

Section 4

Peak District, United Kingdom

4.1 Introduction

The Peak District and, more specifically, the Peak District National Park (the Park) provide a case study concerning the management of development pressure of a highly valued rural area that is close to large urban populations.

Management of development pressures in England, such as the demand for new housing, is through an integrated, centrally guided planning process.¹⁷⁴

This case study provides a brief description of the Peak District National Park and environs. It summarises the important natural, cultural and economic values, and the major pressures on these values. The study discusses the key organisations and programmes of the English planning process that are relevant to the control of peri-urban development.

Finally, the study highlights key themes raised and the differences of the English approach to the New Zealand situation for managing development in peri-urban areas.

4.2 Peak District National Park

Like the rest of the United Kingdom, the Peak District is an area of contrasts. From the gently sloping limestone dales and steeply incised wooded valleys of the 'white peak' to the imposing heather moorlands of the 'dark peak', it is also marked throughout by human influence. The dry stone walls which surround every grazed field, quarries, narrow lanes, moors, hedgerows and houses made from the indigenous stone. It is clear that once a site has been abandoned, nature moves in very quickly and some of the area's best wildlife sites are in disused quarries for instance.

In other areas, however, quarries cause major problems especially just outside the edge of the

*park where “superquarries” swallow up whole valleys especially around Buxton. Although hilly, few parts of the park feel truly “mountainous” and the landscape is mostly a gently undulating one. Even though the towns and cities that encircle the park are never more than fifteen miles away, there is always remote, wild areas where the weather can change in an instant and you can walk for hours without meeting another soul. Despite being the United Kingdom’s most visited national park, there are still many tranquil areas.*¹⁷⁵

The Peak District is located at the south end of the Pennines.¹⁷⁶ The National Park covers most of the area thought of as the Peak District, but some parts of seven adjoining local authorities in the Peak District were excluded from the designated area of the Park.¹⁷⁷

The Park was the first national park in the United Kingdom, designated in 1951 under the National Park and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The Park covers an area of 143,830 hectares consisting mainly of uplands with more fertile lowlands surrounded by dense urban development.

The landscape is a product of nature and the people that live within it. Natural features are characterised by limestone plateaux and gritstone moors and edges, shale valleys and limestone gorges. Human influences come from over 100,000 years of human occupation. Stone walled fields, meadows and rough grazing, forestry and woodlands, farmsteads, country houses villages - large and small are physical changes to the environment resulting from long-term human interaction. The current settlement pattern and human activity consists of about 3,000 farms and 100 villages. There is a resident population of over 38,000 people within the Park and at least 12,600 people are employed within it. Of these jobs, 52 percent are in service industries (including tourism), 19 percent in manufacturing, 12 percent in quarrying and 12 percent in farming. In addition to the population living and working in the Park, 32 percent of England’s population (15.7

million people out of a total of 50 million) is located within one hour’s drive of the Park.¹⁷⁸ The National Park has more than 22 million visitors each year.¹⁷⁹

Unlike national parks in New Zealand and the United States, English national parks are largely in private ownership. A national park is an area designated under the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949. Designation establishes a National Park Authority (the Authority) that has the sole planning authority for that area. The Authority has the responsibility for developing planning documents that protect important features, limit development, and determine where recreation can be provided by private and public investment.¹⁸⁰ The role of the Authority is discussed later in section 4.4.

It was the conflict of public access onto the relatively undeveloped private lands of the Peak area during the 1930s that instigated the government of the time to look at establishing a national park system for England. The Authority has more access agreements (rights of way) with landowners than the rest of England combined; however, almost half of the moorlands still remain closed to the public.¹⁸¹

4.2.1 Valued characteristics of the Park

The Park has a wide range of valued characteristics that include:

- opportunities for quiet enjoyment
- wildness and remoteness
- outstanding natural beauty
- landscape and wildlife
- geology and geomorphology
- clean earth, air and water
- cultural heritage
- archaeology, buildings
- customs and literary associations
- outdoor recreation and adventure
- vibrancy and sense of community
- environmentally friendly farming
- craft and cottage industries

- special value attached to the Park by the surrounding urban communities.¹⁸²

4.2.2 Pressures on the Park and environs

The State of the Park report prepared by the Authority in 2000 states that the Park faces a number of pressures. The management of which is made more challenging by the statutory requirement to balance the objectives of conservation and economic development (see discussion on the Authority in section 4.4).¹⁸³

Most of the pressures on the Park's valued features relate to its proximity to the large conurbations of Greater Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield (figure 4.1).

Major pressures in the Park are related to traffic (from both visitors and those travelling through the Park area), existing quarrying activities, pressure for increased number of telecommunication masts, and direct impacts associated with visitors (for example, impacts on tracks, and crowding in favoured sites).

Many of the same pressures are faced in the rural areas adjacent to the Park (cell phone masts, quarrying, visitor impacts). In addition, there are pressures on the values associated with the adjoining rural landscape from the intensification of rural recreational activities, such as the development of riding stables.

Housing development within the Park is strictly controlled avoiding any impacts on landscape values. The focus of the Authority with respect to housing is to ensure that there is sufficient affordable housing for local need (a social sustainability objective). This housing is located within existing villages or on brownfield sites.¹⁸⁴ (See discussion on Central Government Leadership, section 4.3.3.)

New housing within the Park is limited, with most building activity focusing on conversions of existing buildings (for example, converting barns to homes).¹⁸⁵ However, there may be some tension developing because there is uncertainty as to the

amount of suitable buildings available for future conversions. There is a similar high demand for existing housing stock in the rural areas of the local authorities that are adjacent to the Park. However, there also appears to be increased pressure in these areas for completely new housing developments. This pressure reflects the desirability of the area and its convenience to the nearby cities.¹⁸⁶

Figure 4.1: The location of the Peak District National Park



Source: Christine Prebble, Mosaic Consultants Ltd.

