

Northumberland Submission Core Strategy

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)



SA Report

February 2017

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REVISION SCHEDULE

Rev	Date	Details	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
1	October 2015	SA Report for Pre-Submission Core Strategy	Ian McCluskey Senior Sustainability Consultant	Alex White Associate	Steve Smith Technical Director
2	January-February 2017	Updated SA Report (Incorporating findings from two SA Addendum and consideration of 'additional modifications')	Ian McCluskey Senior Sustainability Consultant	Alex White Associate	Alan Houghton Associate Director

INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to assist Northumberland County Council (NCC or the 'Council') in undertaking the sustainability appraisal (SA) in support of the emerging Local Plan Core Strategy. SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of a draft plan, and alternatives, in terms of sustainability issues, with a view to avoiding and mitigating adverse effects and maximising the positives. SA of the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy is a legal requirement.¹

1.1.2 This SA Report documents the SA process, setting out an appraisal of the sustainability implications of the Submission Core Strategy, and capturing how the SA process has influenced the development of the emerging Core Strategy. **Figure 1.1** below illustrates the SA Outputs that have been prepared at key stages of the Plan-making process.

Figure 1.1: Plan timeline

Plan milestone	Consultation dates	SA Outputs
Issues and Options	23rd May 2012 to 15th August 2012	SA Scoping Report Interim SA Report
Preferred Options (stage one)	6th February 2013 to 20th March 2013	Interim SA Report
Preferred Options (stage two)	31st October 2013 to 2nd January 2014	Interim SA Report
Full Draft Plan	12th December 2014 to 11th February 2015	Interim SA Report
Pre-Submission Draft	14th October to 25th November 2015	SA Report
Major Modifications	15th June to 27th July 2016	SA Report Addendum
Further Major Modifications	11th November to 23rd December 2016	SA Report Addendum Final updated SA Report

1.2 SA explained

1.2.1 It is a requirement that SA is undertaken in-line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the 'SEA Regulations'), which were prepared in order to transpose into national law the EU Directive.²

1.2.2 **The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'.³** The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.

1.2.3 The Regulations prescribe the information that must be contained within the report, which for the purposes of SA is known as the 'SA Report'. Essentially, there is a need for the SA Report to answer the following **four questions**:

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that an SA Report is published for consultation alongside the 'Proposed Submission' Plan document.

² Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (or the 'SEA Directive')

³ Regulation 12(2)

1. What's the scope of the SA?
 - This question must be answered subsequent to a review of the sustainability context and baseline, and consultation with designated environmental authorities.
2. What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?
 - Preparation of the draft plan must be preceded by SA of 'reasonable alternatives'. As well as presenting the appraisal of reasonable alternatives, the SA Report must present 'outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with' and describe the influence of alternatives SA.
3. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?
 - i.e. what are the likely significant effects of the draft plan and what changes might be made in order to avoid or mitigate negative effects and enhance the positives.
4. What happens next (including monitoring)?

1.2.4 These questions are derived from Schedule 2 of the Regulations, which present the information to be provided within the report under a list of ten points. **Table 1.1** makes the links between the ten Schedule 2 requirements and the four SA questions.

1.2.5 The four SA questions are answered in turn across the four subsequent parts of this Report.

Table 1.1: The SA Report requirements.

SA REPORT QUESTION	SUB-QUESTION	SCHEDULE II REQUIREMENT (THE REPORT MUST INCLUDE...)
What's the scope of the SA?	What's the plan seeking to achieve?	An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes
	What's the sustainability 'context'?	The relevant environmental protection objectives , established at international or national level Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
	What's the sustainability 'baseline'?	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan' The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
	What are the key issues that should be a focus of SA?	Any existing environmental problems / issues which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance

SA REPORT QUESTION	SUB-QUESTION	SCHEDULE II REQUIREMENT (THE REPORT MUST INCLUDE...)
What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?		<p>An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of 'reasonableness')</p> <p>The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives</p> <p>An outline of the reasons for selecting preferred options in-light of alternatives appraisal / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.</p>
What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?		<p>The likely significant effects on the environment associated with the draft plan</p> <p>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan</p>
What happens next?		<p>A discussion of what is involved at the next stages of plan making (including SA requirements).</p> <p>A description of the monitoring measures envisaged</p>

- 1.1.5 N.B. The right-hand column of Table 1.2 does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.
- 1.1.6 Table 1.2 demonstrates how this SA Report meets the requirements of Schedule 2, signposting to relevant sections where the required information can be found.

Table 1.2: Compliance with the 'SEA Regulations'

Schedule 2 requirements	Evidence
<i>An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.</i>	Section 2 sets out a summary of the draft plan contents and objectives. Section 5 sets out the relationship with other plans and programmes through the contextual review.
<i>The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.</i>	Section 4 sets out the baseline position for each sustainability topic covering those issues identified in Schedule 2(6)
<i>The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.</i>	Section 4 sets out the baseline position for each sustainability topic.

Schedule 2 requirements	Evidence
<i>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds(a) and the Habitats Directive.</i>	<p>Section 4 sets out the baseline position for each sustainability topic, which includes consideration of biodiversity and conservation taking into account Council Directive 79/409/EEC.</p> <p>Section 6 identifies key issues for the Scope of the SA</p>
<i>The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.</i>	Section 5 (through the contextual review) identifies key objectives, issues and opportunities at international, national and local level for each sustainability topic.
<i>The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects.</i>	<p>Part 2 of the SA Report identifies significant effects associated with reasonable alternatives that were appraised as the Local Plan was being developed.</p> <p>Part 3 of the SA Report identifies significant effects associated with the draft Plan.</p> <p>Appendices provide further detailed assessments.</p>
<i>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.</i>	Part 3 contains recommendations for mitigation and enhancement and how these have been taken into account in plan making. These measures are contained within the appraisal discussions for each SA Topic. Recommendations for enhancement and mitigation were also made at previous stages of appraisal in 'interim SA Reports'. These were taken into consideration by the Council as the Plan was further developed. Section 25 summarises the recommendations made at this stage.
<i>An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.</i>	Part 2 of the SA Report provides 'outline reasons' for selecting alternatives (including site options), why alternatives have been dismissed or determined to be unreasonable, and why the preferred options have been selected.
<i>A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.</i>	Section 26 identifies potential monitoring indicators linked to significant effects as well as more general contextual indicators.
<i>A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.</i>	Separate documents prepared.

PART 1: WHAT'S THE SCOPE OF THE SA?

2. WHAT IS THE PLAN SEEKING TO ACHIEVE?

The SA Report must include...

- An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan

2.1 What is the plan seeking to achieve?

2.1.1 The Northumberland Core Strategy is the first part of the Northumberland Local Plan and will set the overall strategic direction for planning the administrative area of Northumberland County over the period 2011 up to 2031. Further detailed policies and allocations will be included within a Delivery Plan Document, which will also form part of the Northumberland Local Plan.

2.1.2 The Northumberland Core Strategy will provide a spatial expression of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and show how spatial planning can help to deliver the objectives of the SCS. It will also closely align with other plans and strategies such as the Northumberland Economic Strategy, Local Transport Plan and Housing Strategy, seeking to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of common objectives.

2.1.3 The strategic objectives set out in the plan are listed below. Given the importance of Northumberland's environment, the overarching aim is to deliver sustainable economic growth whilst conserving and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and built environment. The objectives are all interlinked and not listed in priority order

Delivering a thriving and competitive economy - to grow and diversify the Northumberland economy by making it an attractive and competitive place to start, grown and invest in a broad range of businesses. This will increase the number and quality of jobs available to raise levels of employment of Northumberland residents, and attract and retain working age people;

Providing existing and future communities with a choice of decent, affordable homes - to meet Northumberland's objectively assessed housing needs by extending choice across Northumberland's housing markets, including the provision of affordable housing;

Conserving and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic, water and built environments – to ensure that these assets continue to be experienced and valued by residents of and visitors to the County and protected from inappropriate development;

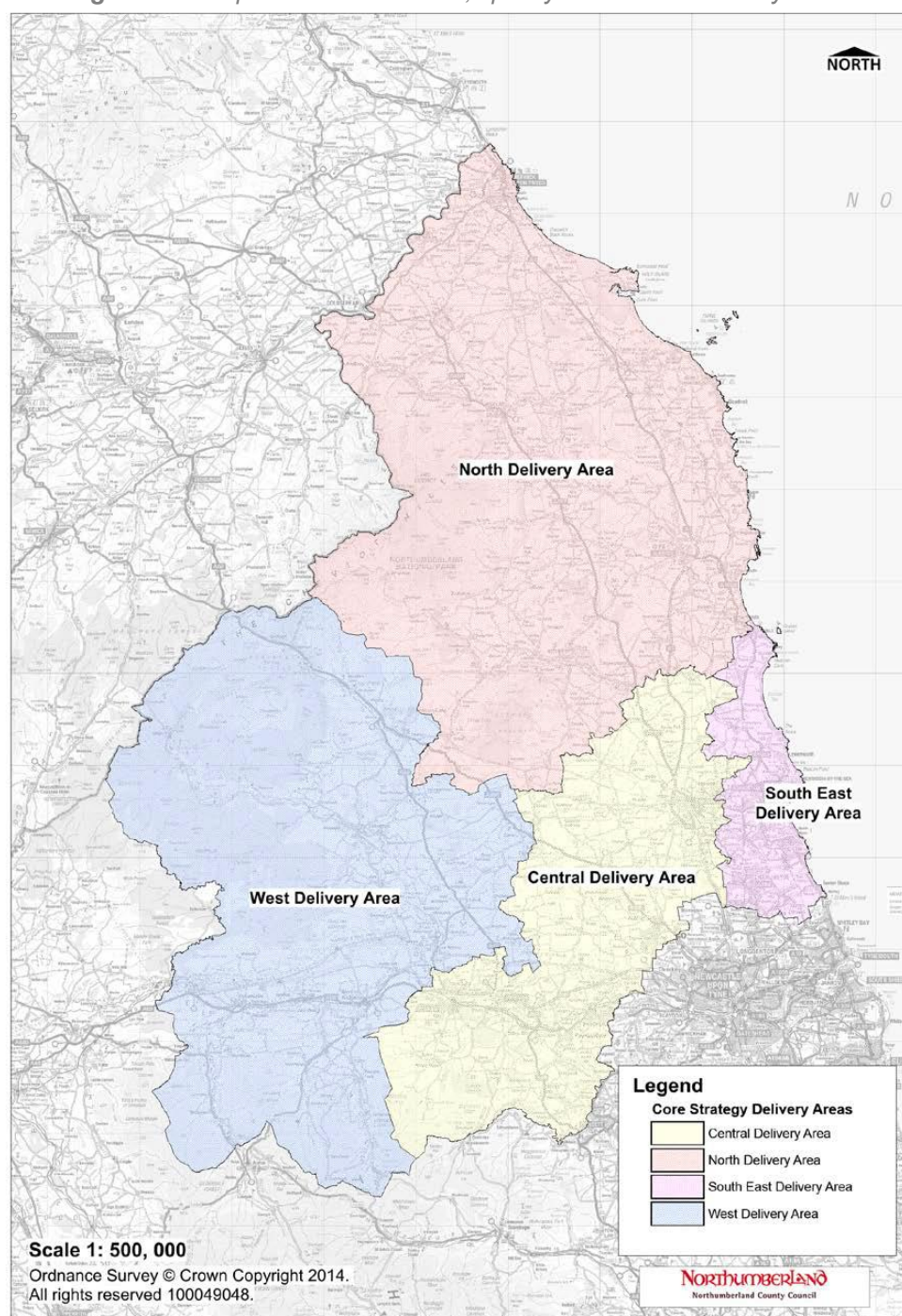
Ensuring connectivity and infrastructure delivery - to ensure all development makes the best use of, and safeguards Northumberland's infrastructure, securing necessary up-grades and new infrastructure where required;

Community well-being - to support sustainable communities across Northumberland; to support health, social and cultural well-being for all including responding to the needs and opportunities created by an ageing population;

Addressing climate change - to ensure the delivery of the most sustainable development, whilst acknowledging and anticipating the likely impact of climate change on Northumberland and to mitigate and adapt to its effects;

Managing natural resources - to manage the prudent use of Northumberland's natural resources, including minerals, energy, land, existing built fabric and water, while producing less waste and minimising adverse impacts on communities and the environment.

2.1.4 The geographical scope of the Plan is illustrated on **Figure 2.1**, which outlines the authority border to which the Plan policies will apply. The map also illustrates the 'Delivery Areas', which are referred to throughout the SA Report.

Figure 2.1: Map of Northumberland, split by Local Plan 'Delivery Areas'

2.2 What's the plan not trying to achieve?

- 2.2.1 It is important to emphasise that the Plan will be strategic in nature. It follows a process that omits consideration of some detailed issues in the knowledge that these can be addressed through other Local Plan documents (such as the Delivery Plan Document and Neighbourhood Plans) and the planning application process. The strategic nature of the plan is reflected in the scope of the SA.

3

WHAT'S THE SCOPE OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL?

The SA Report must include...

- The relationship of the plan with other relevant plans and programmes.
- The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level.
- The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment.
- The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected. The likely evolution of the current state of the environment without implementation of the plan.

3.1 Consultation on the scope

- 3.1.1 The Regulations require that: *'When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies'*. In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, The Environment Agency and English Heritage.⁴ As such, these authorities were consulted on the scope of this SA in December 2011. This consultation was achieved by providing a draft 'Scoping Report' for their comment. The draft Scoping Report was also available on the Council website and was sent to range of other stakeholder organisations at this time so that they would have the opportunity to comment.
- 3.1.2 The Scoping Report was subsequently revised and republished in May 2012 and is available on the Planning Policy Section of the Council's website at www.northumberland.gov.uk
- 3.1.3 The SA scope has since been reviewed to ensure that the appraisals undertaken at each stage of plan-making focus on the most relevant sustainability issues. Updated baseline information is presented in this SA report. No significant changes to the sustainability issues / SA Framework were identified as part of any updates to the scope.
- 3.1.4 The sustainability appraisal framework consists of 20 objectives, which were derived from a consideration of the policy context, baseline information and key issues identified.

1. To improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities.	11. To improve the quality, range and accessibility of community services and facilities.
2. To ensure good air quality	12. To reduce the need for travel and improve transport integration.
3. To protect and enhance Northumberland's cultural heritage and diversity.	13. To protect and enhance the quality, distinctiveness and diversity of Northumberland's rural and urban landscapes.
4. To ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home.	14. To ensure prudent use and supply of natural resources.
5. To avoid or reduce flood risk to people and property.	15. To protect and enhance Northumberland's biodiversity and biodiversity.
6. To deliver safer communities	16. To protect and enhance the quality of Northumberland's river, transitional and coastal and ground and surface water bodies
7. To ensure resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation.	17. To mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
8. To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy.	18. To reduce the amount of waste that is produced and increase the proportion that is reused, recycled or composted.
9. To deliver accessible education and training opportunities.	19. To increase public involvement in decision making and participation in community activity, especially amongst under-represented groups.
10. To increase the diversity and quality of employment opportunities.	20. Promoting innovative solutions for restoration of minerals and waste sites.

⁴ In-line with Article 6(3).of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because *'by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme'.*

4 THE BASELINE POSITION

- 4.1.1 The baseline review set out in the following sections is a summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report from May 2012 and updated where appropriate. It sets out the current and future baseline for Northumberland; acknowledging that there are gaps in some areas.

4.2 Health, Wellbeing and Cohesion

Population

- 4.2.1 Northumberland is the sixth largest county in England with a land area of 5,013 sq. km. However it has a population of approximately 315,000 making it one of the least densely populated counties (63 people per sq. km). There is an uneven distribution of population with over half living in the urbanised south east which covers only 5% of the county's area. (Within the towns of Ashington, Blyth, Cramlington and Bedlington).
- 4.2.2 There is a very low population density in the rural north and west, which creates particular challenges for the delivery of services. Between mid-2002 and mid-2011 Northumberland had an overall rising population with 9 out of the 9 years seeing a population increase. This changed in 2012 and 2013 however, with the figure decreasing slightly⁵ and while the population of Northumberland increased between mid-2013 and mid-2014, it decreased again between mid-2014 and mid-2015.
- 4.2.3 In mid-2015 Northumberland, 60.4% of the population was aged 16 to 64 compared with 63.3% in the North East region and also 63.3% in England. Northumberland had a bigger proportion of persons aged 65 and over in the population than the North East region and a smaller proportion of persons aged 0 to 15 than the region.
- 4.2.4 Based on ONS 2012 estimates, from 2012 to 2037, there will be an estimated 2.7% increase in the total population in Northumberland. ONS 2014 population projections estimate that from 2014 to 2039 the population for England will increase by 15%.
- 4.2.5 The rate of population change in Northumberland is relatively low; however, it is not estimated to be evenly spread across all age groups. **Figures 4.1** and **4.2** below show that between 2012 and 2037 there will be an estimated decrease in population in all age groups under 65 years old. In contrast, there will be an estimated increase in age group groups aged 65 years old and over⁶. This has implications on a series of factors that affect the economy and social wellbeing of the County. The growth in the ageing population including significant growth in those aged 80 years old and over, will place increased demand on health and social support services in the future.

⁵ Relevant Office for National Statistics (ONS) (2015) Local Profile [online] available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

⁶ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/snpp/sub-national-population-projections/2012-based-projections/rft-population-las.xls>

Figure 4.1 UK Mid 2015 population estimates pyramid

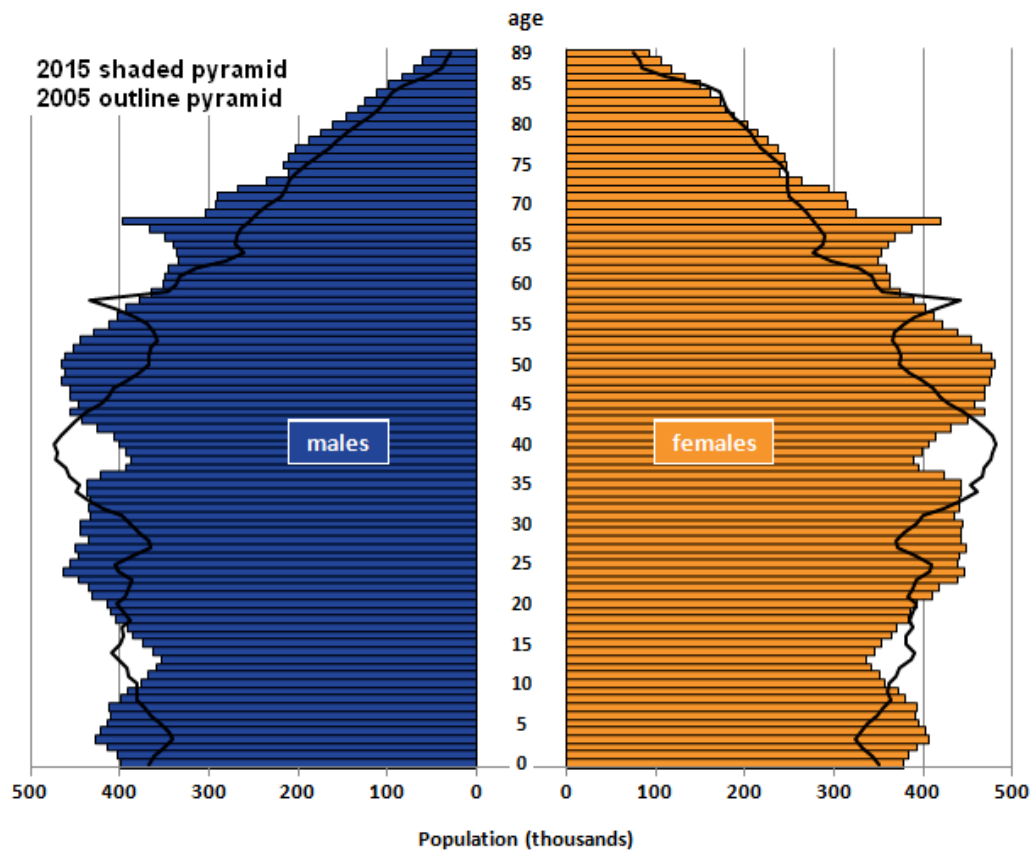
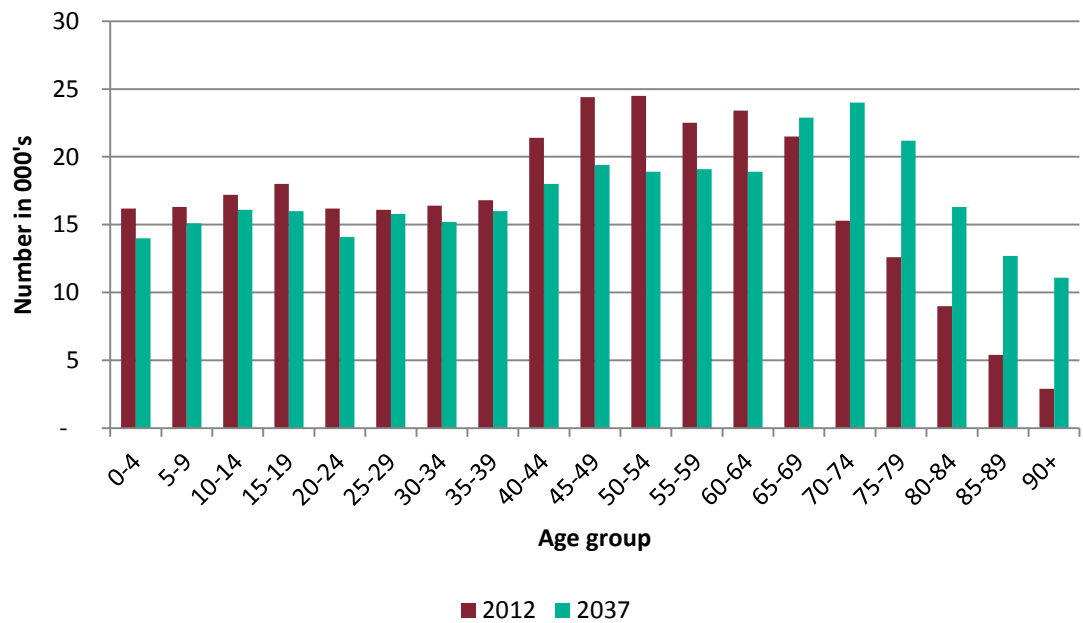


Figure 4.2: Northumberland Total population Estimates 2012 and 2037



Deprivation

- 4.2.6 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD 2015) produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) highlights the variation across the County in terms of the incidence of deprivation and social disadvantage. The IMD brings together 38 different indicators covering seven specific aspects or domains of deprivation including Income, Employment, Health and Disability, Education, Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment and Crime.
- 4.2.7 Northumberland has an average rank of 145 of the 326 local authorities in England. In comparison with other local authorities in the North East Northumberland has the second lowest proportion of LSOAs in the most deprived 10% and the third highest proportion in the 10% least deprived. Northumberland has 14 LSOAs in the most deprived 10% (two less than in 2010). **Figure 4.3** shows that while the most deprived LSOAs are concentrated in the South East, not all LSOAs in the area are amongst the least deprived. However the area contains several LSOAs that fall into the 11% to 20% and 21% to 30% most deprived.

Table 4.1 - Northumberland's most / least deprived Lower Super Output Areas

LSOAS IN THE MOST DEPRIVED 10% OF IMD 2015 ⁷				
LSOA	Name	Electoral Division LSOA falls within	Score	Rank
E01027416	Northumberland 022C	Croft	64.07	605
E01027533	Northumberland 013A	College	57.75	1,138
E01027415	Northumberland 023B	Croft	56.41	1,292
E01027426	Northumberland 025B	Newsham	56.04	1,340
E01027545	Northumberland 010D	Ashington Central/College/Hirst	54.70	1,518
E01027540	Northumberland 013B	Hirst	53.74	1,582
E01027542	Northumberland 009B	Newbiggin Central and East	53.14	1,669
E01027412	Northumberland 029D	Cramlington West	52.24	1,844
E01027527	Northumberland 012D	Ashington Central	51.42	1,981
E01027539	Northumberland 010C	Hirst	51.40	1,984
E01027392	Northumberland 022A	Cowpen/Kitty Brewster	51.00	2,061
E01027424	Northumberland 022D	Kitty Brewster	50.12	2,161
E01027518	Northumberland 020C	Bedlington Central	47.33	2,727
E01027451	Northumberland 008E	Lynemouth	49.04	2,372
LSOAS IN THE LEAST DEPRIVED 10% OF IMD 2015 ⁸				
LSOA	Name	Electoral Division LSOA falls within	Score	Rank
E01027513	Northumberland 036D	Bywell	2.59	32,356
E01027456	Northumberland 018B	Morpeth North	2.80	32,235

⁷ English Indices of Deprivation 2015: Northumberland Knowledge, Research Report, November 2015

⁸ Ibid.

E01027403	Northumberland 027D	Cramlington North	3.00	32,118
E01027455	Northumberland 018A	Morpeth Kirkehill	3.21	31,943
E01027401	Northumberland 027B	Cramlington North	3.33	31,851
E01027492	Northumberland 035E	Hexham West	3.51	31,734
E01027402	Northumberland 027C	Cramlington North	3.60	31,655
E01027469	Northumberland 034C	Ponteland South with Heddon	3.76	31,512
E01027400	Northumberland 027A	Cramlington North	4.10	31,176
E01027468	Northumberland 034B	Ponteland South with Heddon	4.59	30,711
E01027520	Northumberland 021C	Bedlington West	4.59	30,706
E01027507	Northumberland 039E	Stocksfield and Broomhaugh	4.83	30,466
E01027460	Northumberland 018D	Morpeth Stobhill	5.13	30,169
E01027357	Northumberland 004B	Alnwick	5.16	30,128
E01027369	Northumberland 007C	Rothbury	5.17	30,117
E01027458	Northumberland 018C	Morpeth Kirkehill	5.37	29,912
E01027538	Northumberland 014C	Haydon	5.45	29,815
E01027509	Northumberland 039F	Stocksfield and Broomhaugh	5.50	29,748
E01027464	Northumberland 033A	Ponteland East	5.56	29,667
E01027494	Northumberland 035G	Cramlington East/Cramlington South East	5.57	29,649
E01027471	Northumberland 034D	Ponteland West	5.61	29,611

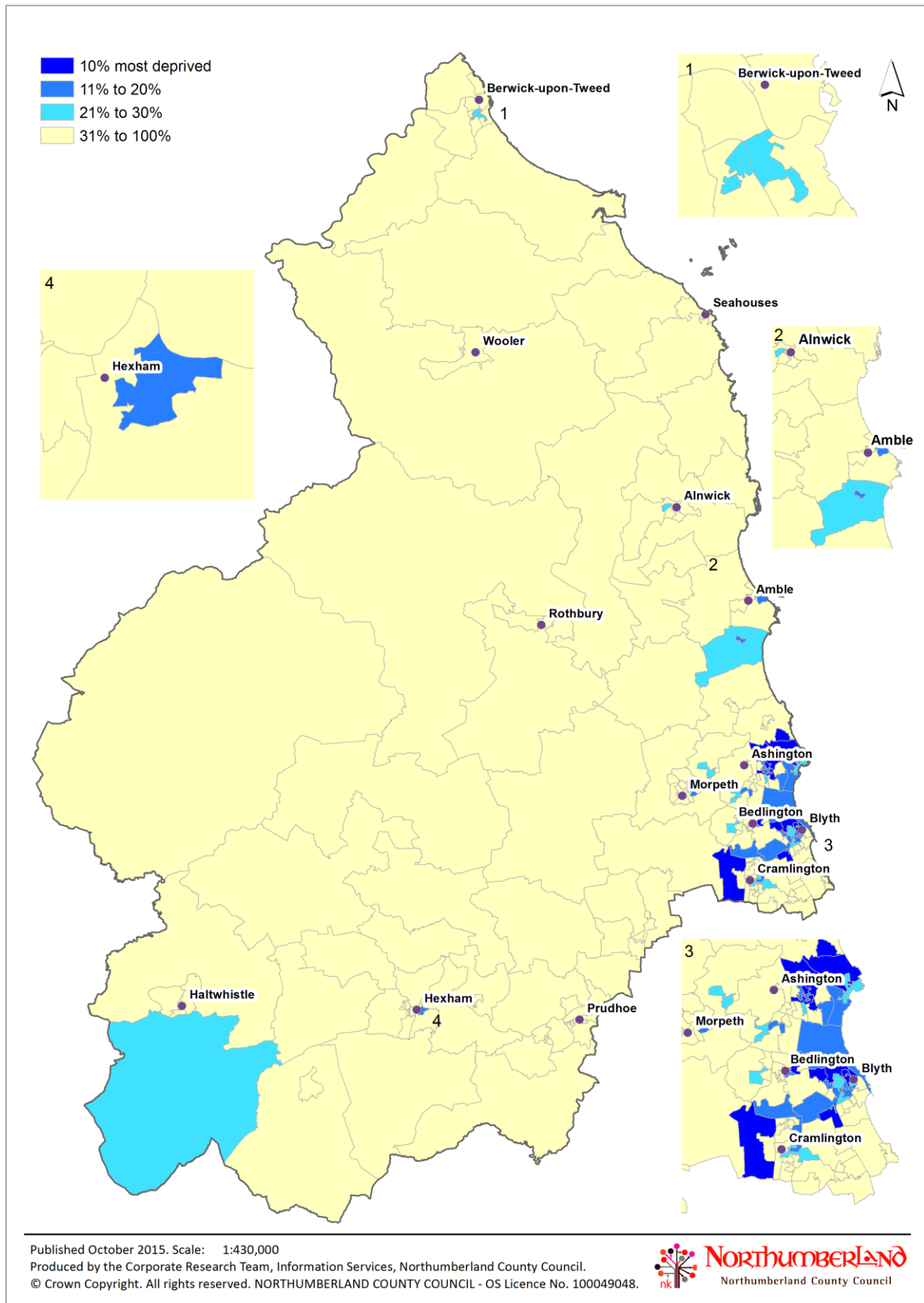
Source: *English Indices of Deprivation 2015: Northumberland Knowledge, Research Report, November 2015*

- 4.2.8 The most deprived LSOA in Northumberland is E01027416, ranked 605th most deprived in England (falling within the most deprived 2%); it is located in the Croft electoral division in Blyth. The least deprived LSOA is E01027513 which is ranked 32,356 of 32,482 (within the 6% least deprived). The LSOA, Bywell, is located in the Wylam area of Northumberland. **Table 4.1** identifies the most and least deprived LSOAs in Northumberland.
- 4.2.9 The northern and western areas of Northumberland have low population densities exacerbated by seasonal trends in holiday and second home occupation. Reduced accessibility to services and higher living costs are assessed in the Barriers to Housing & Services domain which measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and key local services. Due to the way in which the different domains are weighted to create the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation, problems caused by rural isolation are underestimated as a factor in deprivation. Northumberland has 32 LSOAs in the most deprived decile of the Barriers to Housing & Services domain, the majority of which fall within the rural areas of the county away from major settlements. However in a change from the ID 2010 there are now some LSOAs in the more urban south east of the county which are falling into the worst 10% indicating that for this domain higher levels of deprivation have become more widespread throughout the county.

- 4.2.10 Examining the IMD domains for income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education, skills and training and crime, these are most severe in South East Northumberland, whereas within the domains of barriers to housing and services and living environment deprivation is more apparent in the rural areas of Northumberland⁹.

⁹ Northumberland Knowledge (2015), Research Report - English Indices of Deprivation, November 2015

Figure 4.3 - Map of the IMD 2015 distribution of the most deprived areas



Health

- 4.2.11 There is a slight difference in life expectancy at birth for males in Northumberland (79.4 years) and in the North East (78.0 years). The life expectancy at birth for females in Northumberland (82.5 years) is similarly greater than that for North East (81.7 years), both are lower than the national average however. **Table 4.2** below shows the life expectancy data for Northumberland, the North East and England from 2012 to 2014.

Table 4.2: Life expectancy at birth (2012-2014)

	Males	Females
Northumberland	79.4	82.5
North East	78.0	81.7
England	79.6	83.2
Source: Neighbourhood Statistics, Office for National Statistics (2012-2014)		

- 4.2.12 In 1993 the life expectancy in Northumberland for males was 73.1 years; therefore there has been a significant increase over the last 20 years. Similarly with females, a significant increase has been shown with the 1993 life expectancy at 77.9 years.¹⁰
- 4.2.13 Life expectancy at birth has increased for both males and females from 2000-02 to 2012-14; however for females the rate has remained worse than England since 2004-06¹¹.
- 4.2.14 Northumberland had an infant mortality rate of 2.6 deaths per 1,000 live births over the period 2011-13. This compares with the rate for England which has 4.0 deaths per 1,000 live births¹². Infant mortality rates have been declining steadily in Northumberland since 2009-11 to 2011-13, with the latest period having a better period than England¹³.
- 4.2.15 The Health Profile 2015¹⁴ (which compares the health of Northumberland with the rest of England) shows that the health of people in Northumberland is varied compared with the England averages. Deprivation is lower than average, but about 17.6% (9,300) children live in poverty.
- 4.2.16 In Year 6 education 17.7% (534) of children are classified as obese, which is better than the average for England. The rate of alcohol specific hospital stays among those under 18 was 50.4 (rate per 100,000 population). This represents 30 stays per year. Levels of GCSE attainment, breastfeeding and smoking at time of delivery are worse than the England average.
- 4.2.17 Compared to England, Northumberland has significantly better rates of deprivation, children in poverty, statutory homelessness and violent crime. Northumberland had significantly worse rates of GCSE achievement and long-term unemployment, both compared to national rates and the average of its cluster group. In contrast to England, Northumberland has significantly worse outcomes for smoking status at time of delivery, alcohol-specific hospital stays for under 18s, excess weight in adults, hospital stays for alcohol related harm, recorded diabetes, life expectancy for females (as identified above), smoking related deaths and people seriously injured or killed on roads.
- 4.2.18 Demands on healthcare in the County are most likely to increase due to a growing population and an increasing elderly population. The types of services required may also alter in relation to the change in population profile as associated illnesses may differ.

¹⁰ ONS (2015) Life Expectancy at Birth and at Age 65 by Local Areas in England and Wales, 2012-14

¹¹ <http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#gid/1938132696/pat/6/ati/102/page/4/par/E12000001/are/E06000057/iid/90366/age/1/sex/2>

¹² Office for National Statistics (2015) Mortality rate per 1,000 live births (age under 1 year), 2011-2013

¹³ <http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#gid/1938132696/pat/6/ati/102/page/4/par/E12000001/are/E06000057/iid/40101/age/2/sex/4>

¹⁴ Health Profile (2015) Northumberland, Department of Health, Association of Public Health Observatories and NHS

- 4.2.19 Increases in energy prices could lead to a higher proportion of people living in fuel poverty. However Northumberland has seen significant improvements in respect of the number of excess winter deaths. From August 2006 - July 2009 to August 2011 to July 2014, the number of excess winter deaths more than halved with a ratio better than the North East and England in the latest period¹⁵.

Crime

- 4.2.20 In Northumberland, the overall crime rate went up slightly from March 2014 to March 2015. **Table 4.3** below shows the number of crime incidences and the percentage change from March 2013-14 to March 2014-2015. There were significant reductions in drug crime and violent robbery, however violent crime increased, particularly sexual offences and vehicle interference.¹⁶

Table 4.3: Crimes recorded in Northumberland 2013/14 – 2014/15

	Northumberland		
	2013/14	2014/15	% Change
Total Crime	10345	10938	6
Violent Crime	1848	2338	27
a) Violence against the person	1520	1894	25
b) Robbery	40	30	-25
c) Sexual offences	185	327	77
Vehicle Crime	916	977	7
a) Theft of motor vehicle	147	183	24
b) Theft from motor vehicle	739	688	-7
c) Vehicle interference	30	106	253
Burglary	1527	1481	-3
a) Burglary dwelling	428	468	9
b) Burglary other than dwelling	1099	1013	-8
Criminal Damage	2201	2425	10
Drug Crime	529	407	-23
Other Crime	3324	3310	0

Source: Northumbria Police Crime Statistics (2015)

- 4.2.21 It is difficult to predict future crime levels, but it is likely that the concentration of crime will continue to be most prevalent in the urban areas and town centres. Urbanised areas are likely to continue to have higher rates of crime as is the current trend.

¹⁵ <http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#gid/1938132696/pat/6/ati/102/page/4/par/E12000001/are/E06000057/iid/90641/age/1/sex/4>

¹⁶ Northumbria Police Crime Statistics (2015) http://www.northumbria.police.uk/Images/April%20-%20March%202014-15_tcm4-106378.pdf#page=7

Fuel Poverty

- 4.2.22 The Government recently took the decision to change the definition for fuel poverty, which states that a household will be defined as “fuel poor” if occupants have a total income that is “below the poverty line taking into account energy costs” and its “energy costs are higher than typical”. This new definition is called the low income high costs indicator (LICH).
- 4.2.23 Using the new LICH indicator the number of households in Northumberland calculated as being in fuel poverty in 2013 is 15,942 or 11.4%¹⁷. This is lower than the percentage of households calculated as being in fuel poverty in the North East (11.8%) but higher than the national figure (10.4%).

4.3 Environmental protection*Open space*

- 4.3.1 Public open space within the County helps meet the recreational needs of local people. In the majority of cases, this space is well integrated with public rights of way or permissive routes. Country Parks provide a managed environment to make users feel secure and comfortable with clearly way marked paths in good condition, many of which provide “access for all”. The majority of country parks have visitor facilities including cafes, toilets and information. The Country Parks include:
- Bedlington Country Park
 - Bolam Lake Country Park
 - Druridge Bay Country Park
 - Plessey Woods Country Park
 - Queen Elizabeth II Park, Ashington
 - Tyne Green at Hexham
 - Tyne Riverside Country Park
 - Wansbeck Riverside
- 4.3.2 In addition to the Country Parks, Northumberland has a number of large houses with surrounding grounds that offer a countryside experience. These include:
- Belsay Hall: English Heritage
 - Wallington: National Trust
 - Cragston: National Trust
- 4.3.3 Other sites with public access include areas owned by the County Council and conservation groups including Northumberland Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust. There are also a number of woodlands within Northumberland, which are used for recreation purposes.

¹⁷ Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics Report 2015

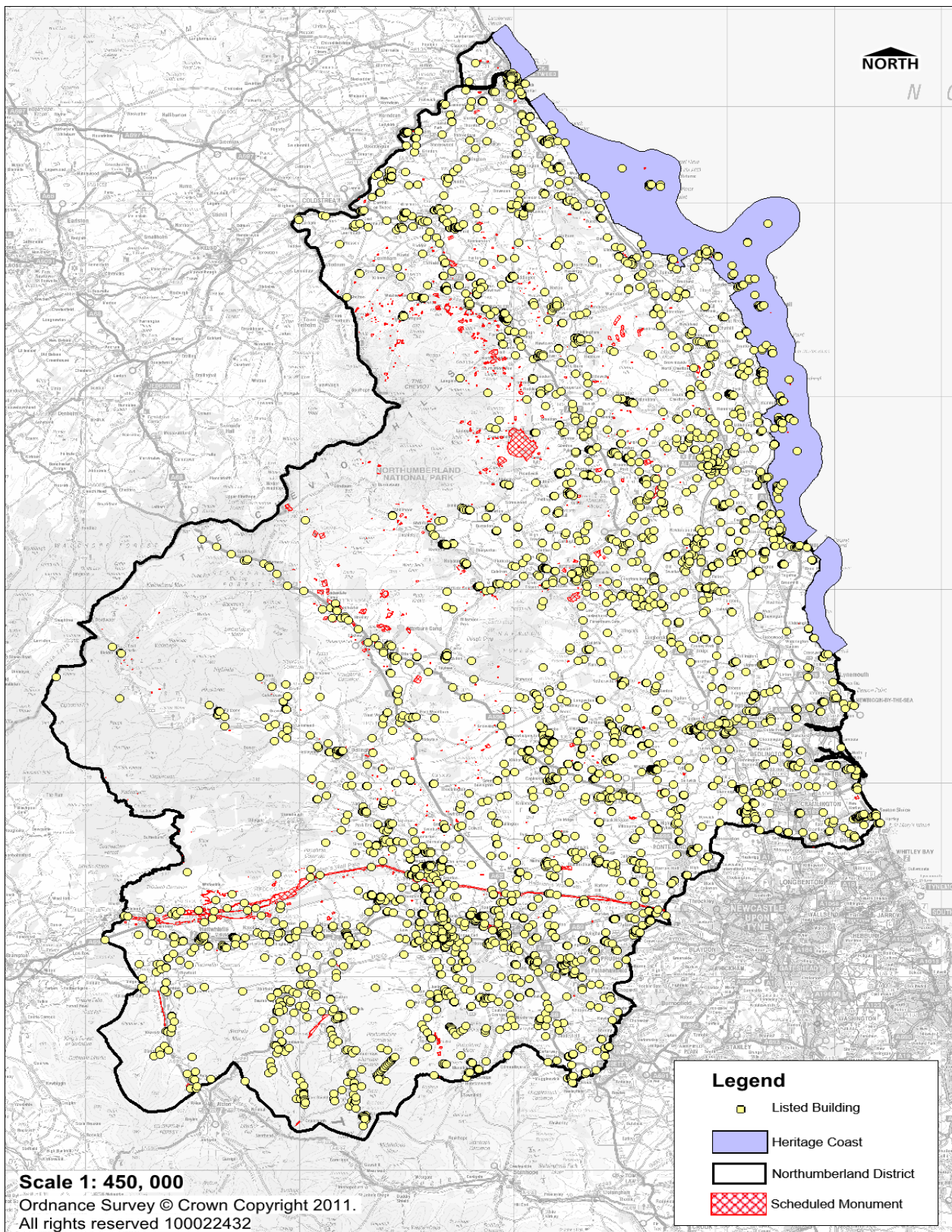
4.4 Built and Natural Heritage

- 4.4.1 There is a wealth of built and natural heritage in Northumberland. In 2015 the number of listed buildings was 5,573, including 174 Grade I. There are 975 Scheduled heritage assets in Northumberland, which is over 65% of the total for the North East. Northumberland also has 18 Registered Parks and Gardens, 4 Battlefields and 69 Conservation Areas.¹⁸
- 4.4.2 Northumberland also includes Hadrian's Wall, a World Heritage Site. A popular tourist attraction, it runs through Northumberland, stretching from Newcastle upon Tyne to Bowness and extends down the Cumbrian coast as far as Ravenglass.
- 4.4.3 Hadrian's Wall due to its classification as a World Heritage Site requires a management plan. The current Hadrian's Wall Management Plan runs from 2015-2019. Continued management and protection will enable its long term conservation.
- 4.4.4 From 2005 to 2015 there has been a loss of 3 Scheduled Monuments in the North East (-0.2%); this may represent Historic England's ongoing review of designations, which has resulted in the de-scheduling of a number of Scheduled Monuments in the North East over this period. Over the same period of time there have been 56 more buildings becoming Listed (+0.45%). Successful heritage protection policy can help continue this positive trend.¹⁹
- 4.4.5 In Northumberland as a whole, there were 153 heritage assets identified as 'at risk' by Historic England' in 2016. In the Plan area, (i.e. excluding the National Park), the figure is 100 exactly. 54 entries in the Plan area (plus a further 51 in the National Park) are archaeology related. A further 41 in the Plan area are built structures, including places of worship, (with a further two in the National Park). The remainder are Conservation Areas (3), and Registered Parks and Gardens (2) – all in the Plan area.
- 4.4.6 As illustrated on **Figure 4.4**, statutory Listed Buildings are found throughout the County, with concentrations in the main towns and smaller settlements. These include a range of historic buildings and structures such as Norman Castles, country houses, fortified farmhouses, and buildings associated with the County's diverse social, economic and cultural legacy.

¹⁸ Historic England (2015)

¹⁹ Ibid.

Figure 4.4 - Nationally designated heritage assets



4.5 Landscape character

4.5.1 Northumberland has a rich and varied landscape character, ranging from the tranquil North Pennines, Cheviots and Border Fringes, to extensive low-lying coastal plains made up of sandy beaches and low headlands. Occasional rocky outcrops and islands in the North East provide stunning views, and this is recognised in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coast designations. **Figure 4.5** sets out the National Character Areas for Northumberland which reflect the rich mosaic of landscapes that are represented in the County. A more in depth Landscape Character Assessment has been completed locally and forms a key part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy²⁰. This provides the baseline against which change can be measured.

4.5.2 Alongside this character assessment, a 'Part B' document was produced that sets out key high level principles for an approach to landscape that will assist in maintaining the key qualities of the Northumberland landscape and associated seascapes.

4.5.3 Based on the landscape descriptions, and the ongoing processes identified within the study area, a list of likely pressures for change was drawn up for each Landscape Character Type. These are referred to as 'forces for change', in the document and cover:

- changes in farmland, woodland, forestry and upland management practices;
- development pressures for housing, industry, and other types; and
- environmental processes such as erosion and climate change.

4.5.4 The three guiding principles below summarise the broad recommendations for distinct landscape areas in the County (reproduced from Box 2.1 in the LCA [Part B]).

Protect

4.5.5 The landscapes which have been identified for protection are the most valued landscapes in the county. They include the coastal landscapes and seascapes which comprise the Northumberland Coast AONB, the foothills which form the setting to the Cheviots, and the dales of the North Pennines AONB, as well as other sensitive river valley landscapes. Protection does not imply preservation, but rather conservation of key landscape qualities. It is recognised that these landscapes are not static, but evolving. They will undergo change in future, but change within these landscapes requires more careful management.

Manage

4.5.6 The landscapes which have been identified for management are agricultural and upland areas, and reflect the working rural landscapes of Northumberland. While they are often highly valued at a local level, these landscapes generally have a greater ability to absorb change, without significant detriment to their innate character. However, there remains a need to ensure that the character of these landscapes is maintained, and that changes are sympathetic and sustainable. The key qualities of these landscapes may still require a degree of protection, although there is greater scope for planning some change.

²⁰ Northumberland County Council, Landscape Character Assessment (Part A) (August, 2010).
<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3458>

Plan

- 4.5.7 Planning has been identified as the guiding principle for landscapes in the south-east of the county, the forested uplands, and areas of intensive arable farming or former mineral extraction. These landscapes have already been heavily modified by the actions of people, and positive action is required to restore or enhance these areas. Again, there needs to be recognition of the underlying key qualities of the landscape, albeit that these may have been compromised in the past. Not all change will be beneficial, and management is required to ensure that change is sustainable, and results in a strengthening of landscape character.

Designated landscapes

- 4.5.8 Northumberland has a high conservation potential and the land management reflects this. There are management plans in place for the Northumberland National Park and the two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), the North Pennines and the Northumberland Coast. The Northumberland Coast AONB Management Plan is a joint management plan with the Berwickshire and North Northumberland European Marine Site. Parts of the Northumberland Coast have been defined as a Heritage Coast. There are also Countryside Strategies which have been produced by the former County and District Councils.

Northumberland National Park

- 4.5.9 National Parks are designated by Natural England under the provisions of The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, and have two statutory purposes:

- To conserve and enhance their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage.
- To promote opportunities for public understanding enjoyment of special qualities.

- 4.5.10 The Northumberland National Park was designated in 1956 and has a population of approximately 2,000 people within its 1,030 square kilometres boundaries running from Hadrian's Wall in the south to the Cheviots in the north. Northumberland National Park Authority has its own statutory functions including as local planning authority, which is separate from that of Northumberland County Council.

North Pennines AONB

- 4.5.11 North Pennines was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1988 and covers an area of 1,983 square kilometres. The North Pennines AONB covers most of the southern area of the former district of Tynedale and stretches through Durham and Cumbria to the border with North Yorkshire.

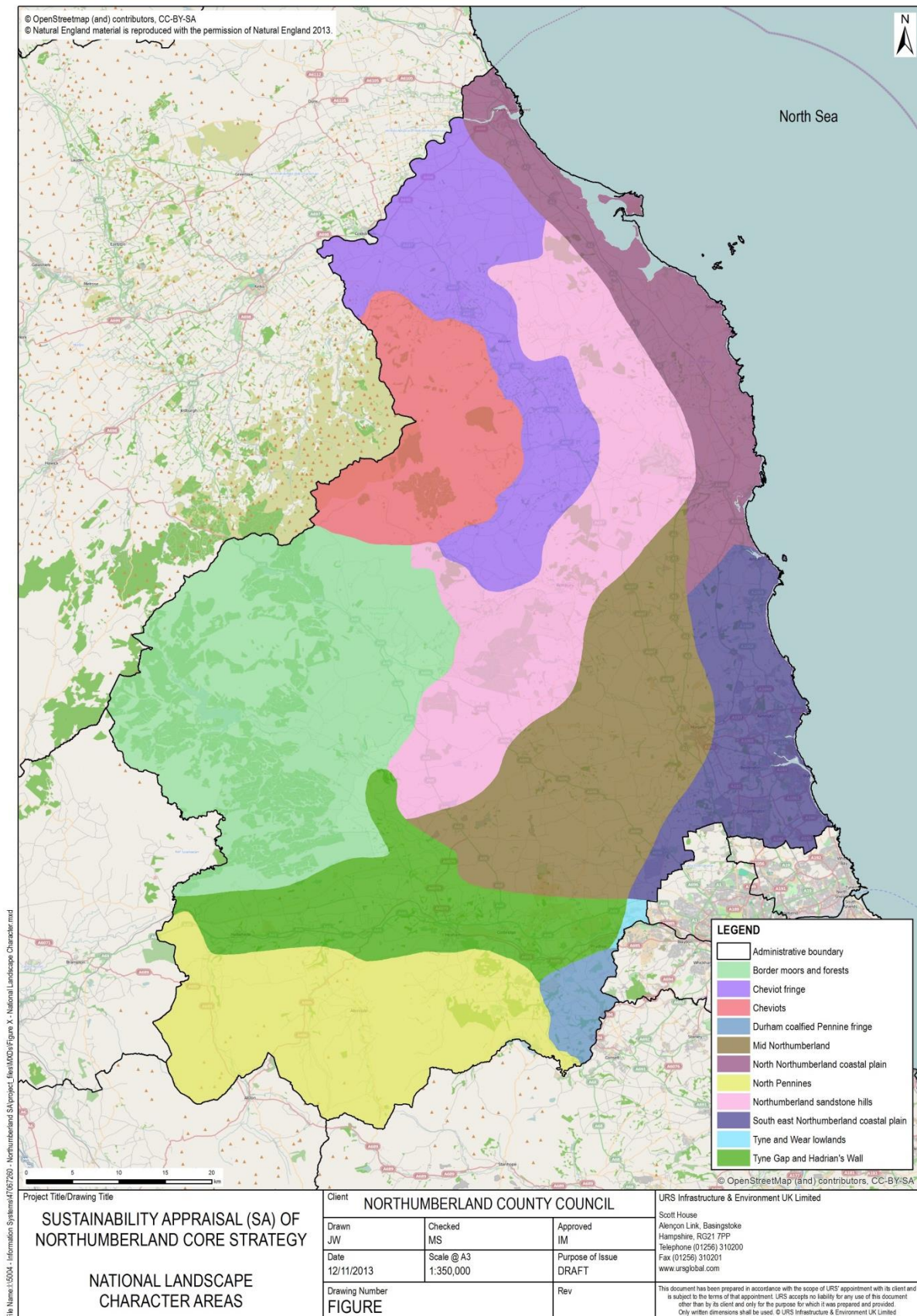
- 4.5.12 The landscape of the North Pennines contains many habitats of exceptional conservation value, including blanket bog, upland heath, species-rich hay meadows, oak and ash woodlands, juniper scrub, flushes and springs and unimproved and heavy-metal rich grasslands. Internationally important numbers of birds, including 10,000 pairs of breeding waders and 80% of England's black grouse, breed and feed on the open moors and adjacent grasslands.

- 4.5.13 The AONB includes parts of the Pennine Dales Environmentally Sensitive Area. As mentioned previously, the North Pennines AONB is also a UNESCO Global Geopark. The North Pennines was once an important area for lead mining and the ruined traces of abandoned lead mines are now acknowledged as an intrinsic part of the landscape and heritage of the area.

Northumberland Coast AONB

- 4.5.14 Established in 1958, the Northumberland Coast AONB covers a narrow coastal strip stretching from Spittal in the North to the Coquet Estuary in the south, an area of 135 square kilometres. Open miles of beach are backed by extensive sand dunes. Lindisfarne Island is characterised by the intertidal mudflats and further south, the rock of the Farne Islands meets the North Sea.
- 4.5.15 Occasionally, the coastline is broken by the Whin Sill; here ancient basalt meets the sea in low headlands and rocky coves, where landmarks such as Bamburgh and Dunstanburgh Castles and shelter for working harbours such as Craster can be found.
- 4.5.16 The Coast AONB contains designations of National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area (Birds) and Ramsar Site. The dunes, marshes and mud-flats of the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve are one of the best sites in Europe for waders and waterfowl and offshore, the Farne Islands are a protected seabird sanctuary. The AONB's dune systems are a particularly fine example of this fragile habitat.

Figure 4.5 – National Landscape Character Areas



4.6 Housing

- 4.6.1 The total number of housing recorded in the 2011 Census is 138,534, broken down by type as follows.

Table 4.4: *Housing types in Northumberland (Census 2011)*

	Count	%
All Households	138534	100
Detached	35120	25.4%
Semi-Detached	50127	36.2%
Terraced (Including End-Terrace)	38345	27.7%
Purpose-Built Block of Flats or Tenement	11602	8.4%
Part of a Converted or Shared House (Including Bed-Sits)	2142	1.5%
In a Commercial Building	932	0.7%
Caravan or Other Mobile or Temporary Structure	232	0.2%
Shared Dwelling	34	0.02%

- 4.6.2 Gross housing delivery in 2015/2016 was 991 dwellings, which is a decrease from 1447 dwellings in 2014/15. The majority of development occurred in the South East Delivery Area (696 dwellings), with a fairly equal amount in the North (103) and Central (168) and much less in the West (24).
- 4.6.3 Roughly half of the new homes in Northumberland (37%) in 2015/16 were developed on previously developed land (PDL). This proportion equates to 385 units²¹.
- 4.6.4 A net total of 178 affordable units were delivered in 2015/2016, which represents 18% of gross completions. The most affordable homes were delivered in the South East Delivery Area (128 units), while the percentage of affordable homes secured was the highest in the North Delivery Area (23%). The West delivered the lowest contribution of affordable housing, with no affordable units completed in 2015/16.

Table 4.5: *Affordable housing completions by Delivery Area*

Delivery area	Affordable housing % of County total	% of affordable housing for delivery area completions
West	0%	0%
North	2.4%	23.3%
Central	2.6%	15.4%
South East	12.9%	18.3%

- 4.6.5 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has identified that the objectively assessed housing need over the plan period (2011-2031) is 24,320 equating to 1,216 dwellings per annum.
- 4.6.6 The updated SHMA has reassessed the affordable housing need across the County. Three elements have been considered when setting an affordable housing target; affordable housing need, viability and the ability of Registered Providers to deliver affordable homes. The SHMA identifies that the affordable need over a five year period equates to the need to provide 401 dwellings per annum, equating to 2005 dwellings over a five year period. Over this period, the affordable need equates to approximately 30% of the overall housing delivery target of 24,320.

²¹ Northumberland County Council (2015) Net Additional Homes Provided 2014/15

4.7 Climate Change

- 4.7.1 In 2013, the estimate of carbon dioxide emissions for Northumberland was -1.1 tonnes per head, showing a decrease of 119% between 2012 and 2013. This was the largest decrease in the country and was largely due to a reduction in large industrial installations. Since 2009 there has been a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions of 8.1tonnes per head (although there was an increase in 2010 and 2011). Despite the rural nature of the County, the total per capita emissions are lower than the North East and England²².
- 4.7.2 **Table 4.6** shows the carbon emission figures between 2009-2014, comparing Northumberland with the North East and England as a whole.

Table 4.6 - Estimated per capita emissions of CO₂

	Tonnes (kt) per head (CO ₂) <i>Industry, domestic and transport</i>					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Area	Tonnes per head (CO ₂)*	Tonnes per head (CO ₂)*	Tonnes per head (CO ₂)*	Tonnes per head (CO ₂)*	Tonnes per head (CO ₂)*	Tonnes per head (CO ₂)*
North-umberland	2.8	4.0	3.6	1.4	-2.4	-3.2
North East	9.5	8.3	7.3	9.2	9.2	8.1
England	7.1	7.3	6.6	6.9	6.7	6.0

Source: Department for Energy and Climate Change

- 4.7.3 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Flood zones are based on information provided by the Environment Agency, (See **Figure 4.6**). The SFRA Flood Zones show that narrow strips of land immediately adjacent to watercourses and coastal and estuarine frontages are potentially at risk of flooding. Urban locations potentially affected by flooding within the study area include parts of Morpeth, Warkworth, Blyth, Ponteland, Hexham, Alnwick, Berwick upon Tweed, Amble, Belford, Wooler and Rothbury, as identified in the Northumberland Strategic Land Review. However there are also numerous small settlements at risk of flooding.
- 4.7.4 The SFRA also identified sewer flooding from NWL historical sewer flooding databases. There have also been recorded instances of groundwater flooding in Spittal, near Berwick and Darras Hall in Ponteland.
- 4.7.5 North East Climate Change Adaptation Study highlighted the following trends in Northumberland's climate and change in sea level in the period up to 2050:

Rainfall

- Slight reduction in overall rainfall but with a change in seasonality with more rain falling in winter months – upland areas could see winter rain fall increase by up to 14%;
- Drier autumns and springs whilst lower lying and coastal areas could see up to 32% less rainfall in summer;

²² UK local and regional CO₂ emissions: statistical release (2005-2013): https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/437384/2005_to_2013_UK_local_and_regional_CO2_emissions_statistical_release.pdf

- Significant increase in severe rainfall events with increased amounts of rainfall and duration.

Temperatures

- Average daily temperatures expected to increase, up to 2.1°C in summer and 1.6°C in winter. Coastal areas will be warmer with temperatures reducing progressively in land;
- Summer extreme temperatures are likely to increase by around 3°C and summer daily average temperatures expected to reach 25°C;
- Heat waves are likely to increase both in duration and intensity with more events above the 28°C threshold temperature.

Frost and snow

- Reduction in frost days and extreme winter temperatures moving closer to melt point but still below zero. Only the Cheviot Hills can expect spring temperatures below zero;
- Major reduction in winter snowfall and number of days of snow, but this does not mean snowfall events will be any less dramatic as temperatures will still fall below zero and the increase in winter rainfall will mean that snowfall depths do not differ from at present.

