

Meeting:	Board
Date:	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2008
Contact:	John Sparkes – 2772668
Board Action:	For discussion
Sensitivity:	Public

**Subject: Bridging Newcastle Gateshead Sustainability Strategy  
AGENDA ITEM 11**

**Link to BNG Vision and Objectives:**

**Vision : To create great places to live.**

The opportunity to create high quality developments in terms of design and sustainability.

**Objective: To provide an improved choice of good quality, well designed homes through new development and investment in sustainable homes whilst replacing obsolete housing.**

The proposed Sustainability Strategy is an overarching document which provides a commitment from BNG to embed sustainability at all operational levels in line with the policies and practices of Newcastle and Gateshead Councils. The strategy is consistent with and complementary to a range of activities already being carried out within the partnership.

**Recommendation:**

That Board approve the BNG Sustainability Strategy.

**Executive Summary:**

Approval from the Board is sought for the attached BNG Sustainability Strategy which provides a commitment from BNG to embed sustainability at all operational levels. This will complement the existing policies and standards adopted by both partner local authorities through a variety of action plans, UDP/LDF framework.

<b>Implications</b>	
Financial:	The application of enhanced standards of sustainability may lead to increase in costs of new build schemes.
Equality:	The Sustainability Strategy will promote the creation of mixed sustainable communities.
Sustainability:	The Sustainability Strategy will assist in the provision of high standards of sustainability in all BNG activities. This will ensure that BNG schemes and activities incorporate appropriate measures to address a range of sustainability issues. This includes, inter alia, the quality of place, high levels of accessibility by public transport and cycling, leading edge design sustainability (eco and lifetime homes), recycling and carbon reduction.
Freedom of Information:	Not subject to FOI restrictions
Report Status:	Open

<b>Risk:</b>			
Risk Map Element	Brief description of any material risks, including of not proceeding.	Impact	Probability
Strategic:	The Sustainability Strategy is not adopted resulting in a failure by BNG to have specific sustainability measures in place which align with other partners.	High	Low
Financial:	The application of elements of the Sustainability Strategy may lead to increased construction and development costs.	Medium	Low
Development:	Schemes, in exceptional circumstances, may be delayed in being brought forward due to increased design lead in time and construction costs arising from the application of higher standards of sustainability.	Medium	Low
Operational:	Failure to apply the Sustainability Strategy may result in some developments failing to meet BNG aspirations.	High	Low
Reputational:	Should the Sustainability Strategy fail to be adopted by BNG then there will be a loss of reputation at a local and national level amongst other pathfinders and central government. It is essential that BNG is able to demonstrate its commitment to high levels of sustainability as part of its operational activities and the embodiment of these aspirations, together with the standards and policies of the partner local authorities in a bespoke document, will clearly reflect this.		

**Report to:**

**BNG Board 18 September 2008**

**Subject:**

**Design Standards and Principles for New Build Developments**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Approval from the Board is sought for the attached BNG Sustainability Strategy which provides a commitment from BNG to embed sustainability at all operational levels. This will complement the existing policies and standards adopted by both partner local authorities through a variety of action plans, UDP/LDF framework.

2. **BODY OF REPORT**

Bridging NewcastleGateshead operates within a partnership across two local authorities and from a policy and strategy standpoint there is a comprehensive framework of documents which are applied to all BNG activities within the two administrative areas. While various core Planning led documents such as the Local Development Framework, Area Action Plans etc all have levels of sustainability embedded within them, these in turn reflect regional priorities.

Given that this framework of policies and action plans is already in place, the proposed BNG Sustainability Strategy will be an overarching document which provides a commitment from BNG to embed sustainability at all operational levels and which will be aligned with and complementary to the policies and practices of Newcastle and Gateshead Councils.