4.3 Statutory framework

4.3.1 Control of development

Environmental planning in the United Kingdom incorporates a wide range of plans and programmes (figure 4.2). The current system has its origins in the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 (TCPA).¹⁸⁷ This Act effectively nationalised development rights and instigated the process of preparing Development Plans. The TCPA also

provided for a compensation fund targeted at landowners affected adversely by being prevented from developing their land. However, this provision was found to be unworkable and was subsequently repealed during the early 1950s.¹⁸⁸

There have been a number of amendments and partial repeals of the legislation but the system remains largely the same. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act) finally repealed the TCPA. The Act is the planning legislation, implemented by local authorities, intended to control housing development in England.

The Act, however, has limited control of agriculture and forestry so that changes in these types of land use within the rural environment fall largely outside planning regulation, and where these activities are controlled it is through specific measures that have variable effectiveness.¹⁸⁹

Development Plans under the Act comprise of:

- **Structure Plans:** produced by county councils, some unitary authorities and national park authorities (in many cases on a joint basis) that set out key strategic policies for development of land use and provide a framework for local plans. Structure Plans provide a strategic framework for development of land for a period of at least 15 years from the base date of the plan. For some types of policy, such as green belt protection, a longer period can be appropriate.¹⁹⁰
- **Local Plans:** produced by district councils, some unitary and national park authorities in which more detailed policies are set out to guide development in a particular local authority area. The plans cover the whole of a local authority area and may include detailed proposals for specific sites. Where possible the duration of a local plan should coincide with that of the relevant structure plan.
- **Minerals Plans:** produced by county councils, some unitary authorities and national park authorities (who are usually the development control authorities for these issues). These deal with the approvals to mine and process minerals, and dispose of mineral

waste.

- **Waste Local Plans:** are also produced by county councils, some unitary authorities and national park authorities. These plans deal with planning applications for development associated with the deposit, treatment, storage, processing and disposal of refuse or waste materials other than mineral waste.¹⁹¹

In addition to these types of plan there are also Unitary Development Plans produced by some metropolitan authorities, which combine Structure and Local Plans into one document.¹⁹²

4.3.2 Local government organisation

Local government in England comprises a range of planning authorities whose roles often overlap and sometimes lack integration.¹⁹³ This situation is a reflection of the long history and evolution of local government in the England, including a series of ad hoc reforms since the 1980s.

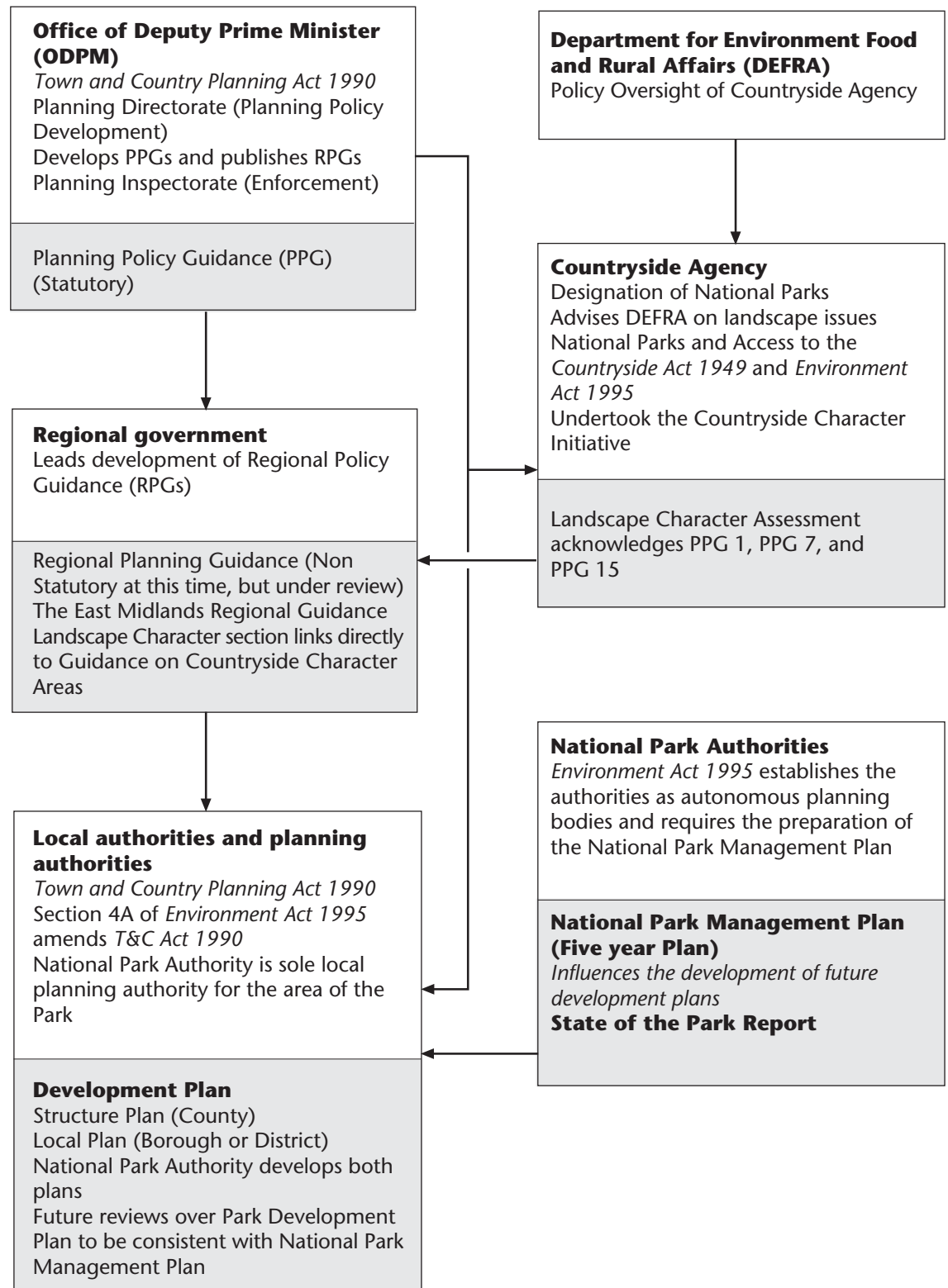
County councils develop Structure Plans and take a strategic and overarching view of local issues. There is a move by the current Labour Government to transfer some or all of the strategic planning functions of county councils to the new, more comprehensive, regional government institutions.