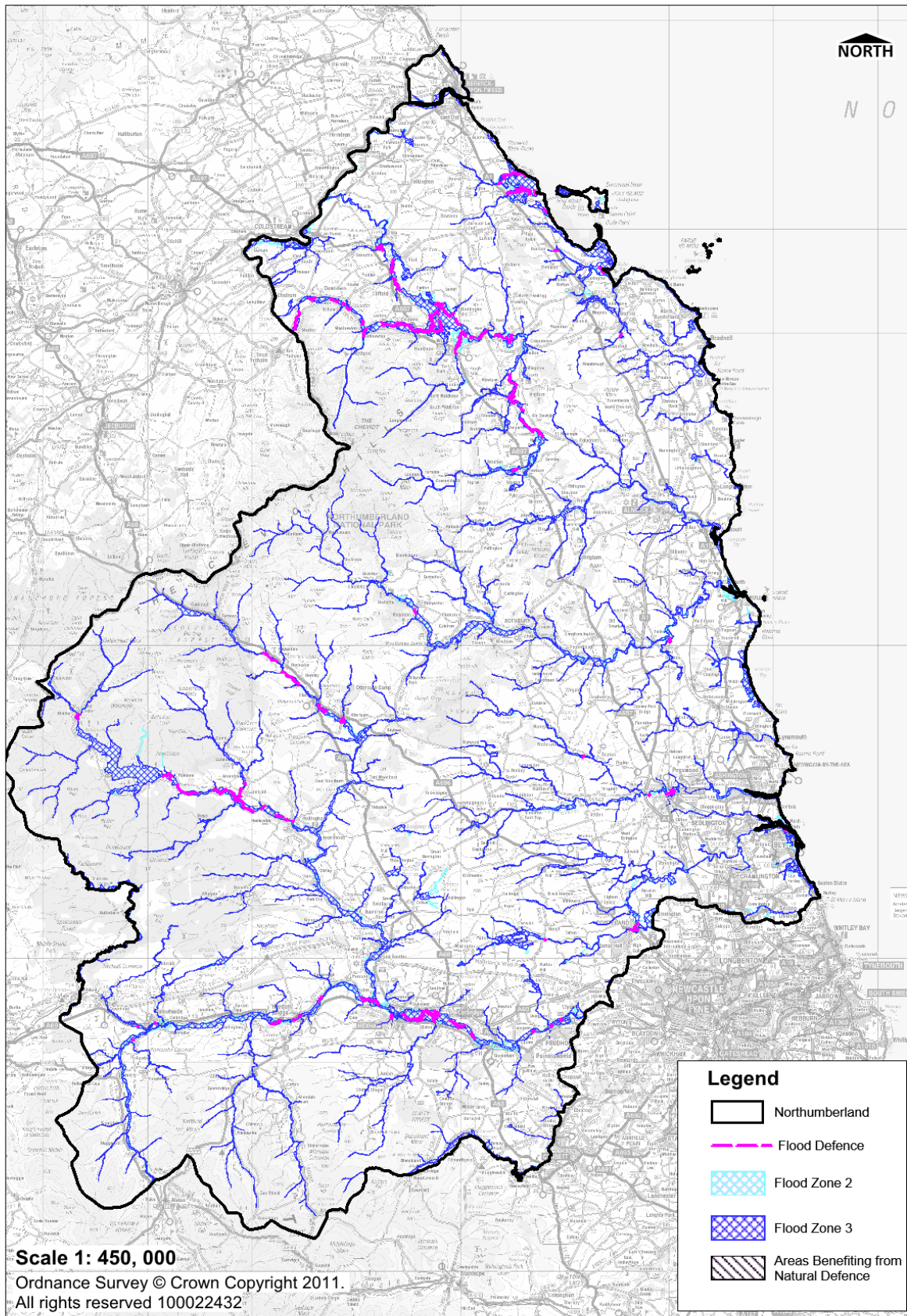
Wind

- There is to be a small change in average or extreme wind speed.

Sea level rise

- There is an expected increase of around 0.3 metres along the Northumberland Coast; and an increase in sea surge levels of up to 0.35 metres.
- The coast of Northumberland is subject to natural erosion but the prevalence of rocky headlands and foreshores protecting softer bays means that coastal erosion is less of a challenge than elsewhere in England.
- The main hydrological influences in Northumberland are the rivers North, South and Main Tyne; the River Coquet; River Wansbeck; River Blyth; River Rede; River Tweed; and River Till. The SFRA for Northumberland states that Northumberland's Catchment Flood Management Plans project an increased level of flood risk in the study area over the next 25 to 100 years as a result of climate change through wetter and warmer winters and an increase in large fluvial events and extreme rainfall events. These events are likely to lead to increased surface water runoff.

Figure 4.6 – Major watercourses, flood zones and flood defences in Northumberland



4.8 Economy and Employment

Education

- 4.8.1 Northumberland performs above the average for the country and region in terms of the numbers of people holding a qualification. Only 8.0% of the working age population do not hold a qualification of any type. Within Northumberland, the former Blyth Valley district has the highest percentage of working age people with no qualifications. The percentage of people with the highest level of qualification (NVQ4 or above) is 30.9% in Northumberland compared to 36% for Britain while the North East only attained 28.4%.²³

Table 4.7 - Qualifications in Northumberland January – December 2015

	Northumberland (numbers)	Northumberland (%)	North East (%)	Great Britain (%)
NVQ4 and above	58,300	30.9	30.7	37.1
NVQ3 and above	102,900	54.5	52.2	55.8
NVQ2 and above	144,300	76.5	72.9	73.6
NVQ1 and above	165,200	87.5	85.0	84.9
Other qualifications	6,600	3.5	4.6	6.5
No qualifications	17,000	9.0	10.4	8.6

Source: ONS (2015) via nomis

- 4.8.2 There has been a continual improvement in qualifications over the last ten years in Northumberland. From December 2004 only 80.7% had any qualifications where the figure in 2015 was 87.5%²⁴. With continual improvement in facilities and improved teaching methods this trend is anticipated to continue.

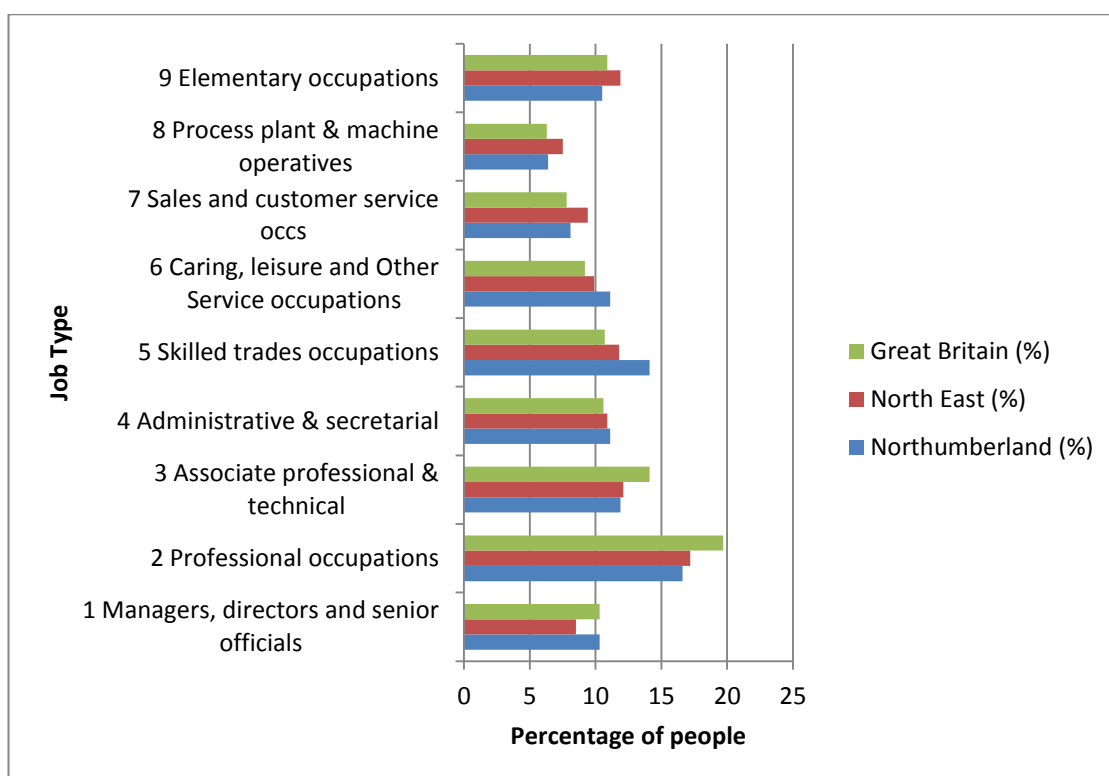
Employment

- 4.8.3 For many years, the economy of Northumberland has experienced fundamental economic restructuring. Jobs have been lost in the traditional industries, particularly deep coal mining and agriculture. Whilst job losses have been partially offset by the creation of new jobs in manufacturing and the service sector, unemployment rates in some of areas of the North East are significantly higher than the national average. This includes towns, such as Blyth within Northumberland, which has areas of high multiple deprivation.
- 4.8.4 Between October 2014 and September 2015, 78.6% of economically active people were in employment. This compares better than the North East as a whole (74.9%) and Great Britain (77.7%). Unemployment was lower in Northumberland compared to the North East, with 6.1% of economically active people unemployed in Northumberland compared to 7.6% in the North East. However, unemployment was lower in Great Britain overall at 5.4%.²⁵
- 4.8.5 The types of occupation in Northumberland are shown in **Figure 4.7**. The job types are divided up into Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) groups. Northumberland has a greater number of higher classification jobs, such as managers, directors and senior officials than the North East. It also has a larger percentage of skilled trades than both the North East and Britain.

²³ ONS annual population survey via nomis (2016) <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/>

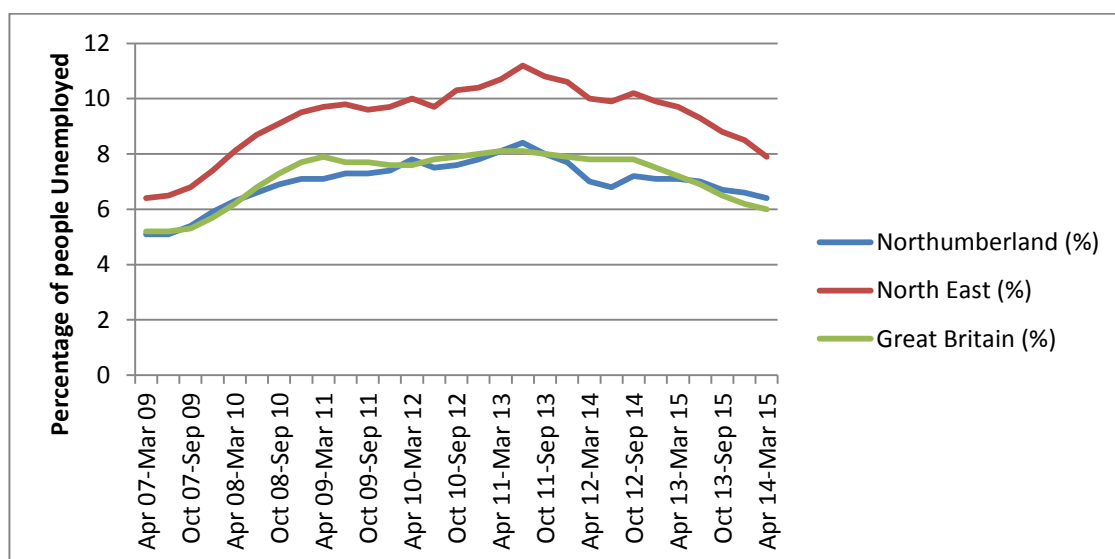
²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ ONS annual population survey (2016) via nomis

Figure 4.7 – Percentage of people in employment type in March 2015

Source: ONS (2015) via Nomis

As illustrated in **Figure 4.8**, unemployment over the last few years has continued to decline at a fairly steady rate, although this has been slower than the rate of decline in the North East and Great Britain.

Figure 4.8 - Unemployment level time series (2007-2015)

Source: ONS (2015) via Nomis

Table 4.8 below shows the earnings by residence. The average weekly pay for Northumberland is below that of both the North East and Great Britain.

Table 4.8 – Gross weekly pay (2015)

	Northumberland (pounds)	North East (pounds)	Great Britain (pounds)
Gross weekly pay			
Full-time workers	479.6	484.4	529.6
Male full-time workers	534.2	522.5	570.4
Female full-time workers	423.4	428.8	471.6

Source: ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis (2015)

Economic performance

4.8.6 The Gross Value Added is a measure in economics of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy. The Northumberland economy has grown steadily in recent years. Total Gross Value Added (GVA), grew at a rate of 3.3% per annum from 1997-2014, with only 1999 and 2009 experiencing a decline. However, this is lower than both the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) area and national rate of growth.

4.8.7 The Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) per head in Northumberland increased by 84.6% between 1997 and 2013, an average increase of 5.0% per annum.²⁶ This was higher than the North East region (4.2%) and than in England (4.4%). In 2013 the GDHI per head in Northumberland was £17,600, for the North East it was £14,927 and in England £17,842²⁷.

4.9 Accessibility

4.9.1 The principal roads in Northumberland are the A1, A69, and A19 trunk roads and the A68, A696, A697 and A189 county roads. The East Coast Main Line and Tyne Valley railway lines pass through Northumberland and provide limited local services and access to the inter-city routes serving the rest of the country.

4.9.2 The East Coast Mainline Railway line also provides travel links between London and Scotland. More locally, the Tyne Valley Railway line connects the west of the County with Gateshead and Newcastle City Centre.

4.9.3 Local bus services form a network throughout south east Northumberland linking the main towns of Blyth, Cramlington, Ashington, Bedlington and Morpeth to each other and Newcastle upon Tyne. In addition there are express bus services to Northumberland towns, including Alnwick, Berwick upon Tweed and Hexham to Newcastle upon Tyne. Some areas of rural Northumberland are considered unviable for the supply of commercial bus services.

²⁶ ONS (2015) Regional Disposable Household Income

²⁷ ONS (2015) Regional GVA

- 4.9.4 Car ownership in Northumberland is slightly higher than the national average and much greater than in the North East as a whole. Car ownership is particularly high in the former Alnwick, Castle Morpeth and Tynedale areas. The number of cars and vans available to households in Northumberland increased by 26,600 (19%) to 169,000 between 2001 and 2011. The North East saw a larger percentage increase of 20% (194,800) but the percentage increase in England was lower at 14% (3,089,200).²⁸

4.10 Natural resources and waste

Previously developed land

- 4.10.1 Table 4.9 shows the percentage of dwellings built on previously developed land (PDL) in Northumberland from 2009 to 2016. The percentage of housing delivered on PDL in Northumberland has been declining steadily in Northumberland since 2013/14, with the overall amount of PDL in 2015/16 dropping to 37%; this suggests that the need for greenfield land is increasing.
- 4.10.2 Prior to 2014/15, the percentage of dwellings built on PDL was monitored by former district area. Therefore there are no clear trends available for the percentage of new dwellings built on PDL by delivery area. However, given Northumberland's rural nature and the fact that Northumberland does not have the same levels of dereliction that is found elsewhere in the North East (*in addition to the fact that the County has already reclaimed large areas of derelict sites*) there is an issue regarding whether the County can continue to maintain a high proportion of new dwellings being built on previously developed land.
- 4.10.3 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment indicates future housing land supply is likely to mostly be Greenfield. An important consideration also is the contribution that some previously developed land may have in relation to nature conservation and the value of biodiversity on such sites.

Table 4.9: Percentage of new dwellings built on previously developed land

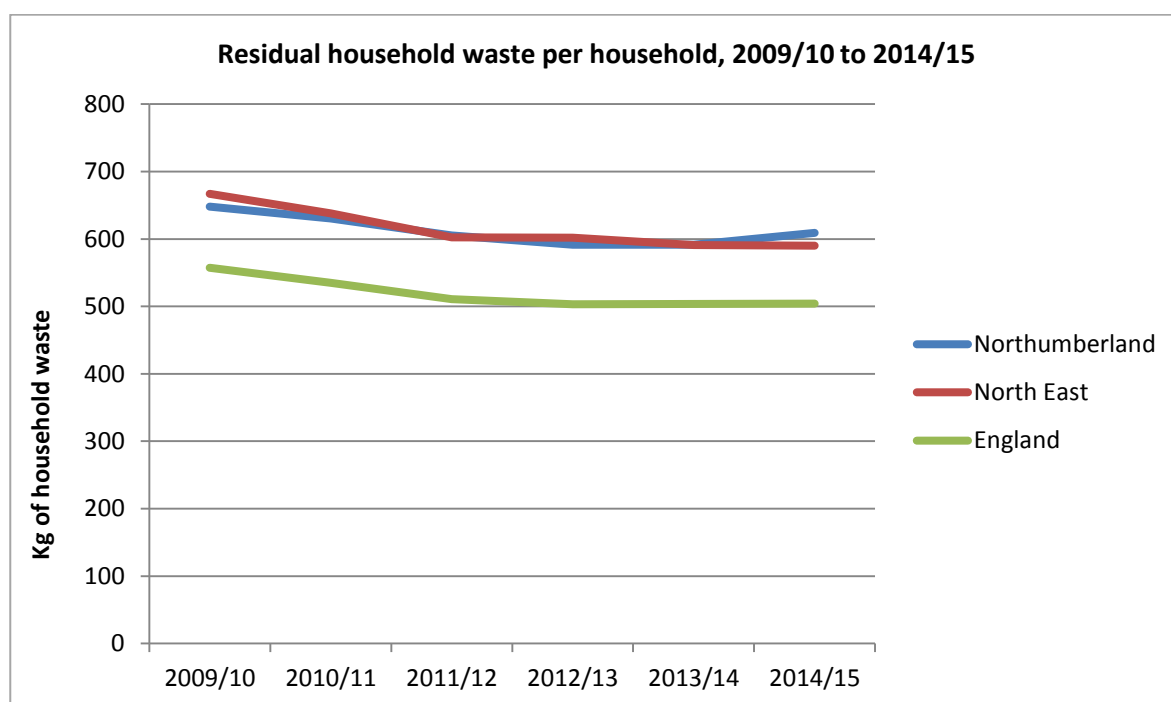
Delivery Area	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Central						68%	55%
North						40%	32%
South East						53%	33%
West						34%	44%
Northumberland	70%	61%	70%	78%	61%	52%	37%

²⁸ Census (2011) ONS

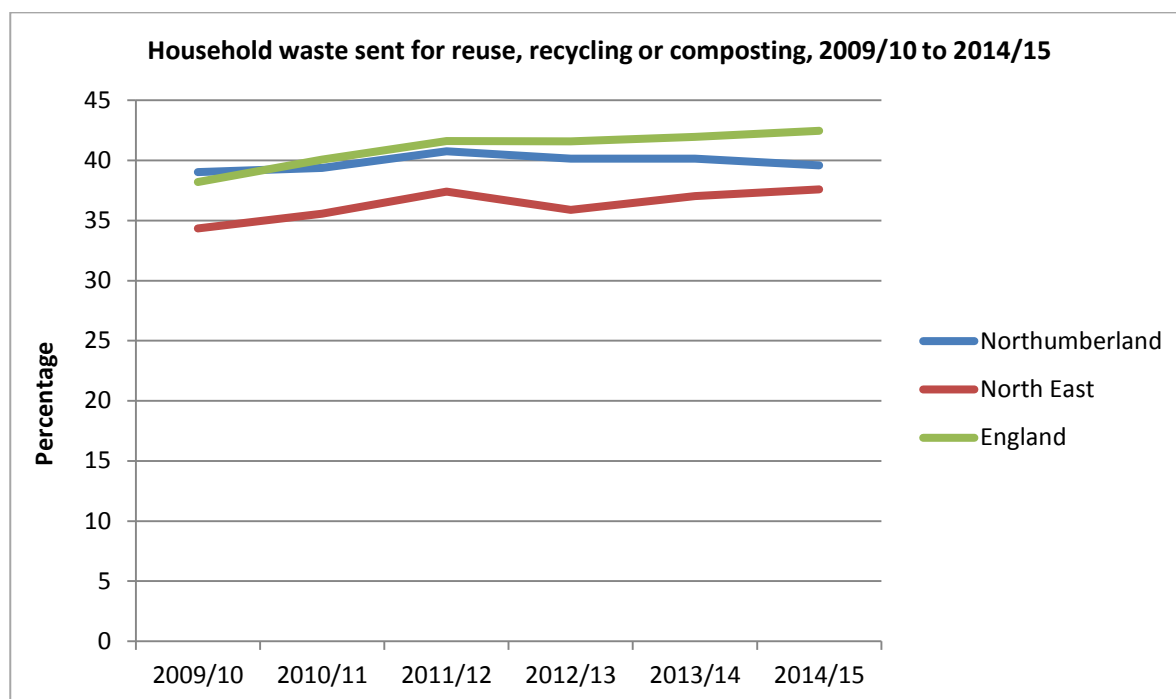
Waste

- 4.10.4 Residual waste per household has been falling over the past 6 years at the national, regional and local level, although waste per household rose for both Northumberland and England in 2014/15. In 2014/15, residual waste per household in Northumberland was 609kg, which was slightly higher than the North East figure (590kg), but significantly more than the England figure (504kg).
- 4.10.5 The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting has been increasing year-on-year. However, the year 2014/15 saw a dip in household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting, with 39.6% of Northumberland waste treated this way in 2014/15 in comparison to 40.2% in 2013/14.. This is slightly lower than the England figure (42.5%) but higher than for the North East (37.6%)²⁹.
- 4.10.6 These trends are seen in the **Figures** below.
- 4.10.7 Trend data suggests that while levels of waste are decreasing in general, the rate at which level of waste have been falling is gradually slowing down, with a rise in residual waste per household recorded in 2014/15. Similarly, while trend data suggests that levels of recycling will continue to increase year-on-year, the rate at which recycling is increasing has slowed down in recent years, with levels of recycling falling in 2014/15. Traditionally however higher levels of growth in economic activity have led to a greater volume of waste, although there is evidence that the amount of waste we produce as a nation 'per capita' is decreasing.
- 4.10.8 The continuing advancement in technology will help keep the recycling percentages rising, although over the last 3 years the trend data suggests that levels of recycling have been relatively static and may increase at a slower rate due to the law of diminishing returns.

Figure 4.9 – Residual waste per household time series



²⁹ DEFRA http://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=46&mod-area=E06000057&mod-group=AllLalnRegion_NorthEast&modify-report=Apply&mod-period=3

Figure 4.10 – Household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting time series

Water quality

- 4.10.9 Ecological status and chemical status together define the overall surface water status of a watercourse under the Water Framework Directive. Ecological status applies to surface water bodies and is based on the following quality elements: biological quality, general chemical and physio-chemical quality, water quality with respect to specific pollutants (synthetic and non-synthetic), and hydromorphological quality. There are five classes of ecological status (high, good, moderate, poor or bad). Chemical status is assessed by compliance with the environmental standards for chemicals that are listed in the Environmental Quality Standards Directive 2008/105/EC³⁰, which include priority substances, priority hazardous substances and eight other pollutants. Furthermore, the level of risk that a number of pressure elements³¹ poses to a water body is graded by the EA.
- 4.10.10 The River Basin Management Plan for the Northumbria River Basin District (prepared by the EA in December 2015) includes information in relation to key characteristics and the water quality of Northumberland. It states that between 2009 – 2015, the percentage of all water bodies at 'good or better' overall status decreased significantly from 42% (2009) to 26% (2015). However, additional biological monitoring and improvements to the design of the monitoring network, put in place by the EA after 2009, revealed more symptoms of environmental issues. Therefore the change between 2009 and 2015 reported may not constitute a real environmental deterioration over this period. The River Basin Management Plan states that by 2021, the overall status of all water bodies is expected to improve slightly.
- 4.10.11 In 2021, 27% of surface waters are expected to be at good or better overall status, while 30% of groundwater bodies will be expected to be at good or better overall status. In combination 27% of all water bodies are projected to be at good or better status by 2021 (see **Table 4.10**).

³⁰ The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2008) Environmental Quality Standards Directive 2008/105/EC. Available from: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:348:0084:0097:EN:PDF> (accessed 12/2013)

³¹ Pressure elements include point source pollution risk, diffuse pollution risk, combined source sanitary risk, combined source nutrients risk, water abstraction and flow regulation risk, physical or morphological alteration risk, and alien species risk.

- 4.10.12 An increased level of development could have an impact on designated nature conservation sites due to likely increases in flow from waste water treatment works to accommodate new development. These potential effects are explored in a detailed Water Cycle Study that has been prepared by AECOM on behalf of Northumberland County Council.

Table 4.10 – Summary statistics for the Northumbria river basin district: Water bodies³²

Percentage of water bodies at good or better status	2015	2021
Surface waters combined	26%	27%
Groundwater	30%	30%
All water categories	26%	27%

- 4.10.13 The River Basin Management Plan for the Solway Tweed River Basin covers the Fell Sandstone Aquifer, which is the source of supply for the Berwick and Fowberry water resource zone. This aquifer is currently at poor status due to water quality issues (nitrates).

Water resources

- 4.10.14 There are two Water Resource Zones (WRZ) in the Northumbrian Water area. The majority of the water is sourced from the Kielder WRZ however Berwick upon Tweed and Fowberry in the north of the county depend on groundwater supplies from the Fell Sandstone Aquifer.
- 4.10.15 An Outline Water Cycle Study was published in 2012³³, highlighting that wastewater flow from the proposed level of development (in the emerging Core Strategy) across Northumberland could be accommodated within existing consent conditions by some of the waste water treatment works (WwTW).
- 4.10.16 This was supplemented with a detailed Water Cycle Study (Published on October 2015), which identifies that the following WwTWs across Northumberland that currently have limited or no capacity to accept or treat any further wastewater from the proposed development. These works may require an upgrade to accommodate the new development. If a new hydraulic consent is required at these works then it is likely the quality consents will be tightened to ensure no deterioration in the water environment. In the majority of cases this is likely to be achievable within current conventional treatment.
- Hepscott WwTW, Humshaugh WwTW, Wark WwTW, Great Whittington WwTW and Newbiggin WwTW - No Headroom Available and no solution currently identified but a solution is likely to be possible within limits of conventional treatment
 - Tranwell WwTW - No Headroom Available and no solution available and WwTW cannot be upgraded
 - Lynemouth WwTW and Haydon Bridge WwTW - No Headroom Available until infiltration is removed
 - Rothbury WwTW, Cornhill on Tweed WwTW and Seahouses WwTW - No Headroom Available, NW Flow and Load investigations required
 - Pegswood WwTW - No Headroom available and likely WQ consent constraints

³² Environment Agency (2015) River Basin Management Plan, Northumbria River Basin District. Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/500907/Northumbria_RBD_Part_1_river_basin_management_plan.pdf (accessed 6/2016)

³³ Northumberland Council Council (2012) Outline Water Cycle Study (May, 2012)

- Allendale WwTW, Barrasford WwTW and Fourstones WwTW - Limited Headroom Available until surface water ingress is removed

The Northumberland Infrastructure Development Plan (through annual updates) will be used to identify the WwTWs that require upgrades in liaison with NW. NW will commence investment procedures to provide capacity at the WwTWs once the potential development is certain.

- 4.10.17 Northumberland Water has undertaken an assessment³⁴ to calculate if there is likely to be a surplus of available water or a deficit in each of their supply areas in Northumberland by 2031, once additional demand from proposed development and other factors such as climate change are taken into account.
- 4.10.18 The results show that there are adequate water resources to cater for the proposed development within the Kielder Water Resource Zone (WRZ). Proposed development in the Berwick and Fowberry WRZ can also be catered for within existing resources except under exceptional circumstances.
- 4.10.19 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) categorises water quality of rivers and lakes in terms of ecological and chemical quality at present and estimated for the future (2015). Ecological quality is categorised as; bad, poor, moderate, good or high and chemical quality is assessed as a pass, fail or does not require assessment.
- 4.10.20 The majority of the Northumberland's rivers systems lie within the Northumberland Rivers and Tyne Catchments within the Northumbria River Basin District. The remainder fall within the Tweed Catchments within the Solway Tweed River Basin District.
- 4.10.21 Just under half (45%) of the water bodies within Northumberland are currently achieving 'good status' or 'good potential' or above³⁵.

Air Quality

- 4.10.22 The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland and Wales sets objectives for air pollutants, nine of which are health based and two are for the protection of ecosystems.
- 4.10.23 Northumberland had one AQMA in Blyth town centre. This was declared due the standard for particulates (PM10) caused by traffic, but was revoked in 2012.
- 4.10.24 The air quality situation is likely to broadly remain at current level but the scale and form of future development could result in changes.

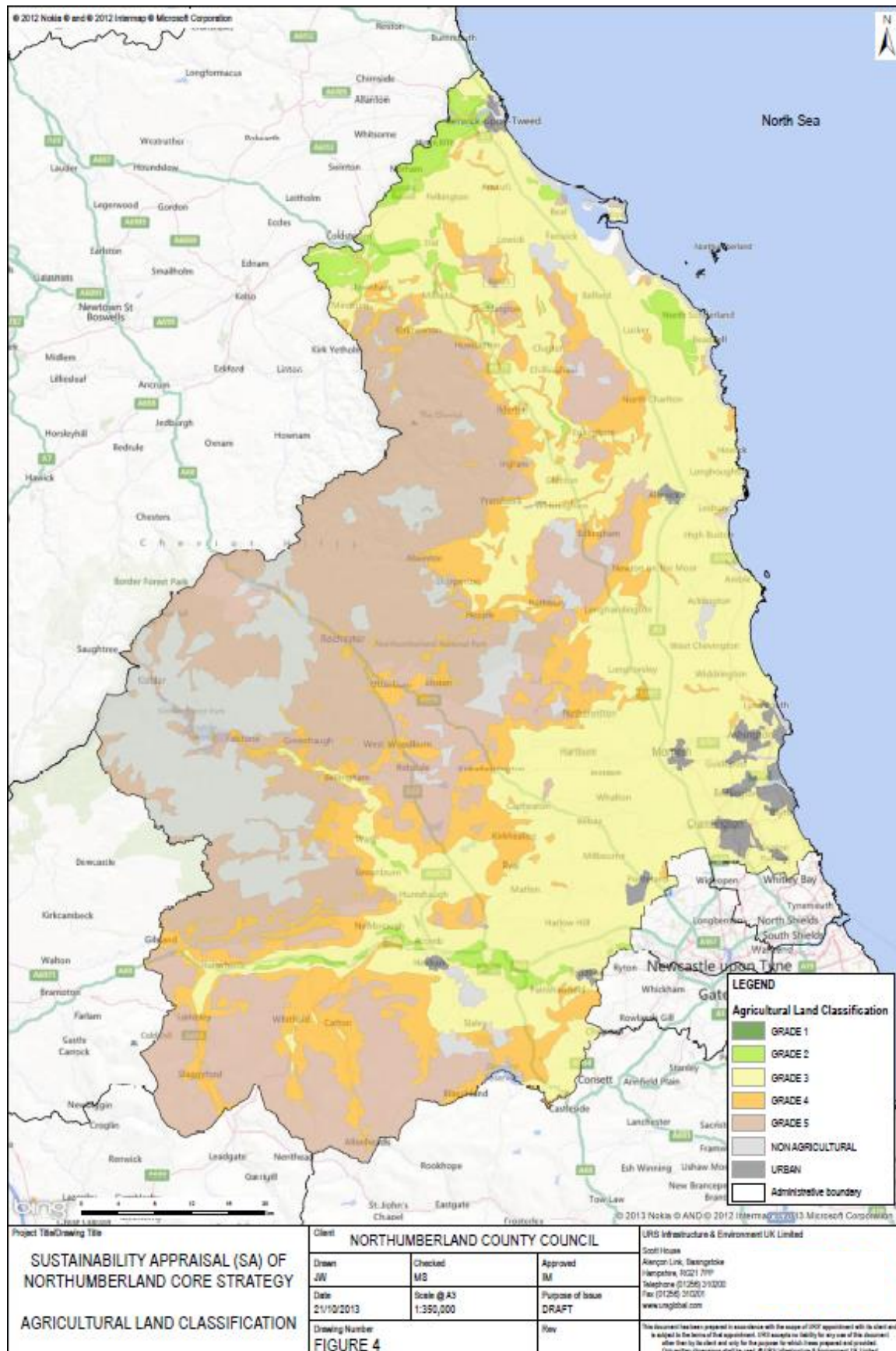
Agricultural Land

- 4.10.25 Agricultural land in England is classified under the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) into five grades, with Grade 1 being the best quality and Grade 5 the poorest quality. The ALC for Northumberland is shown in **Figure 4.11**. The majority of the County is classified as Grade 3 under the ALC, with areas of Grade 4 and 5 in the more upland areas in the west of the County. There is very little Grade 2 and no Grade 1 land within the County.

³⁴ Northumbrian Water Final Water Resources Management Plan 2010-2035 (2010)

³⁵ Northumberland County Council, Water Cycle Study (October 2015)

Figure 4.11 – Agricultural Land Classifications in Northumberland



Coastal erosion

- 4.10.26 The coast of Northumberland is subject to natural erosion but is not as vulnerable as other parts of England, which are losing land at a significant rate. The Northumberland and North Tyneside Shoreline Management Plan 2, Scottish Border to River Tyne, was published in May 2009. The SMP2 “provides a large-scale assessment of the risks associated with coastal evolution and presents a policy framework to address these risks to people and the developed, historic and natural environment in a sustainable manner”. A list of issues that affect receptors in the SMP study area is shown in **Table 4.11** below.

Table 4.11 - Coastal erosion issues affecting receptors in the SMP2 area

Issues	
Environment	Threat of invasive species Loss of habitat, particularly salt marsh and rocky shore and opportunities for habitat creation Recreational disturbance of protected habitats Inadequate management of designated sites Coastal squeeze
Commercial	Erosion flood risk threatening material assets
Heritage	Erosion flood risk threatening heritage asset
Hard asset	Erosion flood risk threatening development zones and material assets
Redevelopment plans within the coastal zone	
Recreational	Erosion flood risk of recreational assets (e.g. beach, golf course)
Erosion flood risk for coastal access	

Source: Northumberland and North Tyneside Shoreline Management Plan 2, May 2009

- 4.10.27 The coast of Northumberland is subject to natural erosion but the prevalence of rocky headlands and foreshores protecting softer bays means that coastal erosion is less of a challenge than elsewhere in England. Various studies are currently being undertaken by partners of the council to provide detailed data in relation to coastal change, which the LDF and SA need to take full account of, for example when considering development or designating Coastal Change Management Areas.

4.11 Biodiversity and geodiversity

- 4.11.1 The UK is bound by the terms of the EC Birds & Habitats Directives and the Ramsar Convention and the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 which provide for the protection of internationally important sites. These are identified as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites. A number of areas within Northumberland have been recognised as being of importance due to their biodiversity interest and have been designated under International and European legislation. These are detailed below and illustrated on **Figure 4.12**.

Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation

- 4.11.2 The Habitats Directive requires EU Member States to create a network of protected wildlife areas, known as Natura 2000, across the European Union. This network consists of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), established to protect wild birds (SPAs) and 'habitats and species' (SACs). These sites are part of a range of measures aimed at conserving important or threatened habitats and species. Map 8: environmental designations in Northumberland, shows locations of the SPAs and SACs. There are six SPAs and thirteen SACs within or partially within Northumberland:

Special Conservation Areas (SPAs)

*Coquet Island
Lindisfarne
Farne Island*

*North Pennine Moors
Holburn Lake and Moss
Northumbria Coast*

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

*Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast
Ford Moss
Newham Fen
North Pennine Dales Meadows
River Tweed
Simonside Hills
Tweed Estuary*

*Border Mires, Kielder – Butterburn
Harbottle Moors
North Northumberland Dunes
North Pennine Moors
Roman Wall Loughs
Tyne and Allen River Gravels*

Ramsar Sites

- 4.11.3 Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. Within Northumberland there are four Ramsar sites. The heath bog areas of the Irthinghead Mires, Holburn Lake and Moss and the coastal edge and tidal areas around Lindisfarne and the Northumbria Coast have been designated as wetlands of international importance.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 4.11.4 A 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI) gives legal protection to the best sites for wildlife and geology in England. SSSIs are managed to conserve the special features and geology which in turn protects rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features that may be supported within that area.
- 4.11.5 In Northumberland there are 113 sites designated as SSSI. Natural England reports on the condition of SSSIs, grading them into six categories. Northumberland, along with the North East and England is meeting the Government's target of 95% with 98.98% of SSSI land being classed as in 'favourable' or 'recovering' condition. However, it should be noted that Northumberland, the North East or England did not meet the Government's target of at least 50% of SSSIs being in 'favourable' condition by 2010. The figure for Northumberland is 31.76%³⁶.

³⁶ Natural England (2016) SSSI conditions

Local Wildlife, Geological Sites and Nature Reserves

- 4.11.6 There are a number of sites within Northumberland that have regional local biodiversity importance, such as Local Wildlife and Geological Sites (LWGSs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). Locally designated sites, although not of the same status as international or national sites, have an important role to play in contributing to overall biodiversity targets and to the quality of life and well-being of communities. LNRs are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally.

They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it. There are 25 LNRs in Northumberland.³⁷

- 4.11.7 It is assumed that the number of designated sites would be unlikely to alter substantially in the foreseeable future. The development of further species action plans would provide an improved foundation for the protection of the various species and increase awareness of their locations so measures may be put in place for enhanced protection. Currently it is anticipated, that the percentage of SSSI land within Northumberland classed as in 'favourable' condition will increase, as 71.61% of SSSI land is currently classed as in 'recovering' condition.

Marine Conservation Zones

- 4.11.8 Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) were first designated by the Government in 2013, and protect a range of nationally important marine wildlife, geology and geomorphology. There are six MCZ's designated off the Northumberland coast. These are; Aln Estuary, North East of Farnes Deep, Swallow Sands, Coquet to St Mary's, Farnes East and Fulmar.

Ancient Woodland

- 4.11.9 Ancient woodland is land that has had a continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD, and may be ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW), which retains a native tree and shrub cover that has not been planted, although it may have been managed by coppicing or felling and allowed to regenerate naturally; or plantation on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), where the original tree cover has been felled and replaced by planting, often with conifers, and usually over the last century.
- 4.11.10 Ancient woodlands are particularly important because they are exceptionally rich in wildlife, including many rare species and habitats; are an integral part of England's historic landscapes; and act as reservoirs from which wildlife can spread into new woodlands. The location of ancient woodlands over 2 ha in area is recorded in the National Inventory of Ancient Woodlands, which is maintained by Natural England. **Table 4.12** below identifies the area of ancient woodland in Northumberland separated into the various woodland types and the split between Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

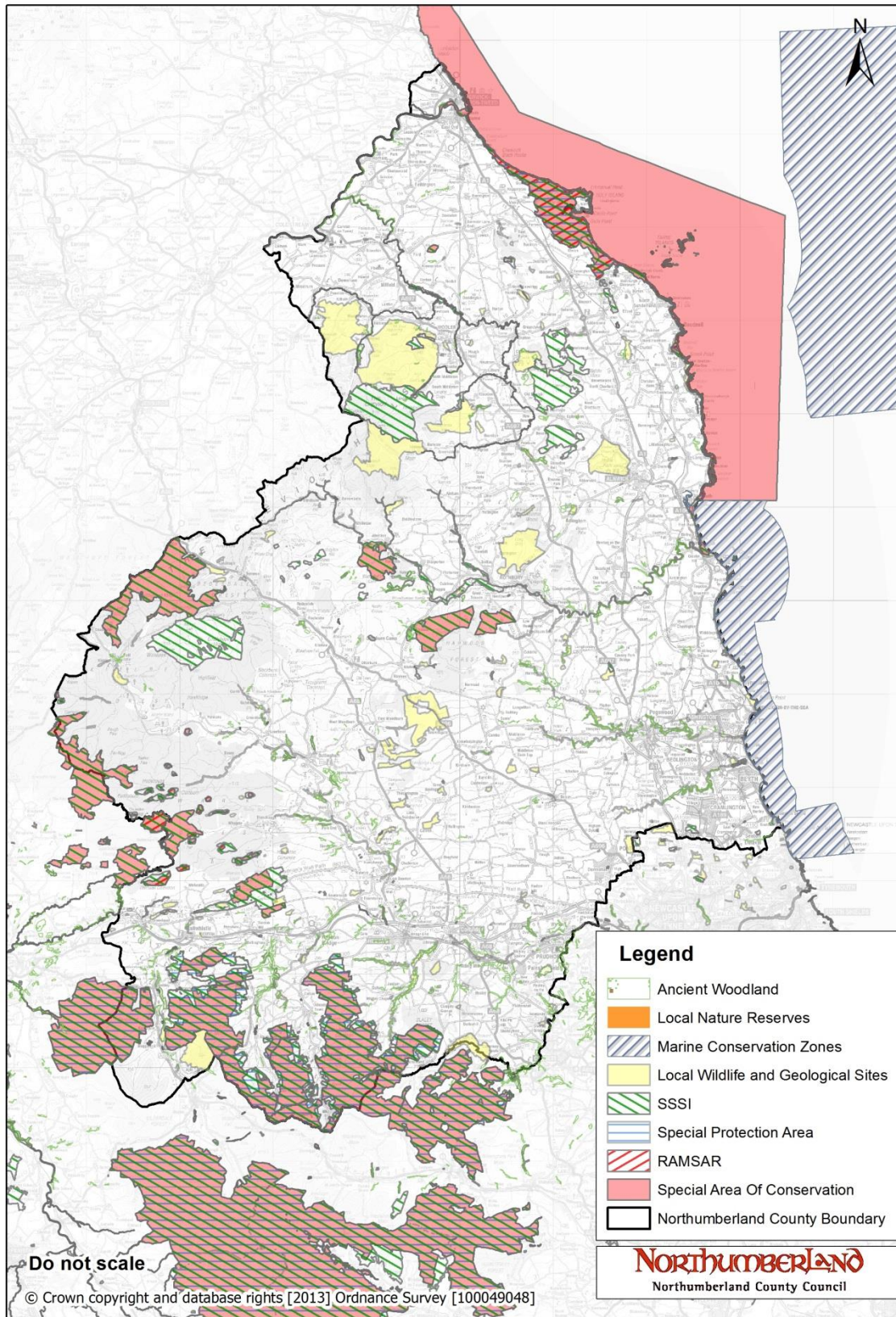
Table 4.12 - Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites

Woodland type	ASNW (HA)	PAWS (HA)	Total Ancient (HA)
Upland Oak	1444	1646	3090
Upland Ash	1205	505	1710
Lowland Mixed Broadleaf	399	270	669
Wet	163	11	174
Juniper	11	0	11
Total	3222	2432	5654

³⁷ Natural England (2013) http://www.lnr.naturalengland.org.uk/Special/lnr/lnr_results.asp?N=&C=31&Submit=Search [accessed 16.9.13]

- 4.11.11 It is estimated that there are 5654 hectares of Ancient Woodland in Northumberland, this amounts to approximately 0.5% of the county area. Key results from the Northumberland Native Woodland Project - A survey of the extent and condition of Ancient Woodlands in Northumberland (July 2006) indicate that 61% of Ancient Woodland (ASNW and PAWS) is in an unfavourable declining or partially destroyed condition and that is likely to continue to decline without the introduction of sustainable woodland management. It is considered that there is a need to increase awareness, among owners and the general public, of the importance of ancient woodlands and the need for appropriate management to sustain them.

Figure 4.12 - Designated wildlife sites within Northumberland



5 CONTEXTUAL REVIEW

- 5.1.1 In order to establish a clear scope for the SA, it is necessary to review and develop an understanding of a wide range of relevant plans, programmes, policies and strategies. This process helps to identify the policy context, which the Core Strategy should take account of and any key environmental protection objectives that are relevant to the SA.
- 5.1.2 The plans, policies and programmes that have been reviewed, which continue to evolve over the SA preparation process are listed in **Table 5.1** below. These originate from the SA Scoping Report (2012); but include more recently published documents to ensure that the scope remains up-to-date.
- 5.1.3 The plans, programmes, policies and strategies identified do not act in isolation and links between their scale and objectives can be made. International, European and national plans and strategies often provide high level guidance, with their objectives being reflected in plans at a regional and local level.

Table 5.1 – Relevant Plans, Programmes and Policies

International
Kyoto Climate Change Protocol, 1992
Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 1992
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, 2007
Local Action 21, 2002
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, 1971
UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 1972
European
EU Sustainable Development Strategy, 2004, 2006, 2009
European Climate Change Programme, 2000, 2005
Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds
Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment
EC Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC)
The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003
Floods Directive 2007 (2007/60/EC)
The 2006 Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC)
European Landscape Convention 2007
EC Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection 2006
EU Waste Directive 2008/98/EC
EU Landfill Directive 1999/31/EC (Consolidated)
EU Mining Waste Directive 2006/21/EC
EU Renewable Energy Directive 2009
EU Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)
EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

Protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration Directive 2006/118/EC
Our life insurance, our national capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020
National
The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003
Securing the Future - UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy, March 2005
Planning for a Sustainable Future: White Paper, 2007
Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: A New Direction for Community Services, 2006
Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier, (Public Health White Paper), 2004
A Tourism Strategy for 2012 and beyond (2007)
Matthew Taylor Review, 2008
Government's Response to Matthew Taylor Review, 2009
External Review of Government Planning Practice Guidance, 2012
Our Countryside: the Future – A Fair Deal for Rural England (Rural White Paper), 2000
UK Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act, 2006
UK Climate Change Act, 2008
UK Low Carbon Transition Plan 2009
Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and N Ireland, march 2011
Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009
The Flood and Water Management Act 2010
Future Water: the Government's water strategy for England 2008
The Pitt Review – lessons learned from the 2007 floods
EA: CLR11, Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (2004)
EA: Dealing with Contamination in England and Wales
Safeguarding our soils – a strategy for England
Construction Code of Practice for Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites 2009
Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended), 1981
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC), 2006
Working with a Grain of Nature – A Biodiversity Strategy for England, 2002
UK Biodiversity Action Plan, 2002
ODPM Circular 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their impact within the planning system; ODPM Guide to Good Practice: Planning for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
State of the Natural Environment, 2008
Keeper's of Time – A Statement of policy for England's ancient and native woodland, 2005
A Strategy for England's Trees Woodlands and Forests, 2008
Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act, 1990
The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future, 2001
National Planning Policy Framework, 2012
National Planning Practice Guidance
Environment White Paper (first published December 2012, Updated October 2014)
Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services

National
National Character Area Profiles (September 2014)
Heritage White Paper: Heritage Protection for the 21st Century, 2007
Mineral Extraction and the Historic Environment, 2008
Mineral Extraction and Archaeology: A Practice Guide, 2008
Meeting the Energy Challenge, UK Energy White Paper, 2007
UK Renewable Energy Strategy, July 2009
National and regional guidelines for aggregates provision in England, 2005–2020 (2009)
Waste Strategy for England 2007
Natural Environment White Paper: The Natural Choice, securing the value of nature, 2011
Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystems services, 2011
The UK Marine Policy Statement, March 2011
The Plan for Growth, March 2011
National Policy Statements for Energy Infrastructure, July 2011
Historic Landscape Characterisation-Taking Stock of Method English Heritage 2003
GP3 (Groundwater Protection Policy and Practice) Environment Agency
GPLC1 The Environment Agency's 'Guiding Principles for Land Contamination' EA 2010
The Localism Act 2011
Making Space for Nature: A Review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network' Lawton 2010
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012
National Infrastructure Plan 2014
Electricity Market Reform 2014
National Planning Policy for Waste 2014
Infrastructure Act 2015
Onshore Hydraulic Fracturing (Protected Areas) Regulations 2015 <i>Draft</i>
Circular 02/2013: Strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development
Planning and the major road network in England 2015
National Policy Statements for Energy
National Policy Statements for Transport
National Policy Statements for Water, Waste Water and Waste
Home Energy Conservation Act 2015
Regional
More and Better Jobs – A Strategic Economic Plan for the North East local enterprise Partnership Area 2014
Better Health, Fairer Health 2008
North East Climate Change Adaptation Study, 2008
: A Summary of Climate Change Risks for North East England 2012
Climate Change Action Plan for North East England, 2008

Newcastle Airport Noise Action Plan 2013
State of the Natural Environment Report for the North East, January 2009
Regional
North East Strategy for the Environment, 2008
Northumbria River Basin Management Plan 2015
Solway Tweed River Basin Management Plan 2015
Till and Breamish Catchment Flood Management Plan 2009
Wansbeck and Blyth Catchment Flood Management Plan 2009
Tyne Catchment Flood Management Plan 2009
North East Northumberland Catchment Flood Management Plan 2009
Eden Catchment Flood Management Plan 2009
Northumbrian Water Resource Management Plan 2015-2020
Local
Northumberland Minerals Local Plan, Written Statement and Proposals Map, March 2000 (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)
Northumberland Waste Local Plan, Written Statement and Proposals Map, December 2001 (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)
Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan, Policy S5 (Green Belt extension) 2008
Alnwick District LDF Core Strategy DPD, October 2007
Alnwick District Local Plan, 1997 (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)
Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan and Proposals Map, April 1999 (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)
Blyth Valley Borough LDF Core Strategy DPD and Proposals Map, September 2007
District Local Plan and Proposals Map, May 1999 (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)
Castle Morpeth District Local Plan and Proposals Map, February 2003 (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)
Tynedale District LDF Core Strategy DPD and Proposals Map, October 2007
Tynedale District Local Plan, April 2000 (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)
Wansbeck District Local Plan July 2007 (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)
Northumberland National Park LDF Core Strategy (2009)
Northumberland National Park Management Plan 2016-2021
North Pennines AONB Management Plan 2014-19
Northumberland Coast AONB Management Plan 2014-2019
Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast European Marine Site Management Scheme 2014
Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy, March 2011
Northumberland Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – February 2012

Northumberland Housing Strategy, 2013-2018
A Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2013-18
Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2021
Common Allocations Policy 2014
Tenancy Strategy 2012
Northumberland Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2015
Strategy for Gypsies and Travellers in Northumberland 2013-2016
Achieving Health and Wellbeing in Northumberland 2014
Northumberland Emergency Community Assistance Plan, March 2016
Northumberland Economic Strategy 2015-2020
Northumberland Destination Management Plan 2015-2020
Northumberland Local Transport Plan 2011-2026
The Heat is on - Northumberland Strategic Partnership – Strategic Framework for Climate Change Planning, 2007
Northumberland County Council Climate Change Action Plan, 2008
Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan, 2008
North Pennines AONB and European Geopark Geodiversity Action Plan 2010-2015
Northumberland and North Tyneside Shoreline Management Plan 2 - Scottish Border to River Tyne
Northumberland Rights of Way Improvement Plan, 2007
Northumberland : Creative Landscape : A Cultural Strategy for Northumberland 2016-2021
Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site Management Plan 2015-2019
Planning for the Future: Guidance for Managing the Archaeological and Palaeo- environmental Resource in the Till-Tweed Valleys, Northumberland
Northumberland Renewable Energy Strategy, 2003
Renewable Energy SPD Scoping Document June 2016
Northumberland County Council Renewable, Low-Carbon Energy Generation and Energy Efficiency Study 2011
Northumberland Joint Municipal Waste Strategy, 2003
Water Resources Management Plan 2014
Northumberland Growth & Resilience Framework (2013-2016)
Allendale Neighbourhood Plan, March 2015
Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan, May 2016
Private Sector Housing Strategy (2015)

6 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

- 6.1.1 Drawing on the review of the sustainability context (Chapter 5) and baseline (Chapter 4), a range of sustainability issues were identified that should be at the centre of SA; ensuring it remains focused.

SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY	
Population	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland is one of the least densely populated counties in the country. Although largely rural, the County is diverse with more urbanised areas. More than half the county's population lives in the south east. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The largest proportion of the County's population is in the 'working age' group but within that range there is a marked decrease in 24-34 year olds. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County's population as a whole is ageing, most markedly in the rural north of the county. This is forecast to accelerate, alongside a shrinking working age population. This will put increasing pressure on services and service delivery but also potentially have a significant negative impact of the long term resilience of communities across the County. 	
Deprivation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst Northumberland is the 2nd least deprived local authority area in the North East, there are concentrations of deprivation within certain areas. South East Northumberland has the greatest overall concentrations of deprivation; however, there are also pockets of deprivation in rural areas of Northumberland which are often exacerbated by barriers to housing, services and living environment. 	
Health and well being	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The health of people in Northumberland is generally similar to the rest of England but life expectancy for women is slightly worse. Health inequalities across the county mean that life expectancy for men is lower in deprived areas than in the least deprived areas; and there are varying rates for number of people with limiting long-term illness for which Northumberland as a whole is higher than the national average. This puts additional pressure on services. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health indicators relating to leading healthier life styles that are worse in Northumberland than nationally include: binge drinking and hospital stays for alcohol related harm; road injuries and deaths; initiation of breast feeding and smoking during pregnancy. This puts additional pressure on services. 	
Crime	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the overall number of recorded crimes in Northumberland has decreased there has been a significant increase in violent offences since 2008. However, the 2008 survey shows that the overall perception of being very or fairly safe is higher in Northumberland than in the North East or England. It is essential that the crime statistics continue to improve and that the population continues to feel safer in Northumberland. 	
Fuel poverty	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland is amongst the worst areas of rural England in respect of fuel poverty. Fuel poverty can be interlinked with social poverty but also can relate to the quality of housing stock in the area or by households living in larger, hard-to-heat homes. Improvements to energy efficiency in both existing and new housing stock can reduce fuel poverty and reduce CO2 emissions. 	

Housing

- Objectively assessed housing needs analysis demonstrates the need for housing growth in the County. The spatial distribution of new housing development will influence its sustainability such as in respect of its accessibility to jobs, services and amenities.
- A high proportion of dwellings in Northumberland are owner occupied or privately rented but types of dwelling and type of tenure vary across the county. Rural areas provide more detached and semi-detached properties while terraced housing prevails in the former Wansbeck district, which also has a higher proportion of RSL and public sector stock.
- House prices vary considerably across Northumberland. The former district of Alnwick has had a higher increase than the North East and England and Wales. Nationally and in Northumberland the gap between earnings and house prices is increasing but more so in the rural areas of the former districts of Alnwick, Berwick upon Tweed, Castle Morpeth and Tynedale, which puts pressure on the availability of affordable housing.
- While some areas have high property prices and few affordable homes there are areas where market failure presents a significant risk with high numbers of empty homes, low property prices, low environmental quality and in some cases poor housing standards.
- Some areas have become popular as holiday destinations and have a high proportion of second homes which affects the housing choices of local residents.
- There are housing needs associated with a wide range of groups including young families, single people, the homeless and Gypsies and Travellers.
- New housing development can receive support or opposition from local residents and impact both positively and negatively on existing communities.

Transport and communications

- Residents in Northumberland are dependent on the use of the private car. Private car usage is greater in the rural areas of Northumberland whilst public transport usage is greatest in the urban south east, which reflects the level of car ownership experienced across the County, this will influence sustainable development.
- Limited public transport provision and the rural nature of the County create challenges for an efficient and sustainable transport system, which provides access to services and employment opportunities.
- There is significant out commuting from areas of Northumberland to the Tyne and Wear City Region for employment purposes. There is also in-commuting to urban areas.
- The rights of way network is important both as an attractor of tourists to the area, helping to bring in essential revenue for the tourism industry as well as meeting the recreational and access needs of local people.
- ITC, including broadband, is important to the economic prosperity of Northumberland whilst also enabling improved access to services, particularly in rural areas. Its availability in more remote areas continues to be addressed

Access to Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to and the quality of green infrastructure and recreation is mixed across the County with some deficiencies such as in the south east of the County.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a range of town and service centres providing shopping centres within the County. Their performance varies in terms of vitality and viability. Some centres are showing evidence of decline such as a high number of empty shop units.
Democracy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is potential concern in some quarters that public do not have sufficient chance to influence spatial planning decision making.
ECONOMY
Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of Northumberland's working population holding qualifications is higher than in the North East or Great Britain. Within the county the former Blyth Valley district has the highest percentage of working people with no qualifications and Alnwick and Tynedale have the highest percentage in the NVQ4 and above - higher than the North East but lower than national levels.
Employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Northumberland economy has experienced fundamental change for many years with jobs lost in traditional industries particularly deep coal mining and agriculture. While job losses have been partially offset by new jobs in manufacturing and the service sector overall unemployment rates are higher than the average for Great Britain but less than for the North East.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland has a lower percentage of jobs in finance, IT and business activities and higher percentage of jobs in public administration, education and the health sector than the North East and Great Britain.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic prosperity and opportunity varies across the County. In some areas there are high levels of unemployment, reliance on benefits and low educational achievement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism accounts for a higher percentage of all jobs compared to the North East and Great Britain. The seasonal nature of this employment is reflected in Northumberland's high percentage of part-time jobs compared to the North East and Great Britain.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average earnings for full-time and part-time employees in Northumberland are lower than regional and national averages for male and female workers.
Tourism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism makes an important contribution to the local economy making up over 11% of jobs in the County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland's wealth of natural and historic features makes it a popular tourist destination and recreational resource. This can occasionally be at odds with environmental protection in environmentally sensitive areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of minerals and waste sites, including Northumberland has encouraged recreation and tourism use of these sites. Further waste and mineral sites may have future potential if effectively restored.

ENVIRONMENT**Climate change and carbon footprint**

Climate Change issues - The effect of climate change in Northumberland is likely to:

- Impact upon communities, businesses and individuals from intense rainfall/storm events and higher summer temperatures.
- Lead to coastal erosion.
- Lead to loss of habitats (e.g. coastal squeeze will be an important early impact of climate change). Need to maintain and enhance habitat networks.
- Lead to increase in wildfires.
- Lead to changes in agricultural practices associated with flooding, soil moisture levels, heat stress of livestock etc, pests and diseases. Need to examine the role of peatland and woodlands as carbon sinks.

Spatial planning policies, can assist in ensuring reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the likely predicted consequences of climate change.

- Renewable energy is generated in Northumberland including from a number of wind farms. Blyth has established itself as a hub of the renewable energy industry including through the National Renewable Energy Centre. There are issues in respect of management of energy generation and distribution – including particular challenges associated with location of new conventional and renewable energy capacity in the county. Energy from waste, tidal and solar offers further opportunities

Air quality and pollution

- Air quality across Northumberland is generally good due to its largely rural nature. There are some pockets of less good air quality associated with urbanised areas. The situation has improved with the only AQMA in Blyth Town Centre associated with traffic being undesignated.
- Northumberland hosts minerals and waste related activities which can give rise to potential threats to air quality. The activities can also have impacts in respect of noise, traffic, odour and health where they are in close proximity to residents.

Water supply and quality

- There are two Water Resource Zones in Northumberland with the Kielder Water system supplying the majority of the County and aquifer boreholes in the north providing water to Berwick and Wooler. The capacity of the two Water Resource Zones has been examined as part of the work on Northumberland Water Cycle Study,.
- Northumberland is generally a hard water area, which is not a health risk but the resultant limescale can affect water using machinery and increase energy bills.
- Monitoring of river biology and chemistry shows mainly 'very good' and 'good' quality rivers in Northumberland which will be important to maintain.
- Minerals and waste activities in the County can give rise to potential water quality issues unless effectively managed and monitored

Bathing water

- The Environment Agency monitors thirteen coastal bathing water sites in Northumberland and all are rated as 'excellent'. In the interests of health and Northumberland's tourism industry it is essential that this quality is maintained.

Waste water management

- The capacity of waste water networks has been assessed as part of the evidence base in support of the Core Strategy. There are certain medium term and long term limitations in a limited number of areas..

Flood management

- Flooding in Northumberland is most likely to occur along the river valleys and on estuarine and coastal frontages. A number of urban areas and smaller settlements may be affected by flooding and there are recorded instances of groundwater and sewer flooding. Surface water flooding is also an issue, particularly in urban areas.
- Climate change is likely to increase the risk of flooding and peak rainfall intensity, peak river flow and sea levels are all projected to increase over the next 100 years.
- Northumberland County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Northumberland as defined by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (the Act). As a result of this the council has a number of new duties and responsibilities to assist in the management flood risk from local sources. . The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and other sustainable management systems are being promoted.

Coastal erosion

- The coast of Northumberland is subject to natural erosion but the prevalence of rocky headlands and foreshores protecting softer bays means that coastal erosion is less of a challenge than elsewhere in England. Various evidence base studies being undertaken by partners of the Council will provide detailed data in relation to coastal change, and may inform development or designating Coastal Change Management Areas.

Contaminated land

- There are currently no designated or declared contaminated land sites in Northumberland. However there are sites that may appear on the contaminated land register in future and some sites remain to be inspected. An awareness of the potential of some unrecorded sites to potentially be contaminated should be retained and future contamination of sites through development should be avoided.
- There may be sites where historic uses will have resulted in land affected by contamination, which will need to be addressed as part of any redevelopment.

Previously developed land

- Northumberland has made effective use of land by re-using land that has previously been developed. However, there is an issue as to whether the County can continue to maintain the trend in the proportion of new dwellings being built on previously developed land.
- Previously developed land has a role to play in terms of nature conservation and biodiversity. Some previously developed sites are important wildlife habitats as well as providing local recreational opportunities. This is particularly significant in the south east of the County.

