contribution to the overall regional benefit. Detailed policies for this and for heritage interpretation opportunities and priorities for local enhancement will be developed through the local plan review.

POLICY E23

Border Crossing Points

The Council will continue to support the further provision of appropriate tourist information and tourism related improvements at Border crossing points.

3.44 Signposting is an important strategic element of the tourism strategy. The context is provided by the Tourist Signposting Policy, developed by the Council in partnership with other agencies. The aim of the policy is to prevent a proliferation of signs which would have an adverse visual impact on the environment. The policy establishes the criteria both for statutory road signs (those erected within the road boundary) and for tourist advertising signs. Future review of the policy will include consideration of action needed to ensure consistency and quality of tourist signage across the Scottish Borders.

POLICY E24

Tourist Signposting

The Council will assess applications for signposting against the Tourist Signposting Policy.



The Tweed at Coldstream Bridge. Coldstream is one of the Scottish Borders 'gateway' towns.