District and borough councils undertake the more specific Local Plan development, and its day-to-day implementation. National park authorities combine the functions of both county and district councils by preparing both Structure and Local Plans. Unitary councils prepare an amalgam of both types of plan called 'Unitary Development Plans'.

4.3.3 Central government leadership

Under the current Labour Government there has been some reorganisation of the central government agencies that are responsible for providing planning direction to regional and local authorities. This leadership is undertaken through the preparation of various types of planning policy guidance.

Figure 4.2: Outline of elements of the English planning system and national park administration
(the shaded boxes show outputs from agencies, the connecting arrows indicate influences)



The central government agency that provides the oversight of planning function is the Planning Directorate of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). This function was previously with the Department of Environment Transport and Regions (DETR).

The Planning Directorate develops different types of national policy guidance targeted at the various plans prepared by local authorities. The local authorities must take account of these guidances when preparing their Structure, Local, Mineral and Waste Plans. The most relevant guidances for the control of peri-urban development are the Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs).

Local authorities must give material consideration to PPGs.¹⁹⁴ If an authority disregards a guidance in its plan they must provide clear reasons for doing so. Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that: “where, in making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”. Therefore, the presumption is that Development Plans must be followed with respect to planning applications and examined first. On the other hand, government guidance documents provide ‘advice’ and do not carry as much weight as the Development Plan.¹⁹⁵

Plans are then put on deposit where the Regional Government Office can object to anything that is not in line with a PPG. If a public inquiry results the Inquiry Inspector will normally follow the PPG. In exceptional circumstances, sections 44 and 45 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allow the Secretary of State to intervene any time before a development plan is adopted. Finally, section 54 of the Act requires that all non-metropolitan Structure and Local Plans must have the Secretary of State’s notice of approval.

Local authorities have discretion in the implementation of their development plans, but the Planning Inspectorate oversees this discretion.

The office of the Planning Inspectorate is part of the Planning Directorate of the ODPM and is the enforcement arm of the planning system. The Inspectorate processes planning and enforcement appeals and holds inquiries into local development plans. The Inspectorate also advises the Secretary of State (currently the Deputy Prime Minister) on any planning applications that have been called in.

Table 4.1 summarises the PPGs that are most relevant to this case study.

At this time, Regional Plans, unlike Development Plans, have no statutory authority under the Act. However, this situation is currently under review by the Labour Government.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister also provides additional information in the form of ‘Statements of National Planning Policy’ to planners and members of the public involved in the planning process. These statements have the objective of improving the planning process and its outcomes. Statements can take the form of ‘Circulars’ (information sheets) on specific topics (such as the undertaking of Environmental Impact Assessments), and ‘Good Practice Guidances’, which provide more information on the Planning Policy Guidances.¹⁹⁸

4.3.4 Green belts

The green belts of Greater Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield surround the Peak District National Park to the West, North and East. Green belts are considered one of the most effective planning tools for preventing urban sprawl into rural areas that are considered to have high value, other than designating them as national parks or some other type of highly controlled conservation area.¹⁹⁹

Green belts are those areas that have been so designated by the Government and comprise of both private and publicly owned land.²⁰⁰ Planning and Policy Guidance 2 provides a guidance on green belts and states that the most important feature of a belt is its rural openness. The guidance

discusses the control of development in green belts, which is in addition to the general protection against development of the countryside as given in PPG3. Any inappropriate development in a green belt will not be approved unless in exceptional circumstances.²⁰¹ Inappropriate development is defined as any development that is harmful to the green belt. The burden of proof is on the applicant to show that the proposed development will not be harmful to the objectives for having green belts.

Green belts have the following objectives:

- to provide opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
- to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation near urban areas;
- to retain attractive landscapes, and enhance landscapes, near to where people live;
- to improve damaged and derelict land around towns;
- to secure nature conservation interest; and
- to retain land in agricultural, forestry and related uses.

Any exceptional circumstances are treated as a departure from the Development Plan and by statute must be referred to the Secretary of State. New building can occur in a green belt but only for agricultural, recreational purposes, or where it consists of limited alterations to existing buildings, limited infilling in existing villages and limited infilling in existing developed areas (for example, air fields, industrial estates).²⁰²

4.3.5 England Rural Development Programme

The Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) oversees the management of the England Rural Development Programme (ERDP). The stated aim of the programme is to underpin the English Government's "New Direction for Agriculture" by helping farmers and foresters to respond better to consumer requirements and become more competitive, diverse, flexible and environmentally responsible.²⁰³

The ERDP schemes focus on promoting environmental awareness and good practice with farmers. The schemes aim to compensate farmers for any income lost when establishing or improving environmentally beneficial aspects of farmland.

In addition to the environmental benefits of land-based schemes, in the case of the Organic Farming Scheme, the ERDP aims to promote the development of new markets for farmers.

The schemes are:

- Countryside Stewardship Scheme.
- Energy Crops Scheme.
- Environmental Sensitive Areas Scheme.
- Farm Woodland Premium Scheme.
- Hill Farm Allowance Scheme.
- Organic Farming Scheme.
- Woodland Grant Scheme.

The ERDP schemes most relevant to the control of adverse impacts on landscape are the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) Scheme, and the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

The ESA Scheme was introduced in 1987 to offer incentives to encourage farmers to adopt agricultural practices that would safeguard and enhance parts of the country of particularly high landscape, wildlife or historic value.