Agricultural land
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland has large areas of agricultural land. There is a need to protect areas of best and most versatile agricultural land from development. This will help to address the potential future issues around food security
Green Belt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland comprises areas of Green Belt which are being reviewed as part of the Core Strategy. Its purpose including preventing the unrestricted sprawl of Tyne and Wear will be maintained.
Biodiversity and geological conservation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland is an important area for biodiversity with a large number of protected sites including European designed sites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland has 99.11% of SSSI land being classed as in 'favourable' or 'recovering' condition which exceeds the Government's target of 95%. This needs to be maintained and enhanced where possible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is potential threat to biodiversity and geodiversity from new development, agricultural and land management practices and climate change. Opportunities exist to create, enhance and promote wildlife and geological interest associated with development proposals and through positive agricultural and land management proposals such as the agri-environment scheme.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are biodiversity linkages between sites across the County and into neighbouring areas which provide important networks to be enhanced.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Species Action Plans are being prepared which inform the Local Plan process.
Landscape and visual amenity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of the County has a high landscape quality, including the Northumberland National Park, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Northumberland Heritage Coast.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are potential development opportunities, including mineral resources located in sensitive environmental areas, including in or close to the Northumberland National Park, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Northumberland Heritage Coast.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas designated for their landscape importance and other landscapes of high quality often support many habitats and species of biodiversity value.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities exist to further enhance the landscape including through restoration of new or former development sites. A Countywide Landscape Character Assessment and associated evidence provide valuable evidence towards the Local Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland is rated as the most tranquil area within England and is part of its appeal to visitors which must be maintained. An area has been designated with dark sky 'gold' status marking one of the best places in Europe to star gaze, due to the lack of light pollution.

Cultural heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a large number of assets within Northumberland that are protected for their heritage value and need to be preserved and enhanced.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some heritage assets in Northumberland are under threat, including those on the Heritage at Risk Register.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to protect and enhance the historic environment and historic assets, which may or may not derive significance from their settings, from potential threats including development activities, climate change, coastal erosion and other forms of harm.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An opportunity exists to promote the wider contribution of the historic environment to sustainable development, including opportunities for heritage led regeneration; heritage based sustainable tourism and ensuring high quality design in new developments with a view to enhancing local character and distinctiveness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historic environment is an integral part of sustainable living and contributes to a sense of place and local identity. There is a need to ensure high quality design in new developments with a view to enhancing local character and distinctiveness, particularly in historic areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An EUS (Extensive Urban Survey) programme within Northumberland is in progress to be taken in account in the Local Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities exist to improve existing poor quality built environments and areas of derelict land.
Mineral resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals are important resources and are crucial to the prosperity of Northumberland and the country as a whole. Minerals are essential to provide the buildings, infrastructure, goods and energy that society and the economy needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northumberland is rich in a number of mineral deposits including coal, clays, hydrocarbons, igneous rock, limestone, metalliferous and vein minerals, peat, sand and gravel and sandstone. The most significant minerals in Northumberland in terms of the tonnages that are extracted, their contribution to the economy and impact on the environment and local communities are coal and igneous rock, limestone and sand and gravel which are extracted for use as aggregates.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minerals are finite resources and need to be used in a sustainable way to ensure there are sufficient supplies for tomorrow.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Society's need for minerals needs to be balanced against the potential impacts of mineral extraction, transport and processing on local people and the local environment. This includes eliminating unacceptable adverse impacts, including health related issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are occasionally issues in respect of the acceptability of mineral workings close to settlements.
Managing waste
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households and businesses in Northumberland produce waste that requires management. There is a need to maintain adequate waste disposal sites for the County.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposal of biodegradable waste to landfill is a significant contributor to climate change and may also pose a threat to the local environment and local people. Landfill should be regarded as the disposal route of last resort.

- European and national policy is driving waste management practices up the 'waste hierarchy' from a reliance on disposal to landfill to increasing the proportion of the waste stream that is re-used, recycled or recovered.
- There are occasionally issues in respect of the acceptability of waste disposal and waste recycling facilities close to centres of population.
- Sometimes there are issues associated with fly tipping, especially close to centres of population and near existing waste management facilities.

7 THE SA FRAMEWORK

- 7.1.1 The SA Framework is used to predict and evaluate the social, economic and environmental effects of proposed options and policies being considered. It is important that the assessment process is practical and manageable.
- 7.1.2 Drawing on the review of the sustainability context (Chapter 5) and baseline (Chapter 4), a range of sustainability issues were identified that should be at the centre of the SA (Chapter 6), ensuring it remains focused. These issues were used as a basis for establishing a series of sustainability objectives and subsidiary questions (*to aid the assessment process*) that together make up the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. To add further structure and aid in presenting the findings succinctly, the SA Objectives have been grouped into 9 Sustainability Topics as detailed in **Table 7.1**.
- 7.1.3 The detailed list of subsidiary questions is presented in Appendix 3 alongside the relevant sustainability objective.
- 7.1.4 To aid in the development of the SA Framework, a detailed compatibility exercise was also undertaken to assess how the SA Objectives developed for the various county and district level plans that have been progressed in recent years may be relevant to the new Northumberland LDF Sustainability Appraisal process.

Table 7.1 – SA topics and Sustainability Objectives

Sustainability Topic	SA Objectives
Health Wellbeing and cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To improve health and well-being and reduce health inequalities. - To increase public involvement in decision making and participation in community activity, especially amongst under-represented groups. - To deliver safer communities. - To improve the quality, range and accessibility of community services and facilities.
Environmental protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To protect and enhance the quality of Northumberland's river, transitional and coastal and ground and surface water bodies. - To ensure good air quality.
Built and Natural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To protect and enhance the quality, distinctiveness and diversity of Northumberland's rural and urban landscapes. - To protect and enhance Northumberland's cultural heritage and diversity.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home.
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To avoid or reduce flood risk to people and property. - To ensure resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation. - To mitigate climate change by reducing of greenhouse gas emissions.

Sustainability Topic	SA Objectives
Economy and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To strengthen and sustain a resilient local economy. - To deliver accessible education and training opportunities. - To increase the diversity and quality of employment opportunities.
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To reduce the need for travel and improve transport integration.
Natural resources and waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting innovative solutions for restoration of minerals and waste sites. - To reduce the amount of waste that is produced and increase the proportion that is reused, recycled and composted. - To ensure prudent use and supply of natural resources.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To protect and enhance Northumberland's biodiversity and geodiversity.

PART 2: WHAT HAS PLAN-MAKING / SA INVOLVED UP TO THIS POINT?

8 INTRODUCTION (TO PART 2)

The SA Report must include...

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and hence an explanation of why the alternatives dealt with are 'reasonable').
- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting preferred options / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan

8.1 Alternatives for what?

8.1.1 The Regulations³⁸ are not prescriptive, stating only that the SA Report should present an appraisal of the '*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme*'. The selection of a 'preferred strategy' is an iterative process and is informed by consultation findings.

8.1.2 In practice, local authorities in England tend to consider reasonable alternatives for a reasonable range of the issues addressed through plan-making. The alternatives are developed in the context of the plan objectives and in order to be considered 'reasonable' will need to be in conformity with these objectives.

8.1.3 The key issues addressed in the draft Core Strategy are as follows:

- The spatial strategy
- Settlement strategies
- Strategic site allocations
- Green Belt release

8.1.4 Each of these issues is assigned a chapter in this part of the SA Report, and the following questions are answered:

1. Why have reasonable alternatives been identified?
2. What are the reasonable alternatives?
3. What is the preferred alternative and why?
4. What alternatives have been discounted and why?

8.2 Thematic policy options

8.2.1 In addition to the key issues identified above, the draft Plan has been informed by consultation and appraisal upon a range of 'thematic policy options'.

8.2.2 The Council undertook an 'Issues and Options consultation from May to August 2012. This consultation set out a range of options for various plan issues that were subject to consideration against the SA Framework.

8.2.3 The findings at that stage of plan-preparation and the following 'Preferred Options (part1)' consultation from February to March 2013 were detailed in two interim SA reports that were produced alongside these consultations.

³⁸ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

8.2.4 These policy options were assessed at the initial 'Issues and Options' stage of the Core Strategy process. A summary of this process is presented in tables 8.1 and 8.2 outlining:

- The extent to which option testing has been carried out – either at the initial stage or subsequently; and
- The degree to which the policy approaches broadly perform in terms of sustainability.

8.3 How were the themed options tested?

8.3.1 If all the questions posed at the Issues and Options stage, including the 4 'key issues addressed', (as described above), are grouped together into themes, it can be stated that 95 issues were explored in the consultation and tested at a high level through the SA.

8.3.2 The four columns in Table 8.1 show the degree to which the SA testing of options was practicable. It should be noted that many of the options are somewhat procedural, and so their outcome regarding sustainability were unlikely to be significant.

- 48 of the 95 issues or themes (around half) were tested in terms of two or more realistic alternative options, (see the left hand column in Table 8.1)
- On the other hand, for 43 of the issues, the SA only tested one main option, (see the middle two columns in Table 8.1). It should be noted that, almost without exception, the testing of alternative options for these 43 issues would have been very difficult and/or complex insofar as each of these options tended to comprise a set of principles or criteria, making up a particular approach. Alternative approaches would therefore potentially comprise any of a large number of combinations of the same (or other) principles or criteria, some more realistic than others. It is important not to test superfluous options. In the 43 cases referred to here, the evidence available, at the time of the Issues and Options report, suggested that there was only one realistic approach – i.e. no realistic alternative to be tested. In 17 of these 43 cases referred to in the previous bullet point, it was possible to compare the SA assessment of the proposed option against a "do nothing" or "status quo" option, (see 3rd column of Table 8.1), although other complex options would have been difficult to test for the reasons outlined above.
- The remaining four issues provided no testable options as the questions posed were general, overarching or, by contrast, sought detailed suggestions. They did not, at that early stage, propose a clear way forward that could be tested for its sustainable planning credentials.

8.4 How sustainable are the themed options, as taken forward through the stages of the Core Strategy?

8.4.1 Appendix X gives an explanation of how each theme / issue has been taken forward. Where there has been a move away from an approach that had a positive assessment at the Issues and Options stage, a general assessment is made of the sustainability of the eventual approach

8.4.2 The five rows in Table 8.1 give an assessment of the SA outcome, following the issue or theme through the stages of the Core Strategy up to the current ('Publication') stage. This assessment is based on the initial SA at the issues and options stage, looking then at which option was taken forward at the later stages.

8.4.3 For certain issues, none of the initially assessed options were taken forward and an alternative approach taken. This may have been because of representations received, new evidence, changed circumstances or changes in Government policy. Nevertheless, in deciding how to proceed on each issue at each stage, a sustainable planning approach was taken throughout.

- 8.4.4 The result is that 70 percent of the initial themed issues, as now manifested in policies in the Core Strategy, continue to demonstrate a major or minor positive effect in sustainable planning terms.
- 8.4.5 Around 20% are estimated to be 'SA-neutral'. Often, these are those where a positively assessed option could not be taken forward due to changes in policy or circumstance. An example would be the decision not to impose a strict hierarchy of sports facility provision, which though sustainable in terms of the largest facilities being located in the largest places, was seen as too restrictive given the views of rural residents and the move away from pooled Section 106 Agreement funds. Often the more flexible approach engendered by such decisions will have a neutral effect as it will be a continuation of the status quo.
- 8.4.6 In the majority of instances where a strong or restrictive policy approach advocated at the early stages of the Core Strategy, was later abandoned, there can be a good degree of confidence that the sustainability appraisal will be neutral or positive. There are only a handful of instances where the effect is uncertain – notably the decision not to set rigid criteria on housing density or previously developed land, and the deferment to building regulations for sustainable construction standards. In such cases, the longer term, cumulative effect of moving away from the practices that were going to be formalised in the Core Strategy will be uncertain.

TABLE 8.1 – Summary of how Strategic and Thematic Options were tested through the SA and Assessment of the SA outcome for each Theme at the Publication Stage

At Publication Stage of Core Strategy	Both or all realistic Options Tested	Single Option + Status Quo Tested. Other Options not possible to test	Single Option Tested Other Options not possible to test	No Options possible to test
MAJOR POSITIVE S.A. OUTCOME LIKELY	STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS Q3 Strategic development options SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION (AND SUSTAINABLE PLANNING) Q4 Spatial distribution options DELIVERING HOUSING – DISTRIBUTION OF NEW HOMES Q13 Distribution of new homes GREEN BELT Q39 Outer Green Belt Boundary – Morpeth MINERAL RESOURCES Q48 Mineral safeguarding areas TRANSPORTATION Q71 Safeguarding rail lines & infrastructure Q72 Safeguarding rail freight infrastructure Q73 Protect existing rail freight facilities Q77 Airports COMMUNITY FACILITIES Q81 Community Facilities GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – LANDSCAPE Q84 AONB policy approach Q86 Landscape ‘guiding principles’ GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – REC., SPORT, OPEN SPACE Q90 Sports facilities and playing pitches HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT Q104 Conservation of heritage assets		SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION (AND SUSTAINABLE PLANNING) Q5 Sustainable development GREEN BELT Q38 Green Belt, General Approach Q40 Inner Green Belt Boundary – Morpeth* MINERAL RESOURCES Q51 Restoration / after-use of mineral sites INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES Q78 Planning for broadband infrastructure GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – GENERAL Q83 Approach to green infrastructure ECOSYSTEM APPROACH AND GEO- / BIODIVERSITY Q88 Biodiversity and Geo-diversity WATER ENVIRONMENT Q101 Coastal Erosion / Change Management Q102 Water Quality *Alternatives were, in effect, tested as part of the Green Belt Review.	
Minor Positive S.A. outcome likely	TOWN CENTRES AND RETAILING Q36 Local leisure / non-retail uses in centres Q37 Office accommodation in centres MINERAL RESOURCES Q43 Options for Coal Extraction Q47 Separation dists. – mineral workings MANAGING WASTE Q56 Hazardous landfill sites Q57 Inert Landfill sites SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION AND SMALL-SCALE RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGIES Q64 Passive Design TRANSPORTATION Q68 / 69 Accessibility and public transport Q74 Development impacts on road network Q75 Enhancing the core strategic network INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES Q79 / 80 Improving Mobile Telecoms ECOSYSTEM APPROACH AND GEO- / BIODIVERSITY Q87 The ‘Ecosystem approach’ GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – REC., SPORT, OPEN SPACE Q89 Recreation, sport / open space Q94 Local green spaces WATER ENVIRONMENT Q95 Approach to flood risk Q97 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Q98 Implementing flood alleviation schemes Q99 Resistance / resilience to flood risk Q100 Minimising run-off and SUDS	DELIVERING HOUSING – AFFORDABLE HOUSING Q19 Affordable homes – Site thresholds Q20 Affordable homes – Off-site contrib’n’s Q21 Affordable homes – Rural exceptions Q22 Affordable homes – 2nd / Hol. Homes DELIVERING HOUSING – SPECIALISED HOUSING Q23 Specialist homes – older / vulnerable Q24 Provision of Traveller sites DEVELOPING A RESILIENT ECONOMY – LAND SUPPLY Q26 / 28 Strategic Emp. Land / ‘BEREZ’ Q27 Employment Land Distribution DEVELOPING A RESILIENT ECONOMY – RURAL ECONOMY AND TOURISM Q29 Rural Economy Q30 Tourism Q31 Strategic Tourism Areas TOWN CENTRES AND RETAILING Q34 Town centre & PSA boundaries Q35 Larger-scale leisure facilities	SETTLEMENT ROLE AND FUNCTION Q7 / 8 / 9 Settlement role and function GREEN BELT Q41 Treatment of Green Belt settlements MINERAL RESOURCES Q46 Managing other Extractive Industries Q49 / 50 Safeguarding mineral infrastructure MANAGING WASTE Q52 Waste recycling & recovery capacity Q53 Waste recycling & recovery locations Q54 Waste recycling & recovery criteria SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION AND SMALL-SCALE RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGIES Q63 Defining an Energy Hierarchy WATER ENVIRONMENT Q96 Principles for flood risk management Q103 Water supply / sewerage facilities etc. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT Q105 Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site	

TABLE 8.1 continued – Summary of how Strategic and Thematic Options were tested through the SA and Assessment of the SA outcome for each Theme at the Publication Stage

At Publication Stage of Core Strategy	Both or all realistic Options Tested	Single Option + Status Quo Tested. Other Options not possible to test	Single Option Tested Other Options not possible to test	No Options possible to test
NEUTRAL TO MINOR POSITIVE OUTCOME LIKELY	TRANSPORTATION Q76 Supporting ports and harbours	DELIVERING HOUSING – PROPOSED RANGES OF HOUSING DELIVERY Q12 Proposed ranges of housing delivery	DELIVERING HOUSING – EVIDENCE FOR ESTABLISHING THE HOUSING REQUIREMENT Q10 / 11 Evidence for housing requirement TOWN CENTRES AND RETAILING Q32 / 33 Shopping Needs	
NEUTRAL OUTCOME LIKELY	MINERAL RESOURCES Q45 Options for Sand and Gravel Supply MANAGING WASTE Q55 Criteria for non-hazardous landfill COMMERCIAL SCALE RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY Q61 Separation - wind farms & residential Q62 Commercial scale renewable criteria SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION AND SMALL-SCALE RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGIES Q65 Energy efficiency - existing stock GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – LANDSCAPE Q85 Important landscape character clusters GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE – REC., SPORT, OPEN SPACE Q91 Sport facility hierarchy Q92 Provision of pitches, open spaces etc. Q93 Protection of open spaces etc.	DELIVERING HOUSING – AFFORDABLE HOUSING Q17 Affordable homes – Targets Q18 Affordable homes – Detailed Targets DEVELOPING A RESILIENT ECONOMY – LAND SUPPLY Q25 Employment Land Supply	GREEN BELT Q42 Green Belt: PDL / Major Developed Sites MINERAL RESOURCES Q44 Options for Crushed Rock Supply Q59 / 60 Renewable / low carbon	SPATIAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES Q1 / Q2 Spatial Vision and Objectives SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION (AND SUSTAINABLE PLANNING) Q6 Delivery Areas TRANSPORTATION Q70 Parking standards COMMUNITY FACILITIES Q82 Sites for community facilities
UNCERTAIN OUTCOME	DELIVERING HOUSING – PRINCIPLES OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS Q14 Previously developed land Q15 Residential Gardens Q16 Housing Density SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION AND SMALL-SCALE RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGIES Q66 Small scale renewables etc. Q67 BREEAM and CFSH		COMMERCIAL SCALE RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY Q58 Renewable energy targets	

TABLE 8.2 Summary of how Strategic and Thematic Options were tested through the SA and Assessment of the SA outcome for each Theme at the Publication Stage – presented in the order of the Issues and Options Questions – see Appendix X for fuller explanation

Topic	Ease of testing options at Issues and Options stage	Estimated overall SA effect through stages
Q1 / Q2 Spatial Vision and Objectives	NONE TESTABLE	NEUTRAL
Q3 Strategic development options	ALL TESTED (3)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q4 Spatial distribution options	ALL TESTED (3)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q5 Sustainable development	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q6 Delivery Areas	NONE TESTABLE	NEUTRAL
Q7 / 8 / 9 Settlement role and function	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q10 / 11 Evidence for housing requirement	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	NEUTRAL to Minor Positive
Q12 Proposed ranges of housing delivery	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	NEUTRAL to Minor Positive
Q13 Distribution of new homes	ALL TESTED (3)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q14 Previously developed land	ALL TESTED (2)	UNCERTAIN
Q15 Residential Gardens	ALL TESTED (2)	UNCERTAIN
Q16 Housing Density	ALL TESTED (2)	UNCERTAIN
Q17 Affordable homes – Targets	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	NEUTRAL
Q18 Affordable homes – Detailed Targets	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	NEUTRAL
Q19 Affordable homes – Site thresholds	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q20 Affordable homes – Off-site contrib'n's	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q21 Affordable homes – Rural exceptions	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q22 Affordable homes – 2nd / Hol. homes	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q23 Specialist homes – older / vulnerable	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q24 Provision of Traveller sites	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q25 Employment Land Supply	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	NEUTRAL

TABLE 8.2 Summary of how Strategic and Thematic Options were tested through the SA and Assessment of the SA outcome for each Theme at the Publication Stage – presented in the order of the Issues and Options Questions – see Appendix X for fuller explanation

Topic	Ease of testing options at Issues and Options stage	Estimated overall SA effect through stages
Q26 / 28 Strategic Emp. Land / 'BEREZ'	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q27 Employment Land Distribution	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q29 Rural Economy	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q30 Tourism	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q31 Strategic Tourism Areas	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q32 / 33 Shopping Needs	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	NEUTRAL to Minor Positive
Q34 Town centre & PSA boundaries	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q35 Larger-scale leisure facilities	2 TESTED (option + status quo) Alternatives not testable.	Minor Positive
Q36 Local leisure / non-retail uses in centres	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q37 Office accommodation in centres	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q38 Green Belt, General Approach	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q39 Outer Green Belt Boundary – Morpeth	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q40 Inner Green Belt Boundary – Morpeth	1 TESTED - Alternatives only tested at Green Belt Review	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q41 Treatment of Green Belt settlements	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q42 Green Belt: PDL / Major Developed Sites	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	NEUTRAL
Q43 Options for Coal Extraction	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q44 Options for Crushed Rock Supply	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	NEUTRAL
Q45 Options for Sand and Gravel Supply	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL
Q46 Managing other Extractive Industries	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q47 Separation dists. – mineral workings	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q48 Mineral safeguarding areas	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE

TABLE 8.2 Summary of how Strategic and Thematic Options were tested through the SA and Assessment of the SA outcome for each Theme at the Publication Stage – presented in the order of the Issues and Options Questions – see Appendix X for fuller explanation

Topic	Ease of testing options at Issues and Options stage	Estimated overall SA effect through stages
Q49 / 50 Safeguarding mineral infrastructure	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q51 Restoration / after-use of mineral sites	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q52 Waste recycling & recovery capacity	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q53 Waste recycling & recovery locations	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q54 Waste recycling & recovery criteria	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q55 Criteria for non-hazardous landfill	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL
Q56 Hazardous landfill sites	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q57 Inert Landfill sites	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q58 Renewable energy targets	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	UNCERTAIN
Q59 / 60 Renewable / low carbon	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	NEUTRAL
Q61 Separation - wind farms & residential	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL
Q62 Commercial scale renewable criteria	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL
Q63 Defining an Energy Hierarchy	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q64 Passive Design	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q65 Energy efficiency - existing stock	ALL TESTED (3)	NEUTRAL
Q66 Small scale renewables etc.	ALL TESTED (2)	UNCERTAIN
Q67 BREEAM and CFSH	ALL TESTED (3)	UNCERTAIN
Q68 / 69 Accessibility and public transport	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q70 Parking standards	NONE TESTABLE	NEUTRAL
Q71 Safeguarding rail lines & infrastructure	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q72 Safeguarding rail freight infrastructure	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE

TABLE 8.2 Summary of how Strategic and Thematic Options were tested through the SA and Assessment of the SA outcome for each Theme at the Publication Stage – presented in the order of the Issues and Options Questions – see Appendix X for fuller explanation

Topic	Ease of testing options at Issues and Options stage	Estimated overall SA effect through stages
Q73 Protect existing rail freight facilities	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q74 Development impacts on road network	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q75 Enhancing the core strategic network	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q76 Supporting ports and harbours	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL to Minor Positive
Q77 Airports	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q78 Planning for broadband infrastructure	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q79 / 80 Improving Mobile Telecoms	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q81 Community Facilities	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q82 Sites for community facilities	NONE TESTABLE	NEUTRAL
Q83 Approach to green infrastructure	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q84 AONB policy approach	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q85 Important landscape character clusters	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL
Q86 Landscape 'guiding principles'	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q87 The 'Ecosystem approach'	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q88 Biodiversity and Geo-diversity	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q89 Recreation, sport / open space	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q90 Sports facilities and playing pitches	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q91 Sport facility hierarchy	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL
Q92 Provision of pitches, open spaces etc.	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL
Q93 Protection of open spaces etc.	ALL TESTED (2)	NEUTRAL
Q94 Local green spaces	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive

TABLE 8.2 Summary of how Strategic and Thematic Options were tested through the SA and Assessment of the SA outcome for each Theme at the Publication Stage – presented in the order of the Issues and Options Questions – see Appendix X for fuller explanation

Topic	Ease of testing options at Issues and Options stage	Estimated overall SA effect through stages
Q95 Approach to flood risk	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q96 Principles for flood risk management	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q97 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q98 Implementing flood alleviation schemes	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q99 Resistance / resilience to flood risk	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q100 Minimising run-off and SUDS	ALL TESTED (2)	Minor Positive
Q101 Coastal Erosion / Change Management	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q102 Water Quality	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q103 Water supply / sewerage facilities etc.	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive
Q104 Conservation of heritage assets	ALL TESTED (2)	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q105 Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site	1 TESTED Alternatives not testable	Minor Positive

9 THE SPATIAL STRATEGY

9.1 Why have reasonable alternatives been identified for this issue?

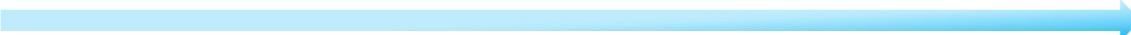
- 9.1.1 Planning for the most appropriate scale and distribution of housing and jobs is possibly the most important part of the Core Strategy. The need to review the Green Belt is also a key issue for Northumberland given that several key settlements are tightly constrained by Green Belt. These strategic issues were a key focus of the SA.

9.2 What are the reasonable alternatives?

- 9.2.1 **Figure 9.1** illustrates the plan making process and how alternative spatial strategies were established and tested in the SA. Further detail on the alternatives identified and tested at each stage is provided below.

Figure 9.1: Testing reasonable alternatives to the spatial strategy

Plan milestone	Issues and Options	Preferred Options	Full Draft Plan	Pre-Submission Draft	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
Alternatives Considered through the SA	<u>Growth:</u> Option A Option B Option C	No further alternatives identified. Preferred spatial strategy unchanged.	No further alternatives identified. Preferred spatial strategy unchanged.	Revisited strategic alternatives in light of new evidence.	Alternatives for the growth and distribution of employment land	Alternative sites for a Garden Village
	<u>Distribution:</u> Option A Option B Option C			Strategic Alternatives 1-9 combining growth and distribution.	Additional site options for housing, as well as revisiting the spatial strategy alternatives	



Issues and options

- 9.2.2 The Issues and Options document (2011) introduced three high-level Options for housing growth and distribution. Options for growth were as follows:

Growth Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach. The existing strategic approach for Northumberland reflected that which was set out within the Regional Spatial Strategy and various planning strategy documents, which apply to Northumberland. The approach sought to maintain balanced and stable population levels and allow for Sustainable development which plans to meet the needs of its residents. However, it was considered this approach would not provide the flexibility required by the NPPF.

Growth Option B: Planning for lower rates of development. Recognising economic challenges as well as associated reduced development activity, an alternative option was identified to plan for on-going economic uncertainty and reduced outputs across the plan period. It was considered that this approach would not meet the development needs of local communities and would not allow the County to respond positively to the Government's agenda to facilitate wider opportunities for additional growth or the Council's priorities for the future of Northumberland.

Growth Option C: Planning for higher targeted rates of development. This option built upon option A, seeking to achieve balanced and stable population levels and sustainable development to meet the needs of Northumberland's residents but incorporating an allowance for additional growth. This was identified as providing the opportunity to broaden the range and improve the quality of housing, create opportunities for regeneration and support new enterprise and job creation targeted at key locations across Northumberland. This approach was also identified as enabling the Council to rapidly respond to positive changes in economic outlook and development needs and activity.

9.2.3 The Council highlighted that it thought that **Growth Option C** was the most appropriate approach and asked through consultation whether stakeholders agreed. The SA broadly supported this approach as it was considered to have the most positive effect on socio-economic factors, whilst not having a significant negative effect on the environment.

9.2.4 Three further options were also considered exploring the distribution of development (*which essentially mirrored the three growth options*).

Distribution Option A: The existing development. Continue to focus the majority of new development in Northumberland's key settlements with smaller scale development allowed elsewhere in order to support local services. Development in the open countryside would be restricted. It was considered that this approach would contribute to the vitality and viability of the market towns and urban areas and assist the regeneration of town centres. It would help to create a critical mass of development to ensure the delivery of new services, infrastructure and facilities. It would also assist in the reduction of private car usage directing development to areas already served by public transport.

Distribution Option B: Dispersed development. This approach would allow for increased development opportunities across Northumberland but specifically in the settlements in rural areas with less development being delivered in the market towns and urban areas. Whilst this approach was identified as delivering some benefits within the rural areas it was considered that it did not align with the wider principles of sustainable development.

Distribution Option C: The existing development plus targeted growth. This Option incorporated the principles of Option A, but built in provision for additional targeted growth. This would focus the majority of new development in Northumberland's key settlements with smaller scale development allowed elsewhere in order to support local services. Additional development and growth would be focused on key locations in Blyth, Cramlington, Ashington and Morpeth, with consideration given to Green Belt review around the settlements of Hexham, Ponteland and Prudhoe. It was considered that this approach would also allow for appropriate sustainable development in rural areas. This approach was identified as having the same positive implications of option A, but would enable the Council to respond positively to the Government's agenda for additional growth through broadening the range and improving the quality of housing, regenerating town centres and supporting rural areas, new enterprise and employment.

9.2.5 The Council highlighted that it thought that Option C was the most appropriate approach and this was the approach that was proposed in the strategy at that time. The SA again broadly supported this approach as it would have the most positive effect on socio-economic factors without having significant negative effects upon the environment.

9.2.6 **Appendix 2** sets out the detailed findings of these broad strategic appraisals (which were made available for consultation in an Interim SA Report alongside the issues and options consultation document).

Preferred Options

- 9.2.7 The Preferred Options consultation in February 2013 proposed four 'Delivery Areas' with corresponding policies. This was a revision from the approach to Delivery Areas in the Issues and Options stage, which only proposed three delivery areas. The changes captured new evidence such as in respect of housing market areas.
- 9.2.8 The preferred strategy reflected the **distribution Option C** of targeted growth to the main towns with lower levels planned for service centres and rural areas. More precise housing and employment land requirements for each area were not established at this stage in part due to issues with the evidence for housing, employment and Green Belt. However, the Council resolved to undertake further work in these areas.
- 9.2.9 The Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation set out the approach to calculating the housing requirement for the County from 2011 to 2031 based on a range of sources, including the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), sub-national household projections; the Council's five year housing land supply and the RSS requirement (2011-16) plus the growth point. However, there was concern mainly from the development industry that the evidence used to inform the Issues and Options document was out of date and insufficient to support the suggested housing requirements. As a result, the Council commissioned further population and household modelling work, together with an update to its long-term employment forecasts to test a series of growth based scenarios.
- 9.2.10 The population scenarios tested in the SHMA informed the identification of the objectively assessed housing need at the County level. When considering these population scenarios across the County, it became apparent that the level of growth would have to differ at a local level to suit the different needs and constraints in different areas. Of particular concern was the projected decline in population in some areas which could have negative implications for the local economy and the sustainability of those communities such as maintaining local services and schools.
- 9.2.11 The Council subsequently undertook further detailed scenario testing and also settlement based analysis, captured in its Strategic Land Review. The analysis was both 'top down' determining population, household and employment needs across the County and 'bottom-up' determining at a local level what scale of development settlements could suitably and sustainably accommodate.
- 9.2.12 This evidence informed the production of the Preferred Options consultation which outlined what the Council considered to be an appropriate strategy at the Northumberland level to deliver the objectively assessed need but also for each settlement based upon the updated evidence base.
- 9.2.13 Taking settlement level issues into account when determining the distribution of housing, it remained clear that the overall spatial strategy would remain the same. i.e. that there would be a focus on the existing patterns of development plus targeted growth in key towns and service centres (growth Option C and distribution Option C).

Full Draft Plan

- 9.2.14 In-light of updated evidence including population projections published at the end of May 2014 and renewed long term economic forecasts, a reviewed Strategic Land Review, and Green Belt Review, the Full Draft Core Strategy was amended and published in December 2014. The Full Draft Core Strategy broadly maintained the approach to the level and distribution of development that had been consulted upon in February 2014.
- 9.2.15 As described above, the Council presented a preferred approach for delivering housing and employment growth in the Full Draft Core Strategy (December 2014). This was informed by a range of evidence and the SA of strategic options for growth and distribution outlined above.

Draft Pre-Submission Core Strategy

- 9.2.16 As the draft Core Strategy was further refined in preparation for pre-submission consultation, the objectively assessed housing need was updated, and it became apparent that there was a need to revisit the preferred approach to ensure it remained the most appropriate (in light of reasonable alternatives). Consequently, further SA was undertaken on a set of strategic alternatives which provided more substance to the more general options identified at Issues and Options Stage.

9.3 Strategic alternatives

- 9.3.1 The full objectively assessed need, is the level of development required to meet the projected increases of population and household growth, allowing for economic growth (growth in jobs), and adjusted to reflect market signals, impact of past delivery and affordability issues. It is this level of development that the Council is required to plan for delivery over the plan period.
- 9.3.2 The updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has identified that the objectively assessed housing need over the plan period (2011-2031) is 24,320 equating to 1,216 dwellings per annum. This target is slightly higher than what was proposed in the Full Draft Core Strategy in December 2014 (23,520).
- 9.3.3 The Council has re-examined the effects of the proposed spatial strategy (*and any reasonable alternatives*) taking into account the most up to date evidence on housing and employment needs.
- 9.3.4 Nine strategic alternatives were established by the Council that address housing growth and distribution together. These nine alternatives have been subject to SA, and the findings are presented in this report. The principles and rationale underpinning the alternatives are discussed below. The Major Modifications and Further Major Modifications did not generate a need to consider additional alternatives (as discussed below)

Housing quantum

- 9.3.5 The Council has undertaken detailed analysis to determine objectively assessed needs in Northumberland over the Core Strategy Plan period.
- 9.3.6 The determination of need is based on a range of factors including the requirements of both business and residential communities. As highlighted in the Pre-Submission Core Strategy and in previous iterations of the plan, the most significant challenge to delivering the Core Strategy vision is the profile of the Northumberland population. Without positive policy intervention, projections show that there is likely to be a significant accelerating ageing of the county's population. Alongside this the core working age population is projected to decrease. The impact of this is a significantly shrinking labour force with the potential to have a significant negative impact on the long term diversity and resilience of the County.
- 9.3.7 Key pieces of evidence underpinning analysis of need are: work by St Chad's College, Durham University³⁹ which produced employment projections; and work by Edge Analytics to provide a range of demographic forecasts.
- 9.3.8 Although multiple scenarios were examined and sensitivity tests applied there are three key scenarios that have been identified as reasonable alternatives for growth.

³⁹ Experts at regional economic modelling with experience of undertaking such work for other Local Authorities and the former Regional Development Agency – One North East.

Lower Growth scenario (jobs baseline)

- 9.3.9 Population growth is determined by the annual change in the number of jobs, as defined by St Chad's 'Baseline' employment forecast (headcount totals). This is a total increase of +6,253 jobs 2013/14–2030/31.
- 9.3.10 The unemployment rate reduced to lowest historical value by 2031 and the commuting ratio reduces in line with NOMIS line of best fit.

Higher Growth Scenario (jobs policy)

- 9.3.11 Population growth is determined by the annual change in the number of jobs, as defined by St Chad's 'Policy' employment forecast (headcount totals). This is a total increase of +11,826 jobs 2013/14–2030/31.
- 9.3.12 The unemployment rate reduced to lowest historical value by 2031 and the commuting ratio reduces in line with NOMIS line of best fit.
- 9.3.13 This scenario considered policy interventions including the Governments 'The Plan for Growth' (2011), the LEPS 'North East Strategic Economic Plan', and the potential benefits policies proposed in the Core Strategy itself.

Preferred Scenario (jobs higher)

- 9.3.14 Population growth is determined by the annual change in the number of jobs, as defined by St Chad's 'Upper' employment forecast (headcount totals). This is a total increase of +11,162 jobs 2013/14–2030/31.
- 9.3.15 The unemployment rate reduced to lowest historical value by 2031 and the commuting ratio reduces in line with NOMIS line of best fit.

Distribution

- 9.3.16 Three strategic Options have been identified for the distribution of development. These mirror Distribution Options A, B & C that were originally established in the Issues and Options Consultation (2011). However, at this latest stage of appraisal more substance has been provided the three strategic distribution options (A-C) to demonstrate the apportionment of housing to individual settlements and how this differs between the three options.
- 9.3.17 Therefore, whilst the principles of the three Distribution Options remain the same, there is greater clarity and transparency about what this means for the key settlements within each delivery area.

Option A – Existing distribution

- 9.3.18 Under Option A, housing is distributed between settlements within each local authority area, in accordance with the most up to date adopted Core Strategy or Local Plan for that area, or in some cases an emerging Core Strategy which did not progress to adoption. The distribution within each former local authority area is indicated below.
- 9.3.19 **Alnwick District Core Strategy** (October 2007) (Policy S1 & S4): Amble 33%, Alnwick 33%, Rothbury 10%, Other listed sustainable village centres 24%
- 9.3.20 **Berwick upon Tweed Core Strategy Preferred Options** – Emphasis and Momentum (Policy L2): Berwick 60%, Belford 8%, Seahouses 13%, Wooler 13%, Sustainable Villages 6%

- 9.3.21 **Castle Morpeth Core Strategy Submission Draft (June 2008)** (Policy 2 and table 5): Morpeth 35%, Ponteland 10%, Coastal Villages 40%, Rural West 15%
- 9.3.22 **Tynedale Core Strategy (October 2007)** (Policies H2 and H3): Commuter Pressure Area 77% (Hexham 27.5%, Prudhoe 27.5%, Corbridge, Allendale and Haydon Bridge 5% each, Rest of Commuter Pressure Area 30%; Rural Area 23% (Haltwhistle 55%, Bellingham 15%, Rest of Rural Area 30%). Within the Rest of Commuter Pressure Area and Rest of Rural Area housing is distributed equally to the settlements
- 9.3.23 **Blyth Valley Core Strategy (July 2007)** (Policy H1 and settlement hierarchy on p15): 2011-16 Blyth 58%, Cramlington 34%, Seaton Valley 8%; 2016-21 Blyth 81%, Cramlington 13%, Seaton Valley 6%, 2021-31 Blyth 67%, Cramlington 23%, Seaton Valley 10%.
- 9.3.24 The Blyth Valley Core Strategy does not provide a breakdown between settlements in the Seaton Valley but the following breakdown has been assumed: Seaton Delaval 65% (the largest settlement), Seaton Sluice/Old Hartley, New Hartley, Seghill and Holywell 9% each. Although identified as a settlement no allocation was made to East Cramlington because it was considered that the numbers are included within the Cramlington allocation.
- 9.3.25 **Wansbeck Local Plan (2007)** (Para 3.10): Wansbeck Local Plan recognises that the majority of development in the main towns of Ashington and Bedlington will be delivered on windfall sites and focusses housing allocations in Ashington and Newbiggin by the Sea. On this basis two thirds of development is focussed north of the river Wansbeck in Ashington and Bedlington with one third in other settlements.
- 9.3.26 In order to quantify the level of development to be distributed between settlements in accordance with the above percentage splits, the housing numbers from the Regional Spatial Strategy (the previously adopted housing numbers) were applied.

Option B – Dispersed Development

- 9.3.27 Under Option B, within each former local authority area, 50% of housing is allocated evenly between those settlements identified as Main Towns and Service Centres in the Northumberland Core Strategy. The other 50% is distributed evenly between 'other' settlements. This was considered to be a reasonable form of dispersed development. Dispersal equally between every settlement was not considered reasonable as this would fail to recognise any kind of hierarchy of centres. It would be unreasonable for example to plan for a settlement of the scale of Alnwick to take an equal amount of development to a settlement the scale of Shilbottle.
- 9.3.28 In the same way as Option A, these numbers are then transposed to the small areas and Delivery Areas in Northumberland Core Strategy demonstrated in **Table 9.1** below.

Table 9.1: Distribution of housing for Option B

		% of development across Delivery Area	% to main towns, service centres and Rest of DA
North	Alnwick	10.1%	Main towns 16.7%
	Berwick	6.6%	
	Rothbury	13.1%	Service centres 36.6%
	Belford and Seahouses	16.9%	
	Wooler	6.6%	'Rest of Delivery Area' 46.8%
	Rest of Delivery Area Total	46.8%	
Central	Hexham	6.9%	Main towns 57.8%
	Morpeth	23.7%	
	Prudhoe	6.9%	
	Ponteland	20.3%	
	Corbridge	5.2%	Service Centres 5.2%
	Rest of Delivery Area Total	37.0%	'Rest of Delivery Area' 37.0%
South East	Amble	3.1%	Main Towns 38.1%
	Ashington	4.5%	
	Bedlington	11.9%	
	Blyth	9.3%	
	Cramlington	9.3%	
	Guidepost	11.9%	Service centres 56.7%
	Newbiggin by the Sea	7.4%	
	Seaton Delaval	37.4%	
	Rest of Delivery Area Total	5.2%	'Rest of Delivery Area' 5.2%
West Delivery Area	Haltwhistle	12.9%	Main town 12.9%
	Haydon Bridge and Allendale	25.8%	Service Centres 50.8%
	Bellingham	25.0%	
	Rest of Delivery Area Total	36.3%	'Rest of delivery Area' 36.3%

Option C – Existing distribution plus targeted growth

- 9.3.29 Under Option C, housing is initially distributed as per Option A. However, an element of targeted growth is assumed. This allocates additional housing equating to 20% the RSS figure to the Main Towns and Service Centres. The distribution between the Main Towns and Service Centres reflects that in Option A.
- 9.3.30 On this basis, over the plan period, housing is distributed within each Delivery Area as indicated below in **Table 9.2**.

Table 9.2: *Distribution of housing for Option C*

		% of development	% to main towns, service centres and Rest of DA
North	Alnwick	23.2%	Main towns 58.2%
	Berwick	35.0%	
	Rothbury	8.5%	Service Centres 28.8%
	Belford and Seahouses	12.7%	
	Wooler	7.6%	'Rest of Delivery Area 12.9%
	Rest of Delivery Area Total	12.9%	
Central	Hexham	16.5%	Main towns 79.0%
	Morpeth	37.0%	
	Prudhoe	16.5%	
	Ponteland	9.1%	
	Corbridge	2.8%	Service Centres 2.8%
	Rest of Delivery Area Total	18.1%	Rest of Delivery Area 18.1%
South East	Amble	6.1%	Main towns 80.1%
	Ashington	19.1%	
	Bedlington	5.8%	
	Blyth	36.6%	
	Cramlington	12.5%	
	Guidepost	4.8%	Service Centres 13.1%
	Newbiggin by the Sea	4.1%	
	Seaton Delaval	4.2%	'Rest of Delivery Area' 6.8%
	Rest of Delivery Area Total	6.8%	
West Delivery Area	Haltwhistle	39.3%	Main town 39.3%
	Haydon Bridge and Allendale	23.8%	Service centres 39.3%
	Bellingham	15.5%	
	Rest of Delivery Area Total	21.4%	Rest of Delivery Area' 21.4%

Combining scale and distribution options

- 9.3.31 The three Options for growth have been combined with the three Options for distribution to establish nine **reasonable alternatives** for the spatial strategy as illustrated in **Table 9.3** below. Each of these alternatives has been appraised in the SA, and the findings are presented in **Appendix VI**.

Table 9.3: The nine strategic alternatives

		Distribution of growth		
		A – Existing distribution	B – Dispersed	C – Targeted growth
Scale of growth	Lower growth (Jobs baseline scenario)	Alternative 1	Alternative 4	Alternative 7
	High growth scenario (jobs policy)	Alternative 2	Alternative 5	Alternative 8
	Preferred scenario (jobs higher)	Alternative 3	Alternative 6	Alternative 9 (preferred)

Major Modifications

- 9.3.32 The Major Modifications saw a minor change to the strategy for the Central Delivery Area, with Hexham receiving an additional 180 dwellings, whilst the 'rest of the delivery area' had a commensurate reduction.
- 9.3.33 At previous stages of plan-making, the Council tested a range of housing growth and distribution options in the SA which involved different levels of growth for the main towns, service centres and 'rest of the delivery area' for each of the four delivery areas.
- 9.3.34 It was important to re-evaluate whether there were further options for distributing housing in the central delivery area in light of the proposed modifications.
- 9.3.35 The alternatives already tested in the SA involved different ratios of growth between the main towns, service centres and 'rest of the delivery area'. The implications for Hexham are set out in table 9.1 below, which also shows the change that the modifications made to this ratio.

Table 9.1: Implications of housing options for Hexham

	Option A	Option B	Option C	Pre-submission	Major Modifications
% to Hexham	27.5%	6.9%	16.5%	12%	14%
% to rest of delivery area	30%	37%	18.1%	17%	14%

- 9.3.36 Table 9.1 demonstrates that the changes made do not drastically alter the proportion of dwellings in Hexham (12% to 14%) or the rest of the delivery area (17% to 14%). A range of other distribution options have also been tested already as well. Therefore, it was not considered necessary to identify wholly new distribution options for the Central delivery area.
- 9.3.37 The rationale to increase housing at Hexham is driven by evidence that a higher scale of growth is required to deliver much needed infrastructure improvements. This approach is also in conformity with the spatial strategy. The Council do not consider that there are reasonable alternatives to this increase in housing at Hexham. To not increase the scale and distribution of housing in Hexham could jeopardise the ability to deliver its housing needs over and beyond the Plan period.
- 9.3.38 However, whether the commensurate reduction of 180 dwellings should be taken from the 'rest of the delivery area' is a reasonable question to ask. As such, the Council explored a range of alternatives, which were ultimately found to be unreasonable.

Reduce the amount of development at other 'main towns'

- 9.3.39 The strategy is to focus development on the main towns and that Morpeth, along with Ashington and Cramlington should be a focus for additional large scale development and growth. Alternatives to this strategy were tested in the SA at previous stages of plan/making and SA. Table 1 in the SLR 2016 provides information on the population for Morpeth and Prudhoe and shows that the housing numbers proposed are consistent with the spatial distribution strategy set out in Policy 3. It would therefore not be appropriate to reduce the proposed housing allocation for Morpeth or Prudhoe. The Council therefore consider this alternative to be unreasonable.

Reduce the amount of development at 'service centres'

- 9.3.40 Service centres have a key role and the spatial distribution strategy set out in Policy 3 is to support development that maintains and strengthens their role. Corbridge is the only Service Centre in the Central Delivery Area. Table 1 in the SLR 2016 shows that the proposed housing allocation is appropriate given the population projections for the settlement. In addition, the majority of the housing allocation already has planning permission. It would not be appropriate to reduce the allocation for Corbridge. The Council therefore consider this alternative to be unreasonable.

Reduce the amount of development at main towns and service centres

- 9.3.41 For the reasons given above it is not considered that this is an appropriate alternative.

Further Major Modifications

- 9.3.42 The emergence of the Garden Village does not change the overall strategy on the spatial distribution of development as it is an entirely separate initiative over and above OAN.

9.4 What is the preferred approach and how has it been selected?

- 9.4.1 The strategic approach proposed by the Pre Submission Core Strategy was largely unchanged from the Preferred Options and Full Draft stages. Although throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy evidence has been updated and the impact of newly released data tested. For example:
- Preferred Options – the baseline data for the scenarios used headship rates from the 2008 Household Projections and the 2010 Household Projections;
 - Full Draft Plan – the baseline data for the scenarios were updated to reflect:
 - 2012 Population projections
 - 2011 based interim household projections
 - Updated economic projections prepared by St Chads
 - Pre Submission draft – the baseline data was updated to use headship rates from the 2012 household projections.
- 9.4.2 The Submission Core Strategy continues to identify Main Towns, as key hubs for housing, employment, education, healthcare and retail, they remain as the main focus for development. The Core Strategy continues to propose that additional large-scale development and growth will be focused on key locations in Blyth, Cramlington and Morpeth. In addition, Service Centres continue to be supported as key hubs. The Core Strategy continues to propose that smaller settlements will also support an appropriate level of development. The SA (see **Appendix VI** for a full appraisal of the nine strategic alternatives outlined above) demonstrates that this approach is more favourable than a dispersed approach from a socio-economic perspective and that environmental effects could be mitigated through proactive plan policies.
- 9.4.3 Although the overall housing requirement has increased slightly in the Submission document from that which was proposed in the Full Draft Plan, the distribution across delivery areas remains largely unchanged. The SA demonstrates that the proposed level of growth performs favourably compared to lower (*which would not meet economic aspirations and housing targets*) and higher growth options (*which could have increased negative effects on landscape, heritage, environmental protection and congestion in particular*).
- 9.4.4 The Full Draft Plan Core Strategy included some changes including a reduction in the proposed housing numbers for the Central Delivery Area outwith the Main Towns and Service Centres particularly reflecting constraints to development discussed in further detail in the Strategic Land Review. The Submission Core Strategy makes it clear that housing numbers are provided as a realistic but indicative scale and distribution of housing, which has been informed by the Strategic Land Review.
- 9.4.5 At Major Modifications stage an increased amount of development was proposed for Hexham (with a commensurate reduction in dwellings [180] in the 'rest of the delivery area'). This was driven by evidence that a higher scale of growth is required to deliver much needed infrastructure improvements.
- 9.4.6 In relation to employment, as explained above, at each stage of plan preparation the approach has been reviewed to similarly reflect updated data and modelling, and also to reflect the North East Strategic Economic Plan and Northumberland Economic Strategy. The approach in the Full Draft Core Strategy changed slightly from the approach put forward through the Preferred Options in part to reflect moderated growth projections.
- 9.4.7 The level of employment planned for remained the same in the Full Draft Plan as that identified in the Preferred Options (stage 2) document. The approach in the Submission Plan has been informed by further evidence employment land and premises demand, which has further refined the previous approach, for example:
- The allocation of a strategic site at the Blyth Estuary remained;

- Confirmation of the need for further land in Hexham, Ponteland, Prudhoe and Alnwick – with new sites identified in Hexham, Ponteland and Prudhoe because of Green Belt constraints;
- Deallocation of employment land that is unlikely to attract future employment uses; undeliverable or has been developed for other uses.

9.4.8

With the strategic focus on Main Towns and Service Centres, it is not surprising that the proportion of development going to the 'Rest of Central Area' is less than may be expected by its population. Furthermore, many of the smaller settlements in the Central Delivery Area are within the Green Belt, including many areas that have been assessed as making a high contribution to the Green Belt. Focusing development on the main towns rather than increasing the allocation in the rest of delivery area also helps to facilitate sustainable transport choices.

10 ALTERNATIVE HOUSING TARGETS FOR THE MAIN TOWNS AND SERVICE CENTRES

10.1 Background

- 10.1.1 The Council undertook a Strategic Land Review which was an iterative process started in October 2013. The review is a local-level based analysis. It provides a key part of the evidence, which demonstrates the capacity of Northumberland to accommodate the level of housing and employment development in the Core Strategy. The Review helped to inform the appropriate level of housing and employment allocated to different areas. Its initial focus was on the main towns and service centres, as this is where the majority of development is being targeted. The strategic spatial strategy approach is broadly underpinned by targeting new development in existing centres which are the most sustainable locations. The Review was later extended to also look at the capacity of smaller settlements and areas outwith centres, although this analysis was more limited.
- 10.1.2 The outputs of the Strategic Land Review have been presented in three parts.
- 10.1.3 The first Strategic Land Review, October 2013, presented a high level review of each Main Town and Service Centre. It brought together evidence, including mapped data on physical constraints, information from the monitoring of planning applications, assessment of sites from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and a wide range of other sources. It identified, in summary, the rates of past housing delivery; key constraints to development; the capacity of settlements to accommodate various projected population, household and employment scenarios; and the broad suitability and deliverability of development opportunities. Factors such as flood risk, environmental designations, historic assets, areas of landscape sensitivity, and infrastructure were considered.
- 10.1.4 The second Strategic Land Review (December 2014) revisited and reviewed factors including:
- (i) the revised OAN housing requirements and distribution across the County;
 - (ii) the key issues raised in consultation responses, including in respect of specific areas or sites;
 - (iii) Any additional or alternative sites, either put forward through consultation on the Core Strategy or via other means; *and*
 - (iv) Green Belt review work.
- 10.1.5 The third version of the Strategic Land Review, October 2015, similarly revisited and reviewed the above factors and newly emerging evidence. It provided settlement specific analysis of:
- The scale of housing delivery in the past, and the impact of past policy on the delivery of new homes;
 - The demographic and housing profile of a settlement and its projected population change;
 - Housing demand;
 - The availability of suitable, developable sites of five or more dwellings;
 - Green Belt; and
 - Physical constraints to development (for example flood risk)

- 10.1.6 A fourth version of the SLR, which was issued with the first round of Major Modifications (June 2016), made necessary revisions where changes were being made to the plan, such as at Hexham. It also incorporated into the analysis work that had been done to show how alternative employment sites had been tested. This referred in particular to each of the towns in the general extent of the Green Belt where additional employment land was required.

10.2 What are the reasonable alternatives?

- 10.2.1 As outlined above, the Strategic Land Review was undertaken in part to consider the capacity of settlements to effectively and sustainably accommodate growth but also the effect of existing policies and rates of delivery and demand. The outputs of the review together with the more top-down approach to defining the objectively assessed need led to the identification of a distribution approach for each settlement.
- 10.2.2 The preferred approaches were initially set out in the consultation on Preferred Options for housing, employment and Green Belt⁴⁰. At this time, a preferred housing number was identified for each town and service centre, as well as indicative broad locations for housing and employment in some settlements where there could potentially be expansion of a settlement.
- 10.2.3 No reasonable alternatives to these preferred approaches at a settlement level were presented in the interim SA Report that was published alongside the preferred options consultation. The outline reasons for this are discussed below under the headings of 'growth' and 'distribution'.
- 10.2.4 As the plan continued to develop, and work on the Strategic Land Review has been progressed, consideration of reasonable alternatives has continued, taking into account the outcomes of consultation, updates to evidence and the SA process. Consultation on the Full Draft Core Strategy additionally offered an opportunity for stakeholders to identify any alternatives that they consider to be reasonable.

Housing growth

- 10.2.5 It was not deemed necessary or proportionate for the SA to appraise alternative levels of housing growth (on an individual basis for each settlement). The main reasons for this are as follows:
- The distribution of development is broadly reflective of the spatial strategy, which was determined at a strategic level and influenced by SA (i.e. appraisal of Options A, B & C for both scale and distribution).
 - Appraising different combinations of growth options across settlements in each Delivery Area would generate numerous options. This would not be a proportionate approach to SA.
 - Options would not be meaningful without knowing which sites would be developed under different levels of growth. As the Core Strategy is a high level document it does not go down to this level of detail. Site allocations are limited to strategic sites, employment sites and green belt releases. More detailed analysis of sites will be appraised, as appropriate, through more detailed planning policies including through the development of Neighbourhood Plans.
- 10.2.6 Appendix XI sets out some of the issues that were considered in relation to alternative distributions between settlements within each Delivery Area. The appendix looks at which alternative approaches existed, but does so within the following parameters:

⁴⁰ Consultation took place from 31ST October 2013 to the 2nd January 2014

- a. That the distribution between Delivery Areas was fixed (high level options on this having been tested)
- b. That the relative growth of main towns, service centres and smaller villages was also fixed (also having been tested through the high level testing of strategic approaches)

10.2.7 Within these constraints, options that existed within delivery areas were confined to factors such as: where Service Centre X had a large shortfall of deliverable SHLAA sites, as compared with the scenario that would deliver the level of housing appropriate for the service centre, would it be appropriate to reassign an element to Main Town Y (within the same Delivery Area) that had a surplus of deliverable SHLAA sites? Such alternative scenarios were likely to be ruled out because of the disruptive effect that the alternative would have on the successful implementation of the overall strategy – factors such as the balance between main towns and service centres that had already been tested at a strategic level.

10.2.8 In summary, it was considered that there were no reasonable alternatives that needed to be tested in the SA with regards to the growth of housing development for each Main Town and Service Centre.

10.2.9 The housing figures were updated for certain towns and service centres in response to updates in the identified housing requirement for the County. As described above, reviews of the strategic land review took account of these (and other) updates. While it may be argued that such changes amount to alternatives for particular settlements that should have been tested at the earliest stage of the Core Strategy, in overall terms, these changes have not led to a departure from the preferred spatial strategy. In a sense, the alternatives were tested across the different stages of the Plan.

Distribution

10.2.10 The Preferred Options (Stage 2) consultation document (October 2014) identified indicative broad locations for development for some settlements, principally relating to areas of least constraint.

10.2.11 The Interim SA Report produced alongside this consultation did not include an assessment of potential alternative locations for development. It was recognised at the time that these broad locations were intended to help engage stakeholders and demonstrate that housing targets were deliverable. They were not set in stone and the evidence base was still evolving. For example, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment identifying potential opportunities for housing development was undergoing review. Furthermore, as identified above, the Core Strategy is a high level strategic plan. The allocation of specific sites, other than strategic sites, was limited to those central to the delivery of the Core Strategy.

10.2.12 In fact, for most Main Towns and Service Centres, especially at the Preferred Options (2) stage, identified, deliverable SHLAA sites in locations acceptable in terms of the overall strategy, known constraints and other planning factors, tended to be roughly equivalent to, or to fall short of, that required to deliver the housing necessary to fulfil the strategic growth for the settlement concerned, giving little or no scope for settlements to have alternative ways of growing or expanding. The details of this for each Delivery Area and the settlements within them can be found at Appendix XI

Summary of Distribution options within each Delivery Area

10.2.13 Tables 10.1 to 10.4 summarise Appendix XI – i.e. the issues that were considered in terms of alternative distributions of housing growth within delivery areas and within Main Towns and Service Centres within those delivery areas.

Table 10.1 Issues considered in terms of alternative distributions of housing growth within the SOUTH-EAST DELIVERY AREA and within main towns and service centres within that Delivery Area

The South-East Delivery Area includes most of the former coal mining and major industrial areas of the County. Most is within commuting distance of Tyneside although only certain parts of the Delivery Area could be described as 'commuter zone'.

There are five main towns, although it is fair to say that three of these – Ashington, Cramlington and Blyth – are stronger, larger centres of population than the other two – Amble and Bedlington – which offer fewer services to a slightly lower population. These two smaller Main Towns, when assessed at the Preferred Options (2) stage, fell short of having the amount of SHLAA sites necessary to meet the needs and growth aspirations for main towns, as set out.

Arguably, these towns could have been looked at in terms of a reduced total at that stage but this was not done as it could have then had the effect of widening the gap between them and Ashington, Blyth and Cramlington. However by the following (Full Draft Plan) stage, the availability of SHLAA sites was found to be of the right order to meet the needs in all five main towns. While some towns offered additional sites to the degree that would present the possibility of a higher level of growth, such alternatives could create an imbalance in relation to the strategy of promoting growth appropriate to the roles of the different settlement tiers.

In the case of the largest three towns, Cramlington had lost much of its growth momentum due to blockages in the release of further large sites and there was a need to 'catch up'. For Blyth and Ashington, the regeneration agenda supported the level of growth envisaged and a balance had to be struck between, on the one hand, losing the momentum of regenerating growth and the possibility that rapid expansion could lead to housing market collapse. There was also the possibility for some towns to offer different combinations of sites or expansion areas but testing (possibly) numerous alternatives would require a level of detailed analysis that would be inappropriate for a Core Strategy SA.

At later stages of the Core Strategy, (Full Draft Plan and Pre-submission), the only suggestion (for the main towns) that an alternative may require examination was in relation to Blyth where a major constraint that emerged was the lack of capacity on the road system into and out of the town from the A189 Spine Road. This raises the question as to whether a lower figure should have been considered for the town of Blyth, with the displaced housing going elsewhere in SE Northumberland. While this could be possible, (for example through using the spare capacity in the "rest of" part of the Delivery Area), this would compromise the role of Blyth AND that of the "rest of" area.

Turning to the three service centres – Guidepost / Stakeford / Choppington, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Seaton Delaval / New Hartley / Seghill / Holywell , these had seen widely varying past development rates but the proposed approach was to select scenarios that would result in slow but steady growth, commensurate with their service centre role. One centre, Guidepost / Stakeford / Choppington, at the Preferred Options 2 stage, fell far short of the required order of SHLAA site numbers, although, as with Amble and Bedlington, the revised SHLAA at the following stages demonstrated that the numbers could be achieved after all. Again, none of the service centres had a significant surplus of available / achievable sites, meaning that no clear alternative realistic scenario for the service centres was apparent. It has already been explained why reallocating capacity to one of the larger towns that had some spare capacity would not have been appropriate either.

The "rest of" area did offer a large number of achievable SHLAA sites over and above that needed to provide a growth rate of a few per cent. This small area included places in need of regeneration but also some places with constraints. Development on the level that may be possible applying SHLAA assessments unfiltered would have the danger of going against sustainable planning principles.