At a regional level, The Integrated Regional Framework for the North East of England March 2008 (IRF) aims to embed the principles of sustainable development within the region's strategies, policies, plans and programmes, so helping us to move towards a more sustainable future and enabling us all to achieve a better quality of life. The IRF provides an overarching framework within which other plans, strategies and programmes can be developed. The IRF, which was first published in 2004, is supported by the North East Assembly, One North East, Government Office for the North East and other regional partners.

Within the IRF a series of 10 objectives are identified which seek to ensure that all policies, strategies, plans and programmes assist in delivering increased level of sustainability. These broad objectives are embodied at a local level by the two local authorities. It is therefore within the strategic context of the IRF that Gateshead and Newcastle City Councils have drawn up their own strategies and policies which are applied to development and other activities within the HMR pathfinder Area.

These include:

- Here Today, Here Tomorrow 2008 – a strategic response to LA21 issues containing a range of broad objectives, actions for the next five years and targets (where applicable) in respect of 10 themes (Gateshead Council)
- Gateshead Unitary Development Plan, Local Development Framework - Core Strategy and Area Action Plans / Supplementary planning Documents / Design

Codes - The suite of statutory planning documents which are applied to developments within Gateshead complementing 'Here Today, Gone Tomorrow' and the IRF and are tailored to meet the location / development requirements.

- Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2008 - This documents sets out the Council's approach to tackling climate change and sets out a range of policies, delivery and governance measures. (Newcastle City Council)
- Newcastle Local Development Framework - Core Strategy and Area Action Plans / Supplementary planning Documents / Design Codes - The suite of statutory planning documents which are applied to developments in Newcastle complement Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2008 and the IRF and are tailored to meet the location / development requirements.

A key element of the BNG Sustainability Strategy will be to ensure that the policies and action plans of the partner authorities are embedded within BNG's operational activities. The Sustainability Strategy therefore provides a series of ten commitments over three themes which are set out below:

#### **THEME 1 - OUR ENVIRONMENT**

- 1: Live within environmental limits, both locally and globally**
- 2: Protect, enhance and respect cultural heritage and diversity**
- 3: Protect and enhance environmental assets and infrastructure**
- 4: Reduce the impacts of climate change and our contribution to its causes**

#### **THEME 2 - OUR COMMUNITIES**

- 5: Promote strong and inclusive communities**
- 6: Raise educational achievement and improve skill levels across BNG**
- 7: Improving health and well-being and reduce inequalities in health**
- 8: Ensure good accessibility for all to jobs, facilities, goods and services**

#### **THEME 3 - OUR ECONOMY**

- 9: Strengthen our economy**
- 10: Improve access to a stable and sustainable employment market**

In order to ensure that sustainability is embedded at all BNG operational levels, in assessing applications for funding, a Sustainability Audit will be carried out on all interventions receiving in excess of £500k as part of the appraisal process. This will be undertaken in tandem with the Design Review which was agreed by Board in June as part of the Design Standards and Principles for New Developments and will consider proposals against the 10 Sustainability Commitments set out above.

In addition to ensuring that the Sustainability Strategy reviews major schemes as they are brought forward as part of the BNG programme, it is also noted that strategy also proposes a series of measures which can be applied to BNG's day to day activities.

These include:

- **City Centre office easily accessible by range of public transport modes**
- **Minimum Printing / Electronic data Storage and Archiving**
- **Paper Recycling**
- **Water Cup Recycling**
- **Black and White Only Printing**
- **Double Sides Printing of Documents**
- **'Lights Off' Policy**
- **Provision of IT infrastructure to enable Home Working reducing transport / CO2**

- emissions**
- **Car Sharing**

### **NEXT STEPS**

Should the Board agree the proposed Sustainability Strategy the principles contained within the document will be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 on all relevant new schemes being brought forward which are in receipt of funding from BNG. It is proposed that the Strategy is reviewed every 12 months to take account of emerging national policy and guidance on design and sustainability issues which are applicable at a local or regional level.

### 4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the BNG Sustainability Strategy be approved by the BNG Board for implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008.