The farmer signs up to a ten-year management agreement with DEFRA and receives an annual payment on each hectare of land entered into the scheme. Each ESA has one or more tiers of entry and each tier requires different agricultural practices to be followed. Typically, higher tiers have higher payment rates than the base tier, but impose more conditions on farmers and achieve greater environmental benefits. The ESA's cover 53.5 percent (77,000 hectares) of the Park.²⁰⁴

The Countryside Stewardship Scheme provides for payments to farmers that will assist with projects that improve the natural beauty and diversity of the countryside, enhance, restore and recreate targeted landscapes, their wildlife habitats and

Table 4.1: Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs)

	Title	Key objective
PPG1	General Policy and Principles	Emphasises that planning should be based on the principles of sustainable development.
PPG2	Green Belts	There are five purposes for including land (outside of National Park) in green belts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas 2. to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another 3. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment 4. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, and 5. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.¹⁹⁶
PPG3	Housing	To promote more sustainable patterns of development and make better use of previously developed land. The focus for additional housing should be in existing towns and cities. Sets a target of 60 percent of new housing to be on previously developed sites by 2008.
PPG7	The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development	Focuses on local planning in rural areas. Highlights the usefulness of using Countryside Agency's Character Assessment when planning for change without compromising distinctive character (see section 4.3.6 on the Agency). New housing should be focused on existing towns and villages and best use of existing housing. Special designations such as national parks.
PPG11	Regional Planning	Sets out the requirements for a more broad regional planning framework that will inform other strategies and programmes within the more formal Town and Country Planning system. The Regional Government Office undertakes the preparation of Regional Plans or Regional Policy Guidance. These are evolving documents under ongoing review. To assist regional planning the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has issued PPG11.

Table 4.1: Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) *continued*

PPG12	Development Plans	Provide guidance on processes for preparing Development Plans (Structure, Local, Mineral and Waste). PPG12 highlights the need for timely planning, integrating sustainable development, transport and land-use in policies, and the key procedural issues for producing Development Plans and the importance of consultation. ¹⁹⁷
-------	-------------------	--

historical features, and improve opportunities for public access. The Countryside Stewardship Scheme operates outside of those areas covered by the ESA. In 1990, 6.8 percent (9,741.1 hectares) of the area of the Park was receiving Countryside Stewardship funding.²⁰⁵

4.3.6 Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Initiative

A key factor in determining development in the rural environment will be the effect of the Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Initiative on the development of Regional Policy Guidances, and Structure and Local Plans.

The Countryside Agency (the Agency) is an independent statutory body with the stated objectives of working to

- conserve and enhance the countryside
- promote social equity and economic opportunity for the people who live there
- help everyone, wherever they live, to enjoy this national asset (the countryside).²⁰⁶

The Countryside Character Initiative (the Initiative) is a programme of information and advice on the character of the English countryside. The Initiative came about because it was recognised by the Agency that there was a need for a new approach to landscape assessment that would look at the whole of England's countryside - rather than just specific designated areas - and provide a consistent national framework within which more detailed local landscape assessments would sit.

This approach led to mapping the country into 159 separate, distinctive Character Areas. The features that define the landscape of each area are recorded in individual descriptions that explain what makes one area different from another and show how that character has arisen and how it is changing.²⁰⁷

The Initiative also provides guidance documents for planning authorities on how to undertake more detailed local character assessments. The guidance shows planning authorities how they can identify and express in their planning documents the different rural elements, such as woodlands, hedgerows, moors, mountains and farmland, building styles, and historic artefacts, which give a place its unique character. The guidance is intended to help planners and policy makers set the right conditions for new development and changing systems of land management.²⁰⁸

The Regional Government Office of the East Midlands (the office has the regional oversight responsibility for the Peak District National Park) has directly linked its rural landscape policies to that of the landscape assessments of the Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Initiative (see table 4.2).²⁰⁹

4.3.7 Landscape assessment areas in the Peak District

There are three distinct Landscape Character Areas within the Park and six other landscape areas that adjoin the Park. The Character Area descriptions include information on the key characteristics, landscape features, physical influences, historical and cultural influences, buildings and settlement, and land cover. The assessment also provides a summary of the major changes or pressures on those character areas. Table 4.2 summarises the features of these assessments that are most relevant to this case study.

4.4 National Park Authority

Most national park authorities have sole responsibility for planning within the various national parks. This situation is a result of the Environment Act 1995, which reviewed the role of the authorities so that they became autonomous bodies, and amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Environment Act 1995 reemphasised the purposes of national parks to:

- conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and
- promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities (of the Parks) by the public.²¹¹

The Environment Act 1995 also places a duty on national park authorities that when pursuing the above two purposes they must:

- seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities by working closely with the agencies and local authorities responsible for these matters, but without incurring significant costs in so doing.

This implies that in some cases there can be conflict between the authorities conservation and economic and social well-being functions. Where there is such a conflict between the two purposes, section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 states that

the duty to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage should prevail over the promotion of economic opportunities.

4.4.1 Peak District National Park

The Peak District National Park straddles four government regions - East Midlands, West Midlands, North West and Yorkshire and the Humber. However, to avoid confusion, the government regional offices have deferred to the East Midlands government office with respect to providing guidance to the Peak District National Park. There are also 12 constituent authorities (some unitary, some district and some counties) with parts of their area inside the National Park. In addition, there are 125 parish councils either wholly or in part within the boundaries of the Park.²¹² (See appendix 4A.)

The Park's key planning documents are the National Park Management Plan: Strategy 2000-2005 (the Management Plan), and the Development Plan. The Development Plan comprises the Structure Plan (adopted 1994) and the Local Plan (adopted March 2001).²¹³

The Peak District National Park Authority is composed of 38 members. Twenty are drawn from the local councils, and the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs appoints 18 members. (See appendix 4B.)

The Park Authority consults widely and works closely with many stakeholders during the development of its Management and Development Plans, and this includes defining the Park's important features. Appendix 4C provides a summary of many of those that were involved in the preparation of the Management Plan.