Table 10.2 Issues considered in terms of alternative distributions of housing growth within the CENTRAL DELIVERY AREA and within main towns and service centres within that Delivery Area

The Central Delivery Area includes most of the commuting zone of Northumberland and also most of its Green Belt Area. This places it at the top of the list in terms of both demand for development and constraints on it.

At the PO2 stage it was clear that the numbers proposed were of the order to meet the strategy and should not be reduced or increased, nor could they be, given the constraints, SHLAA availability etc. Hexham and Prudhoe were extremely constrained and it was certainly necessary to expand into Green Belt areas if the strategy was to be implemented, justifying exceptional circumstances for Green Belt deletion.

Ponteland was a service centre but was less constrained and offered better (less constricted) opportunities for expansion so long as Green Belt deletion could be justified.

The strategy demanded these three settlements expand into the Green Belt otherwise only unsustainably low figures would be achievable. The one town where there was greater flexibility – Morpeth – could perhaps have been allowed to expand over and above the norm for market towns, although this would be something of a deviation from the strategy. If so, it would most likely need to take up some overspill from the 'Rest of Central' area, where there was some evidence that great reliance would be placed on sites which may require Green Belt release and/or would be unacceptably large village expansions and/or were brownfield sites located away from settlements. Therefore numerically speaking the alternative that perhaps should have been tested at Preferred Options (2) stage would have seen the 'Rest of Central' figure reduced by a few hundred and reassigned to Morpeth, something that did happen and was tested through the later stages.

Alternatives may also have been worth testing for some towns insofar as there may have been other directions in which expansion could have been proposed. However much of the detailed Green Belt analysis had yet to be done meaning that the alternatives to be tested were not obvious and this exercise may well have been insufficiently focussed to yield meaningful results.

With a degree of hindsight, the towns where an alternative direction of expansion could have been pursued were Ponteland and Prudhoe, with much less scope for this in Hexham, Morpeth and Corbridge (due to constraints and –in the case of Corbridge – the strong reasons behind limiting expansion to the considerable safeguarded land that was still available). In a sense these alternatives were tested at later stages as evidence emerged.

As far as the Garden Village proposal is concerned, as a totally separate initiative, over and above OAN and the needs and requirements of particular towns or areas, it could not be regarded as an alternative to the expansion of Ponteland to the SE or to any other town or village expansion elsewhere in the Central Delivery Area or elsewhere in the County.

Alternative locations for a possible Garden Village were looked at separately (see section 14)

Table 10.3 Issues considered in terms of alternative distributions of housing growth within the NORTH DELIVERY AREA and within main towns and service centres within that Delivery Area

The North Delivery Area mostly lies beyond the commuter zone. Past levels of housing delivery have presented a mixed picture, some sustaining an element of population growth but others less so. Most areas are experiencing ageing populations and the area which has seen the highest delivery rates, proportionally speaking – around Seahouses and Belford – has a particular issue of second homes, such that higher numbers of dwellings may not be creating the necessary permanent residence opportunities.

At the Preferred Options 2 stage, at which time an intra-delivery-area distribution of housing numbers was first proposed, the overall strategy applying to Main Towns, Service Centres and other settlements was carried through in terms of the numbers (% growth) being proposed. Achievable sites to meet the strategy were found to be sufficient in all areas apart from two of the four service centres – Rothbury and Wooler, where considerable infrastructure investment would be needed before a large proportion of the available land could be brought on stream. Nonetheless the proposed growth rates were carried forward as the preferred option, although there could be no guarantee that Wooler or Rothbury would be able to fulfil the aims set out for them, especially in an environment of low levels of public sector investment. In the meantime, the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed had scope to facilitate an alternative, accommodating displaced housing from Wooler and Rothbury. However, this was not considered to be acceptable alternative in terms of the strategy because it would have the effect of speeding the decline of Rothbury and Wooler as service centres, (especially Rothbury, where past development rates had been low), and it was also considered unsustainable because the market in Berwick itself may not be strong enough to support the additional housing sites coming forward.

A substantial reorganisation of the small areas making up the Delivery Area took place in the lead-up to the Full Draft Plan, along with a reviewed SHLAA. Somewhat lower figures for the service centres themselves, coupled with additional achievable SHLAA sites would allow the substantial meeting of the strategy in these settlements, (as well as the others), without the need to rely on inward investment. While the result may be a more piecemeal, less “planned” growth of a settlement such as Wooler, the resulting solution was considered realistic, sustaining some growth in all settlements commensurate with their scale, role and character. The same or a similar set of evidence and circumstances pertained at the Pre-submission stage and the strategy for main towns and service centres could be pursued without recourse to any necessary or realistic alternative options.

It was notable at these latter two stages that the ‘Rest of North’ part of the Delivery area had increased its total to well over a thousand. This was essentially due to the moving of some hinterland areas, such as places close to Rothbury and Berwick, into this “Rest of” area. There was a reliance on a good proportion of achievable SHLAA sites in these villages delivering housing, which would see some villages’ dwelling counts growing by significant percentages over the Plan period. There is an argument that this could be contrary to the overall strategy which seeks that only a small minority of overall development should be in settlements below the service centre level, whereas in the North Delivery Area, it could end up being at least 30% if villages within other small areas are included. It could therefore be argued that an alternative of a reduced ‘Rest of North’ figure, with the additional housing added to the Berwick-upon-Tweed total, should be tested. Again, this alternative was not tested as it was considered that it would be unsustainable: it would have the effect of speeding the decline of large villages. In any case, it was considered likely that many of these villages, unconstrained as they are by Green Belt and (in many cases) other show stopping designations, will deliver the additional dwellings in any case; in addition the market in Berwick itself may not be strong enough to support the additional housing sites coming forward.

Table 10.4 Issues considered in terms of alternative distributions of housing growth within the WEST DELIVERY AREA and within main towns and service centres within that Delivery Area

The West Delivery Area mostly lies beyond the commuter zone. Past levels of housing delivery have been insufficient to create growth. Indeed the population in most of the West Delivery Area has seen a decline. Past policy approaches have endeavoured to be permissive in terms of factors such as farm diversification, working from home etc. but have nevertheless been restrictive in terms of housing on green field sites. The SHLAA indicates at least an aspiration to see considerable increases in the build rate, something that would be necessary to secure overall sustainable population growth – even with this increase, the delivery area would only be contributing 6% towards the County's new housing over the Plan period.

The emerging plan is putting the mechanisms in place to allow for greenfield sites around settlements to be developed, so enabling this strategy. As in other parts of the county, the relative growth strategy for main towns, service centres and other places was applied, in order to avoid a static or declining situation. SHLAA analysis has indicated, throughout the stages of the Core Strategy, that these numbers are deliverable but with very little flexibility to rise above the quoted figures or for variation across the area or within small areas.

Haydon Bridge and Allendale are (unlike most of the delivery area) within commuting distance of Tyneside and have a past history of stronger housing demand; as such, there may be some scope for numbers to increase in this area. However these locations also have considerable environmental and topographical constraints. Any variation upwards (towards past delivery levels) would be relatively small and insignificant within the overall figures – and bearing in mind the small overall contribution of this Delivery Area towards County totals. So it is unlikely that the small possible variations in the proposed figures (at any stage) would warrant testing as strategic alternative(s).

10.3 Revisiting the alternatives for housing growth at individual settlements

- 10.3.1 Notwithstanding the conclusions above with regard to detailed appraisal of alternatives at a settlement level being unwarranted and somewhat futile in the context of the Core Strategy, the Council considered it was worth revisiting the spatial strategy to ensure that it remains the most appropriate approach in light of updates to the evidence, consultation responses received and earlier SA findings.
- 10.3.2 As part of this process, further SA work has been undertaken to test the spatial strategy and any reasonable alternatives. This work is described in Chapter nine of the SA report.
- 10.3.3 To some extent testing the strategic approach to growth and distribution could not be separated out from some consideration of the scale of growth that would occur at each settlement under three strategic distribution options. (The work also appraised three different levels of overall growth for the County).
- 10.3.4 The SA provides a further level of detail as to what effects there could be on individual settlements as a result of different scale and distribution options tested at a strategic level.
- 10.3.5 In this respect, the SA has assessed key alternatives for housing growth at each settlement at a strategic level. There were many scenarios and sensitivity tests run.
- 10.3.6 It should also be noted that the additional SA analysis does not appraise individual site options for the reasons cited in 10.2.5. However additional analysis has been undertaken in respect of Green Belt sites where the Core Strategy looks to remove sites from the existing Green Belt Boundary. These Green Belt releases have been treated in the same way as an SA would appraise site allocations. Similarly additional SA analysis has been undertaken in light of changes to employment land. While a substantial amount of employment land is being deallocated, the Core Strategy includes identification of new employment sites.

11 STRATEGIC SITE ALLOCATIONS FOR HOUSING

11.1 Background

- 11.1.1 Strategic sites are those sites central to the soundness and deliverability of the Core Strategy. They are inherently large scale sites that in themselves will deliver a significant number of homes that will make a strategic contribution to delivering required levels of growth.
- 11.1.2 As well as being key to delivery, identifying strategic sites offers a number of benefits, including certainty for developers and ensuring adequate strategic infrastructure is effectively planned for to facilitate timely development.
- 11.1.3 The Core Strategy is a high level document. Other than those sites determined as being 'strategic', the Plan generally does not allocate sites, leaving this to more detailed and local level plans. The exception is in regard to newly identified employment sites and green belt release sites which are treated in a similar way to an allocation (these are dealt with in Sections 12 and 13 of this report).

11.2 What are the reasonable alternatives?

- 11.2.1 A number of criteria were applied to identify strategic sites at the stage of Full Draft Plan. These are detailed in the Strategic Land Review. They included being within a Main Town; or being within a service centre and warranting Green Belt review. In all cases sites had to be contiguous to a settlement. The criteria imposed were selected to reflect the spatial approach to development and sustainability objectives within the SA Framework. A further criterion was applied to reflect the varying nature of the county. It was considered a strategic site should represent 30% or more of housing development in the delivery area.
- 11.2.2 The criteria applied in identifying sites were considered by the Council to effectively capture what would be considered as strategic in a Northumberland context.
- 11.2.3 After applying the criteria, only two sites at 'North Morpeth' and 'Cramlington South West Sector' were identified as being of strategic importance. Aside from these two sites, there were therefore no alternative strategic sites identified according to the criteria applied. However, consideration was given to alternative forms of development that could achieve a similar scale of development within the settlements of Cramlington and Morpeth and also Blyth⁴¹.
- 11.2.4 To some extent there could be infinite alternatives to the development of strategic sites. For example there are countless variations for spreading development across the County on very small scale sites where opportunities exist. However, such options were not considered to offer 'reasonable alternatives' as they would fail to achieve the strategic approach to existing development plus targeted growth. The strategic approach had already been tested through the SA process and determined to be the most sustainable approach. It was therefore considered that 'reasonable' alternative options were around development opportunities within those settlements identified for targeted growth – i.e. Cramlington, Morpeth and Blyth.
- 11.2.5 The rationale for identifying, appraising and selecting the most appropriate approach (taking into account alternatives) are set out below for each of the preferred sites.

Cramlington

- 11.2.6 Cramlington is in the south east of the County. It is in close proximity to the Tyneside conurbation and has key connections such as the highway network and rail links.

⁴¹ Whilst Blyth did not have 'strategic scale' development opportunity, it was considered because the town is identified in the Core Strategy as a settlement for targeted growth, alongside Morpeth and Cramlington.

- 11.2.7 The town has a sub-regional role as a centre for industry and houses the largest concentration of manufacturing businesses in Northumberland, including a cluster of pharmaceuticals companies. It is a prime location for inward investment because of the quality of its environment and road network. The redevelopment of the town centre, including a cinema, and the construction of a new specialist emergency care hospital, to the east of Cramlington has enhanced the role of the town in recent years. Further growth will strengthen this role and respond to market demand in this area.
- 11.2.8 The 'South West' sector is an area of Cramlington that had formed part of the initial masterplan for the new town, but has remained undeveloped. Its development therefore would represent the completion or 'rounding off' of the town as had been originally planned.
- 11.2.9 The South West Sector site is already subject to various planning applications.
- 11.2.10 The Council considered that there are no other opportunities of the scale of the South West Sector in Cramlington. It was considered however, that a more distributed approach within/adjacent to the settlement could still fulfil the objective of targeting growth in Cramlington as a key hub and as a settlement in close proximity to Tyneside (i.e. Alternative 2 described in **Table 11.1** below).

Table 11.1 – Alternatives to delivering housing growth in Cramlington

Alternatives	Rationale	Assumptions
1. Focus on a strategic scale expansion to the south west sector	<p>Large extension rounding off existing new town</p> <p>South west has better existing access to the town centre and its services and amenities compared to areas beyond the settlement boundaries</p> <p>Reflects existing commitments and planning consents for development of the area.</p>	A proportion of housing target is already met through permitted development and deliverable brownfield sites.
2. Distributed approach across smaller sites and to east of A189	Shares the positive and negative effects of development in Cramlington as a major sub-regional hub	A proportion of housing target is already met through permitted development.

- 11.2.11 Under Alternative 2, a number of smaller sites were identified in the SHLAA. Notably, an area to the east of Cramlington was appraised as part of the SHLAA. However, the area was discounted in the SHLAA on a number of grounds, including the fact that the land was completely disconnected from Cramlington by the A189 spine road; it was an area of high landscape sensitivity and in part designated Green Belt land. The site also failed to offer the potential to complete the settlement as had been proposed when Cramlington was originally conceived as a new town.
- 11.2.12 For these reasons, the Council considered that Alternative 2 outlined above was not reasonable and therefore it would not be beneficial to undertake SA to compare this to the preferred approach.

Morpeth

- 11.2.13 An area to the north of Morpeth has for a long time been identified as an area of growth of the town. Its future development has been the foundation for delivering the Morpeth Northern Bypass which now has committed funding and is nearing completion. The bypass will provide improved access from South East Northumberland to the A1 whilst also providing access to development sites in the north of Morpeth and relieving congestion within the town centre.
- 11.2.14 The St Georges Hospital site is the main site which has been subject to proposals for housing development with further housing and employment in the Northgate Hospital and Fairmoor area. Development in the North of Morpeth and particularly the wider St Georges Hospital Site. As a master planned urban extension the area has been identified as providing opportunities for the provision of high quality functional and green Infrastructure with associated services and facilities to complement the strategic housing and employment growth.
- 11.2.15 Running in parallel to the development of the Core Strategy, is the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan (MNP), which has now been made. The MNP process involved gathering further detailed evidence about the issues and constraints facing Morpeth.
- 11.2.16 As part of this process an SEA was undertaken. The SEA for MNP drew upon the methodologies and evidence set out in the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report. It was decided that the SEA would also incorporate social and economic factors, which essentially means that an SA has been carried out for the MNP.
- 11.2.17 As part of the SA/SEA process, the MNP had regard to the Preferred Options (stage 2) for the Core Strategy, and sought to allocate a quantum of housing and employment in keeping with the spatial strategy. However, to help inform the development of an appropriate strategy for housing distribution in Morpeth, a range of broad locations or 'scenarios' for housing distribution were also assessed.
- 11.2.18 Rather than undertake a separate assessment of similar alternatives in the Core Strategy SA, it is appropriate to refer to the findings of the alternatives assessment process undertaken for the MNP.
- 11.2.19 The SA/SEA for the MNP identified four reasonable alternatives for delivering housing growth in Morpeth. These scenarios do not all meet the criteria for delivering 'a strategic site', and therefore do not necessarily provide a direct comparison with the preferred approach (i.e. to allocate a strategic site at North Morpeth).
- 11.2.20 However, the scenarios do represent alternatives to how housing could be delivered in Morpeth (i.e. they seek to identify whether the allocation of a strategic site to the North of Morpeth is the most sustainable approach in light of alternatives).
- 11.2.21 **Table 11.2** outlines the four alternatives / scenarios identified in the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan SEA, the rationale for selecting these alternatives and the assumptions involved.

Table 11.2 – Alternative housing strategies for Morpeth

Alternatives	Rationale	Assumptions
1) Focus on a sustainable urban extension in the north	<p>Large extension provides greater opportunities to provide new services and facilities.</p> <p>North west has better existing access to services compared to the south.</p> <p>Mirrors the preferred approach in the Core Strategy Preferred Options for Housing, Employment and Green Belt consultation document.</p>	<p>A proportion of housing target is already met through permitted development and deliverable brownfield sites.</p> <p>Development would take place at St. George's.</p>
2) Distributed approach	Shares the positive and negative effects of development across Morpeth. Greater choice of land to deliver housing targets.	A proportion of housing target is already met through permitted development and deliverable brownfield sites.
3) Focus on the north west	Focuses development to the north of Morpeth without relying upon a large urban extension and associated infrastructure.	A proportion of housing target is already met through permitted development and deliverable brownfield sites.
4) Focus on the south	Contains a number of deliverable and marketable housing sites.	<p>Two large greenfield sites currently pending appeal.</p> <p>County Hall may potentially become available as a large brownfield site for housing.</p>

- 11.2.22 Morpeth Town Council (i.e. the Neighbourhood Plan Group) selected a preferred approach from these four housing scenarios, incorporating the results of the SEA appraisal of the reasonable alternatives. This preferred approach is broadly in-line with Alternative 1, and is set-out in the made Neighbourhood Plan document (May 2016).
- 11.2.23 The SEA illustrates that development focused to the north of Morpeth would be well-related to the town, providing good access to services and facilities. In particular, Alternative 1 would deliver development at a scale that would allow the critical mass to deliver improvements to local services and facilities. There is also good existing access to key services such as the NHS health centre and King Edward VI, the Upper School. It is considered that development focused here could therefore have a significant positive effect on the baseline position. The alternative scenarios would not present the same opportunities.
- 11.2.24 In addition, development in the north would also be more widely accessible via the Morpeth Northern Bypass. A Development Consent Order was granted in January 2015; this decision granted the County Council all the necessary powers to construct the proposed bypass. Work on the bypass is nearing completion at the time of writing.
- 11.2.25 Alternative 1 presents fewer constraints in terms of flood risk compared to the three Alternative scenarios.
- 11.2.26 Whilst the effects on landscape and heritage are predicted as uncertain for Alternative 1, it is likely to perform better than alternatives 3 and 4 which are predicted to have a negative effect on the character of the settlement.
- 11.2.27 On balance, the SEA demonstrates that Alternative 1 would present the most sustainable approach to housing distribution in Morpeth.

Blyth

- 11.2.28 Blyth is identified alongside Cramlington and Morpeth as a settlement for targeted growth in line with its role as a Main Town and its contribution to the overall competitiveness of the County. The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites including land within the town on previously developed land, some of which has consent for significant housing schemes such as the former Wellesley Children's Home, Blyth Links and the former Bates Colliery. A large site to the west of the town at Chase Farm also benefits from planning permission, and while a number of units have been constructed here already, the site has significant capacity to accommodate around an additional 700 dwellings. Another major growth area is located at South Newsham where there have been recent applications and consents.
- 11.2.29 A number of sites around the Blyth Estuary, previously identified as potential housing sites, have been identified for large scale employment uses to support the role of Blyth as a hub for the low carbon, renewables and off-shore sectors. Notwithstanding this significantly reduced potential for housing, further housing development could potentially be directed to the south of Bebside, which was put forward in the Preferred Options as a potential employment location. Further development could also be directed to the south west of the town, although the Green Belt provides a clear boundary to the south.
- 11.2.30 Opportunities for growth in Blyth offered a potential approach to dispersing additional growth to multiple sites (identified in the table below). However, this approach was discounted as a 'reasonable' alternative. Alongside physical constraints to development it was considered market indicators clearly demonstrated the local housing market would not be able to absorb the amount of additional housing that would be needed to offset the levels of development of the strategic sites. There were already a number of stalled sites in the town that had not come forward despite efforts to promote delivery.

Table 11.3 – Alternative housing strategies for Blyth

Alternatives	Rationale	Assumptions
Disperse growth from strategic sites to smaller scale sites including collection of sites across Blyth	Contributes to targeting growth in the key towns identified in the Core Strategy Number of development opportunities	A number of permitted schemes come forward.

11.3 Further alternatives

- 11.3.1 The Council has not identified any further reasonable alternatives to the development of the strategic site allocations.

12 GREEN BELT RELEASE AND REDEFINING THE BOUNDARY

12.1 Background

- 12.1.1 The preferred option for the spatial distribution (as set out in the pre Submission Draft Local Plan) is to focus development in Main Towns, *(of which Prudhoe, Ponteland and Hexham are inset in the Green Belt and Morpeth is located in the general extent of the Green Belt extension)*, and then Service Centres, *(Corbridge and Seaton Delaval being the two that are surrounded by the Green Belt)*.
- 12.1.2 This option received considerable support at the Issues and Options stage, with the one provision being that rural residents wanted additional flexibility about how the residual amount of housing could be distributed around smaller villages and hamlets.
- 12.1.3 The need for a higher rate of development than experienced in recent years is essential to achieving the Core Strategy. This has also been tested regionally through the Duty-to-cooperate.
- 12.1.4 The Main Towns of Prudhoe, Hexham and Ponteland have all reached the point where their (mostly) longstanding Green Belt inset boundaries have been reached and there is very little land remaining to be developed within these places. Not amending the Green Belt boundaries would mean extremely low building rates in these places and insufficient capacity to accommodate the level of growth required to deliver objectively assessed housing and economic development needs.
- 12.1.5 Morpeth is located in the general extent of the Green Belt extension which was identified in Policy S5 of the revised Northumberland Structure Plan (2005), with detailed boundaries to be defined in the emerging Core Strategy. In order to define the Morpeth inner boundary, sufficient capacity to meet strategic land requirements must be identified in accordance with the preferred spatial distribution.

12.2 Are there alternatives to the release of Green Belt?

- 12.2.1 As set out in the Core Strategy Full Draft Plan (December 2014) and followed through to the Pre-Submission Plan, the preferred approach is to release Green Belt land around Prudhoe, Hexham and Ponteland to accommodate objectively assessed local housing and employment needs in these areas.
- 12.2.2 Green Belt land should only be released in exceptional circumstances, and so it is important that reasonable alternatives have been explored as to how housing and employment land can be delivered. This section sets out a discussion of the alternatives that have been developed and considered by the Council prior to finalising the draft Core Strategy for Pre-Submission Consultation.

Building on alternative land within Prudhoe, Ponteland and Hexham

- 12.2.3 Prudhoe, Hexham and Ponteland have all reached the point where their (mostly) longstanding Green Belt inset boundaries have been reached and there is very little land remaining to be developed within these places. There are no alternative sites to accommodate the required level of development need. Therefore, meeting housing needs by developing non-Green Belt land within Prudhoe, Ponteland and Hexham is not a reasonable alternative.

Avoiding or Reducing Green Belt release in Hexham, Prudhoe and Ponteland by distributing development to other settlements in the Central Delivery Area

- 12.2.4 The Council has considered whether development could be distributed across the Central Delivery Area to avoid or reduce the Green Belt release. The fact that a boundary for Morpeth, (the only other Main town in this Delivery area) is only now being defined has allowed for significant levels of growth to be directed here as part of the preferred strategy.
- 12.2.5 Recognising the constrained nature of the Green Belt settlements of Hexham, Prudhoe and Ponteland, further development has been directed to Morpeth in the draft Core Strategy to reflect the development opportunities, particularly to the north of the town and to maintain and strengthen Morpeth's strategic importance. However, there are limits to the rate of development that can be promoted here without undermining its character and/or putting pressure on infrastructure.
- 12.2.6 Beyond the Green Belt and the immediate area of Morpeth, the central delivery area is largely countryside with smaller villages with poor services (as compared with main towns and service centres). The scope to absorb development here is therefore limited, and is also not in keeping with the spatial strategy. Furthermore, the Green Belt area extends 20 miles or more east west and several miles north-south. Numerous villages within the Green Belt area are inset and/or washed over. Many of these inset boundaries are also longstanding and allow little scope for continued development. Therefore a more dispersed approach within the area of the Green Belt would not only be less sustainable, but would also entail revisions of Green Belt inset boundaries around villages.

12.3 Are there alternatives as to which areas of Green Belt should be released?

- 12.3.1 As well as exploring whether there are alternatives to the release of Green Belt land, it is also important to ensure that any Green Belt land that is released is in the most appropriate and sustainable locations.
- 12.3.2 The selection of the preferred approach to Green Belt release has been informed in part by the Green Belt Review and also by the Strategic Land Review. The latter was informed by a wide range of evidence based documents including the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).
- 12.3.3 The reasonable alternative site options for Green Belt release were identified as follows:
- 12.3.4 The Green Belt review initially involved an assessment of 'broad areas' around the main towns (For example, north, east, south, west). Smaller scale land parcel areas around Main Town and Service Centres in the Green Belt were then carefully appraised. The appraisal assessed each parcel's contribution to the Green Belt purposes. This enabled identification of areas with the net lowest contribution to the Green Belt and helped to rule-out certain locations on the grounds of their importance to the function of the Green Belt.
- 12.3.5 Only parcels of Green Belt identified as having a low or medium contribution to the Green Belt were appraised further. Parcels of Green Belt land which made a high contribution were immediately discounted. The parcels that remained after this 'sieving' process are potentially reasonable to propose for Green Belt release.
- 12.3.6 The Council then utilised the Strategic Land Review⁴² to help narrow down and appraise specific sites which would be most suitable for release. It should be noted that in most instances Green Belt 'parcels', defined according to features and characteristics, did not represent sites for appraisal. Instead the Strategic Land Review, underpinned by the SHLAA was used to identify sites within those parcels of low or medium value.

⁴² The SLR considers a range of constraints and opportunities that would typically be assessed as part of a SA (including for example accessibility, flood risk, heritage, landscape sensitivity, and green infrastructure).

12.3.7 In addition to the site information provided in the Strategic Land Review which included an analysis of constraints, suitability and achievability the sites were subjected to a wider appraisal of their sustainability performance. This would help to ensure that the selection of preferred sites is transparent and based upon a wider range of sustainability criteria such as access to services.

12.3.8 Further to analysis of redistributing development elsewhere within the Delivery area and following a sieving process based on the Green Belt Review work and SLR, the Council identified reasonable alternative site options for appraisal at each settlement where Green Belt release is proposed as follows:

- Hexham [17 sites]
- Ponteland [19 sites]
- Prudhoe [5 sites]

Morpeth inner boundary alternatives

12.3.9 The same methodology was used to define the inner Green Belt boundary around Morpeth as that which informed the Green Belt release in other settlements. The Council has identified 12 reasonable alternative site options for appraisal at Morpeth.

12.4 Site appraisal methodology

12.4.1 A range of site appraisal criteria have been established to assess the sustainability performance of reasonable site options for Green Belt release (for allocation or safeguarding). The information gathered and criteria used have made use of the factors covered by the Strategic Land Review as much as possible to avoid duplication. Further criteria have been used where value could be added to the SLR. **Table 12.1** below outlines the site appraisal criteria and determining factors that have been used to categorise each site option according to its performance as **red**, **amber** or **green** against each sustainability criteria. The site appraisal criteria have been presented according to their relationship with the SA Framework to show how the key issues identified in the scope of the SA have been addressed.

12.4.2 Note that this is not a test of whether the sites should be removed from the Green Belt, rather it appraised those sites that the Council view could be released without harming the purposes of the Green Belt.

12.4.3 Appraisals of employment site options, including sites located in the Green Belt, are set out in Chapter 13. The appraisal process for the Garden Village is explained in Chapter 14.

Table 12.1: Site appraisal framework

SA Topic	Criteria	Decision thresholds	Assumptions and limitations
Health Wellbeing and cohesion	<i>Effects on amenity</i>	major issues minor issues no issues	Effects on amenity are determined by Council officers through an assessment of nearby uses.
	<i>Potential for green infrastructure loss</i>	complete loss partial loss no loss	Green infrastructure includes parks and open spaces, allotments
	<i>Access to green infrastructure</i>	800m+ 400-800m <400m	Access to natural greenspace at the neighbourhood level ought to be below 400m to meet Natural England' ANGST. However, this assessment does not take account of the size or quality of greenspace.
	<i>Distance to a GP / health centre</i>	Over 3200m 1200m-3200m <1200m	
Environmental protection	<i>Agricultural land</i>	Grade 1/2 Grade 3a/3b other	Agricultural land classification data may be out of date and does not take account of agricultural land that may already have been lost since the surveys. Further analysis of sites may be necessary to confirm the presence of agricultural land.
Built and Natural Heritage	<i>Landscape sensitivity</i>	High medium low	Landscape characterisation drawn from the Key Land Use Impact Study
	<i>Potential effects on Built heritage</i>	Major constraints Minor constraints No constraints	Effects on built heritage determined by Council officers through an assessment of proximity to heritage assets and potential effects on the setting of these assets.
Climate Change	<i>Fluvial flood risk</i>	Flood zone 3b Flood zone 2 or 3a Flood zone 1	Criteria do not take account of the proportion of the site falling into Flood Zones and whether this could be realistically and successfully mitigated.
	<i>Surface water flood risk</i>	High medium low	

SA Topic	Criteria	Decision thresholds	Assumptions and limitations
Economy, Employment and Housing	<i>Marketability / deliverability</i>	<div>Low</div> <div>medium</div> <div>High</div>	Marketability and deliverability determined based on findings of SHLAA site assessments
	<i>Access to employment sites (housing sites only)</i>	<div>Over 3200m</div> <div>1200m-3200m</div> <div><1200m</div>	Assumes that local access to employment on foot is preferable to support the local economy and reduce commuting.
	<i>Infrastructure constraints</i>	<div>Major</div> <div>minor</div> <div>none</div>	Assumes that infrastructure and highways constraints would make it more difficult to develop a site, and thus positive effects in terms of housing and employment development would be less likely to occur in the plan period.
	<i>Highways constraints</i>	<div>major issues</div> <div>minor issues</div> <div>no issues</div>	
Accessibility	<i>Distance to bus stop</i>	<div>Over 1600m</div> <div>800m-1600m</div> <div><800m</div>	The Manual for Streets (2007) suggests that 800m is an acceptable distance to expect people to travel to access bus services in rural areas.
	<i>Distance to train station</i>	<div>Over 1600m</div> <div>800m-1600m</div> <div><800m</div>	Walking distance of over 1 mile is considered likely to deter users of public transport and / or prove difficult for certain community groups.
	<i>Proximity to a food shop or post office (Housing sites only)</i>	<div>Over 1600m</div> <div>800m-1600m</div> <div><800m</div>	Proximity to a primary school does not necessarily mean that pupils will be able to attend this school if there are capacity issues and the school is unable to expand due to site constraints.
	<i>Proximity to a primary school (housing sites only)</i>	<div>Over 1600m</div> <div>800m-1600m</div> <div><800m</div>	
	<i>Proximity to a secondary school (housing sites only)</i>	<div>Over 3200m</div> <div>1200m-3200m</div> <div><1200m</div>	
Natural resources and waste	<i>Land use</i>	<div>Mostly greenfield (>60%)</div> <div>Partial brownfield</div> <div>Mostly brownfield (>60%)</div>	Redevelopment of brownfield land is assumed to be a more efficient use of land than the need to release greenfield land.

SA Topic	Criteria	Decision thresholds	Assumptions and limitations
Biodiversity and geodiversity	SSSI	Adjacent to (<50m) or within SSSI	It is assumed that development that does not trigger the requirement for consultation with Natural England is unlikely to have significant effects.
		Within SSSI impact zone and requires assessment	
		Not within SSSI impact zone / doesn't require assessment	
	Local Wildlife	Major constraints	This is a qualitative assessment of effects on habitat and species of local value including LWS, LNS, priority species and habitats and features of wildlife interest.
		Minor constraints	
		No constraints	
	European Sites	Within or adjacent (<50m)	
		<400m from SPA/SAC	
		>400m from SPA/SAC	

12.4.3 As the Plan has developed, it has become clearer that the release of areas of Green Belt land is necessary to meet objectively assessed housing needs. It has therefore been necessary to establish a site appraisal framework later in the SA process, which demonstrates the need to constantly refresh the scope of the SA as the Plan progresses.

12.4.4 The Pre-Submission Consultation represented an opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the site appraisal criteria and methods adopted to appraise alternative options for Green Belt release in support of housing development.

12.5 What is the preferred approach and why?

12.5.1 Each site Option has been appraised using the methodology set out above. The findings of this assessment can be found in **Appendix VII**.

12.5.2 Table 12.2 below provides 'outline reasons' as to why sites have been proposed for allocation, safeguarding or rejection (excludes employment sites, see chapter 13). This includes a consideration of a range of factors, including the SA findings, which were taken into account as a decision-aiding tool.

12.5.3 The emergence of a possible Garden Village was not seen as an alternative to Green Belt release. This was because the Garden Village is viewed as a separate initiative, over and above the Objectively Assessed Housing Need. The appraisal process for the Garden Village is explained in Chapter 14.

Table 12.2: Site options for Green Belt Release and Morpeth inner Green Belt boundary⁴³

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
Ponteland					
8004 6589 3427	Site appraised through development management process	Site appraised through development management process	Mixed use with permission		
8003	Risk of sprawl is reduced by containment between the Police HQ site and the C358 and A696 roads. This area partially comprises countryside; however there are opportunities for strong, durable boundaries to prevent encroachment. Principle of development has already been established. Site 8003 is bounded to the west, and partly to the north by existing development. While development in this area is established, development of this site would be a step towards the merger of the 'island' in the Green Belt with Ponteland. New boundaries could however be created using existing field boundaries and a tree line.	Development of site 8003 would reduce the separation between Ponteland and the existing development at HQ Site, and may have a detrimental impact upon the openness of the landscape. The cumulative impact of traffic generated by development of this site, together with consented schemes to the northwest may create traffic congestion in the town centre. The southern edge of the site is at high risk of surface water flooding. The site is located approximately 1.2km from the town centre and 2km from the high school.	Not allocated Separate from settlement and higher risk of merging.		
6777	Site 6777 is bounded by Ladywell Way to the east The Beeches to the south. Development would represent a western extension of Ponteland, with the A696 creating a defensible western boundary. A field boundary marks the northern perimeter of the site.	Site 6777 is in a prominent location. Access could be achieved from Ladywell Way. Parts of the site are at risk of surface water flooding. The site is approximately 650m from the town centre and 1.2km from the high school.	Not allocated Prominent location. Contained master planned area to east preferred.		

⁴³ Table excludes employment site options

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
3730	<p>The Green Belt assessment indicates there is a slight risk of ribbon development along the C356, but that the risk of merger Ponteland and Dinnington is low due to Prestwick Carr Local Wildlife and Geological Site. While the LPA comprises countryside and open recreational land, there are opportunities for strong, durable boundaries to prevent encroachment on countryside.</p> <p>Site 3730 is bounded by the Eland Lane development to the south, while Eland Lane itself to the west, and a track to east form defensible boundaries to the site. A watercourse forms the northern boundary.</p>	Half the site is located in Flood Zone 3b, the functional flood plain and is therefore at high risk of flooding; however flood defences are in place. Line of bypass crosses the site. The site is approximately 800m from the town centre and 1.2km from the high school.	Not allocated Highway and flood constraints		
3430	<p>The Green Belt assessment identifies that because Cheviot View already extends along a considerable part of this LPA, development in this LPA would have a medium risk of merger between Ponteland and Newcastle. Apart from the residential area of Ridgely Drive this LPA comprises countryside however there are opportunities for strong, durable boundaries to prevent encroachment on the countryside.</p> <p>Sites 3010, 3430 are bounded by the Ridgely Drive development to the south, Cheviot View to the west and Ponteland to the NW. However there are no defined boundaries to the east. With the addition of sites 6745, 3654 and 6838, a new boundary could be established along Fairney Burn and the southern boundary of the golf course. Site 3002 extends along Cheviot View up to the roundabout. While defensible boundaries could be created by this cluster of sites, development here would represent a significant extension into the open countryside.</p>		Not allocated Difficult to define new boundary without significant extension in to open countryside. More contained area to the south of these sites preferred.		
3010					
6745					
6838					
3654					
3002					

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
3176	<p>The Green Belt assessment identifies that there is a slight risk of ribbon development along the A696, B6545 and B6323, but that development in this LPA would not increase risk of merger between Ponteland and Newcastle as the built up area already extends to the edge of this LPA. This LPA comprises the residential area of Cheviot View, the School / Leisure some countryside and open recreational land. There are opportunities also for strong, durable boundaries to prevent encroachment on the countryside.</p> <p>The above sites comprise the 'triangle' to the southeast of Ponteland. The triangle is defined by strong defensible boundaries; Cheviot View to the east, Callerton Lane to the west, and Rotary Way to the south. With the area already being enclosed to the east and west, and Rotary Way presenting an opportunity for a new boundary to the south, encroachment into the countryside would be prevented. The triangle is traversed by a discussed railway line</p>	<p>While there are constraints associated with individual sites in this location, master planning of the area of a whole will allow mitigation.</p> <p>The northern part of the site is in Flood Zone 3, with part of the area Flood Zone 3b, functional floodplain. Pockets of the site are at high to low risk of surface water flooding. The site includes playing fields and other open space associated with the schools and leisure centre. The current school and leisure uses are a constraint to development but it is proposed that these be redeveloped within the area. Protected species recorded on parts of the site. The centre of the triangle is located approximately 800m from the town centre and 400m from the existing high school.</p>	<p>Proposed education, leisure and community facilities (3176, 3659)</p> <p>Proposed mixed use development (6911, 3086, 6912)</p> <p>Proposed for safeguarded land (3645, 6913)</p> <p>Contained area with strong boundaries. Constraints addressed through effective masterplanning. Supports delivery of required infrastructure and facilities.</p>	<p>Proposed housing, education, leisure and community facilities (3176, 3659, 6911, 3086, 6912, 3645, 3032)</p> <p>Green Belt release area remains unaltered but detail removed to reflect need for further master planning. 3032 included to reflect master planning work.</p> <p>6912b and 6913 proposed for safeguarded land</p> <p>Safeguarded land amended to reflect master planning work. 6912b created to reflect changes.</p>	
3659					
6911					
3086					
6912 6912b					
6913					
3645					
3189	<p>The Green Belt assessment identifies that sprawl would be contained by the B6323 to the east which would provide a strong durable boundary to prevent encroachment into the countryside. The LPA comprises site 3189 in its entirety.</p>	<p>There are no significant constraints associated with the development of this site. Parts of the site are at low risk of surface water flooding. The site is located approximately 1.6km from the town centre and 950m from the high school.</p>	<p>Proposed for housing</p> <p>Strong Green Belt boundary no major constraints.</p>		

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
Hexham					
2374	The GB assessment indicates that Spital Lane to the west provides an opportunity to provide a strong durable boundary.	Site 2374 is previously developed land in the Green Belt, and the site is cleared and unoccupied. The site benefits from two access points to the B6531. The site is located approximately 1.5km from the town centre, and 900m from the high school.	Proposed for housing 2579 and 2580 are small sites adjacent to existing development and relatively unconstrained. 2374 is small PDL site, relatively unconstrained.	Not allocated (2374, 2580) Larger sites to the west of the settlement preferred. Identified smaller sites do not have sufficient capacity to deliver housing requirement. Further consultation and assessment resulted in the discount of other smaller sites previously identified, reducing capacity of this option. Proposed housing (2759) Site minded to approve subject to S106.	
2579	Sites 2580 and 2579 are located east of Spital Lane, adjacent to built up form of Hexham. The northern boundary of 2580 is marked by a line of trees and fence presenting an opportunity to strengthen the boundary. The southern part of 2579 is outwith the Green Belt, and is enclosed by Park Avenue and allotments to the west and the cricket ground and tennis courts to the east. The northern part is bounded by the golf club to the north, with the boundary marked by a fence. A new tree line along the northern perimeter would provide an opportunity to create a new defensible Green Belt boundary.	Site 2579 is formed of two parts; the northern part is open land while the southern part is occupied by trees, scrub vegetation and dwelling. Only the northern part is Green Belt; much of the southern area is designated open space. Access to Eilansgate is achievable to the south. The site is the subject of a pending planning application. The site is located approximately 800m from the town centre and the high school.			
2580	2374 is previously developed land, with the trees marking the boundary to the golf course to the north. The trees have the potential to create a new Green Belt boundary.	Site 2580 is occupied practice facilities associated with Hexham Golf Club. While currently in use, it is understood the site will be available for development once practice facilities have been relocated. Access can be achieved from the main road. The site is located approximately 1km from the town centre and 650m from the high school.			

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
2644	The GB assessment identifies that there is a risk of sprawl from non-compact development to the south of Hexham, but that the track (Causey Hill Way) connecting Highford with Causey Hill Road provides an opportunity to create a strong durable Green Belt boundary.	Site 2644 is currently designated open space and is well used by dog walkers. The site slopes steeply upwards from Bishopton Way but is relatively level at the higher elevations. Potential access could be achieved from Bishopton Way or Coniscliffe Court to the east, although both accesses are constrained, and complicated by land ownership issues. The site is approximately 1.5km from the town centre and 900m from the high school.	Not allocated Designated open space and highway constraints		
6854	The site forms the south eastern part of this LPA and is bounded to the north in part by woodland (Widehaugh Banks) and a steep drop down to the railway line and river beyond; woodland marks the eastern boundary. The woodland has the potential to form a new defensible boundary to the Green Belt.	Site 6854 is a linear site, which forms the eastern approach to Hexham. The site comprises pasture land, and drops steeply on the northern edge towards the railway line. Good access could be achieved to Corbridge Road. The site is located 2.1km from the town centre and 3.2km from the high school.	Proposed for housing Relatively unconstrained with potential for strong boundary	Not allocated Larger sites to the west of the settlement preferred. Further consultation and assessment resulted in the discount of other smaller sites. Capacity insufficient.	
6771	The Green Belt assessment indicates that there is a risk of non-compact ribbon development to the west of Hexham, but that sprawl would be contained by High Wood, and that in the north of the LPA there are opportunities to create strong durable boundaries	<p>In order to enable development of sites 6771 and 6850, an upgrade to the West Road / A69 junction may be required. Development of this scale is likely to generate significant traffic flows into the town centre and along Eilensgate.</p> <p>Site 6771 is located adjacent to the built form. The site slopes significantly up from the River Tyne; the northern part is identified a Grade 3a agricultural land, while a cricket field occupies a flat area to the south. The elevated nature of the site means it commands prominent views across across the Tyne Valley. 6771 is located approximately 1.5km away from the town</p>	Proposed safeguarded land Site contained by woodland forming boundary	Proposed for housing Larger sites to the west of the settlement preferred as they have sufficient capacity to deliver housing requirement and support the delivery of required infrastructure.	

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
6850		<p>centre, and 0.5km from the high school.</p> <p>Site 6850 is somewhat detached from the built form of Hexham and extends significantly into land which provides the western approach to Hexham. Part of the site is identified as Grade 3a agricultural land. Site 6850 is located approximately 2km from Hexham town centre and approximately 1km from Queen Elizabeth High School.</p>	<p>Not allocated</p> <p>Site contained by woodland forming boundary but detached from settlement.</p>	<p>Proposed for education facilities</p> <p>Adjoining proposed housing and therefore will not be detached from settlement. Education facilities will support preferred option of larger housing sites to the west of the settlement.</p>	
6903	<p>The GB assessment indicates there is risk of non-compact development in the north of the LPA, an area which would incorporate the above sites. However, each site is relatively small when compared to the wider LPA and are well contained.</p> <p>While site 6903 is separated from the main built up form of Hexham, it is very self contained and not visible from far afield, being bounded by the wooded Cockshaw Burn valley to the south. There are low density residential properties to the east and west. Site 6937 slopes significantly from south to north. Public bridleways to the north and west present opportunities to strengthen the Green Belt boundaries to the south west of Hexham.</p>	<p>Site 6903 slopes significantly at its southern boundary, with this area at risk of flooding but the rest of the site is relatively unconstrained. The site is located approximately 1.4km from the town centre and 350 from the high school.</p>	<p>Proposed for housing</p> <p>Compact and contained site</p>	<p>Not allocated</p> <p>Further consultation and assessment resulted in the discount of this site. Site in isolation is detached from the main built-up area and inset boundary.</p>	
6937		<p>Site 6937 is currently designated open space, with the upper level area maintained. The site slopes away significantly to the north. Access can be achieved from Bishopton Way. The site is located approximately 1.6km from the town centre and 950m from the high school.</p>	<p>Proposed for housing</p> <p>Small site –strong boundary</p>	<p>Not allocated</p> <p>Further consultation indicated that the availability of the site is uncertain.</p>	

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
6782	The Green Belt assessment identifies that there is a risk of non-compact development in the LPA from the east, and that there is little opportunity to provide strong durable boundaries that would prevent encroachment into the countryside. The recreational use of the historic ornamental parkland means the LPA contributes to the wider setting of the historic town. The site comprises parkland and forms the easternmost part of the LPA. While strong boundaries to the north, south and east can be created, there is no strong boundary immediately to the west of the site; a stronger boundary may be achievable further west aligned with existing tracks. Rather than strengthening the existing Green Belt boundary formed by Rotary Way, removal of the site from the Green Belt would create a precedent and open up a new area of Hexham development where currently there is very little.	Potential to secure suitable access is currently uncertain. Access from A6079 is problematic due to dual carriageway frontage to site and conflict with industrial traffic emerging opposite. Lack of highway space to provide an appropriate roundabout. No access from A69 possible. Site is therefore uncertain on highways grounds, pending demonstration of suitable access. Discounted through Green Belt assessment.		Not allocated Site not previously appraised due to access issues. Further information suggests access possible to secure but there are still significant access constraints. Higher risk of encroachment into countryside.	
6840	The Green Belt assessment indicates that there is a risk of non-compact ribbon development to the west of Hexham, but that sprawl would be contained by High Wood, and that in the north of the LPA there are opportunities to create strong durable boundaries. The southern part of the LPA in which this site sites is screened by tree cover and makes a medium contribution to protecting the wider setting of the historic town. In addition to the tree cover, parts of this area are developed for residential use. Shaws Lane to the west provides an opportunity to strengthen the Green Belt boundary in this location.	Site 6840 comprises a narrow strip of sloping scrubland to the west of Leazes Park. While appropriate access to the site cannot be achieved, the site represents an extension of site 6792. The site is located 1.4km from Hexham town centre and 420m from Queen Elizabeth High School.		Not allocated Site not previously appraised due to access issues. Deliverability currently uncertain but would form part of the wider release area for preferred option to west.	
6792	The Green Belt assessment indicates that there is a risk of non-compact ribbon development to the west of Hexham, but that sprawl would be contained by High Wood, and that in the north of the LPA there are opportunities to create strong durable boundaries. The	The site comprises undulating parkland, which is dissected by a stream. It contains a significant number of trees. The constrained nature of the Allendale Road to the south, and Leazes Lane to the north means that development in conjunction with site		Proposed for housing Site not previously appraised due to	

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
	southern part of the LPA in which this site sites is screened by tree cover and makes a medium contribution to protecting the wider setting of the historic town. In addition to the tree cover, parts of this area are developed for residential use. Shaws Lane to the west provides an opportunity to stengthen the Green Belt boundary in this location.	6771 to the north may be required to provide appropriate access. The site is located approximately 1.6km from Hexham town centre and 600m from Queen Elizabeth High School.		highways issues, which can be resolved if brought forward with 6771. Option preferred due to capacity to deliver housing and infrastructure.	
6852	The Green Belt assessment identifies that the LPA comprises open countryside, but that opportunities to provide a strong durable boundary exist. It recognises that the predominance of woodland restricts the impact that development would have on the historic setting of Hexham. The site lies in the extreme north of the LPA, and rises steeply from north to south. Tyneview Terrace, together with Half Mile Wood and Cock Wood provide the opportunity to create a strong, durable boundary to the south. The elevated, steep sloping nature of the site means it is prominent from the Rotary Way approaching Hexham from north of the River Tyne.	The site comprises a number of fields south of existing residential development. The fields to the north are very steeply sloping; those to the south are less steep but are elevated, commanding extensive views across the Tyne Valley, from where they are also visible. Access may be achieved from Edgewood to the north east of the site. Due to the sloping nature of the site, achieving suitable access will require substantial engineering works. The site is located approximately 1.3km from the town centre and 2.2km from the high school.		Not allocated Site not previously appraised due to access issues. Further consultation shows access issues can be resolved but site is prominent and requires substantial engineering works.	
9000	The Green Belt assessment identifies that there is a risk of non-compact development to the south of Hexham, and that the LPA comprises open countryside; it notes however, that a track west of High Shield may provide an opportunity to create a strong, durable boundary. The assessment identifies that the impact upon the historic setting of Hexham is most likely to be at higher elevations to the south. The site lies west of the road up to the racecourse. Intake Way to the west and south provides an opportunity to create a durable boundary to the south of Hexham. The countryside nature of this location would be	The site can be accessed from the highway. However, significant off-site works may be required and to bring forward the site, and the size of the site suggests that the scale of development would create undesirable traffic flows down this minor road and impact upon the Eastgate/Battle Hill junction in the town centre. The site is located approximately 1.2km from the town centre and the high school.		Not allocated New site submitted through consultation. Highways infrastructure issues. Site option to west of the settlement preferred.	

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
	transformed by development.				
9001	The Green Belt assessment identifies that there is a risk of non-compact development to the south of Hexham, and that the LPA comprises open countryside; it notes however, that a track west of High Shield may provide an opportunity to create a strong, durable boundary. The assessment identifies that the impact upon the historic setting of Hexham is most likely to be at higher elevations to the south. The site would represent an extension of Loughbrow Park. It is well contained within woodland to the south which presents an opportunity to create a strong durable boundary.	The site may be accessed from the highway, and the site would represent a logical extension of Loughbrow Park. Local highways and the Eastgate/Battle Hill junction in the town centre may be able to support the scale of development which the site could accommodate. The site is located approximately 1.2km from the town centre and 1.7km from the high school		Not allocated New site submitted through consultation. Larger sites to the west of the settlement preferred. Further consultation and assessment resulted in the discount of other smaller sites. Capacity insufficient.	
9002	The Green Belt assessment identifies that there is a risk of non-compact development to the south of Hexham, and that the LPA comprises open countryside; it notes however, that a track west of High Shield may provide an opportunity to create a strong, durable boundary. The assessment identifies that the impact upon the historic setting of Hexham is most likely to be at higher elevations to the south. The site lies on undulating land between the B6306 and the parallel road to the south. The eastern part of the site is well contained by woodland which could create a new boundary; the western part of the site is less well contained.	The site is largely detached from the built form of Hexham by Gallowsbank Wood. Potential for buried archaeological remains. Discounted through Green Belt assessment.		Not allocated New site submitted through consultation. Highways infrastructure issues may be overcome but undesirable impact on network. Site option to west of the settlement preferred.	

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
2598	The Green Belt assessment identifies that there is a risk of non-compact development to the south of Hexham, and that the LPA comprises open countryside; it notes however, that a track west of High Shield may provide an opportunity to create a strong, durable boundary. The assessment identifies that the impact upon the historic setting of Hexham is most likely to be at higher elevations to the south. The site lies to the east of the road up to the racecourse, is steeply sloping, increasing in elevation to the south. The site encroaches into the open countryside with little opportunity to create a durable boundary.	New access required from Dipton Mill Road to west but undesirable to increase traffic flows on this road with bends and restricted junction in town centre. Discounted through Green Belt Assessment.		Not allocated Site not previously appraised due to highways issues. Highways infrastructure issues may be overcome but undesirable impact on network. Site option to west of the settlement preferred.	
Prudhoe					
8006	The Green Belt assessment identifies that development of this LPA would increase the long-term risk of merger between Prudhoe and Chopwell, but that field boundaries offer opportunities for strong durable boundaries to prevent encroachment into the countryside. Site 2339 is bounded by the Moor Grange to the north and Moor Road to the east. Field boundaries mark the south and western sides. Development would represent a small extension of the existing development. Sites 8006 is bounded by Highfield Lane to the north, and sites 2550 and 6849c represent extensions of this site to the east. While extending into the countryside, the sites are defined by field boundaries, with sites	Site 2339 is a sloping site occupied by scrubland facing open countryside to the south. Access would need to be achieved from Moor Grange to the north. While an attractive site, it is located in an area identified as of lower landscape sensitivity. The site is located approximately 950m from the town centre and 500m from the Prudhoe Community High School. Being a small site, 2339 has limited capacity to accommodate housing. Sites 8006, 2550 and 6849c are occupied by arable land and grazing land. Development of the site is likely to require upgrades to Highfield Lane and other local highways and junctions. The sites are located within a Coal Authority High Risk Area. These sloping fields to the south of Prudhoe are identified as	Proposed for Housing and safeguarded land (8006, 2550 and 6849c) Close to town centre and limited risk of merging. Proposed highways improvements would enable development. Other options do not have sufficient capacity.		
2550					
6849c					

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
2339	2550 and 6849c providing a stronger urban edge to that currently offered by sites 2337 and 6849b to the north	<p>being of higher landscape sensitivity. The centre point of the three sites is located approximately 950m from the town centre and 500m from the high school.</p> <p>While 2339 may represent a suitable extension of the existing built form, sites 8006, 2550 and 6849c have the capacity to deliver a significant number of dwellings. While there are constraints to the development of this area, of those areas identified as making a medium contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt, this location is considered preferable. Development in this location should be designed to respect the sensitivity of the landscape in this location.</p>	<p>Not allocated (2339) Small site limited capacity. Insufficient capacity of smaller sites to deliver requirement. Preferred option at Highfield Lane can deliver sufficient capacity.</p>		
2494 2038	Site appraised through development management process	Site appraised through development management process	<p>Housing with permission 2494 minded to approve, subject to a s106 agreement.</p>		
Morpeth					
3071 3071c	<p>Site 3071 is largely located in LPA MH04a – East Lane End Farm, with part of the site within MH04b – South of North gate Hospital</p> <p>The Green Belt assessment identifies that the strong containment by the line of the Morpeth Northern</p>	The Morpeth Northern Bypass line traverses the site Site 3071 from east to west. Cotting Burn crosses site with the area adjacent to the water course in Flood Zone 3. Protected species are located on site. The site includes ancient semi-natural woodland and a local wildlife and geological site, and incorporates a	<p>Proposed safeguarded land Part of comprehensive planning of North Morpeth. 3071c</p>	<p>Proposed safeguarded land Site boundaries amended and appraised. No</p>	

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
	<p>Bypass reduces the risk of non-compact development in LPA MH04a, and that there are opportunities for strong durable boundaries. Commercial developments at Fairmoor Garage create an urban edge character. MH04b to the north of the bypass line is a mixture of urban edge development and countryside.</p> <p>Site 3071 traverses the line of the bypass which defines the boundaries between the LPAs. The bypass line would present an opportunity to create a durable northern boundary to this part of the site.</p>	sand and gravel resource area. The site is approximately 1.7km from the town centre and 1km from the high school.	originally part of 3071.	change to outcome.	
3072 3072b 3073b 3071b	<p>The Green Belt assessment identifies that strong containment by the A1, A192, the Morpeth Northern Bypass, Scotch Gill Woods and burn reduces the risk of sprawl, and that these boundaries reduce the risk of Morpeth merging with Mitford. The LPA is considered to make a medium contribution to the wider setting of Morpeth.</p> <p>The site area is aligned with the LPA, and the roads and wood provide strong durable boundaries.</p>	Parts of the site are at risk of surface water flooding. Preferred access would be from the bypass. The site is approximately 1.7km from the town centre and 1.3km from the high school.	<p>Proposed safeguarded land (3072 and 3073b, 3071b) Well contained by road. Part of comprehensive planning of North Morpeth. 3072b appraised as employment allocation at this stage. 3073b and 3071b originally part of 3072.</p>	<p>Proposed safeguarded land (3072, 3071b, 3072b) Site boundaries amended and sites appraised. 3072b safeguarded as no longer available for previously proposed employment use. 3073b no longer safeguarded as required for employment use.</p>	<p>Housing (and employment) with permission (3073b) Proposed safeguarded land (3072, 3071b) Further consultation indicated 3072b available and now required for employment land as 3073b partly permitted for housing.</p>
3074 8057	<p>Sites 3055, 3174 and 8057 are located in LPA MH03 - Cottingwood Common, while 3074 is located predominantly within this LPA, with part so of the site in MH02 – St Georges Hospital and MH01 – Peacock Gap.</p>	Sites to the north of Morpeth (3074, 3055, 3174 and 8057) – While there are constraints associated with individual sites in this location, master planning of the area of a whole will allow mitigation.	<p>Strategic Site (3074) Safeguarded (8057, 3055, 3174) Part of</p>		

Candidate Sites (SHLAA reference)	Green Belt consideration	Constraints	Pre-Submission assessment outcome	Major Modifications	Further Major Modifications
3055	<p>The Green Belt assessment identifies that LPA MH03 comprises open countryside with limited opportunities to create strong durable boundaries. However, the Howburn Wood to the east and the Morpeth Northern Bypass will provide containment for much of the LPA. All the sites are contained within this area.</p> <p>In LPA MH01, the risk of ribbon development is moderated as the LPA is well contained by woodland and other built up areas; opportunities to create strong durable boundaries are identified. In LPA MH02, the principle of development has already been established, and there are opportunities to create durable boundaries.</p>	<p>Currently highway access prohibits development but the Morpeth Northern Bypass will allow access to this area to the north of Morpeth. Ancient semi-natural woodland forms the eastern boundary to the area. The eastern part of the site is located within coal, clay and sand and gravel resource areas. The centre of the wider site is located approximately 1.4km from the town centre and 600m from the high school.</p>	<p>comprehensive planning of North Morpeth. Accessibility to town centre. Area including strategic site is contained by strong boundaries.</p>		
3174					
8007	<p>The Green Belt assessment identifies that risk of sprawl is prevented by strong containment within the A196 and two railway lines, but that development would increase the risk of merger of Morpeth and Hepscott.</p> <p>The site area is aligned with the LPA, and the rail lines and main road provide strong durable boundaries.</p>	<p>Site 8007 is located on Grade 3a agricultural land. The southern part of the site is at risk of surface water flooding. The site is located within a coal, clay and sand and gravel resource areas. The site is located approximately 2km from the town centre and 2.8km from the high school</p>	<p>Safeguarded Well contained by Road – adjacent existing employment.</p>	<p>Not allocated Further consultation indicated that site would not be available for the proposed use beyond plan period.</p>	<p>Safeguarded Further consultation indicated that site will be available for the proposed use beyond plan period.</p>

13 SITE OPTIONS FOR LOCAL EMPLOYMENT PROVISION

13.1 Background

13.1.1 Overall the County has an oversupply of employment land in relation to identified demand, either based on past rates of development, or econometric projections. A number of areas are being de-allocated as follows:

- 32ha of land at Bates Colliery which has or is likely to be developed for non-employment uses;
- 32ha of land at West Hartford, which had been identified for prestige inward investment, due to viability and deliverability issues.
- 27ha of land to the west of the A189. The land is relatively inaccessible compared to other land around the estuary. The anticipated future use of the sites would not require employment policy protection;
- 7ha at the former Vald Birn site as a result of the anticipated future development for housing.

13.1.2 In most cases, even with de-allocations, the current supply of allocated employment land is more than sufficient for the next 16 years to the end of the plan period.

13.1.3 However there are specific settlements where the Council's evidence based studies including an Employment Land and Premises Demand Study have identified a shortage of supply of employment land in relation to demand locally. The Council has therefore considered the allocation of new sites within these settlements to ensure that local needs are delivered.

13.2 What are the reasonable alternatives?

13.2.1 The Council undertook a 'call for sites' when the Employment Land Review was undertaken in 2010/11 to build-up a portfolio of potential sites should new allocations be eventually taken forward in the Local plan. A site survey was undertaken for each site, using the same methodology used to assess existing sites in the Employment Land Review. To update this bank of potential sites, when the SHLAA 'call for sites' was undertaken in 2013/14 landowners were asked to indicate whether they would support employment development on their land as well as residential.

13.2.2 It should be noted that responses to the call for sites for employment was much less fruitful than that for housing and in many settlements no options for sites were submitted. Conversely in other areas numerous sites were submitted, but this did not match areas of demand for additional employment land. These sites were therefore discounted from further analysis.

13.2.3 The settlements identified as requiring further employment land were Morpeth, Hexham, Ponteland, Prudhoe and Alnwick.

13.2.4 Submitted sites in these settlements were further sieved where there was a clear barrier to development (i.e. it has been developed for another use or there are firm plans to do so), or the site was significantly out of proportion in relation to identified demand for land (e.g. a large site to the north of Ponteland was discounted for this reason).

13.2.5 In settlements where new land is needed but few or no site options came forward from the call for sites, a number of possible sites were identified by the Council. These sites were of a size to provide for the identified need in the evidence base (e.g. close to 10ha sites were mapped around Hexham). In identifying potential sites, there were limited feasible locations in each settlement. Many locations suffered from with poor access for work traffic or were in close proximity to sensitive land uses, where employment development would not be appropriate.

- 13.2.6 A short list of reasonable site options was established focusing on locations close to existing employment sites, with good access to the strategic road network, away from residential areas and other sensitive land uses. The Employment Land and Premises Demand Study identified these as key site criteria to ensure that a site can attract investment.
- 13.2.1 Following consultation on the pre-submission version of the Plan, the Council considered it necessary to re-examine the site allocations for employment in Morpeth and Ponteland. As part of this process, two additional site options were identified in both Morpeth and Ponteland.
- 13.2.7 All the reasonable site options identified (including those considered as part of Major Modifications) are mapped below for each of the settlements where demand was identified for additional employment. These maps also show the proposed site allocations within each settlement. The appraisal of sites is discussed below.
- 13.2.8 The Council prepared five Employment Land Site Option Appraisal documents in June 2016, which outline the land position and site options appraisals for employment land in Morpeth, Hexham, Prudhoe and Ponteland. These can be found on the Council's website as follows:

www.northumberland.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-policy/Reports.aspx#economyretailstudies

13.3 What is the preferred approach and why?

- 13.3.1 The maps below outline the proposed sites for employment along with the alternative site options that were considered within the SA.
- 13.3.2 Each site Option was appraised using the criteria set out in **Table 12.1** (page 86). The SA findings for each site Option are presented in **Appendix VII**.
- 13.3.3 Justification for the selection of the proposed allocations in-light of the alternatives is provided below for each settlement. Amongst a range of other factors such as deliverability, marketability, amenity considerations and relationships to existing employment areas, the Council took the SA findings into account as a decision-aiding tool when coming to a decision on each option.
- 13.3.4 Alnwick – A firm site is not being identified in the Core Strategy but rather the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan. However, options have been assessed as part of the site identification work to assist this plan.
- 13.3.5 Morpeth – The results of the process at Morpeth were applied but then further assessment was necessary as explained here:
- At Pre-Submission stage, the original assessment led to land at Fairmoor in the north of Morpeth being allocated and a separate area, (in the south of the town) safeguarded.
 - Following the Pre-Submission consultation it became apparent that the sites were not available for employment uses and another of the more favourably assessed sites (west of Lancaster Park) was allocated as a Major Modification, while the safeguarded land to the south was omitted from the then proposed Green Belt inset.
 - Subsequently the proposed employment site west of Lancaster Park gained permission for a mixed use housing and employment scheme and therefore additional employment land needed to be identified. Further consultation indicated that part of the Fairmoor site and the site to the south of the town was available, contrary to previous consultation. The Fairmoor site was allocated for employment during the plan period and the land at the south of the town could again be safeguarded. This was reflected in the Further Major Modifications.

- 13.3.6 Ponteland – The preferred option is the deletion of an area of Green Belt to the south of the Prestwick Business Park (Site 11). Prestwick Business Park has proved to be a successful development with high levels of occupation. Resident businesses have indicated a need for expansion, and would benefit from larger units in a similar type of development. The site is deliverable and marketable, has good links to the strategic road network and easy access to the Airport and is relatively unconstrained.
- 13.3.7 The emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Ponteland has a long term ambition to relocate the existing Meadowfield Industrial Estate to a site away from residential areas. Given the long term nature of the proposal, it was proposed to remove an area near the Airport from the Green Belt to be safeguarded for future employment development beyond the plan period. In the light of feedback made on the Pre-Submission Plan, and the fact that a larger site is now being proposed at Prestwick, it is no longer intended to remove this area of land from the Green Belt.
- 13.3.8 There is a level of uncertainty as to whether the land at Clickemin Farm would be released for employment purposes. The site is located adjacent and opposite residential properties on Ridgeley Drive and Cheviot View. There is potential for the amenity of residents to be impacted.
- 13.3.9 Prudhoe – The preferred sites adjoin existing employment sites and can utilise existing access, whereas other options will likely have poorer access and be more closely associated with residential areas, with potential effects on amenity.
- 13.3.10 Hexham – The results of the process at Hexham were applied but then a minor reconsideration of the results was necessary as explained here:
- Initially, at the Pre-submission stage, it was considered that sites to the west of the town and the option to the south of the A69 junction with Acomb were likely to require significant junction upgrades and have a high landscape impact. Site options to the east of the town would be more closely associated with existing industrial estates, and junction improvements were likely to be less expensive.
 - At the Major Modifications stage, it had been found that sufficient housing could only be delivered through a Green Belt deletion to the west of the town. While this would deliver the junction improvement necessary, it continued to be assessed that employment in this location, beyond the strong boundaries of the proposed housing and education sites could have a high landscape impact and would encroach into open countryside, while site options to the east of the town would be more closely associated with existing industrial estates. Therefore the modifications at Hexham did not mean any change to the outcomes from the alternative employment sites assessment.

Figure 13.1: Employment site options for Hexham

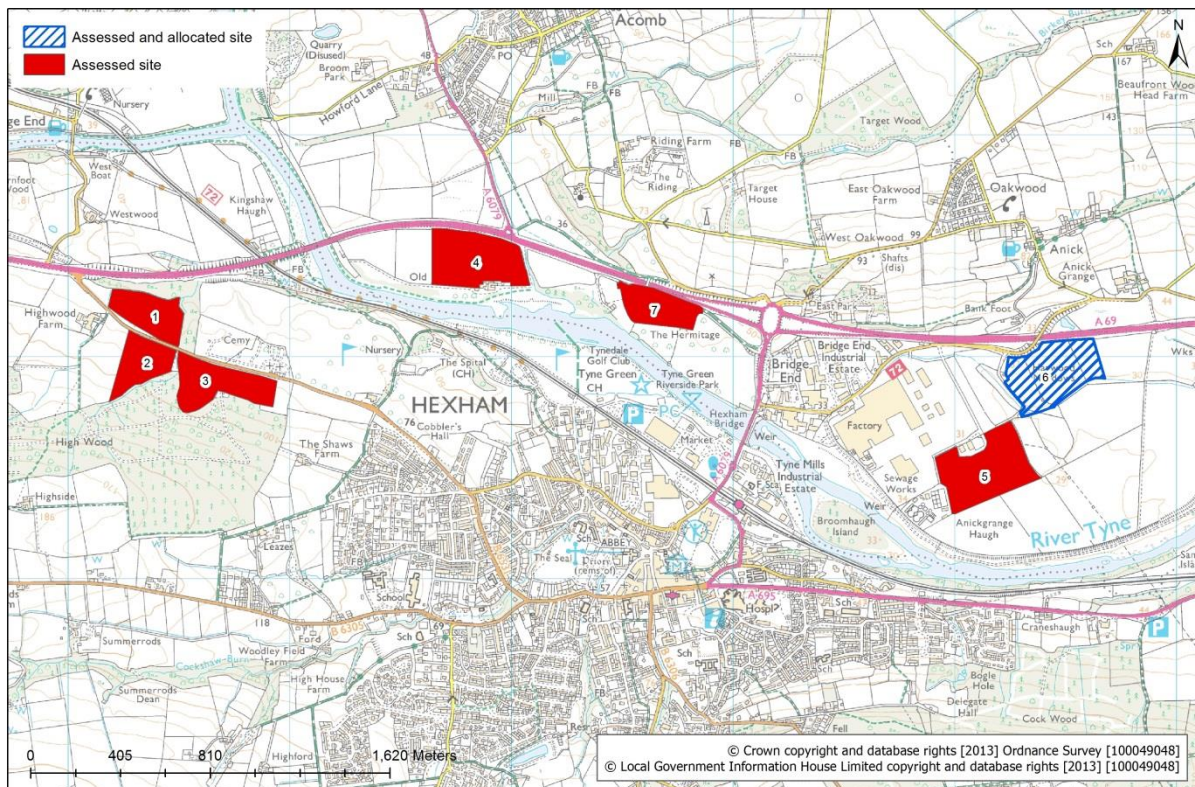


Figure 13.2: Employment site options in Morpeth

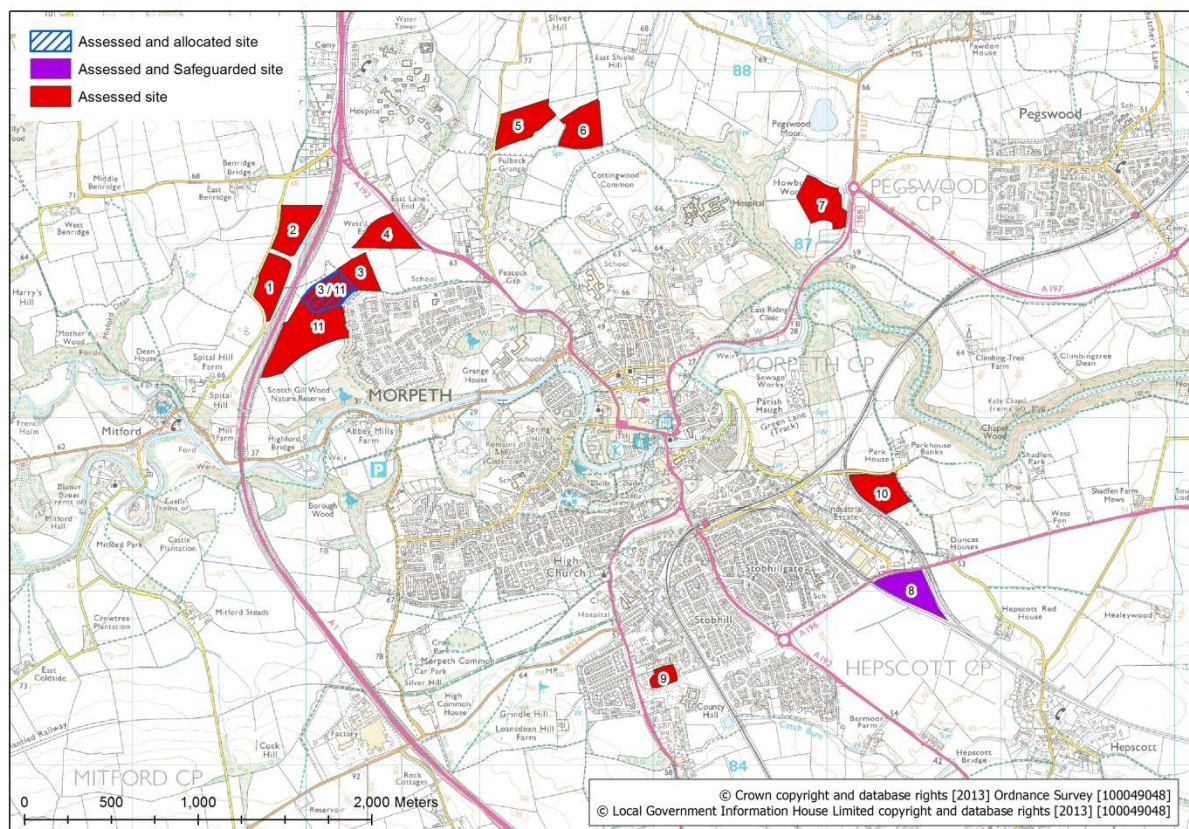


Figure 13.3: Employment site options in Ponteland

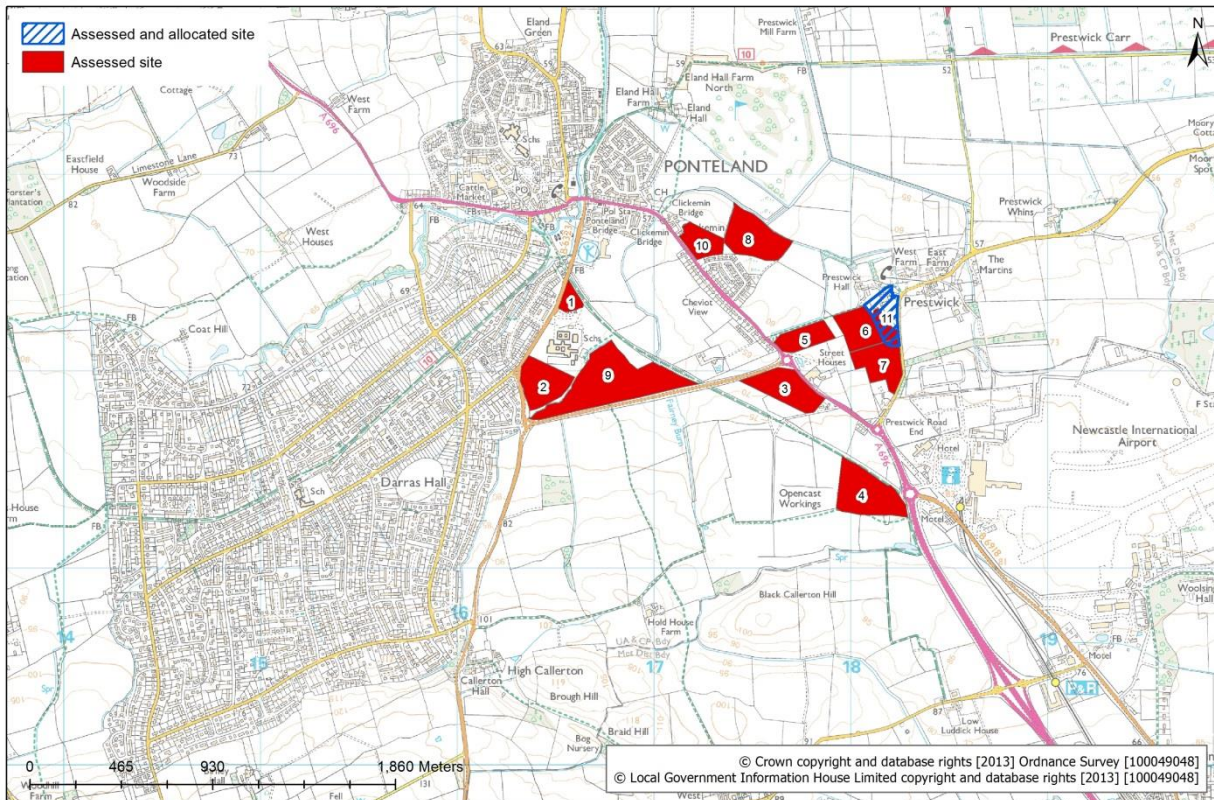
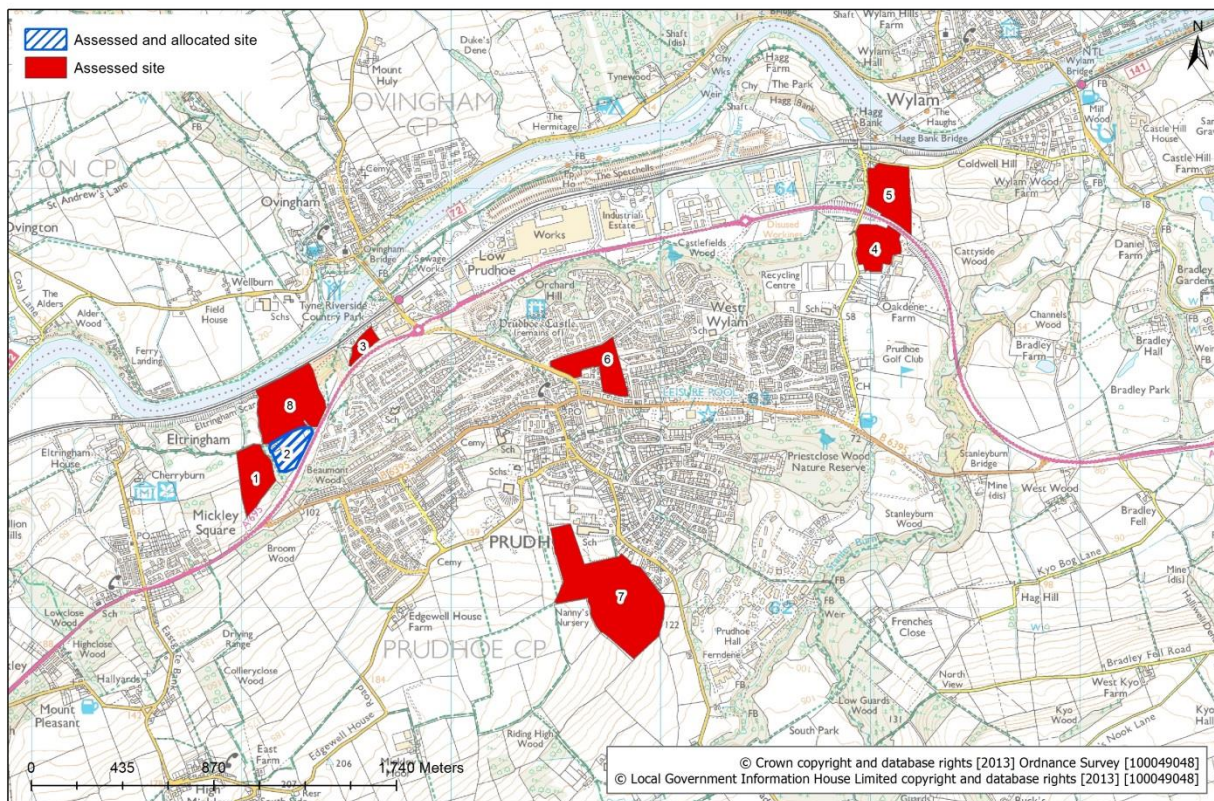


Figure 13.4: Employment site options in Prudhoe



14 ALTERNATIVES FOR A GARDEN VILLAGE

14.1 Background

- 14.1.1 The Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy sets an indicative housing target for the county up to 31 March 2031. The Core Strategy also sets out the spatial distribution of these housing figures and targets the majority of provision in Northumberland's main towns and service centres, with the remaining provision to be distributed more widely within 'delivery areas'. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) work has been undertaken on the Core Strategy by AECOM.
- 14.1.2 The housing provision associated with a potential Garden Village in Northumberland would be in addition to the housing figure required by the emerging Core Strategy, and as a result, will be over and above the objectively assessed housing need (OAN) in the county. The Garden Village will accord with the government's prospectus Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities⁴⁴.

14.2 What are the reasonable alternatives?

- 14.2.1 Nine sites were considered as potentially suitable locations for a garden village. These were:
- Brocksbushes;
 - Widdrington Banks;
 - Widdrington Blue Sky Forest;
 - Marley Tiles;
 - Dissington;
 - Bebside;
 - Earth Balance, Bomarsund;
 - Stannington Station; and
 - Stannington St Mary's.
- 14.2.2 The Council undertook a site assessment to determine which site(s) could be taken forward in terms of the Garden Village initiative and incorporated as a chapter in the Core Strategy document i.e. which sites should be subject to SA as 'reasonable alternatives'. This assessment was in two steps.
1. Assessment of the sustainability merits of the site
 2. Assessment of the compatibility of the sites with the emerging Core Strategy
- 14.2.3 The outcome of these two steps is a set of 'reasonable alternatives' i.e. locational options that should be tested through the SA process.

Summary of the site suitability assessment

Stage 1 - suitability

- 14.2.4 Stage 1 of the Council's suitability assessment was an exercise to determine which of the nine sites would be the most suitable in sustainability terms.

⁴⁴ Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities (DCLG, March 2016) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/locally-led-garden-villages-towns-and-cities>

- 14.2.5 The Council used a set of hybrid objectives derived from the emerging Core Strategy SA process and the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process of a number of Neighbourhood Plans⁴⁵ to create a site options assessment framework.
- 14.2.6 The Council considered it appropriate to combine these two planning tiers as “given the nature of garden villages, it was considered that these objectives provide a good balance between objectives which perform at a strategic level as well as at a local level.” The ‘sustainability objectives’ against which the potential sites’ suitability was assessed are as follows (the full framework can be found in Appendix B):
- 14.2.7 The outcome of this assessment was a ranking of the nine sites according to their relative suitability in sustainability terms (see table 14.1)

Table 2.1. Council’s conclusion on the suitability of sites based upon sustainability factors

Rank	Site	Overall assessment
1	Bebside	✓
1	Earth Balance, Bomarsund	✓
2	Dissington	0
3	Stannington Station	0
3	Stannington St Mary’s	0
4	Widdrington Banks	X
4	Widdrington Blue Sky Forest	X
5	Marley Tiles	X
6	Brocksbushes	X

Key

Compatibility score						
✓✓	✓	?	XX	X	0	-
Major Positive	Positive	Uncertain	Minor Negative	Major Negative	Neutral	No relationship

- 14.2.8 On this basis, the Council concluded that Bebside and Earth Balance are the most likely to be compatible with the sustainability objectives.
- 14.2.9 The Council concluded that sites at Dissington, Stannington Station and Stannington St Mary’s would be neutral in regard to sustainability and that Widdrington Banks, Widdrington Blue Sky Forest, Marley Tiles and Brocksbushes were all incompatible with the sustainability framework (and therefore unsuitable).

⁴⁵ Which were the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan, and Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan.

Stage 2 – policy compatibility

- 14.2.10 As part of the assessment of the range of potential garden village sites in Northumberland, it was considered necessary by the Council to assess the various alternative options against the spatial vision and strategic objectives set out within the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy (emerging Core Strategy), notwithstanding that the garden village proposal would be separate from, and would not alter the agreed spatial strategy and distribution.
- 14.2.11 This helps to ensure that the sites are compatible with the emerging spatial strategy and broad policy principles that have already been established. Sites that would significantly detract from the Plan objectives would therefore be 'unsuitable' from a policy / plan-making perspective.
- 14.2.12 Table 14.2 shows the nine alternative options ranked in terms of their overall compatibility based on their assessment against the Strategic Objectives set out within the Core Strategy.

Table 14.2: Ranking of alternative options according to the Core Strategy Objectives

Rank	Site	Overall assessment
1	Bebside	✓
2	Earth Balance, Bomarsund	✓
3	Stannington Station	X
4	Stannington St Mary's	X
5	Brocksbushes	X
6	Dissington	X
7	Widdrington Blue Sky Forest	X
7	Widdrington Banks	X
8	Marley Tiles	X X

Key:

Compatibility score						
✓✓	✓	?	XX	X	0	-
Major Positive	Positive	Uncertain	Minor Negative	Major Negative	Neutral	No relationship

- 14.2.13 Following the assessment of the nine site options against the two suitability frameworks (to determine the compatibility of the sites with the sustainability framework and the Core Strategy Vision and Objectives) it was clear to the Council that a number of sites were not suitable (i.e. they are not reasonable alternatives) and these were therefore sieved out following this initial stage of compatibility testing.
- 14.2.14 The sites which were discounted as a result of their overall suitability were:

Brocksbushes - Although it does have good links to the A69, the site has a relatively isolated location, beyond reasonable walking distance, in terms of its proximity to main towns and service centres in Northumberland as well as to the wider Tyneside conurbation. This site would provide some affordable homes to meet local need for the central delivery area, however a development of this scale would be inappropriate for this location would also put a strain on existing local services and facilities in Corbridge;

Widdrington Banks - The isolation of the site creates a significant issue in terms of sustainable access and there are doubts over whether the site would have the housing demand or existing services and facilities to warrant a development of this size;

Widdrington Blue Sky Forest - The isolation of the site creates a significant issue in terms of sustainable access and there are doubts over whether the site would have the housing demand or existing services and facilities to warrant a development of this size;

Marley Tiles - The isolated location of the site from the main towns, the poor access from other parts of the County and lack of public transport, suggesting that a development here would be very reliant on the private car. The remote location also raises doubts over whether the site would have the housing demand.

- 14.2.15 The following sites were considered suitable for further assessment through the SA process (i.e. they are reasonable alternatives):

Dissington - Despite being potentially incompatible in relation to landscape, sustainable access and the loss of agricultural land, the Council consider that a major development on this site would meet strong housing market demand in this general location. It is also assumed that development in this location would be likely to yield a percentage of affordable housing which could help to attract working-age people and young families to the area. The site is well related to the A696 but there are questions about the capacity of the local road network and whether development would put a strain on local services....;

Bebside - It is located in proximity to a main town which would enable access to existing services and facilities, although development would put a strain on the already congested local road network, and the affordable housing contribution from the development would help meet the identified need for housing supply in the south east delivery area....;

Earth Balance, Bomarsund - It is located in proximity to a number of existing large villages and small towns with a range of services and its proximity to public transport routes and the A189, although a major development on this site could result in the coalescence of Bedlington in the south and Ashington in the north.....;

Stannington Station - It was assessed as being relatively neutral and therefore worthy of more detailed consideration to assess whether the site would generate more positive or negative effects....;

Stannington St Mary's - Overall, it was assessed as compatible in terms of sustainability although there is uncertainty relating to the potential effects on the economy.

14.3 SA of the site options

- 14.3.1 Following the identification of reasonable alternatives, an appraisal of the area-specific constraints on the alternative sites⁴⁶ was undertaken by the Council. This appraisal was undertaken in-line with the SA methodology used for the emerging Core Strategy i.e. a criteria based appraisal using Geographical Information System (GIS) data. The findings are summarised in table 14.3 below. Appendix VIII presents the detailed appraisal findings for each site.

⁴⁶ The 'sites' represent broad locations rather than specifically defined areas

Table 14.3: Summary of appraisal findings for Garden Village reasonable alternatives

Site	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways Access	Amenity	Agricultural Land	Fluvial Flood Risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green Infrastructure (Loss off)	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA/SAC	Proximity to primary/ first school	Proximity to secondary/ high school	Distance to a GP or health centre	Access to key employment sites	Food shop	Post office	Access to green space/ infrastructure
Dissington				?				?															
Bebside				?				?															
Earth Balance				?				?															
Stannington Station				?				?															
Stannington St Mary's				?				?															

14.4 What is the preferred site and why?

- 14.4.1 As a result of the high level sustainability assessment carried out, it is clear that two of the reasonable site options through this process are more constrained. Consequently, the Council consider that the following sites should not be taken further:
- Stannington Station;
 - Stannington St Mary's.
- 14.4.2 The sites which are considered to be sufficiently sustainable with relatively few constraints (or constraints which could be overcome through development of the site) are considered to be:
- Dissington;
 - Bebside;
 - Earth Balance, Bomarsund.
- 14.4.3 Bebside and Dissington have been ranked 1st and 2nd respectively. Both sites are located within close proximity to schools and food shops, and will not result in loss of Green Infrastructure. Although Dissington is located closer to employment sites, health care and greenspace than Bebside, it is located on a flood zone 3b, and has a high risk of surface water flooding. However, Bebside does not perform as strongly with regards to viability and deliverability, and therefore Dissington is considered to be the preferred site option overall by the Council.
- 14.4.4 Earth Balance scored third. Although it scored favourably among environmental objectives, it is located over 1600m from the nearest bus stop and train station, is composed of mostly (>60%) greenfield land, and also has poor access to many services and facilities. In particular it is located over 3200m from the nearest health centre. Whilst a Garden Village should be able to deliver its own services and facilities, it is unlikely that a new health centre or secondary school would be secured.
- 14.4.5 The Stannington Station site and Stannington St Mary site were considered (by the Council) to be the 4th and 5th most sustainable sites respectively. Both of these sites are located further from many key services and facilities such as: schools, health care, employment sites than the selected options. Additionally both of these sites have poor access to greenspace. Given that development would be in-line with Garden Village principles, some of these factors could probably be mitigated effectively. However, the Stannington Station site is at high risk from surface water flooding, and the Stannington St Mary site has major constraints regarding heritage assets.

15 INTRODUCTION (TO PART 3)

The report must include...

- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with the draft plan approach
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan approach

15.1.1 **Chapters 16-24** present an appraisal of the policies 'as a whole' as set out within the Submission version of the Core Strategy (which includes consideration of 'Major Modifications' and 'Further Major Modifications'. **Chapter 26** discusses conclusions at this current stage.

15.2 Methodology

15.2.1 The appraisal identifies and evaluates 'likely significant effects' on the baseline associated with the Submission version of the Core Strategy. The appraisal also includes consideration of 'Major Modifications' and 'Further Major Modifications', explaining the implications of any changes for the overall SA findings. Some 'additional modifications' were made following the Further Major Modifications consultation, but these are largely related to clarifications and are not likely to have a significant effect on the SA findings.

15.2.2 The appraisal draws upon the sustainability objectives and issues identified through scoping (see Part 1) as a methodological framework.

15.2.3 Effects are predicted taking into account the criteria presented within Regulations.⁴⁷ So, for example, account is taken of the duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. The potential for 'cumulative' effects is also considered.⁴⁸ These effect 'characteristics' are described within the appraisal as appropriate.

15.2.4 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a 'no plan' scenario).

15.2.5 There is a need to make assumptions regarding how the plan will be implemented 'on the ground'. Assumptions are, however, kept to a minimum. For example, the effect of broad locations (which may or may not be accompanied by policy guidance) is based on minimal assumptions regarding the nature of development (and mitigation) that will come forward. Where assumptions are relied-upon this is made clear in the appraisal text.⁴⁹

15.2.6 In many instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict likely significant effects, but it is possible to comment on the merits of the Core Strategy in more general terms.

15.3 Appraisal findings

15.3.1 The appraisal of the Core Strategy is set out within separate tables for each of the sustainability topics listed below (*which are derived from the SA Framework*).

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| - Health Wellbeing and cohesion | - Economy and Employment |
| - Environmental protection | - Accessibility |
| - Built and Natural Heritage | - Natural resources and waste |
| - Housing | - Biodiversity and geodiversity |
| - Climate Change | |

⁴⁷ Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

⁴⁸ In particular, there is a need to take into account the effects of the Local Plan acting in combination with the equivalent plans prepared for neighbouring authorities. Furthermore, there is a need to consider the effects of the Local Plan in combination with the 'saved' policies from the Adopted Local Plan.

⁴⁹ It is worth noting that, as stated by Government Guidance (The Plan Making Manual, see

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelid=156210>): "Ultimately, the significance of an effect is a matter of judgment and should require no more than a clear and reasonable justification."

15.3.2 To give the appraisal 'added structure', each 'plan topic' within the Core Strategy is assigned one (or more) of the following symbols in-line with predicted 'broad implications'. These symbols replace the former scoring system used at the Issues and Options stages, but the assessment method remains the same (i.e. just presented differently).

15.3.3 To reflect the different effects that plan policies could have, some 'sections' of the Core Strategy may be scored as both positive and negative against the same SA Topic. This reflects the fact that the Core Strategy could have different effects in different locations and circumstances.

Positive implications.	↗	Negative implications.	↘
Negligible implications.	↔	Uncertain implications.	?

15.3.4 It is important to note that these symbols are not necessarily used to indicate 'significant effects'. Where significant effects are predicted, these are highlighted in the accompanying text; with the text coloured as follows:there would be a **significant positive effect** or conversely a **significant negative effect**

15.3.5 The appraisal tables do not present a separate score for each individual policy. Rather, the appraisal tables summarise the **cumulative effects** of each of the Policies within specific sections of the Plan (see **Table 15.1** below). A commentary of the effects of each policy is provided and analysis of the policies is grouped together into the relevant sections of the draft Plan. This avoids duplication and provides a more realistic assessment of plan policies by taking into account other policies in the plan when identifying its overall effects.

15.3.6 Local Plans should be read 'as a whole' and thus appraisal needs to be undertaken on the same basis to take account of how policies complement or contradict one another. This is where appropriate **mitigation and enhancement** can be identified.

Table 15.1: Policies within the draft Pre-Submission Core Strategy

Plan topic	Policies
Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Policy 1 – Sustainable development
	Policy 2 – High quality sustainable design
	Policy 3 – Spatial distribution
Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Policy 4 – Employment land supply and distribution
	Policy 5 – Blyth Estuary Strategic Employment Area
	Policy 6 – Home run businesses
	Policy 7 – Windfall employment development
	Policy 8 – Rural economy
	Policy 9 – Tourism and visitor development
	Policy 10 – Hierarchy of Centres
	Policy 11 – Role of Centres
	Policy 12 – Town Centres
	Policy 13 – Office accommodation within Town and larger village centres
	Policy 14 – Large-scale leisure facilities
Providing existing and future communities with a choice of decent, affordable homes	Policy 15 – Housing provision, scale and distribution
	Policy 16 – Strategic delivery sites and additional housing sites
	Policy 17 – Additional housing sites
	Policy 18 – Planning for housing
	Policy 19 – Delivering affordable housing
	Policy 20 – Rural exception sites
	Policy 21 – Housing for older people and vulnerable groups
	Policy 22 – Specialist accommodation
	Policy 23 – Provision for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
Green Belt	Policy 24 – Strategic approach to Green Belt

Plan topic	Policies
	Policy 25 – Safeguarded land
	Policy 26 – Uses Acceptable in the Green Belt
	Policy 27 - Expansion of employment or visitor related buildings in the Green Belt
Conserving and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic, water and build environment	Policy 28 – Principles for the environment
	Policy 29 – Biodiversity and geodiversity
	Policy 30 – Landscape
	Policy 31 – Northumberland Coast Area of Natural Outstanding Beauty
	Policy 32 – North Pennines Area of Natural Outstanding Beauty
	Policy 33 – Historic environment and heritage assets
	Policy 34 – Heritage assets at risk
	Policy 35 – Water quality
	Policy 36 - Water supply and sewerage
	Policy 37 - Flooding
	Policy 38 - Sustainable Drainage Systems
	Policy 39 – Coastal erosion and coastal change management
	Policy 40 – Unstable and contaminated land
Ensuring connectivity and infrastructure delivery	Policy 41 – Promoting sustainable connections
	Policy 41a – The effects of development on the road network
	Policy 42 – Improving Northumberland's Core Road Network
	Policy 44 – Rail transport and safeguarding facilities
	Policy 45 – Newcastle international airport
	Policy 46 – Ports, harbours and beach launch facilities
	Policy 47 – Planning for mobile telecommunications
	Policy 48 – Planning for broadband infrastructure
Community wellbeing	Policy 49 – Community services and facilities
	Policy 50 – Open space and facilities for sport and recreation
	Policy 51 - Green infrastructure
Managing natural resources	Policy 52 – Environmental criteria for assessing minerals proposals
	Policy 53 – Criteria for assessing the benefits of minerals proposals
	Policy 54 – Mineral and landfill site restoration and after-use
	Policy 55 – Safeguarding mineral resources
	Policy 56 – Coal
	Policy 57 – Aggregate minerals
	Policy 58 – Clays
	Policy 59 – Natural building and roofing stone
	Policy 60 – Conventional and unconventional oil and gas
	Policy 61 – Peat
	Policy 62 – Safeguarding minerals related infrastructure
	Policy 63 – Provision for waste re-use, recycling and recovery
	Policy 64 – Waste disposal
	Policy 65 – Renewable and low carbon energy generation
	Policy 66 – Onshore wind energy
	Policy 67 – Solar photovoltaic farms
Implementation	Policy 68 – Implementation
	Policy 69 – Planning for infrastructure
	Policy 70 – Planning conditions and obligations
Dissington Garden Village	Policy DGV1: Strategic policies
	Policy DGV2: Masterplan
	Policy DGV3: Infrastructure provision

16

SA TOPIC 1: HEALTH, WELLBEING AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Relevant SA Objectives

- To improve health and well-being and reduce health inequalities.
- To increase public involvement in decision making and participation in community activity, especially amongst under-represented groups
- To deliver safer communities.
- To improve the quality, range and accessibility of community services and facilities.

16.1

Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and build environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village
↗	↗	↗	↗↘	↗	↗	↗	↔	↗	↗

- 16.1.1 At the centre of the Core Strategy is redressing the County's forecast population profile including increasing the working age population. This should have a positive effect on the diversity and resilience of Northumberland's communities.
- 16.1.2 In terms of the spatial distribution of development, Policy 3 [*Spatial Distribution*] sets out the role that the Main Towns and Service Centres throughout Northumberland will have in terms of being key locations for housing, employment, healthcare and retail development. Delivery of these uses should have a positive effect on the health, wellbeing and community cohesion in these areas. It should help to help to deliver sufficient housing (to meet objectively assessed needs), employment and support community facilities in accessible areas.
- 16.1.3 There would be modest growth in rural areas / smaller villages, which could help to support the viability of local services, including small rural schools. However, these villages would be likely to remain isolated given their rural nature, and thus access to services and facilities could remain poor in some areas. The scale of development involved would be unlikely to create the critical mass required for the likes of new health or leisure facilities in rural areas.
- 16.1.4 The proposed Garden Village is predicted to have a significant positive effect on health and wellbeing. Increased housing (including a large element of affordable provision) would help to improve access to a decent home and create jobs during construction and operation (of non-residential uses). Improved recreation and open space in the surrounding countryside should also be beneficial for the new community and surrounding ones. The new community would also be supported by services and facilities, and designed to a high standard, which would promote healthy lifestyles. There would also be good opportunities to engage communities in the design and master-planning process.

- 16.1.5 A number of other plan policies support the spatial strategy by making it clear how the hierarchy of centres will promote development appropriate to the scale of the settlement. Policy 10 [*Hierarchy of centres*] outlines this and also that the loss of essential shops and services will be resisted, which helps to support local access to services. This should be beneficial to health and wellbeing. Policy 19 [*Delivering affordable housing*] states that affordable housing will be required to deliver mixed communities in areas of need, whilst Policy 21 seeks to plan for the needs of vulnerable groups and older people, which ought to ensure that these groups are not disadvantaged by planning decisions.
- 16.1.6 Policy 3 [*Spatial Distribution*] sets out that additional large scale development and growth will be focused on key locations in Blyth, Cramlington and Morpeth, which will help to revitalise communities in these areas (which include areas of high deprivation). Policy 16 [*Strategic delivery sites and additional housing allocations*] identifies two strategic sites in North Morpeth and South West Cramlington. As part of the development of new housing on these sites, additional community facilities would be likely to be provided including educational and sports facilities. Delivery of these uses would have a positive effect on the health and well-being of the new communities occupying the new sites and existing communities surrounding the sites.
- 16.1.7 There has been comprehensive engagement and consultation in the Core Strategy as it has been developed. There are positive effects of this process in respect of making communities feel part of decision making process and helping to shape their areas. Interest is in part evident in the number of Town and Parish Council's wishing to pursue Neighbourhood Plans for their areas. However, it should be noted that some residents object to development, and so new housing and employment in some areas could have at least a short term negative effect on wellbeing and community cohesion. However, these effects are not predicted to be significant as they are localised and likely to be outweighed by the positives.
- 16.1.8 The Green Belt policies would have mixed effects. Although there would be positive effects with regards to employment and housing provision there would be a loss of greenspace, which could have a negative effect on wellbeing for some communities. The value of that greenspace for local communities will vary as will the value of other Greenfield land that is subject to development. Policies around ensuring provision for green infrastructure and open space including new provision within new developments should help to counterbalance loss of greenspace as a result of development. The policies could also lead to better quality and more accessible greenspaces for sport and recreation, particularly as Policy 24 [strategic approach to Green Belt] supports development that enhances access the countryside, outdoor recreation and landscape value.
- 16.1.9 The Plan identifies the need to provide a total of 305 hectares of land for economic development (through Policy 4 [*Employment Land Supply*]) and to plan for 10,000 additional jobs over the plan period.
- 16.1.10 The employment land target consists of a significant strategic development area at Blyth (91 ha), as well as smaller flexible opportunities throughout the County. Development on these sites would increase the number of job opportunities throughout Northumberland which, in turn, would have a positive effect on the wellbeing of communities within and around the County; particularly for residents in the 'central' and 'south-east' delivery areas, where levels of growth are higher. There are concentrations of deprivation particularly in the south east delivery area and pockets of high unemployment. New economic development would create new job opportunities in these areas.
- 16.1.11 Together, the spatial strategy supported by policies for strategic housing delivery and economic development are considered likely to have a significant positive effect on the health and wellbeing of communities in the longer term as access to employment and a decent affordable home are key determinants of good health. The majority of new development is located into areas with good accessibility and this could also help to achieve regeneration of deprived urban areas.

- 16.1.12 The plan also incorporates a series of policies relating to protecting and enhancing Northumberland's natural, historic and built environment. These include Policies 28 [*Principles for the Environment*], 29 [*Biodiversity*], 30 [*Landscape*], 31 [*Northumberland Coast AONB*], 32 [*North Pennines AONB*], 39 [*Coastal erosion and coastal change management*] and 33 [*Historic environment and heritage assets*]. Implementation of these policies ought to have a positive effect on the wellbeing of residents through protecting the natural and historic environment (*which contribute to quality of life and are a factor in attracting visitors, residents and businesses into Northumberland*). Whilst these effects would be positive, they are not considered to be significant, as a degree of protection would be afforded to the built and natural environment anyway through national policy.
- 16.1.13 In terms of connectivity, the plan sets out the need to ensure that Northumberland is well connected into the regional economy and promotes and support the development of high quality pedestrian, cycle and non-motorised transport network (Policy 41 [*Promoting Sustainable Connections*]). The delivery of the Plan should therefore help to ensure that local communities are well connected to key services and facilities, while acknowledging that areas of the County closer to Tyneside and the main transport corridors will always retain a better level of physical connectivity.
- 16.1.14 Furthermore, the delivery of a sustainable transport network ought to encourage active travel i.e. walking and cycling, which would have a positive effect on the health of the local population.
- 16.1.15 As mentioned above, it should be acknowledged that rural settlements with poor access to service centres and town centres will be likely to remain remote and will continue to rely on private cars, in spite of measures that encourage sustainable connections. Some communities may therefore remain isolated. The Plan seeks to address this issue to an extent by supporting appropriate growth of housing in rural areas, which could help to support local services, retail and employment in these areas. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted in this respect.
- 16.1.16 The plan outlines the need to build resilient communities, supporting the health, social and cultural well-being for all. Policy 49 [*Community services and facilities*] outlines the need to retain existing community facilities, support the development and modernisation of established community services and support the development of new facilities where there are deficiencies in provision. Delivery of this policy would have a positive effect in terms of ensuring that sufficient community facilities are provided in Northumberland over and beyond the plan period. The provision of recreational open space (Policy 50 [*Open space and facilities for sport and recreation*]) and green infrastructure (Policy 51 [*Green Infrastructure*]) would similarly have a positive effect on the health and wellbeing of the local community through encouraging active lifestyles including walking and cycling.
- 16.1.17 The delivery of Policy 69 [*Planning for Infrastructure*] and [*Infrastructure*] would have a positive effect in terms of ensuring that sufficient infrastructure (including key services, and community infrastructure) is provided as part of new development delivered throughout Northumberland over the plan period.

16.2 Health Impact Assessment

- 16.2.1 Alongside the SA, the Council has undertaken a health impact assessment (HIA) of the Core Strategy. The conclusions and recommendations in the HIA are discussed below, which complements the assessments undertaken as part of the SA.
- 16.2.2 The HIA found that the draft Pre-Submission Core Strategy has potential wide ranging health implications. Most of the impacts are indirect rather than direct. For example, improvements to the built and natural environment can indirectly influence individuals' and communities' lifestyle choices. Patterns of development and access to services, facilities and amenities, including green space, all play a role in individuals and communities health and wellbeing.

- 16.2.3 It is apparent from the analysis that impacts will differ according to different groups. By way of example, the impact of new job opportunities could be acute for those who are currently unemployed and unable to fund employment. Being in employment could have significant positive impacts on a number of levels. The key impacts identified are summarised below.

Negative implications

- A focus on main towns and service centres could exclude those with poor access to these areas. This could have negative effects for those in rural areas in particular.
- Construction phases of new development could affect residential amenity.
- New development and change in communities may be perceived as impacting negatively on existing communities, and may also create anxiety about the places within which people live and work.
- Seeking certain standards through planning policies may make development less viable (therefore fewer homes are delivered). Reducing or removing standards may be a missed opportunity to achieve better quality homes. Continued need for home adaptations to be made retrospectively which may be less effective.
- As recognised in the Core Strategy, the Council does not directly provide public transport services. Remote, rural communities may continue to suffer from relative isolation.

Positive implications

- Creation of 10,000 jobs ought to have positive impacts on lifestyles and health including mental health, particularly for those currently unemployed.
- Positive impacts may include more training opportunities and increased disposable income. Rural development could help to sustain communities including sustaining health and education services that may otherwise be in decline.
- Increased working age population and overall improved health and wellbeing of communities. May reduce the pressure on health and social care services.
- Direct positive impact which could enable those on lower incomes to access an affordable home which will directly impact on mental health and wellbeing through independence, social support and integration.
- Proposals to support and reopen existing rail lines ensures communities including some deprived communities in the south east of the County have access to employment opportunities and encourages independence and participation.
- Recreational open space and green infrastructure is supported and could improve health through social inclusion, independence and participation
- Policies to relieve flooding can give confidence and reassurance to communities affected by flood risk. Reduced risk of flooding can also lead to more flexibility to secure mortgages/ house insurance.

- 16.2.4 The impacts identified, both positive and negative will influence future needs and demands for health and social care services. There will be changing needs for both physical service delivery e.g. health centres and non-physical provision e.g. public health initiatives. It will be important for the Local Planning Authority, which has produced the plan, to continue to work in partnership with health leads and a range of other stakeholders involved in health and social care. Collaborative working features as a key means of harnessing opportunities and mitigating negatives.

Implications of the Major Modifications

Despite planning for an overall lower level of employment land (76ha less) compared to the draft Plan, there would still be sufficient job opportunities in areas of need to have a positive effect upon health and wellbeing.

Policy 10 has been strengthened with regards to health, as it clarifies that the loss of local shops and services will be resisted. Whilst this is positive, it does not lead to a significant effect as health is determined by a range of other factors.

Policy 49 has been strengthened to support the development and modernisation of established community services and facilities where this would ensure their retention for the benefit of the community which adds a further positive effect.

Policy 69 has been amended to remove only critical infrastructure in the IDP and added that where infrastructure is not available or requires improvement or compensation due to the impact of a new development, planning permission will only be granted where suitable measures are in place. Whilst this is similarly positive and adds clarity, it will not lead to a significant effect.

Policy 24 clarifies the role of the Green Belt as an important asset for community recreation and access to the countryside. Supporting the development of derelict land and the improvement of landscape character and value where it may be of a lower quality will lead to positive effects on wellbeing and health.

Implications of the Further Major Modifications

The changes to employment sites at Morpeth would not have a significant effect upon health and wellbeing as the quantum of development remains very similar within the plan period.

Summary

Overall, the modifications are predicted to be beneficial for health across the County. Broadly, the effects across the County are not predicted to be demonstrably more significant than was the case within the draft Plan. However, there would be localised benefits for residents of the Garden Village.

17

SA TOPIC 2: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Relevant SA Objectives

- To protect and enhance the quality of Northumberland's ground, river and sea waters.
- To ensure good air quality.

17.1

Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and build environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village

- 17.1.1 The overall spatial strategy set out within the plan is to focus new development within existing towns and settlements within Northumberland, with the main focus for development being the main towns and service centres such as Blyth, Morpeth, Cramlington, Ashington and Alnwick. The delivery of new development in these areas should help protect undeveloped areas. It should also reduce the need to travel in order to access key services and facilities. This could have a positive effect in terms of protecting air quality by minimising emissions from traffic. However, increased development presents the possibility of increased industrial emissions and increased trips generated in and around settlements. This could in turn slow down traffic and / or cause congestion, which could have a negative effect in terms of air quality. This could be a problem in areas of significant concentrated growth such as the South East and Central Delivery Areas.
- 17.1.2 In addition to the overall spread of growth discussed above, the proposed Garden Village would lead to a higher level of development. This would lead to an increase in vehicle trips, which could have an impact on local roads and air quality. However, the development would also involve the delivery of a road link that should help to mitigate congestion through Ponteland. The overall effect upon air quality is therefore not predicted to be significant.
- 17.1.3 The plan seeks to mitigate potential effects on air quality through a number of policies (Policy 41A, Policy 28, Policy 52, and Policy 65). It should also be remembered that growth in traffic would be likely to occur without the Core Strategy (i.e. increased car trips around the main settlements and along key routes such as through increased car ownership).
- 17.1.4 In terms of connectivity, the plan sets out the need to ensure that Northumberland is well connected into the regional economy and promotes and supports the development of high quality pedestrian, cycle and non-motorised transport network (Policy 41 [*Promoting sustainable connections*]). This would encourage the use of sustainable methods of transport, which ought to have a positive effect on air quality by potentially reducing overall emissions from the use of motor vehicles. Policy 41 and Policy 41A [*The effects of development on the transport network*] make specific reference to the need to improve and avoid adverse impacts in terms of air quality as part of new development proposals.

- 17.1.5 In terms of water resources and quality, the detailed Water Cycle Study⁵⁰ identifies that broadly there is sufficient capacity in water supply to support the proposed level of development throughout the County.
- 17.1.6 The strategy focuses the majority of development to the South East and Central Delivery Area, which fall into the Kielder Water Resource Zone (WRZ) which is identified as having a significant volume of spare license capacity. Consequently a **neutral effect** is predicted.
- 17.1.7 The Berwick and Fowberry WRZ supplies the most northern section of the North Delivery Area and the Kielder WRZ supplies the rest of the County. There is a large surplus of available raw water within the Kielder WRZ, therefore there is no requirement to plan a new water resource scheme to supply new developments located in this WRZ.
- 17.1.8 At present, the Berwick and Fowberry WRZ has adequate surplus supply, however the Environment Agency has identified uncertainty in the sustainability of the Berwick abstractions providing this surplus, therefore an investigation has been planned for completion between 2015-20 to assess the sustainable yield of the boreholes.
- 17.1.9 The following Settlement Areas are located within the Berwick and Fowberry WRZ:
- Berwick upon Tweed
 - Wooler
 - Norham
 - Cornhill on Tweed
 - Scremerston
- 17.1.10 For growth in these areas, the Water Cycle Study recommended the following mitigation measures of relevance to the Local Plan:
- Northumbrian Water are consulted on the water supply for all proposed development;
 - Developers should ensure that all housing is as water efficient as possible, and non-domestic building should as a minimum reach 'Good' BREEAM status.
- 17.1.11 Policy 2 supports developments that seek to improve water efficiency, which delivers the recommendation in the second bullet point to an extent. However, there is no firm requirement to deliver the higher optional water efficiency standards within Building Regulations. The Water Cycle Study suggests that there is some justification for applying the higher water efficiency standards to new development in areas covered by the Berwick and Fowberry WRZ. This will be appraised as part of the Delivery Document which will include Development Management focussed policies.
- 17.1.12 The picture with regards to water quality is more complex. The detailed Water Cycle Study identified the following waste water treatment works (WwTWs) across Northumberland that currently have limited or no capacity to accept or treat any further wastewater from the proposed development. These works may require an upgrade to accommodate the new development to ensure that deterioration of water quality does not occur. If a new hydraulic consent is required at these works then it is likely the quality consents will be tightened to ensure no deterioration in the water environment. In the majority of cases this is likely to be achievable within current conventional treatment.
- Hepscoth WwTW, Humshaugh WwTW, Wark WwTW, Great Whittington WwTW and Newbiggin WwTW - *No Headroom Available and no solution currently identified but a solution is likely to be possible within limits of conventional treatment.*
 - Tranwell WwTW - *No Headroom Available and no solution available and WwTW cannot be upgraded.*

⁵⁰ Northumberland County Council (October 2015) detailed Water Cycle Study.

- Lynemouth WwTW and Haydon Bridge WwTW - *No Headroom Available until infiltration is removed.*
- Rothbury WwTW, Cornhill on Tweed WwTW and Seahouses WwTW - *No Headroom Available, NW Flow and Load investigations required.*
- Pegswood WwTW - *No Headroom available and likely WQ consent constraints.*
- Allendale WwTW, Barrasford WwTW and Fourstones WwTW - *Limited Headroom Available until surface water ingress is removed.*

- 17.1.13 The Council is committed to continue to work in collaboration with Northumbrian Water. Waste Water Treatment works requirements are identified in the Northumberland Infrastructure Delivery Plan(IDP) which will be routinely updated at least annually. The IDP is a useful mechanism to identify the WwTWs that require upgrades and work collaboratively with NW. NW will commence investment procedures to provide capacity at the WwTWs once the potential development is certain.
- 17.1.14 In addition to these infrastructure considerations, the plan includes a number of policies that seek to protect and enhance the natural environment. Most notable is Policy 28 [*Principles for the Environment*] which aims to ensure that Northumberland's ground, river and sea waters are protected. More specifically, Policy 28 [*Principles for the Environment*] specifies the need for development proposals to ensure that the local environment can absorb individual and (critically) cumulative pollution impacts relating to ground, soil, water air, light and noise. Policy 35 [Water Quality] also highlights the need for the Council to take a positive approach to development that maintains or may result in enhanced water quality to meet the EU Water Framework Directive. This policy reflects the issues highlighted in the Water Cycle Study.
- 17.1.15 Although there is the potential for localised negative effects on water quality, as highlighted above, it is likely that solutions can be secured in partnership with Northumbrian Water and others. It should also be remembered that there would be a need to upgrade infrastructure anyway to ensure it is operating efficiently and effectively and to support population growth, irrespective of the Core Strategy. The plan policies will also help to ensure that cumulative effects are addressed, and that infrastructure is delivered in a timely way to reflect development coming forward. . Consequently, it is anticipated that the effects would be **neutral**, but an uncertain effect has been recorded at this stage to reflect the issues identified in the Water Cycle Study.
- 17.1.16 Further policies in the Core Strategy which support the protection and enhancement of air quality and water quality are:
- Policy 52 [*Environmental criteria for assessing minerals proposals*] sets out a requirement for proposals for mineral extraction to consider the impact of the proposal on ground and surface water quality, flow and water abstraction. This measure should help to ensure that Northumberland's ground and river water is protected.
 - The plan incorporates policies that will control and assist in the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure within Northumberland over the plan period. These policies include Policy 65 [*Renewable and low carbon energy development*], Policy 66 [*Onshore wind energy*] and Policy 67 [*Solar photovoltaic farms*] and delivery of these sources of renewable energy would have a positive effect on air quality through minimising greenhouse gas emissions from other energy sources. They are particularly positive as they require development the impact on local communities and the environment to be acceptable or can be made acceptable. The sustainable design and construction of new development throughout Northumberland (Policy 2 [*High quality sustainable design*]) could also have a positive effect in terms of minimising greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Policy 64 [*Waste disposal*] identifies measures for the management of hazardous and non-hazardous waste. The implementation of this policy would have a positive effect

in relation to this SA topic through ensuring the sustainable management of waste that would not adversely affect the environment.

- 17.1.17 The proposed Garden Village presents an opportunity to improve water quality through the implementation of sustainable drainage solutions. The benefits would be more pronounced through the use of natural management systems. A potential positive effect is predicted in this respect. Changing the land use from agricultural to residential should also have a positive effect upon water quality by reducing the amount of nitrates entering water sources in surface water run-off. The northern part of the proposed Garden Village lies within / adjacent to a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone and so sensitively designed residential, retail, services and employment should help to reduce pollutants in surface water. Over time this should have a **significant positive effect**.
- 17.1.18 Northumberland had one AQMA which is in Blyth town centre, which was declared due the standard for particulates (PM10) caused by traffic. The AQMA was revoked following improvements. Recent monitoring suggests that air quality is not deteriorating in Blyth. This will be monitored as appropriate and measures implemented to help to improve air quality should this be required. An uncertain effect has been highlighted at this stage, recognising there will be further growth in development at Blyth.

Implications of the Major Modifications

Policy 28 has been clarified to state that where agricultural land is required for development, there is a priority on poorer agricultural land than the 'best and most versatile'. This is not predicted to have any implications in terms of the SA findings.

Implications of the further Major Modifications

The proposals are predicted to have a **significant positive effect** upon water quality for affected watercourses. This relates to the potential implementation of natural water management systems, and changing land use from agricultural to residential in an area recorded as 'nitrate vulnerable' from surface water run-off.

Changes to the allocation of employment sites at Morpeth is unlikely to have significant effects air quality or water quality as the quantum and broad location of development would be the same within the Plan Period.

18

SA TOPIC 3: BUILT AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Relevant SA Objectives

- To protect and enhance the quality, distinctiveness and diversity of Northumberland's rural and urban landscapes.
- To protect and enhance Northumberland's cultural heritage and diversity.

18.1

Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and build environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village

18.1.1

The overall spatial strategy set out within the plan is to direct new development towards existing towns and settlements located within the County. Edge of settlement developments in the main towns and service centres are generally likely to be less sensitive in terms of the capacity of the landscape to accommodate change compared to the more rural parts of the County and coastal settlements near or within the Northumberland Coast AONB. Therefore, the strategy of targeted urban development ought to help to protect the quality and distinctiveness of Northumberland's most sensitive landscapes, which is considered to be a positive effect.

18.1.2

It is important to note that there could be localised effects on landscape character, such as in those areas that involve the loss of Greenfield land, and through cumulative development. There could be indirect negative effects on the character of the landscapes parts of the County.

18.1.3

The proposed Garden Village lies within Green Belt near to Ponteland. Development here will change the character and setting of the countryside in the short, medium and long term, with a decrease in the amount of open countryside. For residents at the Garden Village, their experience of the landscape may be positive, as the development ought to be of a high quality design, with a substantial area surrounding the village highlighted for landscaping and enhancement of the environment. The landscape is predominantly flat and mainly within agricultural use for crops.

18.1.4

Residents and visitors of Ponteland may view the development as intrusive or consider that changes to the countryside are negative. Views from within Ponteland itself are unlikely to change as views towards the garden village from Runnymede Road are obscured by trees, houses and other vegetation. However, views along the A696 into Ponteland may be affected by development.

18.1.5

Open expanses of agricultural land would remain, and structural landscaping could help to screen new development. However the approach to Ponteland along the A696 may change in character.

- 18.1.6 Though Limestone Lane is within the open countryside, views of the landscape along this route would also be affected (provided it is retained as a highway), impacting upon the experience of the countryside for users of this road. It would be beneficial to seek to protect the rural 'feel' along Limestone Lane, with a 'green corridor' along this route through the centre of the garden village. Such matters can be discussed at master-planning stage. Views towards the garden village from along Strikers Bank are unlikely to be affected as there are open areas and tree lines that screen the area well
- 18.1.7 Overall, the effects on landscape associated with the Garden Village are predicted to be mixed. The scale of the site will lead to inevitable changes to the setting of the countryside, but this isn't considered likely to have a significant effect on the character of Ponteland itself. Furthermore, a comprehensive structural landscaping scheme ought to limit negative effects and allow for elements of the countryside to be enhanced. Overall a **minor negative effect** is predicted in respect of the site itself.
- 18.1.8 Potential effects from the road scheme also need to be considered; as a route will be required that bypasses Ponteland. This route would pass through the countryside to the north-east, north and north-west of Ponteland. The route identified is the Castle Morpeth Local Plan bypass route and it runs alongside Cheviot View, and intersects Ponteland Golf Course, Berwick Hill Road and North Road. These areas are within the countryside and have an open and rural feel. There is potential for negative effects that will need to be mitigated. However, there is some uncertainty as the route has not been confirmed and will be subject to further assessment,
- 18.1.9 Although the loss of Green Belt across the County might be expected to have a negative effect on landscape character, the Green Belt Review work appraises landscape character. The analysis together with other evidence such as the key Land Use Impact Study has been used to direct development to areas of lower landscape sensitivity. However, the potential for negative effects ought to be acknowledged, such as described above.
- 18.1.10 New development could also have a negative effect on the setting of buildings/areas of heritage value. At this stage a *detailed* qualitative assessment of the effects on the setting of heritage assets have as yet not been undertaken, so it is not possible to rule out significant effects. Further assessment would need to be undertaken at a project level.
- 18.1.11 There is a listed building on the edge of South East corner of the proposed development area of the Garden Village (West House Farm House Grade 2). The setting of this asset is likely to be affected, as it is currently characterised by open farmland.
- 18.1.12 However, the farm house itself falls within the non- built up area of the proposal, and it ought to be possible to respect its setting in the main, whilst bringing the building into a viable use. Access to the farmhouse (which is private land) could also be improved through enhanced walking and cycling links as part of the new development. Therefore, effects in this respect are predicted to be neutral.
- 18.1.13 The associated link road could run close to further heritage assets such as Elland Hall (Grade II). Whilst this asset is well screened by trees visually, the road could generate noise, which may affect the setting of the hall. These are potential negative effects that need to be explored.
- 18.1.14 Overall, in the case of both sensitive landscapes and sensitive assets/buildings the Core Strategy seeks to direct development to less sensitive locations. However there may be a need for appropriate mitigation and enhancement as part of new development. This will need to be appraised at a local or project level.
- 18.1.15 A more detailed qualitative assessment of the effects on the setting of heritage assets is being undertaken as part of the Strategic Land Review and as site-specific proposals emerge, in order to identify and address any significant effects.