In addition, the Park Authority has special partnerships with local groups on specific issues, such as the Local Countryside Access Forum,²¹⁴ and the steering group for the Peak District's Biodiversity Action Plan.²¹⁵

Table 4.2: Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Initiative - Character Areas in the Peak District

Character Areas within the Park	Pressures identified within the Character Area
<p>White Peak*</p> <p>Small villages and towns, for example, Bakewell.</p> <p>Buxton</p>	<p>Tourist attractions placing pressure on roading and loss of tranquillity.</p> <p>Reworking old quarries.</p> <p>Increased pressure for a home in the country close to conurbations and the potential for large-scale new developments within existing settlements.</p>
<p>Dark Peak</p> <p>No villages or towns - remote farm buildings.</p>	<p>Increased intensity of farming resulting in a decline of traditional pasture types.</p> <p>Modernisation of farming buildings.</p> <p>Pressures on tracks and loss of tranquillity arising from increased recreation (for example, walkers, cyclists, horse riding and 4WD vehicles).</p>
<p>South West Peak</p>	<p>Changes in farming practice creating pressure on traditional pasture.</p> <p>Recreational pressures at popular visitor sites (traffic, erosion of footpaths and disturbance of grouse).</p> <p>On margins of the area there is pressure as a result of inadequate roading networks and demand for caravan parks.</p>
Character Areas adjacent to the Park	
<p>Yorkshire Southern Pennines (East of Park)*</p> <p>Includes the Sheffield Metropolitan Area.</p>	<p>Fragments of woodland between urban areas and the Peak District are under pressure from recreation and sport activities (for example, golf courses).</p>
<p>Southern Pennines (North of Park)*</p> <p>Lies between Greater Manchester and Leeds, contains many small towns.</p>	<p>Recreational pressure from urban visitors.</p> <p>Farms being taken over by non-farmers.</p> <p>Conversion of mills to other uses.</p> <p>Potential for cross peak road development that will increase access and have a considerable impact upon landscape character and the future development of the area.</p>

Table 4.2: Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Initiative - Character Areas in the Peak District
continued

Character Areas adjacent to the Park <i>continued</i>	
Manchester Pennine Fringe (North West of Park)* Between Manchester City and Park. Oldham. Glossop.	Gentrification of farms (riding schools and conversions) or other urban uses. Heavy recreational pressures.
Potteries and Churnet Valley (South West of Park)* Stoke on Trent. Leek.	Forest development. Urban fringe pressure on farmland change to non-farming uses.
Derbyshire Peak Fringe (South West of Park)* Derby. Matlock.	Farming in decline - gentrification and farm building conversions. Increased recreational demand.

* In these areas there is pressure for greenfield housing development.²¹⁰

4.4.2 Key policies

4.4.2.1 The National Park Management Plan

The National Park Management Plan: Strategy 2000-2005 is the overarching strategy document for the management of the National Park. Over the period of the Management Plan a number of action plans will be developed.²¹⁶

The Management Plan covers a range of environment, social and economic issues. There are a few references to landscape issues in the Management Plan. One reference sets the goal of conserving the National Park's distinctive landscapes and biodiversity when developing farming and forestry. The other specifies that planning policies for renewable energy sources

must be of a scale and type that do not harm the Park's special qualities (including the landscape features).

The Management Plan provides for a number of actions relevant to the subject of this case study. The Park Authority will:

Produce and implement management action plans, recognising distinctive assets and issues, for specific areas of opportunity or concern including (amongst others)

- *threatened open spaces, parks and gardens*
- *cultural heritage sites, monuments, artefacts*
- *historic landscapes*

- *landscape character*
- *settlement character*
- *areas under intense pressure from recreation*
- *tourism*
- *land use - so that regeneration is enabled without harm.*²¹⁷

4.4.2.2 Development Plan

The relationship between the Management Plan and Development Plan is set out in appendix 2 of the Management Plan:

A2.3 The Development Plan (the Structure and Local Plan) is very important, as it is the legal basis for National Park Authority planning decisions. It is prepared in a collaborative way through consultation with the public and partners of the Authority. The preparation of the National Park Management Plan does not alter adopted Development Plan policies or status, but it will influence its review in due course.

Therefore, the Park Authority's Structure and Local Plans remain in force until such time as they are reviewed, when the new Management Plan will need to be taken into account.

The Park Authority's Structure Plan has a number of specific policies that restrict peri-urban development within the Park, especially to protect those areas that have the most important natural and cultural values. The most specific policies in the Plan that relate to housing development are Conservation Policies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (For more detail see appendix 4D.)²¹⁸

Within the Natural Zone of the Park,²¹⁹ development is not permitted "other than in exceptional circumstances".

The Park Authority's Local Plan sets out what exceptional circumstances mean in the context of development within the Park (see appendix 4D).

Development outside of the Natural Zone is permitted but only if it is consistent with the

existing uses and character of the area.

4.5 Adjacent authorities

The Park Authority's Structure Plan recognises that the areas adjacent to the Park have protected status (for example, Green Belt or Special Landscape Area). The Park's Local Plan comments that development in these adjacent areas can harm the values within the Park and notes that the Regional Planning Guidance has the function of addressing these cross-boundary issues (see appendix 4D).²²⁰

A number of the adjacent councils also recognise in their Development Plans the importance of managing the landscape relationships across the boundary between their areas of responsibility and that of the Park.

The High Peak Borough Council (HPBC) includes the northern portion of the Park and the areas of Glossop (just outside the Park), New Mills Whaley and Buxton (almost completely surrounded by the Park). High Peak Borough Council is located between the Park and Greater Manchester.

The HPBC's Local Plan recognises that parts of the High Peak are under development pressure and have special protection status under Green Belt policies (see appendix 4D).²²¹

Development in the HPBC area is permitted but is generally limited to existing built-up sites and only when it is "integrated sympathetically into the landscape". However, the Council is concerned about the cumulative impacts from many small developments (see appendix 4D).

Adrian Fisher of the High Peak Borough Council provided the following insight:

As you have probably picked up, the Peak District National Park is one of the most visited National Parks in the world - being located just a few miles beyond the edge of Greater Manchester (pop 2.5million approx) and Sheffield (pop 500,000). The main urban centres of West Yorkshire, Merseyside, Stoke on

Trent and Derby/Nottingham are all within an hours drive. In addition the Peak District is the easiest 'wild' upland area to reach from much of southeast England.

As a result there is a lot of pressure on a fragile historic landscape. The housing pressure we get in High Peak arises mostly from people who live in Greater Manchester and see the Peak District as an attractive environment to live - whilst still retaining a job in central Manchester. This causes problems for us - but not the same problems as you sound as if you are experiencing.