- 18.1.16 The Strategic Land Review appraised each settlement at a high level to ensure that significant effects upon landscape and heritage were taken into account in the decision making process about the suitable level of development within each settlement. It is therefore not anticipated that the levels of development proposed would have significant negative effects. Furthermore, there are a number of policies within the plan that will help to ensure new development is designed to avoid adverse impacts on Northumberland's cultural and natural heritage. Therefore, potential negative effects of the Core Strategy policies for housing and employment on the built and natural environment are not considered to be significant at this stage.
- 18.1.17 Notwithstanding the likely negative impacts not being significant monitoring sensitive landscapes and heritage assets will be important. For example, Historic England have identified that the Conservation Area in Alnwick is deteriorating and it is listed as a heritage asset 'at risk'. As a main town, it is proposed that 1100 dwellings are built in Alnwick, as well as 10 ha of employment land and support for commercial and retail development in the town centre.
- 18.1.18 Although the bulk of development would be expected to occur on the settlement edge, this could put further pressure on the Conservation Area especially if development is adjacent to the CA boundary. Consequently, there is potential for a **significant negative effect** in this location. Plan policies (particularly Policy 33) ought to help mitigate negative effects, particularly as the policy states developments in Conservation Areas should enhance or better reveal their significance however the cumulative effects could be difficult to manage without a proactive strategy for protection and enhancement. It is recommended that development adjacent to Alnwick ought to be encouraged or required to adopt the design principles of the Conservation Area to ensure a coherent transition from the settlement edge to the surrounding areas. There may also be potential to enhance the character of the CA through development in this settlement, and this ought to be a key principle for growth in and around Alnwick. The emerging Neighbourhood Plan for Alnwick would be an appropriate mechanism for adopting these design principles. For consistency, it would be beneficial to adopt such principles for other settlements that contain Conservation Areas (particularly where boundaries are close to the edge of the urban area).
- 18.1.19 In general, the protective policies in the Core Strategy reflect guidance outlined in Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment). However, several policies also focus on ensuring that the cumulative effects of development upon landscape are managed. This constitutes a positive effect as it ought to ensure that piecemeal development does not adversely affect built and natural heritage. For example:
- Policy 1 [*Sustainable development*] outlines the need for new development to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of Northumberland's historic and built environmental assets. The policy also identifies the need for new development to demonstrate high quality sustainable design that respects and enhances the local distinctiveness of the historic and built environment.
 - Policy 2 [*High quality sustainable design*] states that proposals will be supported where development responds to the character of the wider setting, creating a distinctive environment which takes advantage of opportunities to preserve, enhance or enrich the setting and local distinctiveness.
 - Policy 33 [*Historic environment and heritage assets*] highlights the need for development proposals to protect the setting of Northumberland's historic environment and heritage assets. The policy also sets out specific measures to ensure that the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site is protected when considering new development that could affect its setting. The policy outlines that use will be made of the Historic Environment Record, the Historic Landscape Characterisation Study and other relevant records to help inform decision making. A heritage statement will be required to support any planning application that will affect a heritage asset; Implementation of

this policy should have a positive effect in terms of protecting and enhancing Northumberland's cultural heritage and diversity.

- In terms of tourism, Policy 9 [*Tourism and visitor development*] outlines the need for development in rural locations and open countryside to avoid any adverse effects on the character of the local landscape, the setting of a settlement or the character of historic assets. The policy outlines that development in other settlements and adjacent to existing development in the countryside is encouraged to be provided by the re-use of buildings and on brownfield land. The implementation of this policy would have a positive effect in terms of protecting the County's rural landscape and historic assets when considering applications for tourism related development.
- Policy 23 [*Provision for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities*] highlights that proposals for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson sites should not cause unacceptable harm to the landscape character and heritage assets in Northumberland.
- The implementation of policies in the plan relating to the Green Belt (including Policies 24 [*Strategic approach to Green Belt*], 26 [*Uses acceptable in the Green Belt*] and 27 [*Expansion of Employment or Visitor related Buildings in the Green Belt*] should help to ensure that the areas of Green Belt that have landscape value that will be retained will be protected from inappropriate development. This would have a positive effect in terms of protecting Northumberland's rural landscapes.
- Policy 28 [*Principles for the Environment*] sets out the need for development proposals to limit the effects on open countryside and the setting of historic and cultural assets. It adds that development should ensure that the design respects the character, local distinctiveness and/or history of its landscape. Policies 30 [*Landscape*], 31 [*Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*] and 32 [*North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*] incorporate a range of measures that set out the importance of protecting Northumberland's areas of landscape value (including the consideration of cumulative impacts). Policy 31 and 32 include the need to 'maintain sustain and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting'. Implementation of the policies relating to the AONBs should have a **significant positive effect** in terms of protecting the landscape and special qualities of the Northumberland Coast and North Pennines AONBs.
- In plan-making and assessing development minerals proposals, Policy 52 [*Environmental criteria for assessing minerals proposals*] highlights the need to ensure that consideration is given to any potential impact on the landscape character and cultural heritage within and around an application site. Policy 56 [*Coal*] sets out the need to consider the impact on the North Pennines AONB when considering proposals in the Tyne/Derwent Watershed, Plenkeller outlier, Stiblick outlier and the Midgeholme outlier sub areas. Guidance set out in these policies is reflective of guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- The plan incorporates policies that will control and assist in the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure within Northumberland over the plan period. These policies include 65 [*Renewable and low carbon energy development*], 66 [*Onshore wind energy*] and 67 [*Solar photovoltaic farms*]. These policies emphasise the need to protect the landscape character and historic assets located in Northumberland. More specifically, these policies highlight the need to protect the North Pennines and Northumberland Coast AONBs, the National Park and Hadrian's Wall when considering applications for renewable development. Implementation of these policies would have a positive effect in terms of the managing the impacts (*including cumulatively*) on the local landscape and historic assets in delivering renewable energy infrastructure.

- 18.1.20 On balance, it is considered that the pre submission Core Strategy is likely to have a mixed effect on built and natural heritage. Increased aspirations for growth and development could put pressure on the setting of heritage assets through the loss of land and changes to settlement character. However, the strategy generally directs development to less sensitive areas and there are a number of protective policies in the Plan that ought to mitigate potential adverse effects. Therefore, potential negative effects are not considered to be significant. It is recommended that when allocating sites, where potential effects are identified, that mitigating policies on a site-by-site basis are developed in order to not generate significant negative effects.
- 18.1.21 In some instances, development may also help to support better management and use of heritage and natural assets, whilst also encouraging sustainable access to heritage through tourism. There is a potential for a positive effect on the baseline, but these effects are unclear at this stage.

Implications of the Major Modifications

A slight wording alteration of Policy 30 (Landscape) has positive implications for the safeguarding of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, and Policy 31 (Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) has been strengthened through the addition of 'sustain and, where appropriate, enhance' with regards to policy clause D. Policy 32 (North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) has also been strengthened through the addition of similar text which states that heritage assets, and any contribution made by their setting, must be also sustained and enhanced.

The inclusion of more detail with regards to the decision making process which surrounds heritage-assets has a minor positive implication for Policy 33 (Historic environment and heritage assets). This includes a reference to the Historic Environment Record and the Historic Landscape Characterisation Study to help inform decisions, and more clarity with regards to the recording of adopted mitigation measures. These changes are beneficial, but the SA already identified significant positive effects would be likely to occur as a result of these policies in combination.

Implications of the further Major Modifications

Changes to the allocation of employment sites at Morpeth are not predicted to have a significant effect on landscape or heritage. The sites involved were allocated or safeguarded for development, so the effects are more likely to be generated, but at difference timescales. Furthermore, there are no designated heritage assets within close proximity that are likely to be affected.

There are potential negative effects on the setting of heritage assets within proximity to the garden village and the road link. It ought to be possible to mitigate effects so that they are not significant. However, negative effects cannot be ruled out at this stage.

The garden village will change the character of the countryside to the west of Ponteland. In parts, the open, agricultural character will be retained, and enhancement could be secured through effective landscaping. However, there could be negative effects in some areas as the nature of the countryside would change, and be less "rural". Though most views out of Ponteland are unlikely to be significantly affected, changes could be viewed as negative by residents.

Heritage assets are unlikely to be significantly affected by the proposals, but impacts would need to be explored in more detail once more detailed proposals were in place.

19 SA TOPIC 4: HOUSING

Relevant SA Objectives

- To ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home.

19.1 Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and build environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village
↗	↗	↗	↗	↔	↗	↗	↔	↔	↗

- 19.1.1 The plan sets out the need to deliver at least 24,320 additional net dwellings over the plan period (1,216 per annum) that is distributed across the delivery areas to meet the predicted housing needs of Northumberland as indicated by the evidence base (see Policy 15 [*Housing Provision, scale and distribution*]). The Plan highlights that the Council will aim to deliver housing that ensures there is an appropriate mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing and provision for vulnerable groups.
- 19.1.2 The proposed Garden Village will contribute to an increased amount (approximately 2000) of high quality housing in areas of need (including affordable and specialist housing). Delivering a higher level of growth than the Objectively Assessed housing need is likely to be positive for housing, as it provides a level of flexibility and 'contingency' should other sites throughout the County do not come forward as expected. The Garden Village would also have good links to the Newcastle urban area, should any unmet needs in that area arise and need to be addressed.
- 19.1.3 The delivery of this level of new housing should ensure that sufficient numbers and types of housing are delivered in Northumberland, which would have a major **significant positive effect** on the baseline relating to housing.
- 19.1.4 The overall spatial strategy is to deliver new development (including housing) in existing towns and settlements within Northumberland (see Policy 3 [*Spatial Distribution*]), with an emphasis on the larger towns such as Morpeth, Cramlington and Blyth for additional large scale development and growth.
- 19.1.5 Development of housing in the existing towns and settlements should ensure that housing is delivered in sustainable locations that are accessible to existing and other new services and employment opportunities developed over the plan period. The Garden Village will provide a new settlement in its own right and should therefore be accessible to services, facilities and jobs.

- 19.1.6 Although there would be lower levels of development in rural areas, the Plan is supportive of development that would support the viability of rural service centres. Policy 20 [*Rural exception sites*] also incorporates measures that would facilitate the delivery of affordable housing in rural areas, where a need has been identified, provided that it is consistent with the character of an existing rural area and is well related to existing services. Implementation of this policy should deliver better access to housing opportunities for people living in rural areas, which would have a positive effect for these communities.
- 19.1.7 Aside from the Garden Village proposals, two large strategic sites are identified in the plan for the delivery of significant levels of new housing: around 1,000 the North Morpeth site; and around 3,000 on the South West Cramlington site.
- 19.1.8 A number of additional smaller housing sites are also identified to meet the identified needs at Ponteland, Prudhoe and Hexham. Policy 16 [*Strategic Housing Sites and additional housing allocations*] sets out the need to deliver associated community infrastructure as part of new development on these sites (as appropriate) along with shops, services and amenities on each of the sites. These sites are generally well related to existing urban areas in Northumberland, which should ensure that existing key services and facilities should be accessible to people living on these sites. New facilities may also benefit existing communities in surrounding neighbourhoods.
- 19.1.9 Implementation of the plan should also ensure that housing is provided for all members of the community, including older people and vulnerable groups. Policies 21 [*Housing for older people and vulnerable groups*] and 22 [*Specialist Accommodation*] set out the need to provide specialist accommodation for these groups that meet their needs. The delivery of housing for older people is particularly important given that the population projections for Northumberland indicate that the amount of older people will increase over and beyond the plan period.
- 19.1.10 Policy 23 [*Provision for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities*] identifies the need to deliver sufficient numbers of sites for use by Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showperson's over the plan period. Delivery of these sites should ensure that the housing needs of this particular group are met.
- 19.1.11 Policies that deal with Green Belt refer to the fact that there will be a need to release land for housing beyond the settlement boundaries of Hexham, Prudhoe and Ponteland. This is a significant positive effect, as without the release of this land for housing it would not be possible to meet housing needs locally within these areas, which could lead to a shortage in housing provision including affordable housing.
- The Plan includes a number of policies relating to ensuring connectivity throughout Northumberland. Policy 41 [*Promoting sustainable connections*] highlights that the Council will seek to promote and support the development of high quality pedestrian, cycle and non-motorised transport networks across the County. This includes ensuring delivery of cycle parking and supporting infrastructure and protection and enhancement of public rights of way. Policy 41a should also ensure that development is accessible by a range of transport modes, is safe, and effectively managed with regards to parking. Policy 42 [*Improving Northumberland's core road network*] outlines the need to improve the road network in the County as part of delivering new development. Implementation of these policies should help to ensure that new housing delivered over the plan period is accessible via sustainable methods of transport and the road network.
- 19.1.12 A Viability Assessment has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Core Strategy. The Assessment has ensured that an appropriate balance has been struck between Core Strategy policy objectives, including in respect of housing delivery, and development economics. The viability work helps to demonstrate that the Core Strategy is deliverable and development is not threatened. Policies have been carefully developed in accordance with national planning policy to allow for a degree of flexibility which factors in changing market conditions over the plan period. This will be subject to monitoring and review.

Implications of the Major Modifications

Policy 17 (Additional Housing Sites) has merged with Policy 16 to produce a consolidated policy regarding 'Strategic delivery sites and additional housing allocations'.

The overall scale of growth remains unchanged, and the strategic approach remains broadly the same. However the distribution of sites within Hexham has changed from a number of smaller sites around the settlement fringes to a larger opportunity area to the west of the town. This change is unlikely to have a significant effect upon the findings relating to housing. Delivery of sites would be likely under both patterns of development, though the dispersed approach would not put all the needs in one place, and thus the risk of needs not being met could be lower. Conversely, a deliverable large scale site could add certainty of phased housing delivery over the plan period, as it would be delivered as part of a comprehensive masterplan for the whole site.

Implications of the Further Major Modifications

The proposed Garden Village is predicted to contribute to a **significant positive effect** on housing by delivering an increased amount of high quality housing in areas of need (including affordable and specialist housing).

20

SA TOPIC 5: CLIMATE CHANGE

Relevant SA Objectives

- To avoid or reduce flood risk to people and property.
- To ensure resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation.
- To mitigate climate change by reducing of greenhouse gas emissions.

20.1

Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and build environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village
↔ ?	↗	↔	↔	↗	↗	↔	↗	↔	↗

- 20.1.1 The overall strategy set out in the plan emphasises the need to focus new development in Northumberland within the existing towns and settlements in the County. By locating new development in these areas, the need to travel in order to access employment opportunities and key services and facilities ought to be reduced. This should help to mitigate emissions of greenhouse gas emissions generated through travel.
- 20.1.2 A key theme running through a number of policies in the plan (including Policy 1 [*Sustainable development*] and Policy 41 [*Promoting sustainable connections*]) is the need to support the use of sustainable methods of transport including walking, cycling and public transport; and to reduce the need to travel (for example by promoting improved broadband use at home, through Policy 48 [*Broadband Infrastructure*]). Together these policies should have a positive effect by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases associated with travelling (i.e. the need to travel ought to be reduced) and modes of transport (i.e. there would be increased support for walking, cycling and public transport).
- 20.1.3 The plan also aims to promote opportunities for increasing renewable energy capacity throughout the County. Policy 65 [*Renewable and low carbon energy development*] highlights that development of renewable energy and low carbon energy development will be supported and encouraged in appropriate locations in order to contribute to energy generation and a reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases.
- 20.1.4 Policies 66 [*Onshore wind energy*] and 67 [*Solar photovoltaic farms*] support the generation of energy from wind and solar energy specifically. The implementation of these policies would have a positive effect through facilitating the development of renewable and low carbon energy development. However, these policies are not enabling, rather they just encourage the development of low carbon energy schemes, so the effects are not considered to be significant.
- 20.1.5 There are further policies within the plan that together are predicted to have a **significant positive effect** in terms of reducing carbon emissions.

- Policy 5 [*Blyth Estuary Strategic employment site*] identifies a strategic employment site in Blyth. The sites are targeted at certain sectors including the low carbon and renewable energy sectors which builds upon existing strengths in this sector. Blyth is already home to Narec which is a spin-off company of the UK national Renewable Energy Centre.
- Policy 2 [*High quality sustainable design*] states that development will be supported that helps to achieve sustainable, high quality developments. More specifically, development should strive to reduce natural resource requirements and respond proactively to climate change. This includes incorporating measures to reduce waste generated during construction and ensuring the most effective and sustainable use of resources during construction and operation are considered. Whilst this policy will not ensure development goes beyond minimum standards for energy efficiency, it does provide greater support for developments that do so and thus could encourage developers to adopt higher quality design. The government recently revoked plans for implementing zero carbon standards. The position will be monitored during the plan period.

- 20.1.6 With regards to flood risk, the spatial strategy, housing and employment allocations seek to avoid areas of flood risk. In some areas, this ought to be easy to achieve, given that there is a low risk of flooding. For example, Cramlington, Ashington and Alnwick have few constraints from fluvial flooding. In other areas where development is proposed, there is greater risk of flooding, such within and around Blyth, Wooler and Berwick.
- 20.1.7 The allocated employment site in Morpeth is partly at risk of surface water flooding. Development will therefore need to ensure that it is not at risk of flooding, nor will it increase flood risk elsewhere.
- 20.1.8 The majority of the Garden Village site is not currently at risk of flooding from river, surface or ground water. However, development could potentially affect the hydrology of the area, which could have implications on nearby settlements such as Ponteland. However, a critical element of the proposed Garden Village is the need to secure an innovative flood relief and alleviation scheme. This would be likely to involve the use of sustainable drainage methods, which could reduce flood risk on site and the wider area. This would generate a **significant positive effect** for communities that are currently at risk of flooding.
- 20.1.9 The Strategic Land Review identified flood risk for small areas/settlements and this was a factor in determining the appropriate level of development in each area. It can therefore be assumed that development can be accommodated without having to develop in areas of greater flood risk. Having said this, development sites have not been allocated, and there is therefore potential for sites to be proposed that are within areas at risk of flooding. The potential for cumulative effects on flood risk also need to be taken into account. Consequently, an uncertain effect is predicted with regards to flood risk in these areas.
- 20.1.10 The plan incorporates policies that focus on the need to protect and enhance Northumberland's natural environment. Policy 28 [Principles for the environment] emphasises the importance of adapting to and mitigating the causes of climate change. Policy 37 [*Flooding*] outlines the need for development proposals to demonstrate how they will minimise flood risk to people, property and infrastructure. Policy 37 [*Flooding*] is supplemented by Policy 38 [*Sustainable Drainage Systems*], which highlights that where necessary, Sustainable Drainage Systems should be incorporated into developments. These policies reflect guidance incorporated within the National Planning Policy Framework relating to managing climate change and flood risk, and therefore whilst positive, the effects are considered to be insignificant.

- 20.1.11 In terms of coastal erosion and coastal change management, Policy 39 [*Coastal erosion and coastal change management*] sets out the importance of managing areas vulnerable to coastal change when considering development proposals and plan making in order to ensure they are in accordance with the Shoreline Management Plan. Implementation of this policy would have a positive effect in terms of managing the risk of coastal erosion in this area. However, the delivery of new or replacement coastal defences would not eliminate the long term risks relating to coastal erosion that occur along the coastline.

Implications of the Major Modifications

Various changes and additions to Policy 2 (High quality sustainable design) help to clarify the Council's approach to a variety of design factors including setting and local distinctiveness, diversity of communities, and resource use during construction. Changes are considered to have a positive effect in terms of encouraging a sustainable approach to development, and thereby helping to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change. This has led to a **significant positive effect** being predicted when considering Policy 2 alongside other plan policies.

Implications of the Further Major Modifications

The Modifications are predicted to have additional **significant positive effects**, because the proposed garden village would be likely to secure a comprehensive scheme for flood risk management that could benefit the wider area.

The effects upon carbon emissions are uncertain. At this stage, it is possible to predict that there will be an increase in carbon emissions associated with growth (increased energy and water use, waste, and travel). This constitutes a negative effect. However, the new community would be built to an exemplar standard, which would ensure that the efficiency of the development was much better than existing properties. Access to local services would also help to ensure that emissions from transport are minimised.

These factors would help to minimise the increase in emissions generated by substantial development at The Garden Village.

21

SA TOPIC 6: ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

Relevant SA Objectives

- To strengthen and sustain a resilient local economy.
- To deliver accessible education and training opportunities.
- To increase the diversity and quality of employment opportunities.

21.1

Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and build environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village
↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗	↔	↗	↔	↗

- 21.1.1 The plan sets out the need to plan for 305ha⁵¹ of land for economic development to 2031, to be located within and around the existing towns and settlements located within Northumberland (Policy 4 [*Employment land supply*]). The delivery of economic development would increase the amount of employment opportunities in accessible areas for people living within and around Northumberland and contribute towards developing and diversifying the local economy. Coupled with the aspiration for significant housing growth, this strategy would help to retain young workers within the County and halt population decline in some areas. It is considered that this would lead to a **significant positive effect** on the baseline relating to this SA topic.
- 21.1.2 To support the strategy, The Blyth Strategic Employment Area is identified as a key site within the plan for economic development within the low-carbon and environmental goods and services, offshore and subsea engineering and renewable and low carbon energy generation sectors (Policy 5 [*Blyth Estuary Strategic employment area*]). This would have a **significant positive effect** in terms of boosting employment opportunities, diversifying and strengthening the local and regional economy. However, opportunities may be less accessible for people without access to a car, and so there is a need to invest in and encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- 21.1.3 The proposed Garden Village is predicted to have **significant positive effects** upon the economy through the creation of jobs during construction and opportunities for employment in associated retail and services, as well as high-quality employment land that could strengthen the rural economy. Access to employment opportunities ought to be good, particularly with the construction of a link road that links to routes into the Newcastle urban area (i.e. the A696). Improved telecommunications could also facilitate increased home working.

⁵¹ This includes 222ha at Blyth Strategic Employment Area

- 21.1.4 The plan sets out the need to deliver at least 24,320 additional net dwellings over the plan period (see Policy 15 [Housing Provision]). The delivery of new housing within Northumberland over the plan period would further enhance the local economy and provide employment opportunities in the house building sector. The provision of a further 2000 dwellings at the Garden Village should also help to further retain a healthy labour pool in this location. By planning for this level of housing growth a decrease in the population of working-age across the county should be achieved; leading to a significant positive effect on the economy.
- 21.1.5 Policy 7 [Windfall employment development] provides an element of flexibility in terms of considering development proposals for B use classes on non-designated employment land. Where it is demonstrated that a proposed use meets criteria set out within this policy, development for employment uses will be supported. The implementation of this policy would have a positive effect in terms of enabling the development of employment generating uses throughout Northumberland.
- 21.1.6 The need to deliver retail and leisure development in local centres and continue their role in meeting the needs of the local community is set out in Policy 11 [*The roles of centres*] and Policy 12 [*Town Centres*]. The development of these uses in the centres will contribute towards developing the local economy through providing shops and leisure facilities in locations that are accessible to members of the local community.
- 21.1.7 Policy 13 [*Office accommodation within Town and Larger Village Centres*] outlines the importance of delivering office accommodation within the defined commercial and larger village centres throughout Northumberland. The delivery of such space ought to have a positive effect on local economies by ensuring that opportunities for business development are created.
- 21.1.8 The plan emphasises the key role that the rural economy has in terms of the wider economy of Northumberland. Policy 8 [Rural economy] supports the development of the rural economy in the County, which would have a positive effect through providing and maintaining employment opportunities in rural areas.
- 21.1.9 Policy 9 [*Tourism and visitor development*] aims to manage the delivery of tourism related development within Northumberland over the plan period. It sets out measures to ensure that proposed tourism development is located in appropriate locations that do not have a significant adverse impact on the environmental and landscape quality of the local area. Delivery of tourism uses in the County would have a positive effect in terms of continuing to attract visitors to the area, which would support the local economy and provide employment opportunities in the tourism sector. The sector is already significant to the Northumberland economy and is forecast to continue to grow.
- 21.1.10 Furthermore, there are a number of policies within the plan that emphasise the importance of protecting and enhancing Northumberland's natural, historic and built environment. These features are a key attraction in terms of tourism for the County, which forms a key part of the local economy. The implementation of these policies will therefore help to ensure that these features are protected, which is positive, rather than restrictive.
- 21.1.11 The plan includes a number of policies relating to connectivity throughout Northumberland. Policy 41 [*Promoting sustainable connections*] highlights that the Council will seek to promote and support the development of high quality pedestrian, cycle and non-motorised transport networks across the County. Policy 42 [*Improving Northumberland's core road network*] outlines the need to improve the road network in the County as part of delivering new development. Implementation of these policies should help to ensure that new employment uses delivered over the plan period are accessible via sustainable methods of transport and the road network.

- 21.1.12 Policy 41a [the effects of development on the transport network] should also have a positive effect on connectivity by ensuring that new development takes account of its potential impact on the network. The requirement to ensure that development is suitably designed to support the delivery of goods and supplies is also positive for businesses as it ought to promote efficiency.
- 21.1.13 Policy 45 [*Newcastle International Airport*] highlights that the council will support the sustainable development of Newcastle International Airport. Policy 46 [*Ports, harbours and beach launch facilities*] sets out that the Council will support the expansion of port facilities and the harbour provided that it does not have an adverse effect on environmental designations. Both of these policies recognise the importance of these strategic connections and should contribute towards supporting the growth of the Northumberland and wider regional economy.
- 21.1.14 The natural resources present within Northumberland also form a key part of the local economy. The plan incorporates a range of policies that set out the need to sustainably manage these natural resources in order to ensure that mineral extraction activities can continue to contribute towards the local and national economy.

Implications of the Major Modifications

Significant changes have been made with regards to Policy 4 (Employment Land Supply and Distribution). The required land for new economic development has reduced from 381ha to 305ha, with has a subsequent effect on the land allocations at certain sites. The Blyth allocation has thus been reduced from 189 ha to 91ha, and the land protected for B1, B2 and B8 development has been reduced from 128ha to 115ha. The land identified for flexible development has increased, from 51ha to 98ha, and there has been an additional 15ha allocated at Morpeth and an additional 1ha in Ponteland. Employment land at Prudhoe has been reduced by 1ha. Additional site options have been assessed in the SA to identify potential constraints and opportunities. Despite the changes made in the modifications, the Plan is still anticipated to have a significant positive effect on the economy. The overall amount of employment land planned for is lower, but the spread of employment opportunities for flexible development has increased, and could therefore have benefits for a wider range of settlements.

Changes to the details of development locations are predicted to have a minor positive effect on Policy 9 (Tourism and visitor development), and the change of title to 'Main Town Centres' and 'Smaller Town Centres' brings more clarity to Policy 10 (Hierarchy of centres). The additional detail which outlines the Council's support of development which serves the need of the local area, and resistance against the loss of such development, also helps to strengthen Policy 10.

Policy 12 has been renamed from 'Commercial Centres' to 'Town Centres', and a detailed explanation has been given with regards to sequential testing for retail development beyond Primary Shopping Areas. There has also been an addition of accessibility requirements within the policy, the inclusion of which is predicted to have a minor positive effect.

Instead of establishing a 500metre buffer zone to dictate office development, Policy 13 (Office accommodation within Town and Larger Village Centres) refers to Main Towns and Service Centres as a point of reference. This action is not thought to have an effect on the strength of the policy. Policy 14 now refers to large scale leisure facilities, and there has been a removal of small scale leisure facilities and leisure facilities integrated with retail uses from the policy.

Implications of the Further Major Modifications

Additional **significant positive effects** upon the economy are predicted. These are related to the creation of jobs to deliver a Garden Village, and accommodation to support a local workforce.

22

SA TOPIC 7: ACCESSIBILITY

Relevant SA Objectives

- To reduce the need for travel and improve transport integration.

22.1

Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and build environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village

- 22.1.1 The spatial strategy should reduce the need to travel for new communities by locating employment and housing opportunities within close proximity to each other in well-served settlements such as Morpeth, Cramlington, Ashington, Alnwick and Blyth.
- 22.1.2 The largely rural nature of the County means that access to services will still be an issue in some rural areas and there will be a continued reliance upon the private car. However, focusing significant growth in remote rural areas would not be a sustainable strategy. The Core Strategy does seek to support an appropriate level of development in rural areas by focusing on maintain the role of Service Centres and villages that can accommodate growth.
- 22.1.3 The increase in employment and housing development within the main towns and service centres may place additional pressure on the existing transport network due to the increase in people moving to and from and within the settlements (which is flagged as a potential **significant negative effect**). However, the plan incorporates policies that seek to mitigate these effects by requiring new development to deliver sufficient improvements in terms of sustainable transport provision, ensuring delivery of cycle parking and supporting infrastructure and improvements to the highways networks (Policy 41 [*Promoting sustainable connections*] and Policy 42 [*Improving Northumberland's core road network*]).
- 22.1.4 Furthermore, Policy 42 [*Improving Northumberland's core road network*] highlights that support will be given to improving Northumberland's core road network by supporting and safeguarding the lines of bypasses and improvements outlined in the policy. Specific reference is made to areas of the A1, A19 and A69. Delivery of these improvements would improve the efficiency of the local road network (although might also encourage increased car travel). Meanwhile the proposed reopening of the Ashington Blyth Tyne railway line could significantly improve accessibility throughout the south east of the county and links to the Tyneside conurbation. These measures (along with further plan policies discussed below) ought to mitigate the potential negative effects identified above.
- 22.1.5 Policy 16 [*Strategic housing sites*] seeks to deliver significant development at North Morpeth and South West Cramlington. Both these developments would contribute to improved accessibility in these locations through the provision of community infrastructure such as local centres, education, community and sports facilities.

- 22.1.6 Development at north Morpeth is facilitated the Morpeth Northern Bypass, which should have a positive effect on accessibility by reducing congestion. However, it should also be acknowledged that strategic road network improvements may also increase the overall amount of car trips made.
- 22.1.7 Policy 5 [*Blyth Estuary Strategic Employment Area*] identifies the area around the Blyth Estuary for employment and more specifically target sectors. The policy is supported through the allocation of sites as Enterprise Zone sites. The development of the area is likely to require public transport improvements to ensure sustainable access. This will not be secured before development therefore the effect is considered currently neutral. There are additionally issues with regard to traffic congestion on accesses into Blyth which have been recently subject to analysis and mitigation measures are proposed.
- 22.1.8 The growth of a further 2000 dwellings within the Central Delivery Area (at the proposed Garden Village) is likely to lead to increased vehicle trips, which could put pressure on existing road networks. However, the proposed Garden Village would involve the construction of a link road; ensuring access to the A696 from the new community. This road should also help to relieve the number of trips through the centre of Ponteland from both existing and additional traffic generated by the scheme.
- 22.1.9 The Policies supporting the Garden Village also seek to enhance connectivity for cyclists, pedestrians and by public transport, which should help to reduce the number of car trips generated and encourage active travel and recreation. The creation of a 'community centre' including basic services and facilities should also help to reduce the need to travel and secure good access to services, facilities and recreation.
- 22.1.10 Overall, the scheme is predicted to have a neutral effect at this stage. Whilst it would generate substantial growth in this location, new development should help to improve public transport links, and ensure that the community has access to a range of facilities, services and jobs. Increased traffic should also be managed through the construction of a bypass around Ponteland. Therefore, any potential negative effects ought to be offset by the positives.
- 22.1.11 Policy 39 [*Rail transport and safeguarding facilities*] sets out the key priority of the Council to secure the reintroduction of passenger rail services on Ashington, Blyth and Tyne railway line. The policy also sets out the need to avoid development that would prevent the reintroduction of passenger rail services on the South Tynedale and the Aln Valley Railway Lines. Reintroduction of these services would have a positive effect in terms of enhancing accessibility, including to Tyne and Wear, via a sustainable method of transport and potentially remove car borne travel and mitigate congestion issues at key junctions on the strategic highway network.
- 22.1.12 Policy 51 [*Green Infrastructure*] outlines the need for development proposals to contribute towards the development of the local green infrastructure where appropriate. Improvements to green infrastructure within Northumberland ought to have a positive effect in terms of encouraging people to walk and cycle when travelling shorter distances. The effects are not considered to be significant given that travel choices are dependent upon a wider range of factors than the provision of attractive routes.
- 22.1.13 The need to deliver retail and leisure development in local centres and continue their role in meeting the needs of the local community is set out in Policy 7 [*The roles of centres*] and Policy 9 [*Tourism and visitor development*]. The development of these uses in centres will ensure that they are accessible to people living within and around the existing towns where the centres are located. This should reduce the need to travel in order to access retail and leisure related uses.

- 22.1.14 Policy 49 [*Community services and facilities*] sets out a requirement for development proposals to safeguard and/or provide sufficient community facilities. The implementation of Policy 69 [*Planning for Infrastructure*] will help to facilitate the delivery of this infrastructure. These policies would therefore have a positive effect on accessibility by helping to ensure that community facilities are accessible by sustainable modes of transport to residents on new developments.
- 22.1.15 As discussed above the Plan is likely to have a mix of positive effects and negative effects. With mitigation and plan policies in place, it is predicted that the negative effects would not be significant.
- 22.1.16 In summary, the level of growth in the Plan is likely to lead to increased numbers of car trips. For rural areas, this is unlikely to lead to congestion issues, but will continue the trend of car transport to access services. Development in the main towns and service centres would mean that new residents ought to have good access to essential services, jobs, retail and leisure opportunities as well as public transport. However, there could be increased pressure on road networks leading to congestion along key routes. The delivery of strategic upgrades such as the Morpeth Northern Bypass ought to relieve pressure in some locations, and Plan policies will also seek to promote sustainable connections as much as possible, all of which would contribute to mitigating increased growth in housing, employment and subsequent car trips.
- 22.1.17 The council has undertaken a countywide Transport Assessment which appraises the impacts of new development on the road network and identifies mitigation measures including junction improvements. In spite of mitigation measures increased development could have a negative impact on journey times and congestion in particular parts of the county which already have localised congestion issues.

Implications of the Major Modifications

Policy 41 (Promoting sustainable connections) has been reworded for clarity, with emphasis on how conditions, obligations and other contributions could be applied and sought (when justified) in order to mitigate against the effects of development. Policy 43 (The effects of development on the road network) has been deleted and relocated to new Policy 41A (The effects of the development on the transport network). The new policy has reworked Policy 43 to be more consistent with national planning policy. This is likely to have a positive, but not significant effect.

Policy 42 has been updated to include specific improvements to the road network, which is likely to have positive effects upon accessibility.

Implications of the Further Major Modifications

Proposed modifications to the employment allocations at Morpeth are not predicted to have any significantly different effects, as they are broadly within the same location with similar access to the road network.

The Garden Village will lead to increased growth in the Central Delivery Area; which could lead to pressure on the road network. However, accessibility to jobs and services by vehicles ought to be maintained (possibly enhanced) through the delivery of a bypass. Accessibility is likely to be good for residents in the new community as the policy supports; the delivery of education, small-scale retail, enhanced broadband connections, public transport improvements, open space and community facilities.

Improved access to the countryside and recreation is identified as a key principle for the Garden Village which ought to have positive effects for new and existing communities.

23

SA TOPIC 8: NATURAL RESOURCES AND WASTE

Relevant SA Objectives

- Promoting innovative solutions for restoration of minerals and waste sites.
- To reduce the amount of waste that is produced and increase the proportion that is reused, recycled and composted.
- To ensure prudent use and supply of natural resources.

23.1

Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and built environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village
	↔	↔	↔	↔		↔			↔

- 23.1.1 The strategy seeks to increase housing growth above projected population levels ('policy-off') to ensure that the economy does not decline. This is likely to lead to an increase in the total use of natural resources and the generation of waste. However, the plan promotes the development of low carbon energy industries, sustainable construction and efficient patterns of development. Therefore, it is likely that the per capita use of resources and waste generated would decrease, which is a positive effect.
- 23.1.2 For the Garden Village for example, new development would be likely to be built to a high standard of design that would facilitate more efficient use of natural resources over the life of the development. The Garden Village should also ensure that opportunities to deliver sustainable waste management and low carbon energy schemes are explored and delivered. This would lead to the benefits in the longer term (providing such schemes are found to be feasible).
- 23.1.3 The spatial strategy set out in the plan is to focus new development in existing urban areas (main towns and service centres as a priority). This ought to have a positive effect in terms of ensuring that mineral resources are not sterilised. There is also a preference for the development of brownfield land, which should help to protect agricultural land from development. However, the need to release Green Belt and greenfield land to accommodate the growth proposed at some settlements (including a new Garden Village) would lead to the loss of agricultural land, which is a potential negative effect. The loss of this resource is irreplaceable, but one way to potentially 'compensate' the loss of agricultural land would be to secure increased allotment plots at existing or new sites.

- 23.1.4 Locating new development within and around main settlements would also help to ensure that existing waste disposal and recycling facilities would be accessible to Northumberland's communities. Waste collection is typically less efficient within rural areas as properties are scattered quite sparsely, which results in longer trips. Although authorities are committed to recycling and have a duty to collect waste from all properties, it might not be as cost effective to expand recycling schemes in some rural areas. The majority of existing waste facilities are located around the urban areas to the South East and Central areas, so the proposed strategy makes more effective use of existing infrastructure, which constitutes a positive effect.
- 23.1.5 The plan incorporates a specific section relating to managing natural resources, which sets out a range of policies relating to minerals proposals and waste and renewable and low carbon developments. The implementation of these policies will help to ensure prudent use of natural resources. Policy 52 [*Environmental criteria assessed for assessing minerals proposals*] highlights that applications for mineral extraction will be permitted where an applicant can demonstrate that any adverse effects on local communities and the environment are acceptable. . In addition, Policy 53 [*Criteria for assessing the benefits of minerals proposals*] outlines a set of criteria for assessing the benefits of minerals proposals.
- 23.1.6 Policies 55 [*Safeguarding mineral resources*], 56 [*Coal*], 57 [*Aggregate minerals*], 58 [*Clays*] and 59 [*Natural building and roofing stones*] set out criteria to be taken into account when determining applications for such minerals development. This includes support for minerals working when it can be demonstrated that the criteria would be met.
- 23.1.7 Policy 54 [*Mineral site reclamation*] identifies the need for applications for development to demonstrate that a suitable strategy for the reclamation of mineral extraction sites in Northumberland. It also requires development to ensure there is high quality restoration and aftercare, including for agriculture, geodiversity, the NPPF, biodiversity, native woodland, the historic environment and recreation, The implementation of this policy would have a positive effect in terms of the restoration of minerals sites.
- 23.1.8 Policy 62 [*Safeguarding minerals related infrastructure*] sets out a requirement to safeguard minerals related infrastructure over the plan period. The implementation of this policy would have a positive effect in terms of supplementing minerals related operations in Northumberland over the plan period.
- 23.1.9 The plan sets out the importance of moving waste management up the 'waste hierarchy'. Policy 63 [*Provision for waste re-use, recycling and recovery*] sets out the strategy for the provision of new waste management facilities within Northumberland. The policy identifies a series of criteria to ensure new facilities are located in the most sustainable locations. Policy 64 [*Waste disposal*] identifies measures for the management of hazardous and non-hazardous waste. The implementation of these policies should have a positive effect by ensuring the sustainable management of waste.
- 23.1.10 The plan outlines the need to improve the core road network and to ensure that new development does not lead to unacceptable impacts on the road network (Policy 42 [*Improving Northumberland's core road network*] and Policy 41A [*The effects of development on the transport network*]). This should ensure that the road network has sufficient capacity to manage vehicular traffic generated by waste and minerals development.

Implications of the Major Modifications

The wording of Policy 54 (Mineral and landfill site restoration and after-use) has been updated to offer clarity on the types of restoration and aftercare which should take place, which is likely to have positive implications. Extra detail has also been added to Policy 60 (Conventional and unconventional oil and gas), namely to ensure that development does not have 'unacceptable adverse environmental, social and economic effects'. An additional rail link (the East Coast Main Line to Steadsburn railhead) has been included within Policy 62 (Safeguarding minerals related infrastructure) and should also have benefits for minerals and waste movement.

More detail has been given on the support for renewable energy schemes (Policy 65: Renewable and low carbon energy), and changes have been made to both Policy 66 (Onshore wind energy) and Policy 67 (Solar photovoltaic farms). Changes to Policy 66 are to ensure they are in conformity with regards to the written Ministerial Statement relating to wind energy. These outline that wind energy schemes should only be permitted where areas of opportunity have been identified in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. Given that no opportunity areas have been identified yet, the potential effects on wind energy are uncertain.

Implications of the Further Major Modifications

The Garden Village will require the use of natural resources, and will generate waste in construction and operation. However, the efficiency of resource use ought to be at a higher standard given that this is planned to be an exemplar development. There may also be opportunities to secure sustainable forms of waste management. Therefore, the overall effects at this stage are predicted to be mixed / neutral.

24

SA TOPIC 9: BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

Relevant SA Objectives

- To protect and enhance Northumberland's biodiversity and geodiversity.

24.1

Appraisal Summary

Delivering the vision for Northumberland	Delivering a thriving and competitive economy	Providing everyone with access to a decent, affordable home	Green Belt	Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and build environment	Ensuring connectivity	Community well-being	Managing resources	Implementation	Dissington Garden Village
↗	?	?	↔	↗	↔	↗	↔	↔	?

- 24.1.1 There are a number of European sites located wholly, partly or surrounding Northumberland including 22 Special Areas of Conservation, 9 Special Protection Areas and 5 Ramsar sites.
- 24.1.2 Although the spatial strategy generally directs development away from the most sensitive areas, a number of the towns and service centres identified for new development in the plan (through Policy 3 [*Spatial Distribution*]) are located adjacent or close to European sites.
- 24.1.3 It should also be noted that increased discharge from waste water treatment plants could have a negative effect on ecology, particularly where the watercourse is a SSSI. In the main, these issues ought to be possible to manage through SUDs, and upgrades to the waste water network. However, the potential for negative effects has been recorded at this stage. Development in Haltwhistle, Rothbury and Wooler in particular could present a risk for effects on SSSIs that are water dependant.
- 24.1.4 The proposed Garden Village is located upon mostly agricultural land, upon which there are no designated habitats or protected species recorded. The site falls within two SSSI impact risk zones relating to Darras Hall SSSI. One of the SSSI zones would not require further consideration, though residential development over 100 units in the other zone would trigger the need to consult with Natural England (suggesting that effects may be more likely).
- 24.1.5 Darras Hall SSSI is a small piece of semi-natural grassland surrounded by residential uses. It is used for informal recreation. Development of residential units could affect the site through increased visitor use, though this is considered very unlikely. The proposed Garden Village would be over a mile walking distance, and would include an element of managed open space (and access to the wider countryside). Therefore, no effects are predicted in this respect.
- 24.1.6 There are small parcels of woodland within the masterplan area of the site, as well as hedges and groups of trees. It is likely that any ecological value associated with these features could be protected and any impacts mitigated. Furthermore, the development could enhance biodiversity within the area, seeking to achieve improvements in green and blue infrastructure and through the use of natural flood management schemes. This would have a positive effect in this location, but the effects are uncertain at this stage.

- 24.1.7 The Habitats Regulations Assessment states that provided European sites are protected from the potential effects of development either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, then the effects of the housing and economic policies in the Core Strategy can be deemed insignificant. It is considered that the Core Strategy provides the framework for the avoidance of such significant effects through a number of key policies.
- 24.1.8 There are a number of policies incorporated within the plan that emphasise the need for development proposals to contribute towards the conservation and enhancement of natural environmental assets including international, national and locally designated and non-designated nature conservation sites. These include Policy 1 [*Sustainable Development*], Policy 28 [*Principles for the Environment*] and Policy 51 [*Green infrastructure*] which goes further and seeks to secure net-gains for biodiversity through the protection, creation and enhancement of coherent ecological networks. This should lead to a positive effect.
- 24.1.9 Implementation of these policies should ensure that the need to protect these sites is considered as part of determining applications for new development in Northumberland.
- 24.1.10 Policy 29 [*Biodiversity*] sets out the importance of considering the impacts of new development on biodiversity within the County and seeks a net increase in biodiversity. The policy sets out the need to avoid any adverse impacts as a first preference, but provides flexibility in terms of requiring development to mitigate adverse impacts. Furthermore, Policy 36 [*Water supply and sewerage*] sets out the need for new water related infrastructure to avoid any harmful impacts on the existing ecosystem, sites of international, European or local importance for biodiversity. Implementation of these policies would contribute towards protecting and enhancing Northumberland's biodiversity.
- 24.1.11 Policy 5 [*Blyth Estuary Strategic Employment Area*] highlights that development will be supported in this location provided that there are no significant adverse impacts on the environment, including designated ecological assets. This is considered to be a neutral effect on balance.
- 24.1.12 There are a number of further supporting policies in the plan which emphasise the need to protect and enhance Northumberland's biodiversity for specific circumstances. These include:
- In assessing development proposals for tourism related development, the plan (Policy 9 [*Tourism and visitor development*]) sets out the need avoid significant adverse effects on designated sites of ecological value and protected species, unless it can be mitigated.
 - Policy 23 [*Provision for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities*] sets out the need for proposals to avoid unacceptable impacts to ecological assets.
 - Policy 46 [*Ports, harbours and beach launch facilities*] highlights the need to consider potential impacts on European protected sites, SSSIs and National Nature Reserves when considering development of port, harbour and beach launch facilities.
 - In planning for mobile telecommunications, Policy 47 [*Planning for telecommunications*] highlights the need for development to avoid adverse impacts on areas of ecological interest.
 - Policy 52 [*Environmental criteria for assessing minerals proposals*] sets out the need for development for minerals proposals to take into account the potential effects on the conservation and enhancement of nature conservation sites (including internationally, nationally and locally designated sites).
 - Policy 65 [*Renewable and low carbon energy development*] highlights the need to consider the need to protect internationally, nationally and locally designated nature conservation sites in terms of renewable and low carbon energy development.

- 24.1.13 Taken together, the Plan policies seeking to protect and enhance biodiversity ought to have a positive effect by firstly avoiding sensitive areas and then mitigating potential negative effects where development occurs. Although enhancement is encouraged, it is uncertain whether a significant positive effect would be achieved as this depends upon the extent to which 'net gains in biodiversity' could be achieved. Therefore, the overall effect at this stage is considered to be neutral, subject to careful management of pressure on European Sites and SSSIs.

Implications of the Major Modifications

An additional clause has been adopted in Policy 51 (Green Infrastructure) for securing net gains in biodiversity. This complements Policy 28 (Principles for the environment) which also seeks net gains in biodiversity where possible. The change is beneficial, but unlikely to significantly alter the SA Findings.

Implications of the Further Major Modifications

The proposed garden village is predicted to have no significant effects upon Darras Hall SSSI. Though there may be patches of habitat supporting wildlife (trees, hedges etc..) it is considered that routine mitigation would be possible to avoid or minimise impacts. The proposal presents an opportunity for significant enhancements to biodiversity, and so an uncertain positive effect is predicted at this stage.

25 MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT

- 25.1.1 As the Core Strategy has been prepared SA has been undertaken on draft policies at key stages including the Preferred Options Consultations, and the full Draft Plan Consultation. Recommendations made in earlier iterations of the SA have been taken into consideration by the Council when preparing the draft Pre-Submission Core Strategy.
- 25.1.2 It is recognised that policies in the draft Core Strategy will help to mitigate negative effects where they have been identified. No further mitigation or enhancement measures have been recommended where it is considered that plan policies are sufficient enough to achieve this.
- 25.1.3 Further focused mitigation and enhancement measures have been identified below, primarily to address significant negative effects or uncertain effects identified in the appraisal at this stage.

Key issue	Recommendations
There is potential for negative effects on the setting of heritage assets.	Qualitative assessment (to the necessary level of detail) of the effects on the setting of heritage assets should continue to be undertaken as part of the Strategic Land Review and as site-specific proposals emerge, in order to identify any significant effects. For the Delivery Document part of the Local Plan it is suggested that the assessment of site options takes account of cumulative effects upon the setting of heritage assets.
Potential for significant negative effects on the Conservation Area in Alnwick	<p><u>Mitigation</u></p> <p>It is recommended that development adjacent to Alnwick ought to be encouraged or required to adopt the design principles of the Conservation Area to ensure a coherent transition from the settlement edge to the surrounding areas. There may also be potential to enhance the character of the CA through development in this settlement, and this ought to be a key principle for growth in and around Alnwick.</p>
Development is likely to lead to the loss of agricultural land.	<p><u>Compensation</u></p> <p>The loss of this resource is irreplaceable, but one way to potentially 'compensate' the loss of agricultural land would be to secure increased allotment plots at existing or new sites where Grade 1, 2 or 3 lands are affected.</p>
Potential effects on landscape character associated with the Garden Village	<p><u>Mitigation</u></p> <p>Seek to retain a 'green corridor' along the route of Limestone Lane, to maintain a 'rural character' and views towards other 'built up' parts of the site.</p>
Potential to reduce water pollution from surface water run-off.	<p><u>Enhancement</u></p> <p>Ensure that development takes account of the potential to reduce pollutants within surface water run-off. Seek to implement natural water management measures that regulate pollution as well as managing flood risk.</p>

26 CONCLUSIONS AT THIS STAGE

- 26.1.1 The impacts of the Submission Core Strategy considered as a 'whole' have been summarised in **Table 26.1** below.

Table 26.1: Summary of sustainability effects

Sustainability Topics	Summary of effects	Potential monitoring measures
Health Wellbeing and cohesion	<p>The overall strategy to focus growth into the southern and central areas (<i>main towns and service centres</i>) should help to lessen inequalities and tackle deprivation. It should also help to match labour to job opportunities, particularly for young people. At the same time, the strategy seeks to maintain the vitality and viability of smaller rural settlements. Therefore a significant positive effect is predicted on health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Whilst supporting the vitality of settlements and providing access to a home for local residents the delivery of housing/ growth will inevitably be perceived by some as having an adverse impact and could potentially adversely affect their wellbeing. Therefore minor <u>negative effects</u> have been recorded (although these would be localised).</p> <p>The proposed Garden Village would lead to additional significant positive effects upon the baseline position for health and wellbeing. The village ought to ensure that more people have access to a good home, services and recreation, whilst providing job opportunities throughout construction and operation phases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy life expectancy. - Health profile monitoring focussed on key issues identified in health impact assessment. - Resident satisfaction with their local area as a place to live. - Net loss/gain in community facilities.
Environmental protection	<p>Air quality</p> <p>The scale and pattern of growth is likely to result in increased traffic around the main towns, which could have an adverse effect on air quality. However, the plan seeks to support infrastructure improvements that would help to relieve some of this pressure. On balance minor <u>negative effects</u> are predicted. However, plan policies do seek to achieve a modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel, which should help to further minimise emissions from traffic.</p> <p>Water</p> <p>The need to service new homes and businesses with waste water treatment/drainage may be constrained in some areas due to restricted capacity at certain waste water treatment works and the potential for negative effects on water quality due to increased loads. It is likely solutions can be secured to support growth at the majority of settlements, but an <u>uncertain effect</u> has been recorded at this stage to reflect the potential for negative effects in some areas at least in the short term. Further investigation and continued partnership working with Northumbrian Water is necessary to determine how these issues can be resolved. The draft Core Strategy supports such a proactive approach by seeking to minimise effects on water quality.</p> <p>The Garden Village proposals are predicted to have a significant positive effect upon water quality for affected watercourses. This relates to the potential implementation of natural water management systems, and changing land use from agricultural to residential in an area recorded as 'nitrate vulnerable' from surface</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measuring changes to air quality - Water supply and sewerage asset health - Achievement of water framework directive targets. - % of developments achieving a higher water efficiency rating than required by building regulations.

Sustainability Topics	Summary of effects	Potential monitoring measures
	water run-off.	
Built and Natural Heritage	<p>Heritage</p> <p>It is predicted that the Core Strategy is likely to have a mixed effect on heritage. Aspirations for growth and development could affect the setting of heritage assets through the loss of land and changes to settlement character. However, the strategy directs development away from smaller rural villages that are generally more sensitive to change, which ought to ensure that sensitive areas can be avoided. In some instances, development may also help to support better management and use of heritage, having a <u>positive effect</u>.</p> <p>Whilst the majority of development would be expected to be on the settlement edges, there is still potential for negative effects on heritage in the main towns and service centres. In particular, there is potential for a significant negative effect upon the Conservation Area in Alnwick, given that the scale of growth is substantial and the CA is 'at risk' and deteriorating.</p> <p>Plan policies (particularly Policy 33) ought to help mitigate potential negative effects, but the cumulative effects of development need to be carefully monitored and managed.</p> <p>The Garden Village proposals could have negative effects on the setting of heritage assets within proximity to the garden village and the road link. It ought to be possible to mitigate effects so that they are not significant. However, <u>negative effects</u> cannot be ruled out at this stage.</p> <p>Landscape</p> <p>The strategy generally directs development to settlements that are less sensitive in terms of landscape character. There are also a number of protective policies in the Plan that ought to mitigate any potential adverse effects. In some instances enhancement may be possible.</p> <p>It is therefore predicted that overall, effects on landscape (<i>although potentially negative in some locations</i>) are not likely to be significant.</p> <p>The garden village will change the character of the countryside to the west of Ponteland. In parts, the open, agricultural character will be retained, and enhancement could be secured through effective landscaping. However, there could be <u>negative effects</u> in some areas as the nature of the countryside would change, and be less 'rural'.</p> <p>Though most views out of Ponteland are unlikely to be significantly affected, changes could be viewed as negative by residents.</p> <p>Heritage assets are unlikely to be significantly affected by the proposals, but impacts would need to be explored in more detail once more detailed proposals were in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress of preparation and implementation of an action plan for conservation areas (including Conservation Area Appraisals, Conservation Management Plans, Article 4 Directions and Development Briefs). - Number of heritage assets identified as part of the Heritage At Risk programme that have a reduction in the level of risk and/or are removed from the at risk register as a result of mitigation. - Known heritage assets conserved or improved through their enhancement, repair, reinterpretation or better management - Number of planning applications granted with Northumberland Dark Skies conditions - Community perception of changes to their settlements. - Landscape character assessments undertaken.

Sustainability Topics	Summary of effects	Potential monitoring measures
Housing	<p>The Core Strategy seeks to deliver sufficient numbers and types of housing across the County to meet the objectively assessed housing need (<i>including an element of affordable housing</i>).</p> <p>The plan has been prepared from the 'top down' and 'bottom-up' to ensure that the most appropriate spatial strategy is delivered, but also allowing housing need to be met locally where specific needs and issues are prevalent. This will help to prevent the population and vitality of rural and urban areas from declining and will help to meet the aspirations for economic growth in the more urbanised areas in the South East and Central Delivery areas.</p> <p>The proposed Garden Village is predicted to have a positive effect on housing by delivering an increased amount of high quality housing in areas of need (including affordable and specialist housing).</p> <p>Overall, the Core Strategy is considered likely to have a significant positive effect on the baseline relating to housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of dwelling units granted planning permission in Northumberland and the Delivery Areas. - Affordable homes secured as a proportion of all new homes delivered in Northumberland and the Delivery Areas - Cumulative number of approved and completed; sites/and or yards; additional pitches/and or plots over the lifetime of the plan.
Climate Change	<p>Flood risk</p> <p>Focusing higher levels of growth into the main towns and service centres would help to support patterns of development that typically produce lower carbon emissions compared to dispersed rural growth.</p> <p>In the main, development is likely to be located away from areas of flood risk. Site specific information may allow some development to be in areas of flood risk but site specific information would need to be established.</p> <p>The garden village proposals would be likely to secure a comprehensive scheme for flood risk management that could benefit the wider area, which is a <u>positive effect</u>.</p> <p>Carbon emissions</p> <p>Although growth <i>per se</i> would increase carbon emissions, this would happen in a more uncoordinated manner without the Core Strategy in place (<i>which would likely result in higher carbon emissions</i>).</p> <p>There are a number of plan policies supporting the delivery of low carbon energy schemes and a shift to more sustainable modes of transport. There are also policies specifically supporting the development of low carbon industries around the Blyth Estuary, which ought to have a positive effect.</p> <p>In summary, the Plan promotes higher levels of housing growth to support economic development, but at the same time is likely to reduce per capita levels of carbon emissions by encouraging sustainable modes of travel and low carbon energy developments.</p> <p>Policy 2 and Policy 5 together are predicted to have a significant positive effect in terms of reducing carbon emissions and promoting resilience to climate change.</p> <p>Regarding the Garden Village, the effects upon carbon emissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Flood Risk Management Schemes implemented and number of people/properties protected. - Number of developments including water recycling systems - Number and percentage of SuDS secured in housing developments of between 5 and 9 units (and over 10 units). - Applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice. - Installed and consented renewable energy capacity (MW) by type - Number of developments incorporating small scale renewable/low carbon energy generation or connecting to a district energy scheme.

Sustainability Topics	Summary of effects	Potential monitoring measures
	<p>are uncertain. At this stage, it is possible to predict that there will be an increase in carbon emissions associated with growth (increased energy and water use, waste, and travel). This constitutes a <u>negative effect</u>.</p> <p>However, the new community would be built to an exemplar standard, which would ensure that the efficiency of the development was much better than existing properties. Access to local services would also help to ensure that emissions from transport are minimised. These factors would help to minimise the increase in emissions generated by substantial development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of new homes achieving emissions reductions above building regulation requirements.
Economy and Employment	<p>The Core Strategy is likely to have a significant positive effect on the local economy by supporting economic growth in accessible locations for key sectors. The plan will also help to ensure that the majority of housing is delivered in close proximity to the employment opportunities and where it is important to retain a young economically active labour force. Allowing modest growth in rural areas will also help to support the viability of smaller settlements.</p> <p>The strategic employment sites around the Blyth Estuary are acknowledged to be somewhat in-accessible currently. This will need to be improved as development occurs to ensure that local communities can benefit from new jobs and access them by sustainable means.</p> <p>Additional <u>positive effects</u> upon the economy are predicted related to the creation of jobs to deliver a Garden Village, and accommodation to support a local workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Northumberland Gross Value Added (GVA) - Unemployment rate. - Tourist numbers visiting Northumberland (day visitors and overnight) - Amount of flexible employment land taken up by non B class uses (hectares) - Employment land take up availability (hectares) by Employment Site
Accessibility	<p>The Plan is likely to have a mix of <u>positive effects</u> and <u>negative effects</u>. With mitigation and plan policies in place, it is predicted that the negative effects would not be significant (<i>i.e. the residual effect would be neutral</i>).</p> <p>In summary, the level of growth in the Plan is likely to lead to increased numbers of car trips. The strategy would help to reduce the need to travel (and distances travelled) by focusing growth around main towns and service centres. This ought to ensure that new housing has good access to essential services, jobs, retail and leisure opportunities as well as public transport. However, as the County is largely rural the issue of accessibility will still be prevalent in some rural areas.</p> <p>Proposed levels of growth could result in additional congestion on the existing network in the South East and Central Delivery areas in particular. However, there are proposals for strategic transport infrastructure to address such issues including the Morpeth Northern Bypass and support for the reinstatement of the Ashington-Blyth-Tyne Passenger Rail Line. The Core Strategy would help to support these schemes and would also help to reduce out-commuting by seeking to achieve greater self-reliance. Subject to securing the appropriate infrastructure to support development, the Core Strategy is therefore predicted to have a <u>neutral effect</u> on accessibility overall. This is positive in the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportion of Section 106 and Section 278 agreements secured in approved applications and appeals for the benefit of the transport network - Distance travelled to place of work and/or those working mainly at or from home - Measuring modal share of transportation by sustainable modes - Net inflow/outflow of commuters in Northumberland (ten year period) - Accessibility to key services by sustainable modes of transport

Sustainability Topics	Summary of effects	Potential monitoring measures
	<p>context that increased growth is typically associated with increased congestion.</p> <p>The Garden Village proposals would lead to increased growth in the Central Delivery Area; which could lead to pressure on the road network.</p> <p>However, accessibility to jobs and services by vehicles ought to be maintained (possibly enhanced) through the delivery of a bypass.</p> <p>Accessibility is likely to be good for residents in the new community as the policy supports; the delivery of education, small-scale retail, enhanced broadband connections, public transport improvements, and open space and community facilities.</p> <p>Improved access to the countryside and recreation is identified as a key principle for the Garden Village which ought to have positive effects for new and existing communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ratio of workplace-based employment to residence-based employment. - Peak time congestion and traffic count monitoring.
Natural resources and waste	<p>Focusing the majority of development into existing urban areas may help to better ensure that mineral resources are not sterilised. A focused urban approach to development will also help to ensure that waste collection regimes are more efficient compared to a widely dispersed approach. However, the higher levels of growth could lead to an increase in the amounts of waste generated and minerals required to support construction. On balance, the Core Strategy is considered likely to have a <u>neutral effect</u>.</p> <p>The plan is also likely to lead to the loss of some agricultural land (which is negative) but the effects are not considered to be significant at this stage as it is unclear what sites would be released to support development. These issues would need to be picked up in Part 2 of the Local Plan (Delivery Plan DPD), Neighbourhood Plans, and at a project level.</p> <p>The Garden Village will require the use of natural resources, and will generate waste in construction and operation. However, the efficiency of resource use ought to be at a higher standard given that this is planned to be an exemplar development. There may also be opportunities to secure sustainable forms of waste management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost of waste disposal per capita. - Levels of recycling, composting and reuse. - Loss in hectares of best and most versatile agricultural land by Grade. - Number of allotment plots secured through development contributions.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>The strategy helps to protect rural landscapes (and associated wildlife) particularly to the west and North of the County. However, local impacts would need to be determined through site level appraisals. Due to the significant growth directed to towns including along the Northumberland Coast, there is potential for additional recreational pressure and pollution to affect designated habitats. However, the HRA states that these effects can be considered insignificant (in terms of European Sites) if appropriate policy clauses are incorporated into the Core Strategy that ensure that development does not affect European sites. The policy measures incorporated into the plan take account of these recommendations, and also seek to enhance biodiversity where possible; and therefore a <u>neutral effect</u> is predicted at this stage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Net loss / gain in priority habitats and local wildlife sites. - Number of planning applications permissions granted which require mitigating licenses to avoid unacceptable harm or disruption to protected species or their habitats

Sustainability Topics	Summary of effects	Potential monitoring measures
	<p>It should be noted that increased discharge from waste water treatment plants could have a negative effect on ecology in the longer term, particularly where the watercourse is a SSSI. In the main, these issues ought to be possible to manage through effective water management including SUDs, and upgrades to the waste water network. However, the potential for <u>negative effects</u> has been recorded.</p> <p>Development in Haltwhistle, Rothbury and Wooler in particular could present a risk for effects on SSSIs that are water dependant.</p> <p>The proposed garden village is predicted to have no significant effects upon Darras Hall SSSI. Though there may be patches of habitat supporting wildlife (trees, hedges etc.) it is considered that routine mitigation would be possible to avoid or minimise impacts.</p> <p>The proposal presents an opportunity for significant enhancements to biodiversity, and so an <u>uncertain positive effect</u> is predicted at this stage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Percentage (%) of schemes approved affecting protect species and Nationally and Local Protected Sites where mitigation or compensation is secured</u> - <u>Quality of existing Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Northumberland (percentage in favourable condition)</u>

PART 4: WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS (INCLUDING MONITORING)?

27 INTRODUCTION (TO PART 4)

The SA Report must include...

- A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring

27.1.1 This Part of the SA Report explains the next steps that will be taken as part of the plan-making / SA process, including in relation to monitoring.

27.2 Plan finalisation and adoption

27.2.1 Consultation on the Full Draft Core Strategy took place from 12th December, 2014 to 11th February 2015. Following consultation on the draft Core Strategy the Council took account of consultation responses and the findings of sustainability appraisal (as well as any other new sources of evidence that emerge) and prepared the Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy.

27.2.2 As the plan was being finalised, the Council deemed it appropriate to revisit the alternative strategies to housing and employment growth in line with new/updated evidence and consultation responses. The SA Report has been updated to present the appraisal of these alternatives.

27.2.3 The Council consulted on the Pre-Submission Core Strategy, and has since made some changes to the Plan through 'Major Modifications' and 'Further Major Modifications'. SA was undertaken alongside these stages, with two addendums to the SA Report being prepared and consulted upon. This SA Report is an updated version, which consolidated and updates the previous SA Report and Addendums. This version of the SA Report has been submitted as part of the Examination library as a key piece of supporting evidence.

27.2.4 The provisional timetable moving towards Adoption of the Core Strategy is set out in **Table 27.1** below.

Table 27.1 – Local Plan Core Strategy Timetable

Date	Milestone
February 2017	Full Council considers Submission Core Strategy document
March 2017	Submission of Core Strategy
Summer 2017	Examination
Winter 2017	Adoption

27.2.5 At each of these stages, it may be necessary to undertake additional iterations of SA to account for further changes to the plan.

27.3 Monitoring

- 27.3.1 There is a requirement to outline the measures envisaged to monitor the predicted effects of the local Plan. A Core Strategy Monitoring and implementation Framework has been developed and has been subject to consultation alongside the pre-submission draft. Many of the identified targets, indicators and triggers overlap with the SA (reflected by those indicators that are underlined and [shaded purple](#)). However the sustainability effects of the plan will also be subject to specific monitoring, and these ought to be incorporated into the wider monitoring and implementation framework.
- 27.3.2 **Table 26.1** in the previous Chapter sets out monitoring measures under each SA topic which are intended to monitor any significant effects as well as tracking the baseline position more generally. At this stage the monitoring measures have not been finalised, as there is a need to take account of consultation feedback and explore the feasibility of collecting information for the proposed measures.

APPENDIX I: REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Annex I of the SEA Directive prescribes the information that must be contained in the SA Report; however, interpretation of Annex I is not straightforward. The table below explains how we (AECOM) interpret Annex I requirements.

Annex 1

Interpretation of Annex I

The report must include...

The report must include...

(a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;
(b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan
(c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
(d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;
(e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;
(f) the likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;
(g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;
(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information
(i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.

An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	i.e. answer - What's the Plan seeking to achieve?	i.e. answer - What's the scope of the SA?
Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - What's the 'context'?	
The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level		
The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan		
The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	i.e. answer - What's the 'baseline'?	
Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance		
Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of appraisal	i.e. answer - What are the key issues & objectives?	
An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (i.e. an explanation of the 'reasonableness of the approach')	i.e. answer - What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?	
The likely significant effects associated with alternatives, including on issues such as and an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives considered / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.		
The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan	i.e. answer - What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?	
The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan		
A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring	i.e. answer - What happens next?	

APPENDIX II: ASSESSMENT OF BROAD SPATIAL ALTERNATIVES

The appraisal methodologies set out below were utilised at the issues and options stage to appraise options for a range of plan issues. Although the presentation of these findings is different to those in subsequent stages of SA, the content and meaning of the findings remain consistent (i.e. both presentation methods identify and differentiate between significant and non-significant effects).

Key

Significance of effect		Description of effect
++	Major Positive	Option will have a major positive effect on the SA objective being assessed when compared to the current and future baseline conditions
+	Minor Positive	Option will have a positive effect on the SA objective being assessed when compared to the current and future baseline conditions. Minor adverse effects may result but the overall effect will be positive
0	Neutral	Option being assessed is unlikely to create any significant impact (positive or negative) at present or in the future
-	Minor Negative	Option will have a negative effect on the SA objective being assessed when compared to the current and future baseline conditions. Minor positive effects may result but the overall effect will be negative
--	Major Negative	Option will have a major negative effect on the SA objective being assessed when compared to the current and future baseline conditions
?	Unknown/Uncertain	There is insufficient information about the implications of the option to make a robust assessment or the option has significant positive and negative effects
X	No Relationship	Option not relevant to the SA objective
Timescale		Description of timescale
Short Term		The effect the option would have within the initial 0 - 5 years
Medium Term		The effect the option would have within the initial 5 - 10 years
Long Term		The effect the option would have beyond 10 years

Assessment of various options on sustainability aspects can only be made at a general level within this issues and options stage. Therefore, an 'unknown/uncertain' result has been recorded which may be due to a lack of detail at this strategic level. For the purpose of this assessment, significant effects are defined as those which have been identified as major positive (++) or major negative (--) in the assessment.

Strategic development options [question 3]

Question 3: The Council's view is that option C represents the most appropriate strategic development option for Northumberland. Do you agree with this? If not which option do you consider to be the most appropriate, or are there other options to consider?												
	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
1. Health and well-being	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on people's health.	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on people's health.	0	0	0	This is unlikely to impact on people's health.
2. Air quality	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect as it is a continuation of the existing strategy.	?	?	?	A lower level of development may result in less car based trips and thus may be more beneficial than Option A or C. However, by accommodating less development in Northumberland, it may result in longer trips for employment and services, for example to Tyneside.	?	?	?	Accommodating higher levels of growth within Northumberland should help to prevent people travelling further for employment, retail and other services, for example to Tyneside, which should be beneficial in terms of reducing emissions. However, new development may still generate an increased traffic generation. Directing development to sustainable locations in line with CS Objective 1 and in line with the proposed settlement hierarchy development principles should help to mitigate any potential impact alongside policies which encourage means of transport other than the private car. Targeted growth in certain centres may have the potential to impact on local air quality in town centres and this would need to be mitigated.

Question 3: The Council's view is that option C represents the most appropriate strategic development option for Northumberland. Do you agree with this? If not which option do you consider to be the most appropriate, or are there other options to consider?

	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
3. Cultural heritage and diversity	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place to avoid new development impacting on cultural and heritage assets and using CS objective 6 and criteria based policies to help to safeguard against any adverse impacts.	?	?	?	This option may have less impact than option A or C due to the lower scale of growth. Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where any new development is to be directed. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place to avoid new development impacting on cultural and heritage assets and using CS objective 6 and criteria based policies to help safeguard against any adverse impacts.	?	?	?	This option may have a slightly higher impact than option A or B due to the higher scale of growth. Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where any new development is to be directed. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place to avoid new development impacting on cultural and heritage assets and using CS objective 6 and criteria based policies should help to safeguard against any adverse impacts.
4. Decent and affordable homes	+	+	+	Likely to have a minor positive effect as it should enable the provision of new housing to meet local needs in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy. It may not have such a positive effect as option C which should enable greater housing provision. It may not provide sufficient flexibility to respond to changing housing markets and economic circumstances.	--	--	--	Likely to have a major negative effect as it may not meet the housing needs of local communities, may result in a shortage of housing and lead to an increase in house prices, making affordability issues worse, particularly in rural areas.	++	++	++	Likely to have a major positive effect enabling the provision of a wide range of types of housing, including affordable in order to meet local needs.

Question 3: The Council's view is that option C represents the most appropriate strategic development option for Northumberland. Do you agree with this? If not which option do you consider to be the most appropriate, or are there other options to consider?

	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
5. Avoiding flood risk	?	?	?	The potential effect would depend upon the location of new development delivered under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by directing new development away from high flood risk areas and including appropriate mitigation measures such as Sustainable Drainage Schemes.	?	?	?	This option is less likely to impact on areas at risk of flooding due to the lower scale of development. Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is delivered under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by directing new development away from high flood risk areas and including appropriate mitigation measures such as Sustainable Drainage Schemes.	?	?	?	This option is more likely to impact on areas at risk of flooding due to the scale of the development. Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is delivered under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by directing new development away from high flood risk areas and including appropriate mitigation measures such as Sustainable Drainage Schemes.
6. Safer communities	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on community safety.	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on community safety.	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on community safety.
7. Climate change adaptation	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on climate change resilience.	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on climate change resilience.	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on climate change resilience.
8. Resilient economy	+	+	+	Maintaining existing levels of growth is likely to have a minor positive effect on the local economy by enabling provision of employment land to support the local economy and provision of housing for housing-led regeneration. However this option may not provide sufficient flexibility	--	--	--	Planning for lower rates of growth is likely have a major negative effect by limiting ability to provide the employment land required for flexibility to respond to an economic uplift and growth.	++	++	++	Planning for targeted increases in development is likely have a major positive effect by enabling the provision of a flexible and responsive supply of employment land to meet potential economic growth. In addition, increased levels of housing may help support housing-led regeneration, which may support those

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	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
				to respond to changing economic circumstances.								town centres where additional growth is proposed and provide additional construction industry jobs and spin-offs.
9. Education and training opportunities	0	0	0	Likely to be a neutral effect on the whole. There may be the opportunity to secure educational facilities through new development Community Infrastructure Levy / Section 106 Agreements associated with new development.	0	0	0	Likely to be a neutral effect on the whole. Less development means less opportunity to secure educational facilities through Community Infrastructure Levy / Section 106 Agreements.	0	0	0	Likely to an overall neutral effect. More development means more opportunity to secure educational facilities through Community Infrastructure Levy / Section 106 Agreements.
10. Employment diversity and quality	+	+	+	Likely to have a minor positive effect as continued existing levels of growth should enable the provision of employment land to help to support the local economy and job provision.	--	--	--	Likely to have a major negative effect as lower rates of development may limit ability to provide employment land required for flexibility to respond to an economic uplift / growth and provide employment.	++	++	++	Planning for targeted increases in development is likely have a major positive effect by enabling the provision of a flexible and responsive supply of employment land to meet potential economic growth. In addition, increased levels of housing may help support housing-led regeneration, which will support those town centres where additional growth is proposed and provide additional construction industry jobs and spin-offs.
11. Community services and	+	+	+	Likely to have a minor positive effect as new	-	-	--	Likely to be a minor negative effect increasing to a major	+	++	++	Planning for targeted increases in development is

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	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
facilities				community services and facilities can be planned and provided for as part of new development.				negative effect in the long term as there will be less likelihood of securing new community facilities and services as part of new developments. In the longer term the impact of a lower rate of development may mean that the critical mass required to support such facilities may be lost over time, particularly in rural areas.				likely to have a positive effect in the short term, rising to major positive in the medium to long term. As the economy picks up and rates of development increase over time there may be a greater chance of securing community services and facilities as part of new developments. Higher rates of development should provide the critical mass required to support such facilities.
12. Reduce travel and integrate transport	?	?	?	<p>Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option.</p> <p>New development may generate additional transport requirements. The moderate level of growth proposed under this option should help to reduce the need for people to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc, which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the length of trips and thus emissions.</p> <p>Any potential impact could be mitigated by directing new development to</p>	?	?	?	<p>Accommodating less development in Northumberland may result in longer trips for employment and services, for example to Tyneside. However, it is partly dependent upon where new development is located under this option.</p> <p>Any potential impact could be mitigated by directing new development to sustainable locations and ensuring that new developments are accessible by means of transport other than the private car.</p>	?	?	?	<p>Accommodating higher levels of growth within Northumberland should help to prevent people travelling further for employment, retail and other services, for example to Tyneside, which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the need to travel particularly the length of trips.. However, new development may still generate an increased number of trips depending on the location. Directing development to sustainable locations in line with CS Objective 1 and in line with the proposed settlement hierarchy</p>

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	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
				sustainable locations and ensuring that new developments are accessible by means of transport other than the private car.								development principles should help to mitigate any potential impact alongside policies which encourage means of transport other than the private car.
13. Rural and urban landscapes	?	?	?	<p>Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option.</p> <p>New development, particularly on greenfield land, has the potential to impact upon urban and rural landscapes.</p> <p>Mitigate potential adverse impacts by encouraging sustainable patterns of developments which focus on existing settlements.</p> <p>Appropriate criteria based policies could be utilised to ensure that the impacts of new development on urban and rural landscapes are minimised. An emphasis on re-using previously developed land would be beneficial by ensuring that greenfield take up is kept to a minimum and that brown field sites are remediated</p>	?	?	?	<p>Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option.</p> <p>New development, particularly on greenfield land, has the potential to impact upon urban and rural landscapes. Lower rates of development proposed under this option may have less impact than option A or C as it should result in less land take.</p> <p>Mitigate potential adverse impacts by encouraging sustainable patterns of developments which focus on existing settlements.</p> <p>Appropriate criteria based policies could be utilised to ensure that the impacts of new development on urban and rural landscapes are minimised. An emphasis on re-using previously developed land would be beneficial by</p>	?	?	?	<p>Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option.</p> <p>New development, particularly on greenfield land, has the potential to impact upon urban and rural landscapes. Higher rates of development and more land take under this option may have greater impact than option A or B, with cumulative negative effects over time.</p> <p>Mitigate potential adverse impacts by encouraging sustainable patterns of developments which focus on existing settlements.</p> <p>Appropriate criteria based policies could be utilised to ensure that the impacts of new development on urban and rural landscapes are minimised. An emphasis on re-using previously developed</p>

Question 3: The Council's view is that option C represents the most appropriate strategic development option for Northumberland. Do you agree with this? If not which option do you consider to be the most appropriate, or are there other options to consider?

	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
				thus helping to improve urban landscapes. The Landscape Sensitivity Study should help to identify sites which are less sensitive to new development.				ensuring that greenfield take up is kept to a minimum and that brown field sites are remediated thus helping to improve urban landscapes. The Landscape Sensitivity Study should help to identify sites which are less sensitive to new development.				land would be beneficial by ensuring that greenfield take up is kept to a minimum and that brown field sites are remediated thus helping to improve urban landscapes. The Landscape Sensitivity Study should help to identify sites which are less sensitive to new development.
14. Natural resources	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as there is a mixture of positive and negative effects. New development could increase the need for construction materials for new buildings and infrastructure. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by locating development in sustainable locations to avoid sterilisation of supplies (minerals etc.) The nature of the development is also crucial. The design of the development (south facing windows etc), the incorporation of integrated renewable energy (CHP etc) can help to reduce the need for energy thus minimising the potential impact. Appropriate criteria based	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as there is a mixture of positive and negative effects. New development could increase the need for construction materials for new buildings and infrastructure. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by locating development in sustainable locations to avoid sterilisation of supplies (minerals etc.) The nature of the development is also crucial. The design of the development (south facing windows etc), the incorporation of integrated renewable energy (CHP etc) can help to reduce the need for energy thus minimising the potential impact. Appropriate criteria based policies and use of SPD should help to secure	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as there is a mixture of positive and negative effects. New development could increase the need for construction materials for new buildings and infrastructure. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by locating development in sustainable locations to avoid sterilisation of supplies (minerals etc.) The nature of the development is also crucial. The design of the development (south facing windows etc), the incorporation of integrated renewable energy (CHP etc) can help to reduce the need for energy thus minimising the potential impact. Appropriate criteria based policies and use of SPD should help to

Question 3: The Council's view is that option C represents the most appropriate strategic development option for Northumberland. Do you agree with this? If not which option do you consider to be the most appropriate, or are there other options to consider?

	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
				policies and use of SPD should help to secure new developments that are energy efficient and mitigate any potential impact.				new developments that are energy efficient and mitigate any potential impact. This option may have less impact than option A and option C as less natural resources may be required for construction and it is less likely that mineral and aggregate resources would be sterilised.				secure new developments that are energy efficient and mitigate any potential impact. This option may have a greater impact than option A and option B as more natural resources may be required to enable construction and it is more likely that mineral and aggregate resources could be sterilised. Appropriate mitigation measures described above would be important.
15. Biodiversity and geodiversity	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Designated sites are well protected but non-protected sites, species and habitats need safeguarding where possible. Mitigate potential impacts by careful consideration, through the Habitats Regulations Assessment, of protection of existing and provision of new habitats and using appropriate criteria based policies to ensure that potential adverse effects are	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Designated sites are well protected but non-protected sites, species and habitats need safeguarding where possible. This option is likely to have more positive effects than Option A or C in terms of requiring less land take however there may be fewer opportunities to secure enhancement and provision of new habitats through Community Infrastructure Levy / Section 106 Agreement.	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Designated sites are well protected but non-protected sites, species and habitats need safeguarding where possible. Particularly under this option there may be targeted growth in coastal locations which may impact on European marine sites. This option is likely to have a more negative impact than options A and B in terms of requiring a greater land take and the potential to impact on

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	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
				mitigated and opportunities for enhancement taken.				Mitigate potential impacts by careful consideration, through the Habitats Regulations Assessment, of protection of existing and provision of new habitats and using appropriate criteria based policies to ensure that potential adverse effects are mitigated and opportunities for enhancement taken.				biodiversity / geodiversity. However this option may also have more positive impact than options A and B due to improved opportunity to secure enhancement and provision of new habitats through Community Infrastructure Levy / Section 106 Agreement. Mitigate potential impacts by careful consideration, through the Habitats Regulations Assessment, of protection of existing and provision of new habitats and using appropriate criteria based policies to ensure that potential adverse effects are mitigated and opportunities for enhancement taken.
16. Ground, river and sea waters	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, but particularly for employment, waste processing and minerals extraction, may have a negative effect on water quality. Mitigate using appropriate safeguards and policies.	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, but particularly for employment, waste processing and minerals extraction, may have a negative effect on water quality. Mitigate using appropriate safeguards and policies.	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, but particularly for employment, waste processing and minerals extraction, may have a negative effect on water quality. Mitigate using appropriate safeguards and policies.

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	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
17. Reduce greenhouse gases	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend upon where new development would be located under this option. New development may generate additional transport requirements. The moderate level of growth proposed under this option could help to reduce the need for people to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc, which may be beneficial in terms of reducing the length of trips and thus emissions. Any potential impact could be mitigated by directing new development to sustainable locations and ensuring that new developments are accessible by means of transport other than the private car. This will also help to minimise the uptake of green field land. Appropriate criteria based policies could help to mitigate any potential adverse impacts: i.e. priority to the re-use of brownfield land where available;	?	?	?	Accommodating less development in Northumberland may result in longer trips for employment and services, for example to Tyneside. However it is partly dependent upon where new development would be located under this option Any potential impact could be mitigated by directing new development to sustainable locations and ensuring that new developments are accessible by means of transport other than the private car. This should also help to minimise the uptake of green field land. Appropriate criteria based policies could help to mitigate any potential adverse impacts: i.e. priority to the re-use of brownfield land where available; encouragement of sustainable methods of travel; integrated renewable energy proposals as part of new developments; eco- friendly developments.	?	?	?	Accommodating higher levels of growth within Northumberland should help to prevent people travelling further for employment, retail and other services, for example to Tyneside, which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the need to travel particularly the length of trips. However, new development may still generate an increased number of trips depending on the location. Directing development to sustainable locations in line with CS Objective 1 and in line with the proposed settlement hierarchy development principles should help to mitigate any potential impact alongside policies which encourage means of transport other than the private car. This should also help to minimise the uptake of green field land. Appropriate criteria based policies could help to mitigate any potential adverse impacts: i.e. priority to the re-use of brownfield land where available; encouragement of

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	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
				encouragement of sustainable methods of travel; integrated renewable energy proposals as part of new developments; eco-friendly developments.								sustainable methods of travel; integrated renewable energy proposals as part of new developments; eco-friendly developments. Higher levels of development may provide the critical mass required to deliver CHP schemes and economies of scale for developers to absorb renewable energy and energy efficient design and construction costs.
18. Reduce waste	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as new development may lead to the creation of additional waste in terms of construction and also in terms of waste generated from future residents. The effect will also be dependent upon provision of waste management and minimisation facilities and kerb side collections for new developments. Mitigate by ensuring new development includes appropriate measures in line with CS objective 7, which seeks to reduce waste. If adequate measures are not introduced alongside new	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as new development may lead to the creation of additional waste in terms of construction and also in terms of waste generated from future residents. The effect will also be dependent upon provision of waste management and minimisation facilities and kerb side collections for new developments. Mitigate by ensuring new development includes appropriate measures in line with CS objective 7, which seeks to reduce waste. If adequate measures are not introduced alongside new build then the effects could get	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as new development may lead to the creation of additional waste in terms of construction and also in terms of waste generated from future residents. The effect will also be dependent upon provision of waste management and minimisation facilities and kerb side collections for new developments. Mitigate by ensuring new development includes appropriate measures in line with CS objective 7, which seeks to reduce waste. If adequate measures are not introduced alongside new build then the effects could

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	Option A: Continue the existing strategic approach				Option B: Planning for lower rates of development				Option C: Planning for targeted increases in development			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
				build then the effects could get worse over time.				worse over time.				get worse over time.
19. Community decision making	x	x	x	No direct relationship. There will be an opportunity to comment on emerging options.	x	x	x	No direct relationship. There will be an opportunity to comment on emerging options.	x	x	x	No direct relationship. There will be an opportunity to comment on emerging options.
20. Minerals and waste site restoration	+	+	+	Likely to have a minor positive effect as existing levels of growth may provide scope for development related re-use of a minerals or waste sites, provided that it is in a sustainable location.	-	-	-	Likely to have a minor negative effect as less growth may limit the potential for development related uses of minerals and waste sites.	++	++	++	Likely to have a major positive effect as more growth should support development related re-use of a minerals or waste sites, provided that it is in a sustainable location. It should also support the local economy making potential uses more viable.

Summary
Options A and C are likely to perform well in relation to the achievement of economic and social objectives, particularly option C where higher levels of growth could support the local economy with associated benefits for Northumberland's residents. Option A may not provide sufficient flexibility to respond to changing economic circumstances. Option B is likely to have a negative impact on economic and social objectives as lower levels of growth may not provide sufficient flexibility to respond to changing economic circumstances or meet the housing, employment and other needs of residents.
All three options are likely to have an uncertain or negative impact on the environment as new development has the potential to impact on the environment, however, the extent of that impact is largely dependent upon the location of the development.
Option C, however has the potential to have more negative impacts on environmental objectives due to the higher scale of development, depending on the location of development. Higher rates of development may, however, help to reduce trips outside of the county for employment, retail and other services which may be beneficial in terms of climate change mitigation. Careful mitigation measures should therefore be required across the range of objectives to ensure that this Option does not negatively impact on the environment and that opportunities for enhancement are taken.
Criteria based policies in the Core Strategy in relation to: sustainable patterns of development; reducing the need to travel; encouraging public transport, walking and cycling; energy efficiency and renewable energy; flood risk; pollution; protection of the built and natural environment; provision of education, health and community facilities etc would be required to mitigate the impact of development proposed under any of the three options. Option C could take advantage of economies of scale to provide enhancement opportunities.

Spatial distribution options [question 4]

Question 4: The Council’s view is that option C represents the most appropriate spatial distribution option for Northumberland. Do you agree? If not which option do you consider would be the most appropriate or are there other options to consider?												
	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
1. Health and well-being	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on people’s health	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on people’s health	0	0	0	Unlikely to impact on people’s health
2. Air quality	?	?	?	<p>New development may generate additional transport requirements. However, locating new development in the County may help to reduce the need for people to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc, which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the length of trips and thus emissions. Any potential impact could be mitigated by directing new development to sustainable locations and ensuring that new developments are accessible by means of transport other than the private car.</p> <p>Criteria based policies relating to air pollution would also assist.</p>	-	-	-	Whilst locating new development in the County should help to reduce the number and length of trips outside the County, a more dispersed development pattern may lead to people travelling further within the County to access employment and services, particularly in rural areas and it may not provide the critical mass required to support public transport provision. This option is likely therefore have a negative effect on air pollution.	?	?	?	<p>New development may generate additional transport requirements; however, locating new development in the County may help to reduce the need for people to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the length of trips and thus emissions. By focusing development in existing settlements, as proposed under this option, it should help to support public transport provision and encourage walking and cycling.</p> <p>The towns which could be the focus of targeted growth may see an increase in air pollution, particularly in town centres. Strong policies to support public transport provision and walking and cycling may help to mitigate the impact.</p> <p>Advantage should be taken of</p>

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
												the critical mass that could be created in towns which are the focus of targeted growth to ensure the integration of public transport, footpaths and cycle ways into new developments.
3. Cultural heritage	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place to avoid new development impacting on cultural and heritage assets and using CS objective 6 and criteria based policies to help to safeguard against any adverse impacts.	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place to avoid new development impacting on cultural and heritage assets and using CS objective 6 and criteria based policies to help to safeguard against any adverse impacts.	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by ensuring appropriate safeguards are in place to avoid new development impacting on cultural and heritage assets and using CS objective 6 and criteria based policies to help to safeguard against any adverse impacts.
4. Decent and affordable homes	+	+	+	Likely to have a minor positive effect as continuing the existing strategy should ensure that new housing development is directed to main towns and service centres to meet housing need in these locations. While smaller settlements and more remote rural areas may not benefit so much from this approach, rural	+	+	?	Likely to have a minor positive effect in the short and medium term as dispersing new housing development should assist in meeting housing needs in rural but less so in the main towns and service centres. Likely impact is uncertain in the long term as it may not allow housing needs to be met in main towns and service centres.	++	++	++	Likely to have a major positive effect through continuing to provide housing in the main towns and service centres and villages with appropriate services, plus targeted growth in regeneration areas should ensure that the housing needs of Northumberland's residents are met and enable sufficient flexibility to be responsive to changing housing markets

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
				exceptions policies may enable genuine housing need in these areas to be met and may help to offset any potential negative impact.								and provide a wide range of housing types and tenures, including affordable housing. This option may be less beneficial in relation to small settlements and more remote rural areas, however rural exceptions policies may enable genuine housing need in these areas to be met and help to offset any potential negative impact.
5. Avoiding flood risk	?	?	?	The potential effect would depend upon the location of new development delivered under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by directing new development away from high flood risk areas and including appropriate mitigation measures such as Sustainable Drainage Schemes.	?	?	?	The potential effect would depend upon the location of new development delivered under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by directing new development away from high flood risk areas and including appropriate mitigation measures such as Sustainable Drainage Schemes.	?	?	?	The potential effect would depend upon the location of new development delivered under this option. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by directing new development away from high flood risk areas and including appropriate mitigation measures such as Sustainable Drainage Schemes.
6. Safer communities	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect on safer communities.	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect on safer communities.	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect on safer communities.
7. Climate change adaptation	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect on climate change adaptation.	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect on climate change adaptation.	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect on climate change adaptation.
8. Resilient economy	+	+	+	Likely to have a minor positive effect on the local economy by enabling	?	?	-	Likely effect is uncertain as while a more dispersed development pattern should	++	++	++	Likely to have major positive effects including the same benefits as Option A.

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
				employment land provision to support the local economy and enabling housing-led regeneration. Directing development towards existing settlements should also support the regeneration of those settlements / town centres. This option may be less beneficial in more remote rural areas. Mitigate by using CS policy to allow conversion of rural buildings.				assist rural areas it may have a negative effect on main towns and service centres, as over time as they could lose the critical mass required to support employment and retail and service provision in town centres which could have a negative impact on the local economy. Dispersal could also lose the benefits of economies of scale (i.e. locating similar industries next to each other or others in the supply chain, producing a 'cluster effect'.)				Additional targeted growth in key location and regeneration areas should increase the potential for employment generating development and provide for flexibility to respond to changing economic circumstances as well as a wide range of employment land types. It should also assist the regeneration of centres targeted for growth. This option should have additional benefits of economies of scale and could support clustering of niche sectors.
9. Education and training opportunities	+	+	+	Likely to have minor positive effects by supporting educational facilities provision in main towns / service centres and smaller settlements with 1 st Schools and education facilities could be secured through Community Infrastructure Levy / Section 106 Agreement. This option may have less positive benefits in remote rural areas to support schools.	?	?	-	Likely effect is uncertain in the short and medium term. A greater dispersal of development may help support schools in rural areas however, conversely depending on the extent of dispersal; it may be difficult to have sufficient critical mass to support schools. In the long term main towns and service centres may start to lose the critical mass required to support educational facilities, particularly post 16 education and training.	++	++	++	Likely to have major positive effect by supporting educational facilities provision in main towns / service centres and smaller settlements with 1 st Schools and providing economies of scale and critical mass to support more innovative education and training facilities in those towns. There is more scope under this option to secure education facilities as part of new development. This option may have less

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
												positive benefits in remote rural areas to support schools.
10. Employment diversity and quality	+	+	+	Likely to have minor positive effects as continuing existing distribution will enable the provision of employment land to help support the local economy / job provision.	?	?	-	Likely effect is uncertain as while a more dispersed development pattern should assist rural areas it may have a negative effect on main towns and service centres, as over time as they could lose the critical mass required to support employment and retail and service provision in town centres which could have a negative impact on the local economy. Dispersal could also lose the benefits of economies of scale (i.e. locating similar industries next to each other or others in the supply chain, producing a 'cluster effect'.)	++	++	++	Likely to have major positive effects including the same benefits as Option A. Additional targeted growth in key location and regeneration areas could increase the potential for employment generating development and provide for flexibility to respond to changing economic circumstances as well as a wide range of employment land types. It would also assist the regeneration of centres targeted for growth. This option would have additional benefits of economies of scale and could support clustering of niche sectors.
11. Community services and facilities	+	+	+	Likely to have a minor positive effect as new community services and facilities can be planned and provided for as part of new development in main towns, service centres and villages with a certain level of services.	?	?	-	There is likely to be a mixture of positive and negative effects of this option. The dispersal of development may assist in the provision of community facilities and services in rural areas; however, it may negatively impact on the provision of those facilities in the main towns and service centres. In the longer term it is	+	+	++	Likely to have a minor positive effect in the short and medium term rising to major positive in the long term. As the economy picks up and rates of development increase over time there may be a greater chance of securing community services and facilities as part of new developments. Higher rates of development should

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	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
								considered that it may be difficult to achieve the critical mass required in order to sustain those facilities due to the dispersed nature of development. Over time main towns and service centres may lose the critical mass required in order to support existing facilities leading to a negative effect in the longer term.				provide the critical mass required to support such facilities.
12. Reduce travel and integrate transport	?	?	?	New development may generate additional transport requirements. However, locating new development in the County may help to reduce the need for people to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc, which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the length of trips and thus emissions. Any potential impact could be mitigated by directing new development to sustainable locations and ensuring that new developments are accessible by means of transport other than the private car.	-	--	--	Whilst locating new development in the County may help to reduce the need to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc, a dispersed development pattern could encourage a higher number of car based trips within the county in areas which are not served by public transport. Furthermore, dispersed development may not provide the critical mass to support public transport provision which may deteriorate over time in main towns and services centres as the centres lose population. Any new development may generate additional transport requirements. It may be difficult to mitigate	?	?	?	New development may generate additional transport requirements; however, locating new development in the County may help to reduce the need for people to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the length of trips and thus emissions. By focusing development in existing settlements, as proposed under this option, it should help to support public transport provision and encourage walking and cycling. Strong policies to support public transport provision and walking and cycling may help to mitigate any potential

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	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
								the negative effects of this option as public transport provision and walking and cycling could be less viable.				impact. Advantage should be taken of the critical mass that may be created in towns which are the focus of targeted growth to ensure the integration of public transport, footpaths and cycle ways into new developments.
13. Rural and urban landscapes	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, particularly on greenfield land, has the potential to impact upon urban and rural landscapes. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by encouraging sustainable patterns of developments which focus on existing settlements. Appropriate criteria based policies could be utilised to ensure that the impacts of new development on urban and rural landscapes are minimised. An emphasis on re-using previously developed land would be beneficial by ensuring that greenfield take up is kept to	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, particularly on greenfield land, has the potential to impact upon urban and rural landscapes. This option may lead to a negative effect on rural landscapes but conversely there may be a more positive effect on urban landscapes. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by encouraging sustainable patterns of developments which focus on existing settlements. Appropriate criteria based policies could be utilised to ensure that the impacts of new development on urban and rural landscapes are minimised. An emphasis on re-	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, particularly on greenfield land, has the potential to impact upon urban and rural landscapes. Higher rates of development could lead to more land-take and this option could have greater impact than option A or B. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by encouraging sustainable patterns of developments which focus on existing settlements. Appropriate criteria based policies could be utilised to ensure that the impacts of new development on urban and rural landscapes are minimised. An emphasis on re-using previously developed

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	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
				a minimum and that brown field sites are remediated thus helping to improve urban landscapes. The Landscape Sensitivity Study should help to identify sites which are less sensitive to new development.				using previously developed land would be beneficial by ensuring that greenfield take up is kept to a minimum and that brown field sites are remediated thus helping to improve urban landscapes. The Landscape Sensitivity Study should help to identify sites which are less sensitive to new development				land would be beneficial by ensuring that greenfield take up is kept to a minimum and that brown field sites are remediated thus helping to improve urban landscapes. The Landscape Sensitivity Study should help to identify sites which are less sensitive to new development.
14. Natural resources	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as there is a mixture of positive and negative effects. New development could increase the need for construction materials for new buildings and infrastructure. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by locating development in sustainable locations to avoid sterilisation of supplies (minerals etc.) The nature of the development is also crucial. The design of the development (south facing windows etc), the incorporation of integrated renewable energy (CHP etc) can help to reduce the need for energy thus minimising the potential impact.	-	-	-	Likely to have a minor negative effect. New development could increase the need for construction materials for new buildings and infrastructure. The dispersed nature of development under this option is more likely to lead to a sterilisation of supplies of minerals etc. In addition, it may lead to greater car based travel which could result in the need for more oil, a finite resource. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by locating development in sustainable locations to avoid sterilisation of supplies (minerals etc.) The nature of the development is also crucial. The design of the	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as there is a mixture of positive and negative effects. New development could increase the need for construction materials for new buildings and infrastructure. Mitigate potential adverse impacts by locating development in sustainable locations to avoid sterilisation of supplies (minerals etc.) The nature of the development is also crucial. The design of the development (south facing windows etc), the incorporation of integrated renewable energy (CHP etc) can help to reduce the need for energy thus minimising the potential impact. Appropriate criteria based policies and use

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
				Appropriate criteria based policies and use of SPD should help to secure new developments that are energy efficient and mitigate any potential impact.				development (south facing windows etc), the incorporation of integrated renewable energy (CHP etc) can help to reduce the need for energy thus minimising the potential impact. Appropriate criteria based policies and use of SPD should help to secure new developments that are energy efficient and mitigate any potential impact.				of SPD should help to secure new developments that are energy efficient and mitigate any potential impact. This option could have a greater impact than option A as more natural resources could be required to enable construction and it is more likely that mineral and aggregate resources could be sterilised. Appropriate mitigation measures described above would be important. Economies of scale should be taken advantage of in terms of securing integrated renewable energy; energy efficiency measures and more innovative low carbon solutions which may require a certain critical mass to be viable.
15. Biodiversity and geodiversity	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Concentrating new development should help to avoid green field land take which should help to minimise impact. Mitigate potential impacts by	--	--	--	Likely to have major negative effects as more dispersed development is more likely to result in greenfield land-take in rural areas which could impact on biodiversity and geodiversity. The extent of the impact would depend on where new development is located under this option. Less	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. Concentrating new development should help to avoid greenfield land-take, which should help minimise impact. In this respect this option is more positive than option B.

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
				careful consideration, through the Habitats Regulations Assessment, of protection of existing and provision of new habitats and using appropriate criteria based policies to ensure that potential adverse effects are mitigated and opportunities for enhancement taken.				economies of scale could lessen opportunities to enhance existing / create new habitats and criteria based policies may not be sufficient to off-set negative effects. Whilst designated sites are well protected, there is more likelihood under this option for non-protected sites and species to be affected. Mitigate effects by using the Habitats Regulations Assessment to consider protection of existing / provision of new habitats and using appropriate criteria based policies to ensure potential adverse effects are mitigated and opportunities for enhancement taken.				Designated sites are well protected but non-protected sites, species and habitats need safeguarding where possible. Particularly under this option there may be targeted growth in coastal locations which may impact on European marine sites. This option is likely to have a more negative effect than options A in terms of requiring greater land take and the potential to impact on biodiversity / geodiversity. However this option could also have more positive impact than option A due to improved opportunity to secure enhancement and provision of new habitats through Community Infrastructure Levy / Section 106 Agreement. Mitigate potential impacts by careful consideration, through the Habitats Regulations Assessment, of protection of existing and provision of new habitats and using appropriate criteria based policies to ensure that potential adverse

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
												effects are mitigated and opportunities for enhancement taken.
16. Ground, river and sea waters	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, but particularly for employment, waste processing and minerals extraction, may have a negative effect on water quality. Mitigate using appropriate safeguards and policies.	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, but particularly for employment, waste processing and minerals extraction, may have a negative effect on water quality. Mitigate using appropriate safeguards and policies.	?	?	?	Likely effect is uncertain as it would depend on where new development is located under this option. New development, but particularly for employment, waste processing and minerals extraction, may have a negative effect on water quality. Mitigate using appropriate safeguards and policies.
17. Reduce greenhouse gases	?	?	?	New development may generate additional transport requirements and thus emissions and result in the uptake of land and resources. However, locating new development in the County may help to reduce the need for people to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc, which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the length of trips and thus emissions. Any potential impact could be mitigated by directing new development to sustainable locations and	--	--	--	Whilst locating new development in the County may help to reduce the need to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc, a dispersed development pattern may encourage a higher number of car based trips within the county in areas which are not served by public transport. Furthermore, dispersed development may not provide the critical mass to support public transport provision which may deteriorate over time in main towns and services centres as the centres lose population.	?	?	?	New development may generate additional transport requirements and thus emissions and result in the uptake of land, use of resources etc; however, locating new development in the County may help to reduce the need for people to travel outside the County for employment, retail etc which should be beneficial in terms of reducing the length of trips and thus emissions. By focusing development in existing settlements, as proposed under this option, it should help to support public

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect				Nature of Effect			
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation	Short term	Med term	Long term	Comments / mitigation
				<p>ensuring that new developments are accessible by means of transport other than the private car.</p> <p>Appropriate criteria based policies should help to mitigate any potential adverse impacts: i.e. priority to the re-use of brownfield land where available; encouragement of sustainable methods of travel; integrated renewable energy proposals as part of new developments; eco-friendly developments.</p>				<p>Any new development may generate additional transport requirements.</p> <p>It may be difficult to mitigate the negative effects of this option as public transport provision and walking and cycling would be less viable.</p>				<p>transport provision and encourage walking and cycling.</p> <p>Advantage should be taken of the critical mass that may be created in towns which are the focus of targeted growth to ensure the integration of public transport, footpaths and cycle ways into new developments.</p> <p>Appropriate criteria based policies should help to mitigate any potential adverse impacts: i.e. priority to the re-use of brownfield land where available; encouragement of sustainable methods of transport; integrated renewable energy proposals as part of new developments; eco-friendly developments.</p> <p>Higher levels of development may also provide the critical mass required in order to deliver CHP schemes and other innovative low carbon solutions and provide economies of scale for developers to absorb the cost of renewable energy and energy efficiency design/s and</p>

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
												schemes. These should be seriously considered as part of any large scale development in order to off-set negative impacts.
18. Reduce waste	?	?	?	<p>Likely effect is uncertain as new development may lead to the creation of additional waste in terms of construction and also in terms of waste generated from future residents. The effect will also be dependent upon provision of waste management and minimisation facilities and kerb side collections for new developments.</p> <p>Focusing development in existing settlements should assist in ensuring that waste management/minimisation facilities are located in close proximity to residents, making recycling easier</p> <p>Mitigate by ensuring new development includes appropriate measures in line with CS objective 7, which seeks to reduce waste. If adequate measures are not introduced alongside new build then the effects could</p>	-	-	-	<p>Likely effect is negative as new development may lead to the creation of additional waste in terms of construction and also in terms of waste generated from future residents. The effect will also be dependent upon provision of waste management and minimisation facilities and kerb side collections for new developments.</p> <p>A more dispersed development pattern could make kerbside collections more expensive to deliver and could make the co-location of waste management / minimisation facilities (a barrier to encouraging people to recycle).</p> <p>If adequate measures are not introduced alongside new build then the effects could get worse over time.</p>	?	?	?	<p>Likely effect is uncertain as new development may lead to the creation of additional waste in terms of construction and also in terms of waste generated from future residents. The effect will also be dependent upon provision of waste management and minimisation facilities and kerb side collections for new developments.</p> <p>Focusing development in existing settlements should assist in ensuring that waste management/minimisation facilities are located in close proximity to residents, making recycling easier</p> <p>Mitigate by ensuring new development includes appropriate measures in line with CS objective 7, which seeks to reduce waste. If adequate measures are not introduced alongside new build then the effects could get worse over time.</p>

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	Option A: The Existing Distribution				Option B: Dispersed Development				Option C: The Existing Distribution plus targeted growth			
	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation	Nature of Effect			Comments / mitigation
SA Objectives	Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term		Short term	Med term	Long term	
				get worse over time.								
19. Community decision making	x	x	x	No direct relationship. There will be opportunity to comment on emerging development options.	x	x	x	No direct relationship. There will be opportunity to comment on emerging development options.	x	x	x	No direct relationship. There will be opportunity to comment on emerging development options.
20. Minerals and waste site restoration	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect.	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect.	0	0	0	Likely to have a neutral effect.

Summary

Options A and C which seek to concentrate new development in existing centres score highly in terms of social and economic objectives by supporting existing main towns, service centres and villages with a certain level of services. They also provide housing, retail, employment land in the right locations and particularly option C, which promotes targeted growth in regeneration centres, has the additional benefit of economies of scale and should provide a flexible supply of housing and employment land in sustainable locations and create the critical mass required to support community services and facilities. Both options may have less positive effects in smaller hamlets and the open countryside which could be off-set by allowing conversion of rural buildings and the use of exceptions policies to meet genuine housing need on those locations.

Both options may have uncertain or potential negative effects on the environment as new development may lead to increased traffic generation, use of natural resources, result in green field land take etc, however, by locating new development in the County it should help to reduce the need to travel outside of the County for employment, retail etc and should, therefore, be beneficial in terms of reducing emissions. In relation to some indicators the potential impact will depend upon the location of the development. By focusing development in and around existing settlements it should help to create sustainable patterns of development and minimise the potential impact of any development on the environment.

Criteria based policies in the Core Strategy in relation to: sustainable patterns of development; reducing the need to travel; encouraging public transport, walking and cycling; energy efficiency and renewable energy; flood risk; pollution; protection of the built and natural environment; provision of education, health and community facilities etc would be required to mitigate the impact of development proposed under the three options. It is recommended that, if Option C is progressed, advantage be taken of economies of scale to provide enhancement opportunities and to consider more innovative low carbon developments which may require a certain critical mass to be viable.

Whilst option B may be more beneficial in more remote rural areas, it is of concern that it may have a detrimental impact on higher order centres which may start to lose critical mass and services and facilities over time. The needs of the residents of those centres may not be met in the long term. It may also not support the regeneration of the main centres and the dispersed nature of employment development may not support economies of scale that co-location brings.

Option B has major negative impacts on global and local environmental objectives by increasing the need to travel and contributing to green house gas emissions and may have a higher impact on Northumberland's landscapes and biodiversity/geodiversity. It is considered that it would be difficult to provide sufficient mitigation to outweigh the likely major negative effects of this option

APPENDIX IV: SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS TO THE SA OBJECTIVES

SA Objective	Subsidiary Questions
1. To improve health and well being and reduce health inequalities	<p>Will it encourage healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities?</p> <p>Will residents' quality of life be adversely affected?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p> <p>Will it help in tackling rising obesity levels?</p> <p>Will it increase regular participation in sports/exercise?</p> <p>Will it provide for high quality, accessible healthcare facilities?</p> <p>Will it incorporate a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure within new developments, where appropriate?</p> <p>Will it promote recreational and leisure opportunities in the countryside?</p> <p>Will it deliver healthy workplaces through good quality and safe design?</p> <p>Will it provide high quality, accessible healthcare facilities?</p> <p>Will it deliver a comprehensive network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?</p> <p>Will it deliver recreational and leisure opportunities?</p> <p>Will it improve access to open space and / or recreational facilities?</p> <p>Will it ensure pollution eradication / reduction (noise, emissions, light)?</p> <p>Will it provide accessible public transport options?</p> <p>Will it result in the need to undertake a Health Impact Assessment?</p>
2. To ensure good air quality	<p>Will it maintain and improve air quality?</p> <p>Will it limit air pollution to levels that do not damage natural systems?</p> <p>Will it limit air pollution to levels that do not damage human health?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p> <p>Will it help bring forward the removal of designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's)?</p> <p>Will it mitigate the impacts on air quality from road transport?</p> <p>Will it discourage or mitigate against uses that generate NO₂ or other particulates?</p>

SA Objective	Subsidiary Questions
3. To protect and enhance Northumberland's cultural heritage and diversity	<p>Will it protect and where appropriate enhance sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological or cultural value in both urban and rural areas including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and Historic Parks and Gardens?</p> <p>Will it ensure appropriate archaeological or building assessment is undertaken prior to development?</p> <p>Will it promote sensitive re-use of historical assets and buildings of local historic interest, where the opportunity arises?</p> <p>Will it improve and broaden access to, and understanding of, local heritage and historic sites?</p> <p>Will it maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the residual adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities are clearly outweighed by public interests that cannot be met in any other way?</p>
4. To ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home	<p>Will it provide an adequate supply of affordable housing?</p> <p>Will it support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all part of the community?</p> <p>Will it reduce homelessness?</p> <p>Will it ensure that appropriate use is made of the existing housing stock?</p> <p>Will it promote of sustainable building techniques including innovative building materials and construction methods?</p> <p>Will it provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?</p>
5. To avoid or reduce flood risk to people and property	<p>Will it ensure that all developments comply with legislative requirements and emerging flood strategies?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p> <p>Will it reduce the risk of flooding to people and property in new and existing developments?</p> <p>Will it protect and enhance the natural function of floodplains</p> <p>Will it promote the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in appropriate circumstances?</p> <p>Will it take into account predicted future impacts of climate change, including water scarcity and flooding events?</p> <p>Will it provide opportunities for creative approaches to flood management associated with minerals and waste related developments?</p>

SA Objective	Subsidiary Questions
6. To deliver safer communities	<p>Will it promote design of buildings and spaces to reduce crime and the fear of crime?</p> <p>Will it help reduce incidence of anti-social behaviour and substance misuse?</p> <p>Will it encourage social inclusion?</p> <p>Will it contribute towards road safety for all users?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p>
7. To ensure resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation	<p>Will it reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change e.g. flooding, disruption during extreme weather etc?</p> <p>Will it reduce vulnerability of the economy to climate change and harness any opportunities that may arise?</p> <p>Will it ensure that impacts and opportunities of climate change on natural habitats and species are full considered and incorporated in spatial planning decisions?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p>
8. To strengthen and sustain a resilient local economy	<p>Will it contribute to employment opportunities, especially in less economically successful parts of the county?</p> <p>Will it maximise opportunities for all members of society?</p> <p>Will it tackle the causes of poverty and deprivation?</p> <p>Will it encourage and promote social cohesion and respect for other cultures and lifestyles?</p> <p>Will it protect and enhance the vitality and viability of existing employment areas?</p> <p>Will it provide employment land in areas that are easily accessible by public transport?</p> <p>Will it promote a more sustainable local economy by accommodating development linked to new economic opportunities resulting, from example, alternative fuel technologies; renewable energy; new agricultural production (due to climate change); etc.</p>
9. To deliver accessible education and training opportunities	<p>Will it provide and support high quality educational facilities?</p> <p>Will it improve the skills and qualifications throughout the working age population?</p> <p>Will it promote life-long learning that is accessible to all?</p> <p>Will it help to provide a supply of skilled labour to match the needs of local businesses?</p> <p>Will it reduce inequalities in skills across Northumberland?</p>

SA Objective	Subsidiary Questions
	<p>Will it support community enterprises and the voluntary sector?</p> <p>Will it support the creation of flexible jobs to meet the changing needs of the population?</p>
10. To increase the diversity and quality of employment opportunities	<p>Will it contribute to employment opportunities, especially in less economically successful parts of the county?</p> <p>Will it assist businesses in finding appropriate land and premises?</p> <p>Will it improve business development and enhance competitiveness?</p> <p>Will it direct appropriate retail, leisure and/or employment opportunities to town centre locations to aid urban regeneration?</p> <p>Will it support the rural economy and farm diversification?</p> <p>Will it recognise the importance of the environment to the local economy?</p> <p>Will it utilise the natural environment to create employment in the tourism sector?</p> <p>Will it promote sustainable tourism and cultural opportunities?</p> <p>Will it encourage development of a low-carbon economy in Northumberland?</p>
11. To improve the quality, range and accessibility of community services and facilities	<p>Will it improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including healthcare, education, retail and leisure?</p> <p>Will it promote the development of a range of high quality, accessible community, cultural and leisure facilities?</p> <p>Will it encourage active involvement of local people in community activities?</p> <p>Will it maintain and enhance rural facilities?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p>
12. To reduce the need for travel and improve transport integration	<p>Will it decrease the amount of traffic using the road system?</p> <p>Will it reduce adverse impacts of transportation on communities and the environment?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p> <p>Will it increase the availability and utilisation of public transport</p> <p>Will it promote mixed-use developments that reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car?</p> <p>Will it increase the range, availability and affordability of sustainable travel choices i.e. public transport, walking, cycling?</p>

SA Objective	Subsidiary Questions
	<p>Will it promote car-share schemes and/or working from home?</p> <p>Will it promote the development of Park & Ride Schemes?</p> <p>Will it improve the jobs/homes balance?</p> <p>Will it reduce traffic volumes?</p>
13. To protect and enhance the quality, distinctiveness and diversity of Northumberland's rural and urban landscapes	<p>Will it reduce the amount of derelict, degraded and underused land?</p> <p>Will it improve the landscape and ecological quality and character of the countryside?</p> <p>Will it decrease litter in the countryside?</p> <p>Will it protect and enhance the landscape character and scenic quality of the countryside?</p> <p>Will it protect and enhance natural landscapes within the urban area, including recreational open space and strategic green corridors?</p> <p>Will it incorporate a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure within new developments, where appropriate?</p> <p>Will it conserve and enhance areas with landscape designations and take account of their management objectives?</p> <p>Will it protect the strategic function of the Green Belt?</p> <p>Will it maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements?</p> <p>Will it improve access to the countryside for recreation?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p> <p>Will it improve the amenity of residential areas?</p> <p>Will it deliver good quality design that reflects local character?</p> <p>Will it protect and enhance the historic value of rural and urban landscapes?</p>
14. To ensure prudent use and supply of natural resources	<p>Will it minimise the loss of soils to development?</p> <p>Will it maintain and enhance soil quality?</p> <p>Will it encourage the construction industry and other minerals users to utilise the most appropriate materials for any given situation?</p> <p>Will it support education initiatives that encourage more effective use of limited resources?</p> <p>Will it ensure that mineral resources are not sterilised unnecessarily when considering other planning applications and undertaking other development?</p>

SA Objective	Subsidiary Questions
	<p>Will it provide an adequate supply of minerals to meet society's needs?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p>
15. To protect and enhance Northumberland's biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>Will it avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species?</p> <p>Will it conserve and enhance natural / semi-natural habitats, including marine habitats?</p> <p>Will it conserve and enhance species diversity, and in particular avoid harm to protected species?</p> <p>Will it maintain and enhance sites, including marine sites, designated for their nature conservation interest?</p> <p>Will it maintain and enhance woodland cover and management?</p> <p>Will it provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate wildlife and wild places?</p> <p>Will it avoid habitat fragmentation and strengthen ecological framework?</p> <p>Will it ensure all new developments protect and enhance local biodiversity?</p> <p>Will it contribute to the achievement of objectives and targets within the Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan?</p> <p>Will it incorporate a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure within new developments, where appropriate?</p> <p>Will it result in a net gain for the natural environment with each new development?</p> <p>Will it encourage farming as a means of sustainable management of the environment?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p> <p>Will it result in the need to undertake an Appropriate Assessment?</p>

SA Objective	Subsidiary Questions
16. To protect and enhance the quality of Northumberland's river, transitional and coastal and ground and surface water bodies	<p>Will it limit water pollution to levels that do not damage natural systems?</p> <p>Will it maintain water abstraction, run-off and recharge within carrying capacity (including future capacity)</p> <p>Will it maintain and restore key ecological processes e.g. hydrology, water quality, coastal processes)</p> <p>Will it improve the quality of rivers, ground and surface water bodies?</p> <p>Will it improve the quality of transitional and coastal waters?</p> <p>Will it encourage sustainable and efficient management of water resources?</p> <p>Will it minimise the environmental effects of water abstraction, both inside and outside the authority boundary?</p> <p>Will it ensure that essential water infrastructure is co-ordinated with all new development?</p> <p>Will it promote and encourage the installation of water saving measures?</p> <p>Will it contribute positively to achieving objectives set for the Northumbria and Tweed/ Solway River Basin Management Plans as part of delivery of the Water Framework Directive?</p> <p>Will it avoid adverse impacts and, where possible, enhance the landscape and seascape above and below surface water level?</p> <p>Will it encourage sustainable practices in aquatic farming, fishing and other businesses?</p> <p>Will it contribute positively to achieving the aims of the integrated Northumberland Coast AONB/EMS Management Plan and use an ecosystem approach to coastal and marine management?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p> <p>Will it fulfil all duties under the habitats regulations?</p>
17. To mitigate climate change by reducing of greenhouse gas emissions	<p>Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption or providing energy from waste?</p> <p>Will it lead to an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources?</p> <p>Will it reduce emissions of ozone depleting substances?</p> <p>Will it promote energy efficiency in buildings and new development</p> <p>Will it reduce contributions to climate change through sustainable building practices</p> <p>Will it contribute to reducing Northumberland's carbon footprint?</p>

SA Objective	Subsidiary Questions
	<p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p>
<p>18. To reduce the amount of waste that is produced and increase the proportion that is reused, recycled and composted</p>	<p>Will it lead to reduced consumption of materials and resources?</p> <p>Will it reduce household waste?</p> <p>Will it increase waste recovery and recycling?</p> <p>Will it reduce hazardous waste?</p> <p>Will it reduce waste in the construction industry?</p> <p>Will it provide a framework in which businesses, communities and individuals take more responsibility for their own waste</p> <p>Will it ensure the design and layout of new development supports sustainable waste management?</p> <p>Will it provide a suitable range of facilities throughout the County to assist in increasing rates of reuse, recycling and composting?</p> <p>Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities?</p>
<p>19. To increase public involvement in decision making and participation in community activity, especially amongst under represented groups</p>	<p>Will it provide opportunities for the public to become involved in the planning process?</p> <p>Will it increase the ability of 'Hard-to-Reach' groups to influence decisions?</p>
<p>20. Promoting innovative solutions for restoration of minerals and waste sites</p>	<p>Will it identify best practice in the restoration of minerals and waste sites?</p> <p>Will it encourage operators to seek innovative renovation solutions?</p> <p>Will it support decision makers in promoting such innovative solutions?</p>

APPENDIX V: CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The tables below set out the consultation comments received during the consultation upon the draft Local Plan at Regulation 18 stage in December 2014.

Historic England (formerly English Heritage)

Comments received	Action
English Heritage welcomes SA objective 3	Noted
Paragraph 4.3 deals exclusively with historic environment yet is also headed natural environment. This should be amended accordingly.	Title 4.3 amended to 'Built Heritage'
A problem arises in conflating the built (historic) environment and natural environment issues. Harm in relation to one, coupled with positive effects in respect of the other, does not and should not give rise to a neutral effect overall.	It is agreed that a positive effect in one area and a negative effect in another does not equal a neutral effect. This is reflected in the methodology in section 13.2 (14.2 in this SA Report) which states that both positive and negative effects can be recorded for different sustainability objectives and topics.
Para 4.3 does not report on the Register of Historic Battlefields. Nor does it report on those assets which are not designated, some of which may be of national importance. This section provides no information on the condition of these heritage assets. It provides no commentary as regards issues, challenges, or problems faced by the historic environment of the county despite, for example, there being reference in para 4.9 to the harm that might be caused to it by coastal erosion.	Additional information will be sought to ensure that non-designated heritage is considered as part of the appraisal. Further information will be sought to clarify the issues, challenges and solutions for the historic environment. The final SA Report will contain this information (as available), and the appraisals will be updated accordingly.
Chapter 6 deals with sustainability issues. Some issues facing the historic environment are identified but not in any level of detail. For example, we are advised that some heritage assets are under threat but there is no exposition of the causes of these threats or what the possible solutions might be.	It is inevitable that some of the issues identified in the SA will be high-level, due to the strategic nature of the Local Plan. However, where additional information (as identified through scoping) is available and allows for a more detailed consideration of the challenges and solutions, this will be reflected in the key issues and subsequent appraisals. This information will be presented in the final SA Report as appropriate.
Para 13.5 SA Topic 3 deals with the built and natural environment. These are dealt with separately in the SA framework. It is not clear at what point in the process it is thought necessary or desirable to link them together.	These SA objectives have been brought together to streamline the appraisal and also because development is likely to affect both the built and natural environment (landscape) in similar ways. However, although the topic 'built and natural environment' combines two objectives, the effects have been considered separately.