The reason for this is probably the differences in the planning system between the United Kingdom and New Zealand (unfortunately I am not very familiar with your system). As you may know, planning in the United Kingdom is based on a system of development plans - strategic documents combined with a detailed Local Plan. Every Local Authority must produce a plan for all of its area - and include a detailed map (usually 1:10,000 or 1:25,000 scale) designating different policy areas.

The Greenbelt is one of those policies - first prepared in this area in 1989 as a separate plan and later incorporated into our local plans. Within the greenbelt most forms of building is prohibited. Even in areas outside the greenbelt, countryside policies prohibit virtually all housing. This system is backed up by the requirement to obtain planning permission for nearly all types of development - in some cases even building a garden shed.

Consequently whilst the pressure is there, we don't get houses springing up - and suburbs only creep if WE want them to. The problem we do experience is that house prices tend to be very high and local people get priced out of the market. It is on this issue that we collaborate with the national park and other agencies.²²²

The Sheffield Metropolitan District Council 1998

Local Plan also recognises the relationship with the Park and states that:

Special protection will continue to be given to areas which are particularly attractive, such as on the edge of the Peak National Park. So far as it can within its planning powers the City Council will endeavour to support the protection and management of the special qualities of the National Park.²²³

This position is being examined under the current review of the Local Plan with the likelihood of strengthening the above policy.²²⁴

The Staffordshire Moorlands District Council's (SMDC) Local Plan is also currently under review. A summary of the draft Local Plan indicates that there are questions being raised by the Council on the degree of infill housing that will be allowed to occur in open areas. The SMDC's draft Local Plan does not, however, discuss the relationship of its management of landscape to that of the Park.²²⁵

4.6 The reality

4.6.1 Housing

The Park and its environs are highly desirable places to live for many of the people in the adjacent urban conurbations. Within the area of the Park these pressures are tightly controlled and there does not appear to be a problem with increased housing. However, this may change when the supply of buildings suitable for conversion to residential housing becomes exhausted.

Outside of the Park controls on new housing development also exist. At a national level there is a clear directive from central government that the priority for new housing developments should be on previously developed or 'brownfield' sites and not in undeveloped rural 'greenfield' areas. This focus on protecting existing rural areas is reinforced by the designation of large green belts around the major urban areas near the Park.

Despite this strong policy direction, new housing

developments do get proposed for greenfield areas adjacent to the Park. This appears to happen for a number of reasons:

- Not all of the new housing needed for local people can be accommodated on previously developed land.
- The English planning system allows for planning permissions, once started, to remain valid, and development started many years ago can carry on even if it is against contemporary policy.²²⁶
- In some cases planning authorities do not fully take account of policies in relevant PPGs issued by government (in this case specifically PPG3) in their Development Plans.

In the last case, organisations such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England, Sheffield, Peak District and South Yorkshire Branch (CPRE SPDSY)²²⁷ do undertake campaigns and make submissions on plans to ensure that greenfield developments do not proceed.²²⁸

The PPG3 has been found to be especially useful to CPRE SPDSY when undertaking campaigns against new housing developments on rural land. This policy guidance makes it clear that the focus should be on brownfield sites. However, CPRE SPDSY still has some concerns about aspects of the guidance. The PPG3 gives a target of 60 percent new housing development on brownfield sites by 2008. This of course means that 40 percent can still occur on greenfield sites. There is also some concern by CPRE SPDSY about the scope of the term brownfield. In some cases, previously developed sites have reverted/regenerated to such an extent that they have acquired biodiversity, amenity, or other values. However, these sites are still treated as being available for development despite these values.

Responses to the High Peak Borough Council's draft Local Plan highlight that there are tensions between those that support greenfield housing developments, especially in the Buxton area, and those who consider that such developments are not necessary or appropriate. Based on the

summary of responses, this can be attributed to different views regarding the:

- application of PPG3 and the apparent inconsistency between the objective of the guidance with other government policies that have the objective of promoting economic growth
- availability of suitable brownfield sites
- appropriateness of the methods used to forecast future housing demand.²²⁹

The restriction on the supply of new housing in and around the Park has raised the price of homes beyond the reach of many. In PPG3 the Government has sent a clear signal that Development Plans should take account of the local need for affordable housing and that the development plans of the planning authorities both within and adjacent to the Park acknowledge this responsibility.

4.6.2 Key pressures on the Peak District landscape

The pressures on the green belt areas surrounding the Park arise not so much from urban sprawl but from changes in the type and intensity of land use. Recreational demands have changed land use from traditional farming to riding stables, golf courses, and space for bike and walking tracks, thereby changing the visual appearance of the landscape.

Quarrying is seen as the most significant environmental impact within the Park. Recent changes to the law require improved environmental performance by quarry operators. However, any new conditions cannot be applied until the operator has submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), but there is no legal requirement for the operators to undertake an EIA. The quarry operator can, therefore, continue to operate under the old environmental conditions indefinitely and CPRE SPDSY sees this as a loophole in the planning system.²³⁰

4.7 Cultural context

There are cultural differences between New Zealand and England concerning both the role of planning and the values associated with the modified countryside.

England has had a strong centrally lead planning system for the management of development since 1947. At that time private development rights were effectively nationalised.²³¹ The ability of a government to achieve such a major change may have been a reflection of the post-war environment and the pressures arising from an increasing population on a relatively small island.

While the system has been subsequently modified, it remains largely the same. Since 1994, changes have been made to the planning system that emphasise the role of sustainable development and balancing economic, social and environmental outcomes.²³²

Culturally, there appears to be an acceptance across the political spectrum that government can and should place strong restrictions on certain types of development.

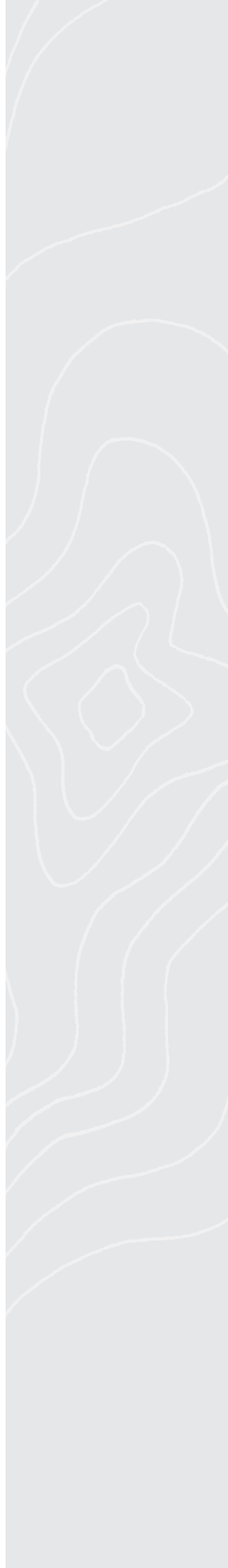
An example of this cultural acceptance is the absence of any significant pressure group that is advocating for compensation for lost economic opportunities caused by restrictions imposed by the planning system. Such groups exist in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.²³³ However, this debate does not appear to be a significant factor in the English political landscape. Development concerns seem to focus on making the planning process more timely, flexible and consistent.²³⁴

The other significant difference between New Zealand and the United Kingdom is that in the modified rural environment of the United Kingdom more concern is given to values other than those of economic production. Traditional agriculture is even considered to contribute to the Park's beauty.²³⁵ Such values are reflected in the creation of organisations such as a Countryside

Agency, which has conservation, social, economic and access objectives. The Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs also integrates conservation, social and economic objectives through programmes such as the England Rural Development Programme, and Rural Economy and Communities.²³⁶

The role and values attached to the Peak District National Park are also different from those of a national park in New Zealand. The Peak District National Park has a long history of human occupation and is a lived-in environment. One of the key objectives of having the Park is to meet the desire for public access while protecting the full range of values that are present. With a strong planning regime largely accepted by the community, ownership of land by the Crown is not seen as necessary to control land-use outcomes.

A key aspect of the planning system is the active role of central government. The Government gives clear leadership through the various policy guidance, circulars and documents. Implementation at a regional level occurs through the regional government offices and there is a policy review underway that may soon have these offices working with county councils to develop regional plans that will replace Structure Plans.



List of abbreviations and acronyms

CPRE SPDYSY	Council for the Protection of Rural England, Sheffield, Peak District and South Yorkshire Branch
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (central government department responsible for environmental and rural policy, including administering the legislation for national parks and the countryside)
DETR	Department of Transport and Regions (functions now undertaken by DEFRA, Department of Transport and ODPM)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ERDP	England Rural Development Programme (suite of programmes designed to promote the rural environment, sustainable agriculture and rural communities)
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Areas (one of the ERDP programmes with the specific target of promoting farming practices that will protect sensitive environmental areas)
HPBC	High Peak Borough Council
NPMP	National Park Management Plan
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (includes the Planning Directorate)
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance notes (central government guidance to local authorities when preparing planning documents)
RPG	Regional Policy Guidance (planning guidance focused at regional issues prepared by regional assemblies and published by the ODPM)
SMDC	Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Act 1947

Useful websites

Peak District National Park Authority
www.peakdistrict-npa.gov.uk

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Planning Policies
www.planning.odpm.gov.uk

The Countryside Agency
www.countryside.gov.uk/index.htm

Department for Environment Food Rural Affairs
www.defra.gov.uk

List of appendices

The appendices can be downloaded from the PCE website www.pce.govt.nz.

4A Local government organisations involved with the Park

4B Members of the Peak District National Park Authority

4C Participants in the development of the Park's Management Plan

4D Extracts from Structure and Local Plans

¹⁷⁴ Central government sets the parameters and attempts to integrate the planning undertaken by regional, county, unitary and local authorities.

¹⁷⁵ Description provided by John Spottiswood, Planning Officer, Council for the Protection of Rural England, Sheffield, Peak District and South Yorkshire Branch (CPRE SPDYSY), pers. comm.

¹⁷⁶ The Pennine mountain range is sometimes called the 'backbone of England'. It extends 260 kilometres (c 160 miles) from the Cheviot Hills on the Scottish border to the Peak District in Derbyshire.

¹⁷⁷ John Spottiswood, Planning Officer, CPRE SPDYSY, states that one of the major reasons for excluding these other, equally attractive, places from the Park's designated area, was that it was foreseen that they would be needed for future road and rail development, pers. comm.

¹⁷⁸ Peak District National Park Authority. 2000a. *Peak District National Park: State of the Park Report*, p. 9.

¹⁷⁹ Peak District National Park Authority. 2001. *Peak District National Park Local Plan, Adopted Version March 2001*, p. 12.

¹⁸⁰ Peak District National Park Authority, 2001, op. cit.

¹⁸¹ Peak District National Park Authority, 2000b. *National Management Plan: Strategy 2000-2005*, p. 15.

¹⁸² Peak District National Park Authority, 2000b, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁸³ Peak District National Park Authority, 2000a, op. cit.

¹⁸⁴ 'Brownfield' site is a term used to refer to land previously developed that may or may not be contaminated.

¹⁸⁵ Total building commitments in the Park 1991 to 2000:
 Local Need 199

- Conversions 363
Agriculture 82
Enhancement 34
New Build 139
- Peak District National Park Authority, 2000a, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
- ¹⁸⁶ John Spottiswood, Planning Officer, CPRE SPDSY, pers. comm., 12 August 2002.
- John states that CPRE SPDSY is currently undertaking campaigns to prevent greenfield housing development in Buxton and Buxworth, Derbyshire. Although there is a preference against 'greenfield' developments in the Government's guidance, these areas outside of the Park can still be developed where there is a shortage of 'brownfield' sites.
- ¹⁸⁷ The English planning system is an example of Plan Led Control, which is a regulatory system that controls future development by setting out, in planning policies and documents, what will be considered appropriate development activity.
- This approach can be compared with the New Zealand Resource Management Act 1991, which does not attempt to define appropriate activities but focuses on avoiding, remedying or mitigating the effects of those activities.
- ¹⁸⁸ John Spottiswood, CPRE SPDSY, pers. comm., 12 August 2002. For further discussion of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 and the issue of compensation see Blundell, J. 1993. *Labour's Flawed Land Act 1947-1976*, and Cullingworth, J. and Nadin, V. 1997. *Town and Country Planning in the UK*.
- ¹⁸⁹ Farmer, et. al., 1999. *Environmental Planning in the United Kingdom: A Background Paper for the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution*.
- ¹⁹⁰ The Government has proposed that Structure Plans will be replaced by the Regional Policy Guidance (promoting it from a guidance to plan status) (see table 4.1).
- ¹⁹¹ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. 2000. *Planning Policy Guidance Note 12: Development Plans*.
- ¹⁹² Also, there are the Regional Planning Guidances that are prepared by Regional Assemblies.
- ¹⁹³ Farmer, et. al., 1999, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- ¹⁹⁴ Section 70 of the Town Country and Planning Act 1990 states that any material consideration can be taken into account when considering a planning permission. Case law interprets 'consideration' widely as long as it is relevant.
- ¹⁹⁵ Adrian Fisher, Forward Planning Manager, Regeneration Service, High Peak Borough Council, pers. comm., 23 October 2002.
- ¹⁹⁶ Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. 1995. *Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts*.
- ¹⁹⁷ See www.planning.odpm.gov.uk [Accessed June 2002].
- ¹⁹⁸ See www.planning.odpm.gov.uk/informat.htm [Accessed 31 January 2003].
- ¹⁹⁹ Farmer, et. al., 1999, *op. cit.*
- ²⁰⁰ There are 14 areas designated as green belts in England, and six in Scotland.
- ²⁰¹ Exceptional circumstances in UK law are determined on a case-by-case basis. However, Structure and Local Plans can attempt to reduce uncertainty by specifying what are exceptional circumstances. (See the discussion on the Peak District National Park Local Plan in appendix 4D.)
- ²⁰² Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 1995, *op. cit.*
- ²⁰³ See www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/about/aboutindex.htm [Accessed June 2002].
- ²⁰⁴ Peak District National Park Authority, 2000a, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
- ²⁰⁵ Peak District National Park Authority, 2000a, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
- ²⁰⁶ See www.countryside.gov.uk [Accessed June 2002].
- ²⁰⁷ See www.countryside.gov.uk/cc/ [Accessed June 2002].
- ²⁰⁸ Swanwick, C. 2002. *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland: Prepared on behalf of the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage*.
- ²⁰⁹ Government Office of East Midlands. 2002. *Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands (RPG8)*.
- ²¹⁰ John Spottiswood, Planning Officer, CPRE SPDSY, pers. comm.
- ²¹¹ Peak District National Park Authority, 2000b, *op. cit.*, appendix 1, p. A-2.
- ²¹² Peak District National Park Authority, 2000a, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
- ²¹³ See www.peakdistrict-npa.gov.uk/ [Accessed June 2002].
- ²¹⁴ The Peak District Local Access Forum is an independent group that meets regularly to review and advise the National Park Authority on improvements to access to the countryside of the Peak District.
- ²¹⁵ See <http://www.peakdistrict.org/pubs/bap/bap.htm> [Accessed June 2002].
- ²¹⁶ Peak District National Park Authority, 2000b, *op. cit.*
- ²¹⁷ Peak District National Park Authority, 2000b, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- ²¹⁸ Peak Park Joint Planning Board. 1994. *Peak Park Structure Plan, Adopted Replacement, Final Edition*.
- ²¹⁹ From the Park's Local Plan:
- The Natural Zone is defined in the National Park Plan as "those areas where the vegetation is almost entirely self-sown, with only minor modifications by human activities. There are few buildings or obvious signs of human influence such as field boundaries. The Natural Zone areas are not truly 'natural' since human influence has considerably shaped the environment. However, they are the nearest thing to wilderness in the Park*
- Peak District National Park Authority, 2001, *op. cit.*
- ²²⁰ Peak District National Park Authority, 2001, *op. cit.*
- ²²¹ High Peak Borough Council, 2002. *High Peak Local Plan, Deposit Draft 2002*, pp. 21, 22.
- ²²² Adrian Fisher, Forward Planning Manager, Regeneration Service, High Peak Borough Council, pers. comm., 30 July 2002.
- ²²³ Sheffield City Council. 1998. *Sheffield Unitary Development Plan*.
- ²²⁴ See www.sheffield.gov.uk/feedback/UDP/Intro.htm [Accessed June 2002].
- ²²⁵ Staffordshire Moorlands District Council. 2001. *Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - Consultation Draft: Summary, March 2001*.
- ²²⁶ Although there are provisions to revoke permission, these may be considered too expensive to be used in practice.
- ²²⁷ The CPRE SPDSY is a non-government organisation established in 1926 that campaigns to promote the long-term future of the countryside. Friends of the Peak District has been established by CPRE SPDSY to deal solely with the threats faced by the Park.
- ²²⁸ See www.cprepeakandysorks.org.uk/campaigns/housing.htm [Accessed August 2002].
- ²²⁹ See www.highpeak.gov.uk/latest/index.htm for a summary of the responses to the Local Plan [Accessed July 2002].
- ²³⁰ John Spottiswood, CPRE SPDSY, pers. comm., 12 August 2002.
- ²³¹ The first Labour government elected in 1945 began a programme of nationalisation including the Reserve Bank, the coalmines and the railways.
- ²³² Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. 1997. *Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: General Policy and Principles*.
- ²³³ John Spottiswood, CPRE SPDSY, pers. comm., 12 August 2002.
- ²³⁴ The Confederation of Business Industry, a UK business advocacy organisation, has expressed the view that applicants should be compensated for the costs of delays caused by the planning process. Confederation of Business Industry. 2001. *Planning for Productivity: A ten-point plan*.
- ²³⁵ See appendix 4D, Conservation Policy 5, an extract from the Park Authority's Structure Plan.
- ²³⁶ The Rural Economy and Communities initiative comprises a set of government policies and funding programmes designed to maintain and improve rural services (for example, education, health services, affordable rural housing, access to transport services). It also includes programmes to promote aspects of the rural economy by rejuvenating market towns and traditional rural industries). See www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/rwphome.htm [Accessed July 2002].