Comments received	Action
<p>There is no assessment of the significance of strategic sites in the Local Plan. We are informed that sites have been assessed at a high level as part of the strategic land review, yet there is no clear evidence in this review that in assessing the sustainability credentials of the sites there has been:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An assessment of the significance of those heritage assets on, or in the vicinity of the sites concerned. 2. An assessment of the extent to which the significance of any assets might be harmed or lost as a consequence of development. 3. An assessment of the extent to which public benefits might outweigh that harm or loss. 	<p>The two strategic sites proposed in the Local Plan as part of Policy 13 have been appraised in the Strategic Land Review. It is accepted that the information with regards to effects on the historic environment is limited.</p> <p>The SA will draw upon the SLR and seek to undertake a more detailed assessment of the potential effects on heritage assets that could arise as a result of development of the strategic sites. However, it should be noted that the strategic nature of the Local Plan means that details of site development will not be available; making it difficult to make detailed predictions of likely effects.</p>
<p>Table 13.1 summarises the effects of the SA, grouping the built and natural environment together. These should be considered separately.</p>	<p>These SA objectives have been brought together to streamline the appraisal and also because development is likely to affect both the built and natural environment (landscape) in similar ways. However, although the topic 'built and natural environment' combines two objectives, the effects have been considered separately and are discussed transparently throughout the SA.</p>
<p>Appendix II</p> <p>Without an understanding of the extent to which the significance or value of any heritage assets may be harmed or lost by the Plan it is not possible to assess the effects of the various strategic development and spatial distribution options. Without such an assessment it is not possible to assert that all or any impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated.</p>	<p>An updated assessment of strategic alternatives is presented at Appendix VI.</p>
<p>Appendix IV</p> <p>Adjustments are recommended to the SA sub criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it protect and where appropriate enhance sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological or and cultural value in both urban and rural areas including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and Historic Parks and Gardens? • Will it ensure an appropriate archaeological or building assessment is always undertaken prior to development where there is a likelihood of harm to the significance of the asset? • Will it promote sensitive re-use of historical assets buildings and buildings of significant-local historic interest, where appropriate the opportunity arises? • Will it improve and broaden access to, and understanding of, local heritage and historic sites? • Will it maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements? • Will it ensure that the adverse impacts of development, including minerals extraction and waste management activities, are clearly outweighed by public benefits that cannot be met in any other way minimised in order to protect the amenity of local communities? 	<p>Changes have been made to the SA Framework as recommended by English Heritage. The appraisal will be updated if necessary to reflect the subtle differences in the criteria.</p>

The Environment Agency

Comments received	Action
<p>Water Quality</p> <p>With regards to page 26, although the SA makes reference to the Northumbria River RBMP, it should also make reference to the Solway Tweed RBMP. This covers the Fell Sandstone Aquifer – the source of supply for the Berwick and Fowberry water resource zone mentioned in the water resources section. This aquifer is currently at poor status due to water quality issues (nitrates) and should be included within the summary of WFD waterbody status.</p>	<p>Baseline position updated.</p>
<p>Water resources</p> <p>The section (page 27) should make reference to the Solway Tweed and the Berwick water resource zone. This groundwater body (the Fell Sandstone) is currently at poor status due to potential over-abstraction. This is currently under investigation by the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water Ltd.</p>	<p>Baseline position updated.</p>
<p>Sustainability objectives</p> <p>We welcome the inclusion of objectives in relation to ground river and sea water. However, in line with WFD, these should be referred to as river, transitional and coastal and ground water bodies or surface and ground water bodies.</p>	<p>SA Framework updated as suggested.</p>
<p>Summary of Effects (table 13.1)</p> <p>We agree with the summary of effects. However, the policy clauses should include those from the WFD to ensure development is not having an adverse effect on the waterbody.</p> <p>With regards to climate change section, the wording in the second paragraph should be amended to “Development should be located away from areas of flood risk, site specific information may allow some development to be in areas of flood risk but site specific information would need to be established”</p>	<p>Amended as suggested.</p>

Natural England

Comments received	Action
Page 5 – “Objective 15: To protect and enhance Northumberland’s biodiversity and biodiversity.” Should one of the references to biodiversity be geology? This should be corrected.	Mistake corrected
Page 31 – There seems to be some confusion over what SACs are designated for. Although SPAs are designated for birds, SACs are designated for habitats and species (excluding birds) which should be corrected. The decision to name the SPAs and not name the SACs appears arbitrary and should also be corrected.	Baseline position updated.

The tables below set out the consultation comments received during the consultation upon the pre-submission Local Plan at **Regulation 19** stage (including consultations on Major Modifications and Further Major Modifications)

Comments received	Action / Response
Mr Les / Mark Stephenson / Gray Mr Scott Munro - Lugano Developments Ltd Ms Claire Davies - Savills <i>[...]Another key concern is that the Sustainability Appraisal that accompanies the Core Strategy does not consider any other alternatives in sufficient detail, and therefore lacks robustness. Para 52 of the NPPF advises that the Council ‘should’ consider if their housing requirements might be better met through the release of large scale opportunities. Instead, the Core Strategy seeks to provide a scattered approach to development that is unreliable in its delivery form, and places the Plan at greater risk of a lack of implementation. We expressed this concern at the last consultation and again there is very little substantiated evidence of assessment of these alternatives</i>	<p>The SA considers alternative spatial strategies within sections 9-11.</p> <p>Chapter 14 considers alternatives locations for the delivery of a Garden Village (which was undertaken following this stage of consultation).</p>
Mr Justin Hancock - Banks Property Ltd <i>[...]The Sustainability Appraisal underpinning the plan quotes Manual for Streets that 800m is an acceptable distance to expect people to travel to access bus services (table 12.1). In our experience Local Planning Authorities rarely accept 800m and will usually expect distances of 400m. In any event the majority of West of Callerton Lane allocation would fall outside of 800m. The X78 bus is not routed along Callerton Lane so it is a sustainability problem for the site which is not easily solved[...]</i>	<p>The site appraisal framework scores each site option objectively according to their performance relating to the identified thresholds. These thresholds were established through the scoping process and agreed with stakeholders.</p>
John Blundell <i>...there has been no reasonable alternatives considered and no consultation on them. There has been no proportionate evidence particularly if the OAN is 90.5% in excess to DCLG2012 Housing requirement. As such the plan is contrary to PAS SEA requirement and is not sound...</i>	<p>Reasonable alternatives to the amount and distribution of housing growth have been considered throughout the plan making process, including consultation at key milestones. Section 9 of the SA Report sets out the alternatives consideration and testing process. The objectively assessed housing needs are</p>

Comments received	Action / Response
	taken into consideration in testing different scales of growth. The 2012 DCLG housing forecasts do not form the objectively assessed housing needs, and is not a housing 'target' in itself.
<p>Mr David McGlade</p> <p><i>...The Plan has failed to consider the loss of recreational amenity to the residents (and visitors) to Prudhoe because the Sustainability Appraisal Report has not considered the report of housing development in the land south Highfield Road. The land has strategic Public Rights of Way links to Durham Riding, Hyons Wood, Crawcrook and beyond. They are walked regularly and extensively by large numbers of local people for whom the area is an important amenity resource. The Council acknowledges that the land, currently Green Belt, to be an area of high landscape value yet the Sustainability Appraisal did not take it fully into account in terms of its importance to amenity. Had it done so, then it would have at least kept to the spirit of the ELC. A housing development on this former Green Belt land will sit incongruously in the landscape. It would not be spatially connected and consistent in any way with neither the surrounding rural landscape nor the existing urban Prudhoe....</i></p>	<p>The land south of Highfield Road (Site refs 8006/2550/6849c) was appraised in the SA and each of the sites have been recorded as having a high landscape sensitivity. This takes into consideration the amenity value of the land in terms of local use.</p> <p>Other effects on 'amenity' have been determined by Council officers through an assessment of nearby uses and the potential for amenity issues such as noise, dust, light, vibration. This criteria does not take account of recreational use of open space.</p>
<p>Mr Phillip Lowe</p> <p><i>We object to the allocation of land to the west of Lancaster Park, Morpeth, for employment development and trunk road services. The proposed modification runs counter to the newly made Neighbourhood Plan which was prepared following widespread consultations + detailed analysis. It is not justified by reasoned argument + evidence but seems to be a purely opportunistic response to the wishes of a particular landowner. It is all the more surprising given that land is being de-allocated for employment developments from other parts of Morpeth and across Northumberland more generally. There is a complete failure to justify this shift in strategy and to compare this new allocation of land with the opportunities offered at alternative sites. The County Council has in any case a policy of decentralising jobs and services from Morpeth to other market towns in the County, particularly through the closure of County Hall. This in itself will generate spaces within the existing urban boundaries of Morpeth for alternative employment provision. There has been no sustainability appraisal of this shift in strategy nor any analysis of the impact of such peripheral development on the commercial, public + retail service of Morpeth Town.</i></p>	<p>The SA addendum undertaken alongside the Major Modifications sets out an appraisal of the modifications made and how this affects the SA findings. This includes consideration of the change in strategy in Morpeth.</p>

Comments received	Action / Response
<p>Roy and Pat Johnson (Major Modifications stage)</p> <p>The two sites (7692 and 6840) referenced in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Northumberland Local Plan (Major Modifications) -SA Report Addendum June 2016. Simple do not recognise the description of the site in Table 6.1 Additional Site Options for Green Belt Alternation (sic) in Hexham and in Table 6.3 Summary of Green Belt Assessment and Rationale to Support Allocations in Hexham.</p> <p>For example in Table 6.1 against 'Surface Water FR' the site 6792 is given a green light. This is nonsense. After even a small amount of rain there is a considerable run off from the higher fields and woods to the north. This has been a problem in the past observable from The Leazes, which lies above the site. This building does have a cellar that is subject to dampness and it is believed water flows under the building into spring like outlets that feed into site 6792. Perhaps I can do no better than refer you to the refusal of planning application 940307 in 1994 where the risk of handling increased water run-off from the fields if developed for housing and the subsequent possible flooding of the burn were amongst the reasons for refusal of planning permission. Against Amenity, Landscape Sensitivity, Green Infrastructure and Heritage Assets table 6.1 also shows a green light suggesting that none of these factors is an issue. Nothing could be further from the truth and shows a misunderstanding of the site. The Councils SHLAA of August 2013 says: "The varied topography and tree coverage gives the site a complex park like character." The reason for this is that it was developed by the former owners of the Leazes, a Grade 2 Listed Building, as part of their extended garden area. It is planted with extensive spring bulbs and includes a number of impressive mature trees planted as part of the landscaping. Although site 6792 is now in separate ownership it still considerably enhances the building. The site is also crossed by a very well used public footpath and as such provides a fantastic amenity for the west of Hexham which would be lost if the green belt protection was removed and which would in no way be replaced by the open farmland to the west of Shaws Lane. Indeed one of the arguments often heard against Green Belt is that it can be just dull low utility farming land. Nothing wrong with the farm to the west of Shaws lane but it is just that, plain open farmland with no particular features of interest. Sites 6792 and 6840 are the opposite. There is also a green light against Local Wildlife. It is not my area of expertise but I would be surprised if the site did not contain an interesting selection of wildlife apart from the ever present rabbits but I can tell you that an extensive colony of bats roost in the trees on the site and also in those lining Shaws Lane. It is a delight of a summers evening to see them flitting back and forth. Has any assessment been made of this wildlife? From the green light I presume not and would suggest that this should be done before proposing any deletion of green belt protection from this land[...]</p>	<p>An objective appraisal of the site was undertaken to highlight potential strategic issues.</p> <p>This appraisal used a combination of GIS data and qualitative information to determine the site 'scores' against different criteria.</p> <p>More detail about site characteristics can be submitted by consultees on a site specific basis and this can also be taken into consideration by the Plan making body. This is a key role that consultation plays.</p> <p>The SA is a decision aiding tool, and has not in itself led to the allocation or rejection of different site options.</p>

Comments received	Action / Response
<p>Mr John Blundell (Further Major Modification's stage)</p> <p><i>As it was not a planning consultation, no other alternatives were provided as required within Strategic Environment Assessment SEA Directive and NPPF182 on sustainable development. In effect a fait accompli without correct consultation procedure, without a mention of 900-1362 houses, Pre-empted use of proposed safeguarded land, contradictory Sites to that proposed in the Core Strategy, no presentation of proposed Green belt deletion, no presentation of infrastructure issues, nor any consideration at all to flooding issues, and inadequate FRA Stage 2 with higher level assessment infrastructure assessment[...]</i></p>	<p>With regards to the SEA / SA. A range of reasonable alternative site options (to green belt release) have been considered and appraised as part of the process (See sections 11, 12 and 13).</p>
<p>Mr Michael Hamilton (Further Major Modification's stage)</p> <p><i>[...]Whilst the further modifications document has been subject to a SA, the option of the creation of a new settlement was not considered in previous Core Strategy SAs – it was therefore not considered to be a reasonable alternative that should be tested. The published SA does not fully consider the implications of the Dissington Garden Village proposal on the rest of the Core Strategy, it is therefore not fit for purpose[...]</i></p> <p><i>The Dissington Garden Village proposal cannot be considered to be 'an addition to the plan rather than a complete change of strategy'. It is a complete change of strategy and was not considered as an option during the informal stages of preparing the plan, it is therefore not justified.</i></p>	<p>At previous stages of plan making, no proposals were 'on the table' for the delivery of a new settlement. Therefore, this approach was determined by the Council to be an unreasonable alternative at those points in time.</p> <p>Following the emergence of a potential Garden Village as an additional element to the Core Strategy, the SA has considered the effects of the Garden Village both on its own and in combination with the rest of the submitted Plan (i.e. the effects of the Plan viewed 'as a whole').</p> <p>The Council consider the Garden village to be an addition to the plan rather than a change of strategy.</p>
<p>Mr Scott Munro - Lugano Developments Ltd (Further Major Modifications stage)</p> <p><i>[...]The proposed allocation is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal Second Addendum (Further Major Modifications) (November 2016) as required by Section 19(5) of the PCPA 2004 and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. This identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Plan with the Garden Village; and, notably, undertakes an equal appraisal of other reasonable alternatives, taking into account both the objectives and geographical scope of the Plan. This included an assessment of each reasonable alternative (including Dissington) against an appropriate list of sustainability objectives; an assessment against the policy requirements of the Core Strategy; and any other area specific constraints. Whilst, inevitably, some negative environmental impacts are identified, these can be adequately addressed through the planning application process with the provision of suitable mitigation. Indeed, such matters are adequately addressed within the draft policies for the Garden Village. Overall, it is concluded within the Sustainability Appraisal</i></p>	<p>Comments noted.</p>

Comments received	Action / Response
<i>Addendum that Dissington is the preferred site option for the Garden Village; and thus the allocation is justified[...]</i>	
Natural England (Further Major Modifications Stage) <i>We have no further comment to make on the Sustainability Appraisal and agree with the conclusions reached within it.</i>	Comments noted.
Mr John Fleming, Gladman Developments Ltd (Further Major Modifications Stage) <i>In reference to the Dissington Garden Village:</i> <i>[...], this site has come forward late in the Local Plan preparation process, as such, the Council must ensure that it has sufficient evidence and that it has been properly tested through the Sustainability Appraisal process to ensure the soundness of the Plan. Whilst we note that the SA Addendum (November 2016) tests alternative locations for a new Garden Village, it does not consider whether it would be more appropriate to continue with a greater level of growth across the authority area. The rationale for introducing a large scale strategic allocation of this nature should be fully integrated into the strategy of the Local Plan. It should also be fully integrated into the vision and objectives for the future of the area. The process of integrating the proposal into the vision, objectives and strategic allocations of the Plan will create the need to re-visit the wider supporting evidence base. This will include, but not be limited to, evidence relating to: sustainability appraisal, site selection, green belt release, economic development needs and the housing requirement/target[...]</i>	The Council considers that the Garden Village accords with the spatial strategy but should be treated as a separate component with regards to the consideration of alternatives, as it is an entirely separate initiative over and above the objectively assessed housing need.
Councillor Peter Jackson (Further Major Modifications stage) <i>[...]That is a significant issue for the DCLG Garden Village assessment, not least there has been absolutely no consultation as within SEA, to provided alternatives, reasons for not choosing them and not made accessible to the public at any consultation[...]</i>	Alternative locations for a Garden Village were established, considered and tested in the SA Report second Addendum, which was consulted upon alongside the Further Major Modifications. Outline reasons for selecting the preferred option in light of alternatives is provided. This information is reproduced in this updated SA Report in section 14.
The Crown Estate, Mr Rob Moore – Savills (Further Major Modifications) <i>[...]The Addendum does set out why Dissington is a preferred option at 3.2, however the difference between this and the 'first' choice site (Bebside) is stated as viability and deliverability. Concerns in respect of deliverability and viability have been expressed above and as such equally apply to Dissington. The justification is therefore unclear and insufficient to be found sound. [...]</i>	<p>Outline reasons for selecting the preferred option in light of alternatives is provided. This information is reproduced in this updated SA Report in section 14.</p> <p>The SA is a decision-aiding tool and its conclusions alone do not determine whether a site or strategy should be pursued or not.</p>

APPENDIX VI: APPRAISAL OF STRATEGIC ALTERNATIVES (UPDATED)

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	<p>There are a number of European sites located in or around Northumberland including 22 Special Areas of Conservation, 9 Special Protection Areas and 5 Ramsar sites. Large scale housing development can cause a range of impacts that can affect European sites, including increased or changing patterns of air pollution from increased vehicle use, or from increased water demand, waste arisings and recreational use.</p> <p>Potential effects on European Sites⁵² have been considered through a standalone process of Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)⁵³, but it is appropriate to recap findings here in addition to considering impacts to 'biodiversity more generally'. The HRA identifies potentially significant effects on European sites (including Ramsar sites) in rural areas and in proximity to main towns and service centres, particularly on the coast and in some upland areas (eg. North Pennines). Of particular note is the potential for increased disturbance to: i) purple sandpiper and turnstone in the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar Site; ii) breeding upland waders and raptors in North Pennine Moors SPA; iii) breeding little tern and migratory and wintering waders and wildfowl in Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar Site and Lindisfarne SPA and Ramsar Site; iv) sensitive vegetation (numerous SACs); and eutrophication from increased sewage discharge in Tweed Estuary and River Tweed SACs. These European Sites are sensitive to increased development. Due to the significant growth directed to towns including along the coast, there is potential for additional recreational pressure and pollution to affect designated habitats. However, the HRA states that effects on European Sites are not likely to be significant with the implementation of appropriate policy.</p> <p>Potential impacts to ecology from increased discharge from waste water treatment plants has also been noted In the SA, particularly where the watercourse is a SSSI. Although these issues ought to be possible to manage through effective water management, housing growth in Haltwhistle, Rothbury and Wooler in particular could present a risk for effects on SSSIs that are water dependant. There might also be impacts from development on non-designated areas of habitat that contribute to ecological connectivity, and therefore biodiversity, within the County. In general, it can be assumed that higher growth</p>	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6

⁵² These include Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites.

⁵³ URS – Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Full Draft Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment, December 2014

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
	<p>alternatives are less preferable to lower growth alternatives as it will necessitate loss of habitats that are of local importance to some extent, although additional studies are needed to assess if any of these are likely to be significant.</p> <p>In general, alternatives (4, 5 and 6) are likely to have more <u>positive effects</u> in the North delivery area than alternatives 1-3 or 7-9 in terms of requiring less land take overall, particularly in Berwick and Wooler. Conversely, in the West delivery area alternatives 4-6 performs worse due to larger land take than the other alternatives, particularly in Bellingham (adjacent to Northumberland National Park) and Allendale just north of North Pennines AONB. By spreading development, alternatives 4-6 have the potential to increase opportunities for avoiding sensitive sites, depending on the exact location of the development. Alternatives 4-6 also are likely to have a more positive effect on biodiversity/geodiversity in coastal locations (with the exception of Seahouses) where housing development and related increased recreational pressure may impact on European marine sites. On the other hand, these alternatives have the potential to have more effects on biodiversity assets in and on the edge of the County's smaller rural towns and villages and provides less flexibility as there may be fewer opportunities to secure enhancement and provision of new habitats through Community Infrastructure Levy/ Section 106 Agreement.</p> <p>Whilst it is difficult to undertake an appraisal at this level of detail in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity, a number of broad conclusions can be made. On the basis of the HRA analysis to date, we can broadly assume that alternative (4) would result in the smallest increase in disturbance and recreational pressure on the SPAs, particularly in the Northumbria Coast SPA which includes much of the coastline between the Tweed and Tees Estuaries in the north-east, and (4) is therefore preferred from an HRA point of view as it poses the lowest risk to European site integrity.</p> <p>This SA conclusion is reached taking into account the fact that development of greenfield sites around the main towns will lead to impacts on biodiversity 'more generally' (i.e. leaving aside HRA considerations). There could be some impacts to important habitats (including nationally and locally important sites), but there is currently insufficient evidence to suggest likely significant effects. Ultimately the effect of the housing development alternatives on the County's biodiversity and geodiversity will depend on the location, layout and design of new development as well as the incorporation of improved green infrastructure provision and the extent to which relevant policies are incorporated into the draft Core Strategy to mitigate potential significant negative impacts and enhance positive effects where possible.</p>									
Climate	A key consideration here relates to the potential for each alternative to increase or decrease average per capita transport-									

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
Change	<p>related CO₂ emissions. Although growth in general will increase carbon emissions, focusing higher levels of growth into the main towns and service centres would help to support patterns of development that typically produce lower carbon emissions overall compared to dispersed rural growth which encourages high levels of commuting. This is dependent however on accessibility to a range of sustainable modes of transport and capacity of the local road network to manage increased congestion. Therefore, alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 are most preferable in this respect.</p> <p>Another consideration is the location of new housing development and potential exposure to flood risk. Northumberland's Catchment Flood Management Plans project an increased level of flood risk in the area over the next 25 to 100 years as a result of climate change through wetter and warmer winters and an increase in large fluvial events and extreme rainfall events. These events are likely to lead to increased surface water runoff and may affect new development.</p> <p>Coastal erosion is another factor requiring consideration in the analysis of housing alternatives. The coast of Northumberland is subject to natural erosion but the prevalence of rocky headlands and foreshores protecting softer bays means that coastal erosion is less of an issue than elsewhere in England. Although the implementation of the Shoreline Management Plan would help to manage many of these risks, any planned housing development in coastal areas would still be vulnerable to long term risks relating to coastal erosion.</p> <p>In regards to the first consideration, focusing development in the main towns and service centres can better support the principles of reducing the need to travel and promoting the use of public transport. Dispersed development alternatives 4-6 (where 50% of housing is allocated evenly between Main Towns and Service Centres and the other 50% is distributed evenly between other settlements within each LPA) may result in longer trips for employment and services, which could have <u>negative effects</u>. Alternatives 7-9 however will potentially lead to more congestion on the highway network from increased numbers of commuters travelling to key employment and service hubs, for example to Newcastle upon Tyne. There is also limited accessibility via public transport to key strategic employment sites at the Blyth Estuary. Some of these potential effects could be mitigated through implementation of other policies in the draft Core Strategy and by directing new development to more sustainable locations and ensuring that new developments in settlements are accessible by means of transport other than the private car. Alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 would also increase the potential for new residents to access services/facilities and employment opportunities within the main settlements by walking, cycling and public transport; and it is also fair to assume that there could be greater uptake of 'sustainable travel' options amongst existing residents once infrastructure upgrades are in</p>	4	3	2	6	6	5	3	2	1

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
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	<p>place. These alternatives are therefore predicted to have <u>positive effects</u> on accessibility.</p> <p>Higher growth alternatives will likely lead to increased GHG emissions from both transport and domestic energy use. However, there is also the increased potential for self-containment with larger developments. A higher growth strategy around the towns of Blyth, Cramlington and Ashington which are already key hubs for housing, services and employment for example potentially has more opportunity to integrate renewable / low carbon energy infrastructure, providing more potential for reductions in emissions through increased likelihood of achieving ambitious sustainable design and construction measures. However, there is little to suggest that opportunities will be 'significant'. It is suggested by focusing growth into the main towns and service centres, alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 would support patterns of development that typically produce lower carbon emissions compared to dispersed rural growth. Higher growth alternatives 3 and 9 also have the most potential to deliver high quality public transport and community infrastructure, increasing the potential that ambitious energy/carbon saving measures would be viable. However, this is in the context of higher overall levels of growth, which could increase the total amount of emissions.</p> <p>In terms of risk to flooding, Northumberland's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2015) indicates several areas at low, medium and high risk of flooding and this is evidently a very important consideration in the viability of future development in the County. Northumberland has an extensive river network⁵⁴ and therefore fluvial flooding presents a significant risk throughout the county. The county also has a 132km coastline along the North Sea, where some coastal communities are at risk from tidal flooding⁵⁵. The strategy considers other risks to communities, including surface water flooding⁵⁶ (pluvial flooding), groundwater flooding⁵⁷, sewer flooding⁵⁸, and flooding from artificial sources (such as reservoirs). The analysis estimates the</p>									

⁵⁴ According to the Environment Agency, areas at risk of fluvial flooding from main rivers include River Wansbeck at Morpeth River Coquet at Rothbury, River Pont at Ponteland and River Tyne at Hexham and Prudhoe.

⁵⁵ The Northumberland County Council Flood Action Plan identifies areas at risk of tidal flooding. Blyth Town Centre has been identified as being at very high risk of tidal flooding from the North Sea. Whereas Amble and Berwick Upon Tweed have been identified as being at high risk from the North Sea and Tweed Estuary respectively. Seahouses and Alnmouth have both been identified as being at medium risk of tidal flooding from the North Sea.

⁵⁶ Previous studies undertaken by NCC have identified a number of urban areas that may be potentially at risk from surface water flooding. These urban areas include of Morpeth, Berwick, Belford, Ponteland, Hexham, Haltwhistle, Cramlington, Amble and Blyth. Surface water flooding often occurs in combination with other flood sources. For example two major flood events in Morpeth have occurred in recent years, although fluvial flooding from the River Wansbeck is the primary flood source surface water flooding has also been identified as a contributing factor. This combined flood mechanism has also occurred in other urban areas such as Haltwhistle.

⁵⁷ The Northumberland Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment states that groundwater rebound is more likely to occur in the south-east of Northumberland and along a corridor to the east of the county. Blyth, Ashington, Ponteland and Bedlington may be susceptible to groundwater rebound.

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
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	<p>number of residential properties at risk of fluvial and pluvial flooding (flood zone 2 and 3) in the County, by small delivery area. It is considered that policies addressing flood risk in the draft Core Strategy are likely to provide a strong framework for minimising and mitigating the adverse effects of flooding on potential residential development. However, site specific flood risks require further understanding. The effect of the alternatives on the risk of flooding therefore largely depends on the location of development in conjunction with design measures proposed through planning applications that mitigate for any flood risk. On this basis, we can broadly assume that alternatives 3 and 9 perform less favourably in terms of the total number of residential properties potentially at risk from flooding (all flooding sources), particularly since targeted growth may be in areas at which are at risk of flooding (i.e. Blyth).</p> <p>On balance, targeting new development to sustainable locations with the potential to incorporate low carbon / renewable energy infrastructure combined with strong policies to encourage sustainable modes of transport (public transport, walking and cycling), thereby reducing the use of fossil fuels and CO2 emissions, should help to combat climate change. On this basis, alternatives (3 and 9) have the potential to perform better than other alternatives, having <u>positive effects</u>. However, it is uncertain whether this would result in significant effects. These two alternatives could also present greater risk for flood risk.</p>									
Health, well-being and community cohesion	<p>Due to the distributional and strategic nature of the nine housing alternatives, a key factor determining the sustainability performance in relation to health and wellbeing of each alternative is in regards to residents' access to employment and a suitable and affordable home, as these are key determinants of good health. The suitability of housing and ensuring that planned development is the appropriate mix and type in order to meet future community needs, e.g. that development meets identified affordable housing needs⁵⁹ and the housing needs of elderly, disabled and other groups in the County, is a key consideration (please see 'housing' section below for analysis on this aspect).</p>	6	2	4	7	8	9	5	1	3

⁵⁸ DG5 records provided by Northumbrian Water suggest properties at risk of sewer flooding are predominantly in the more urban areas in the south east of the county. The Northumberland Level 1 SFRA, produced in 2010, identified some areas of Morpeth, Cramlington, Hexham, Amble and Haltwhistle to be at risk of sewer flooding. Also, a number of areas were identified within the Outline Water Cycle Study, produced in 2012, that would require upgrades to existing sewers if further development were to take place. This assessment supports the SFRA in identifying some areas of Haltwhistle, Cramlington, Amble and Hexham as areas at risk of sewer flooding. However this data in both studies) may now be outdated due to Northumbrian Water's ongoing capital investment programme.

⁵⁹ Data from the Northumberland County wide Housing Needs survey (2012) informed this analysis. The survey assessed the future demand and need for housing in the County by tenure, type and size to inform future development of market housing and affordable housing targets in each of the SHMA areas. The report also identifies the needs of special housing groups, i.e. BME, Older Persons whose requirements are different to those of general households and may require specific support strategies.

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
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	<p>Accessibility to health services⁶⁰ and sports, leisure and recreational facilities is another key factor. The alternatives which are likely to facilitate ease of access to these services and amenities are likely to perform more favourably in relation to this objective.</p> <p>Another consideration which will influence health and wellbeing in the County is the extent to which new housing development will encourage healthier and more active lifestyles⁶¹. In this context the alternatives which are more likely to facilitate walking and cycling as viable alternatives to private car usage (eg. by maximizing opportunities for residents to access public transport, recreational open space, and green infrastructure, for example) will also perform more favourably than the alternatives.</p> <p>Further considerations regarding the effect of housing development on crime levels or public involvement in decision making and participation in community activity (especially amongst under-represented groups) have been considered. However, at this stage of the assessment the alternatives do not have notable implications in terms of these objectives.</p> <p>In terms of access to community infrastructure / services, by focusing future development in main towns and service centres, there are increased opportunities to collocate health and other public services and maximise benefits through economies of scale. By focusing large scale development and growth on key locations in Blyth, Cramlington and Morpeth for example, and specifically in two strategic sites in North Morpeth and South West Cramlington, the provision of new community facilities will have a positive effect on the health and well-being of both new and existing communities in the South East Delivery Area where there are high levels of deprivation, according to IMD 2010 data. There is the risk however that higher growth targets will put additional pressure on key services (eg. primary healthcare and emergency services, education⁶², waste disposal), thereby reducing quality of provisioning available to both existing and future residents. Policies in the draft Core Strategy dealing with community infrastructure provide a strong framework to ensure that housing growth will be supported by the appropriate level of public services. In this respect, alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 perform better than 4-6. An analysis of the consultation responses to date and a review of the strategic infrastructure study also indicates few major constraints, although site specific constraints</p>									

⁶⁰ Demands on healthcare in the County are most likely to increase due to a growing population and an increasing elderly population. The types of services required may also alter in relation to the change in population profile as associated illnesses may differ.

⁶¹ Health indicators relating to leading healthier life styles that are worse in Northumberland than nationally include: binge drinking and hospital stays for alcohol related harm; road injuries and deaths; initiation of breast feeding and smoking during pregnancy. This puts additional pressure on services but can be mitigated by providing and promoting healthier living opportunities.

⁶² The Strategic Infrastructure Study indicated that growth could generate the need for new primary schools in the South East Delivery Area (Ashington, Blyth, and Cramlington) and also potentially require the need for additional capacity at Cramlington Learning Village (secondary school).

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
	<p>will need to be considered in greater detail to ensure that the services and infrastructure are sufficient to meet future community demand and need, without compromising the quality of current provisioning.</p> <p>In terms of supporting good health amongst local residents, all of the alternatives have the potential to promote walking and cycling though other policies in the plan. Alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 will potentially have more opportunities than alternatives 4-6 to achieve walking and cycling through focussing development at the locations with the largest concentration of services, facilities and amenities and the most comprehensive public transport networks⁶³. The extent to which alternatives 4-6 are able to promote more active lifestyles will depend on the provision of new services and facilities within the more rural villages, or the capacity of less development in main towns and service centres to support increased provisioning in these areas. On the other hand, another consideration is the capacity of more targeted urban growth to provide residents with accessible and useable open space as part of high quality local and district-wide green infrastructure networks. Housing growth could potentially lead to reductions in accessible, quality green space⁶⁴ in some locations, particularly in parts of Ashington and Blyth where residents currently have limited access to green space in the local area. The draft Core Strategy's policies dealing with recreational open space and green infrastructure should help to mitigate any potential issues, assuming investments in green infrastructure and quality open, green space are proportionate to housing growth targets.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that housing development in the main towns and services centres will perform more favourably than dispersed alternatives. A higher growth option would also provide more opportunities to capitalise fully on regeneration opportunities in the South East delivery area, and thereby support achievement of 'health' objectives. More details are required however on the capacity of key services to meet future demand placed by different scales of development to determine which level of growth would perform best. In this instance, alternative 8 performs slightly better from a sustainability perspective than the alternatives. On balance, it is appropriate to conclude that <u>significant positive effects</u> are likely for scenarios 1-3 and 7-9.</p>									
Economy	The Northumberland Economic Strategy 2015-2020 (2015) outlines a strategy to create 10,000 new jobs in the county up to	5	2		8	6	7		1	2

⁶³ The Baseline and Options Assessment highlighted the difficulties of promoting suitable, alternative sustainable modes of travel in the rural parts of the county. The south east of the County was more suited to facilitating walking, cycling and greater movements by bus.

⁶⁴ The SE GI Strategy (2010) found that some settlements have no access to green space within 300m, including areas of Cramlington, Blyth, East Ashington, Ellington & Lynemouth and Morpeth. There was also a deficiency identified in the amount of natural & semi-natural and outdoor sport space.

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
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and employment	<p>2031. This establishes a joint baseline with the new Northumberland Local Plan which provides the longer term spatial planning framework to enable business, housing and infrastructure development. The strategy identifies a list of eight priorities, four of which are: 1) Facilitating countywide housing development including strategic housing areas in Cramlington and Morpeth; 2) Enabling development of economic hubs across the county including the delivery of the Ashington Investment Plan; 3) Attracting investment to the North East Enterprise Zone and delivering a countywide network of excellent employment sites and strategic infrastructure; and 4) Supporting skills development, providing opportunities for young people including apprenticeships and ensuring the future workforce matches businesses requirements. In particular the Economic Strategy commits to the: reopening of the Ashington Blyth Tyne Line to passenger transport; construction of the Morpeth Northern Bypass; and economic growth around the Blyth Estuary⁶⁵. The economic assessment underpinning the Economic Strategy underscores the importance of Northumberland residents' 'disproportionate' contribution to regional output, particularly amongst those who commute to work in Tyneside, and reiterates the important role of housing growth in the county's economic development, particularly in terms of providing for a growing labour force, ensuring sustainable communities and enabling infrastructure development.</p> <p>In general, the development of housing within Northumberland will support the local economy through a number of aspects, including from increased demand for goods and services in the construction industry, long-term maintenance and occupation of dwellings, and the increase in demand and patronage of local businesses, goods and services. All alternatives will support local services and businesses and will all contribute to a multiplier effect that will support economic growth to varying degrees. However, planning for targeted, higher growth is more likely to enable the provision of a flexible and responsive supply of employment land to meet potential economic growth⁶⁶. In addition, targeted, increased levels of housing may help support housing-led regeneration, which will support those town centres where additional growth is proposed and provide additional</p>			3				4		

⁶⁵ The Core Strategy includes a proposal for the supply of 381 hectares of land for employment development, including the proposed Blyth Estuary strategic employment area (which will provide 222 hectares of available land), prestige inward investment site at West Hartford (13 hectares) and allocation at Newcastle Airport (15 hectares).

⁶⁶ Based on the Employment Land Review and the Employment Land and Premises Demand Study.

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
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	<p>construction industry jobs and spin-offs. Lower growth baseline alternatives would result in a decline in the level of full time employment and fall short of the growth targets in the SEP⁶⁷. Therefore it is reasonable to argue that higher growth alternatives would be more beneficial from an 'economy and employment' perspective.</p> <p>On balance, it is predicted that alternative (8) performs best, although there is uncertainty about the strength and durability of future growth opportunities as a result of wider economic factors. Alternative (9) – the preferred alternative – is highly contingent on a number of factors, including increases in the working age population; increases in net inflows and reductions in the net outflows of people to/from Northumberland; decreases in the net outflow of commuters; and a return to levels of unemployment to pre-recession levels. Alternative (8) may be more viable and therefore more sustainable alternative, while still meeting SEP targets. This is also more consistent with past performance in Northumberland as 9,000 jobs were created in the County between 2001 and 2011. However, the 2013 update to the ELR suggests that if past levels of development are followed, the amount of employment land required is well in excess of the most optimistic employment growth forecast. This would suggest that alternative (9) is preferable to (8) on this aspect. In conclusion, alternative (8) is best performing and is likely to lead to significant positive effects. Alternatives 4-6 are not predicted to have significant positive effects as housing delivery would not be well located to employment opportunities.</p>									
Housing	<p>The goal of this SA objective is to ensure that Northumberland residents have the opportunity to live in an affordable home of a good quality (and one that conforms to environmental standards). Key considerations regarding the sustainability of different housing alternatives include the extent to which planned development can ensure that sufficient numbers and appropriate types of housing are delivered in Northumberland and the extent that new development is affordable⁶⁸. The capacity of each</p>	8	4	3	9	6	5	7	2	1

⁶⁷ The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) for the North East (2014) sets out a vision that by 2024 the economy of the LEP area will provide over one million jobs, which is equivalent to an 11% increase in employment or about 100,000, suggesting the need to provide around 6,000 to 9,000 additional Northumberland based jobs to 2024..

⁶⁸ According to the SHMA update (2013), affordability pressure is most marked in the North and West, but is also evident in the Central HMA, while pockets exist in the South East. Furthermore, house prices vary considerably across Northumberland. The former district of Alnwick has had a higher increase than the North East and England and Wales. Nationally and in Northumberland the gap between earnings and house prices is increasing but more so in the rural areas of the former districts of Alnwick, Berwick upon Tweed, Castle Morpeth and Tynedale, which puts pressure on the availability of affordable housing.

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
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	<p>of the housing alternatives to meet Objectively Assessed Housing Needs (OAHN) and affordable housing requirements are key factors in this assessment. The spatial distribution of new housing development will also influence its sustainability such as in respect of its accessibility to jobs, services and amenities.</p> <p>The Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment outlines the requirements for housing development across the County for the duration of the plan. The objectively assessed housing need is for the provision of approximately 24,320 new dwellings over the plan period.</p> <p>With regards to affordable housing (i.e. social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market) an affordable housing target has been recommended and is also reflected in the target outlined in the draft Core Strategy. The analysis suggests that policies such as welfare reform and initiatives to free up under-occupied family sized properties in increasing existing stock turnover “should provide the major means of addressing future need, particularly in the South East Delivery Area which has high social stock levels”. Therefore, it can be inferred that all of the housing alternatives can potentially support affordable housing need in the County, subject to the extent (and timing) that existing stock can be made available and potentially retrofitted to meet future demand. A dispersed approach (alternatives 4,5 and 6), may provide more opportunities to meet affordable housing needs in rural areas, depending on viability considerations⁶⁹, and tenure mix requirements. However, targeted, higher levels of housing growth (alternatives 8 and 9) could potentially increase affordable housing delivery overall; particularly in main towns and service areas in the South East and Central delivery areas where projected demand is greatest⁷⁰.</p> <p>In conclusion, alternatives 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 would be likely to have significant positive effects given that they meet objectively assessed housing needs in full. However, alternatives 3, 6 and 9 provide substantial levels of housing growth and perhaps provide better opportunities to provide an increased number of affordable housing. Alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 should also help to</p>									

⁶⁹ Preliminary findings from the viability assessment identify variations across the County and at a localised level, including marked variations in market conditions within Delivery Areas. There are some areas of very high value housing while in some of the more urban areas, the county has some very low values.

⁷⁰ The Northumberland County Wide Housing Needs survey, conducted in 2012, provides evidence to suggest that affordable housing need is greatest within the north and south east of the County, and hence an approach that focuses growth in a dispersed manner and away from areas with the most need might not deliver affordable housing in the most suitable areas. Higher growth targets would also help to increase the overall quantity of affordable housing in the County. In terms of ensuring a mix of specialist housing to meet the needs of the elderly and other specific groups, there is some basis to suggest that an approach that supports larger, better targeted development would perform better.

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
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	ensure that housing is delivered in sustainable locations that are accessible to existing and other new services and employment opportunities developed over the plan period. Alternatives 8 and 9 would have more beneficial effects compared to 2 and 3 given that a targeted approach would help to deliver an appropriate level of housing in areas of greatest need. The implementation of other policies in the draft Core Strategy should also provide enhanced access to housing opportunities for people living in rural areas.									
Accessibility	There are a number of key sustainability issues linked to accessibility. These include access to local services, facilities and amenities, car dependency, traffic and congestion. The effect that each alternative may have on either increasing or decreasing accessibility on the local transport network ⁷¹ is an important consideration in the SA. Congestion is another key factor, and there is a need to appraise the alternatives in terms of their potential to affect traffic congestion on key routes through increased commuting. Growth in the wrong place and without the appropriate infrastructure could result in additional congestion on the existing network in the South East and Central Delivery areas in particular which would potentially affect the productivity of the workforce. However, there are proposals for strategic transport infrastructure to address such issues	2	4	6	7	8	9	1	3	5

⁷¹ The principal roads in Northumberland are the A1, A69, and A19 trunk roads and the A68, A696, A697 and A189 county roads. The East Coast Mainline Railway line also provides travel links between London and Scotland. The Tyne Valley Railway pass through Northumberland and provides limited local services and access to inner-city routes, and connects the west of the County with Gateshead and Newcastle City Centre. Local bus services form a network throughout south east Northumberland linking the main towns of Blyth, Cramlington, Ashington, Bedlington and Morpeth to each other and Newcastle upon Tyne. In addition there are express bus services to Northumberland towns, including Alnwick, Berwick upon Tweed and Hexham to Newcastle upon Tyne. Some areas of rural Northumberland are considered unviable for the supply of commercial bus services.

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
	<p>including improvements in the local road network and improved rail services including Morpeth Northern Bypass and the Ashington Blyth Tyne Line⁷². The implementation of these schemes should have a <u>positive effect</u> in terms of enhancing accessibility (particularly to Tyne and Wear) via a sustainable method of transport and potentially reduce car borne travel and mitigate congestion issues at key junctions on the strategic highway. These proposals need to be considered when assessing the potential effects that the housing alternatives may have on accessibility in the County.</p> <p>In general, the increase in housing development within main towns and service centres has more potential than dispersed development alternatives⁷³ to reduce the need to travel by locating housing opportunities within close proximity to each other in well-served areas. Housing development in strategic housing sites at North Morpeth and South West Cramlington would also contribute to improved accessibility in these locations by securing strategic infrastructure improvements. In this respect, targeted growth (alternatives 7-9) are most beneficial.</p> <p>However, by concentrating the majority of development in main towns and service centres, there is the potential risk that the existing road network would not be able to cope with the large scale of development planned in certain areas, leading to congestion / bottleneck issues and potentially affecting the viability of any particular scheme (depending on location and road upgrades). In the Central Delivery Area, for example, the Strategic Infrastructure Study there is a risk that planned housing development will cause congestion to areas in the North West of Newcastle and localised congestion in Morpeth and Ponteland. There are also current capacity issues at A19/A189 Moor Farm roundabout and A1/A19 Seaton Burn roundabout, which are likely to require improvements in order to accommodate the anticipated level of traffic resulting from proposed levels of development. The implementation of policies⁷⁴ in the draft Core Strategy should help to mitigate these potential</p>									

⁷² Policies in the draft Core Strategy intend to secure the reintroduction of passenger rail services on Ashington, Blyth and Tyne railway line. The policy also sets out the need to avoid development that would prevent the reintroduction of passenger rail services on the South Tynedale and the Aln Valley Railway Lines. Reintroduction of these services would have a positive effect in terms of enhancing accessibility to Tyne and Weir via a sustainable method of transport and potentially remove car borne travel and mitigate congestion issues at key junctions on the strategic highway network

⁷³ The largely rural nature of the County means that access to services will still be an issue in some rural areas and there will be a continued reliance upon the private car.

⁷⁴ For example, Policy 41 (Promoting sustainable connections) highlights that the Council will seek to promote and support the development of high quality pedestrian, cycle and non-motorised transport networks across the County. Policy 42 (Improving Northumberland's core road network) highlights that support will be given to improving Northumberland's core road network by supporting and safeguarding the lines of bypasses and improvements outlined in the policy (full duelling of the A1 and improving links to the A1 and full duelling of the A69 and improvements to local links to the A69. Delivery of these

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
	<p>negative effects by ensuring that new housing delivered over the plan period is accessible via sustainable methods of transport and that employment hubs and community facilities are accessible to new development. Alternatives that focus housing growth in remote rural areas would not be sustainable as it would encourage continued reliance on the car for commuting to employment sites, including strategic employment areas such as Blyth Estuary, and key services.</p> <p>On balance, it is appropriate to conclude that dispersed housing development alternatives 4, 5 and 6 is less preferable than targeted development in the main towns and service centres from a sustainability perspective as these alternatives would provide fewer opportunities to access to local services, facilities and amenities and reduce car dependency, although it is unclear if this would lead to significant negative effects. Targeted housing growth (alternatives 1-3 and 7-9) would lead to higher levels of traffic and congestion on the local road network than other alternatives, although with the implementation of planned proposals to alleviate some of these capacity issues, it is uncertain whether this would result in significant negative effects. It is possible that higher growth alternatives may be supported without significant negative effects, although more localised congestion is a key consideration that requires further analysis. In conclusion, alternatives 7 and 1 would contribute to improved accessibility in the County without putting as much pressure on local road networks as alternatives 2, 4, 8 and 9.</p> <p>There are clearly competing objectives, i.e. objectives that ‘pull in different directions’. On the one hand, there is a desire to minimise traffic congestion, whilst on the other there is a need to deliver housing at locations in proximity to where businesses wish to locate. Policies in the draft Core Strategy, in combination with other strategies, plans and programmes integral to addressing the highway network, will help to alleviate some of these issues. It is suggested that (7) will perform better than the other alternatives. This conclusion reflects an overriding assumption that focusing growth leads to opportunities for the development of sustainable communities (i.e. locating housing and jobs close together), and minimising adverse effects of growth.</p>									
Natural resources and waste	This SA objective seeks to ensure the ‘prudent use and supply of natural resources’ in Northumberland. This includes the sustainable use of materials in building construction, the operation use of new homes and the disposal of waste. The design and layout of the developments is crucial in ensuring that resources are used effectively.	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3

improvements which has in part been recently announced (dualling of the A1 from Morpeth to Ellingham) would improve the efficiency of the local road network (although might also encourage increased car travel). Meanwhile the proposed reopening of the Ashington Blyth Tyne railway line could significantly improve accessibility throughout the south east of the county and links to the Tyneside conurbation.

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
	<p>In general, any planned new housing development is likely to lead to an increase in the total use of natural resources and the generation of waste. Higher growth would place more pressure on the County's waste management facilities, and there is some evidence to suggest that capacity at facilities locally is constrained. For example, the Strategic Study Interim Report (2014) highlighted that "waste water treatment capacity continues to be an issue and may influence the phasing of delivering growth particularly in the south east of the County where a significant proportion of development is being directed". It is therefore possible that high growth alternatives may lead to issues in terms of sustainable waste management.</p> <p>By locating the majority of development in main towns and service centres however, alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 would help to ensure that existing waste disposal and recycling facilities would be more accessible to Northumberland's residents since the majority of existing waste facilities are located around the urban areas to the South East and Central areas and waste collection is typically less efficient and cost effective within more rural areas. More targeted growth alternatives would also have a <u>positive effect</u> in terms of ensuring that mineral resources are not sterilised. However, the need to release Green belt and greenfield land to accommodate the growth proposed at some settlements would lead to the loss of agricultural land, which has been identified as a potential a <u>negative effect</u> in the SA. This could be an issue for each of the alternatives, but particularly those with higher growth (i.e. 3, 6 and 9).</p> <p>Overall, the high level strategic nature of this assessment makes it unclear as to the full extent of the sustainability implications of the housing options on natural resources and waste. Higher growth alternatives 3, 6 and 9 are likely to lead to the largest increases in the total use of natural resources and the generation of waste, of which alternatives 3 and 9 would place more pressure on the County's waste water treatment facilities in the South East where the largest amount of housing development is being directed. It is therefore more likely that alternatives 3 and 9 could lead to the issues in terms of sustainable waste management. However, other policies in the draft Core Strategy if implemented would promote the development of low carbon energy industries, sustainable construction and efficient patterns of development, potentially reducing the per capita use of resources overall, including increased reductions in waste generated. These policies ought to have a <u>positive effect</u>.</p> <p>On balance, it is predicted that alternatives 1 and 7 perform slightly better than higher growth alternatives 2, 3 and 8, 9 due to potential waste management issues at higher levels of growth. Dispersed development under alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would have a <u>significant negative effect</u> as it would lead to inefficient waste management arrangements. It is desirable to treat waste closest to source, and given that treatment facilities are located in the main towns (particularly to the South East), alternatives</p>									

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
	that promote a dispersed approach perform poorly.									
Environmental protection	<p>The condition of the rivers in Northumberland is largely 'good' with about 50% of waterbodies to be in 'good' status by 2015. The impacts on ground, river and sea waters with regard to the options presented, are likely to result from two areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The impact of increased / dispersed development on the waste water treatment works (WwTW). 2. The impact of employment activities (mainly agriculture) relating to increased economic activities (e.g. farming) on nitrate run-off to controlled water. <p>Generally speaking, the impact of the more dispersed options might be increased pressure on the WwTW network capacity rather than the capacity of the WwTW facilities themselves. By increasing the distances between the source of waste and the point of treatment there would be a need to improve the infrastructure for waste transportation in order to avoid overloading the network. The issue of WwTW capacity is addressed to some extent through the Water Cycle Study which has stated that the low-level growth options could be accommodated within current consent conditions. This being the case, the low growth options are also considered to be able to be accommodated. The higher growth alternatives would obviously place greater pressure on the WwTW and network. On this basis, Alternative 7 would be the highest rank option as it has the lowest level of growth and a more urban centric approach to delivering growth which would put less pressure on the wastewater network. In terms of the other alternatives, it is likely that a high growth, dispersed strategy (alternative 6) would put pressure on both the network and works and may have significant negative effects on water quality / resources.</p> <p>The economic activities in rural areas might contribute to further runoff of pesticides and fertilisers to controlled waters causing an increase in pollution and deterioration in condition. However, it is considered that the nature of the employment generated that would cause this impact (e.g. unlikely to bring more land into agricultural production) is going to be small. Indeed it may be that under the high growth and dispersed scenario (Option 6) runoff is reduced as agricultural land might be needed for housing / employment land. Either way it is considered that the plan itself would have a <u>negligible effect</u> over this impact and that effective farm management under a different regime is more likely to affect this impact.</p> <p>With regard to air quality, there are no AQMAs designated in the County. Recent monitoring suggests that air quality is 'stable' in Blyth, which was formerly designated as an AQMA. Changes in traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles and diesel fuel</p>	2	5	8	3	6	9	1	4	7

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
	<p>vehicles would likely increase PM10 and PM2.5 emissions. It is important that air quality does not deteriorate or result in AQMAs being designated. Spatial planning has a role in this but so does technology. Increased efficiency of combustion, cleaner fuels and electric cars should all serve to reduce emissions by more significant amounts than the plan. Nonetheless, high levels of growth in sensitive areas should be avoided.</p> <p>A focus of growth in the urban areas in the south east of the County is likely to result in increased pressure on the transport system both in terms of construction of the new developments (and associated HGV traffic) but also in terms of operation (i.e. increased general car traffic). There is also an issue with increasing growth in rural areas. Car ownership in these areas is higher than in urban areas and there is a greater reliance on cars to travel / commute. Focusing growth in rural areas is likely to cause a deterioration in air quality in these smaller 'B' roads due to their more limited capacity and increased use. This being the case, high growth and highly dispersed options (Option 6) should be avoided for their potential to have <u>negative effects</u> on air quality. Conversely, low growth urban centric options should be preferred (Alternative 7). However, even this is likely to have a <u>negative effect</u> on air quality unless policies are established to ensure air quality does not worsen.</p>									
Built and natural heritage	<p><u>Heritage</u></p> <p>Each alternative has the potential for negative effects on heritage assets (and their settings) due to increased development which could alter the character of settlements. Direct effects on heritage assets themselves would be unlikely given that the Plan seeks to protect assets from loss or damage. The main consideration would be changes to the setting of heritage assets, which also includes non-designated features of local importance. With regards to the character of settlements, increased growth at smaller villages under alternatives 4, 5 and 6 would be more likely to substantially affect the scale, form and character of these settlements that are rural in nature. Therefore, these alternatives are less desirable than the others in this respect. It is predicted that alternative 6 could have a <u>significant negative effect</u> due to the higher level of growth involved. Alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 would see higher levels of growth in settlements close to Hadrian's Wall such as Haltwhistle, which could affect the character of this area. However, the alternative distribution under 4-6 would see increased development in smaller settlements similarly within proximity to Hadrian's Wall including Hayden Bridge and Corbridge. In conclusion, a dispersed approach would be more likely to have negative effects, although these would be 'spread' over a larger area.</p> <p><u>Landscape</u></p>	1	2	3	3	4	5	1	2	3

Alternative housing scenarios:

- (1) Low growth Distribution A (2) Medium growth Distribution A (3) High growth Distribution A
 (4) Low growth Distribution B (5) Medium growth Distribution B (6) High growth Distribution B
 (7) Low growth Distribution C (8) Medium growth Distribution C (9) High growth Distribution C

Topic	Discussion of <u>significant effects</u> and <u>rank of preference</u> more generally	Alternative								
		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8	Alt 9
	<p>Each alternative has the potential for negative effects on landscape character through the loss of greenfield land within and around settlements. There are sensitive landscapes throughout Northumberland, but it is likely these would be avoided as far as possible under any of the alternatives. For dispersed scenarios 4-6, there would be less need to release Green Belt in towns including Hexham, Prudhoe and Ponteland. However, this would only be at the expense of Green Belt and greenfield land in the 'rest of the delivery area'. For some settlements such as Seaton Delaval, which would see higher levels of growth, there is a danger that a dispersed approach could lead to effects in terms of encroachment and merging of built up areas. Areas such as Bellingham would also receive more growth in a dispersed approach, with potential negative effects upon the National Park. Therefore, alternative 6 is predicted as likely to have a significant negative effect.</p> <p>Alternatives 1-3 and 7-9 have greater potential to secure regeneration in urban areas, and it is recognised that this could lead to enhancement of the character of the built and natural environment. <u>Positive effects</u> are predicted in this respect, but it is unclear the extent to which these would be realised. It is also recognised that alternatives 3 and 9 in particular would lead to a higher concentration of growth in and around the main towns and service centres which could affect character in these areas. For example, the higher level of growth in Alnwick could affect the Conservation Area, which is already classed as 'at risk' and deteriorating. Conversely, development could actually present an opportunity for enhancement in these areas, but at this stage the effects are uncertain.</p>									

APPENDIX VII: SUMMARY OF SITE OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR GREEN BELT RELEASE

Site options for Hexham

Site reference	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure*	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC	Proximity to primary school	Middle School	Proximity to secondary school	Distance to a GP or health centre	Access to key employment sites	Food shop or post office	Access to greenspace
2374																							
2579																							
2580																							
2644																							
6854																							
6771																							
6850																							
6903																							
6937																							

Additional site options for Hexham identified at Major Modifications stage

Ref	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure*	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC	Proximity to primary/first school	Proximity to middle school	Proximity to secondary/high school	Distance to a GP or health centre	Access to key employment sites	Food shop or post office	Access to greenspace
6782	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
6840	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
6792	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
6852	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
6936	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
9000	Green	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green
9001	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
9002	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow
2598	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow

Site options for Prudhoe

Site reference	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure*	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC	Proximity to first school	Proximity to middle school	Proximity to secondary school	Distance to a GP or health centre	Access to key employment sites	Food shop or post office	Access to greenspace
8006	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red
2550	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
6849c	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow
2339	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green
2494	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green

Site options for Ponteland

Site reference	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure*	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC	Proximity to primary/first school	Proximity to middle school	Proximity to secondary/high school	Distance to a GP or health centre	Access to key employment sites	Food shop or post office	Access to greenspace
8004																							
8003																							
6777																							
3730																							
3430																							
3010																							
6745																							
6838																							
3654																							
3002																							
3176																							
3659																							
6911																							
3086																							
6912																							
6913																							
3189																							
3645																							
3430																							
3032																							

Site options for Morpeth

Site reference	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure*	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC	Proximity to first school	Proximity to middle school	Proximity to secondary school	Distance to a GP or health centre	Access to key employment sites	Food shop or post office	Access to greenspace
3071																							
3072																							
3074																							
8057																							
3055																							
3174																							
8007																							

Additional site options for Morpeth identified at Major Modifications stage

Site reference	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure *	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC	Proximity to primary school	Proximity to middle school	Proximity to secondary school	Distance to a GP or health centre	Access to key employment sites	Food shop or post office	Access to greenspace
3071																							
3071b																							
3071c																							
3073																							
3073b																							

APPENDIX VIII: SUMMARY OF APPRAISAL FINDINGS FOR EMPLOYMENT SITE OPTIONS

	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure*	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC
Hexham Employment Site 1																
Hexham Employment Site 2																
Hexham Employment Site 3																
Hexham Employment Site 4																
Hexham Employment Site 5																
Hexham Employment Site 6																
Hexham Employment Site 7																
Morpeth Employment Site 1																
Morpeth Employment Site 2																
Morpeth Employment Site 3																
Morpeth Employment Site 4																
Morpeth Employment Site 5																
Morpeth Employment Site 6																
Morpeth Employment Site 7																
Morpeth Employment Site 8																
Morpeth Employment Site 9																
Morpeth Employment Site 10																

	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure*	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC
Ponteland Employment Site 1																
Ponteland Employment Site 2																
Ponteland Employment Site 3																
Ponteland Employment Site 4																
Ponteland Employment Site 5																
Ponteland Employment Site 6																
Ponteland Employment Site 7																
Ponteland Employment Site 8																
Ponteland Employment Site 9																
Prudhoe Employment Site 1																
Prudhoe Employment Site 2																
Prudhoe Employment Site 3																
Prudhoe Employment Site 4																
Prudhoe Employment Site 5																
Prudhoe Employment Site 6																
Prudhoe Employment Site 7																
Alnwick Employment Site 1																
Alnwick Employment Site 2																
Alnwick Employment Site 3																

Additional employment land options identified at Major Modifications stage

ref	Site name	Distance to bus stop	Distance to train station	Highways access	Amenity	Agricultural land	Fluvial Flood risk	Surface water FR	Landscape sensitivity	Green infrastructure*	Heritage assets	Local wildlife	SSSI	Land use	Marketability	Infrastructure constraints	SPA / SAC
Morpeth																	
10	Land east of coopies lane															**	
11	Lancaster Park							*									
Ponteland																	
10	Clickemin Farm																
11	Prestwick Park Phase 2									*							

* part of site to the south ** potential

APPENDIX VIII: SITE OPTIONS FOR A GARDEN VILLAGE – DETAILED PROFORMAS

1. Dissington

SA Topic	Criteria	Score	Further considerations
Health wellbeing and cohesion	Effects on amenity	Uncertain effects at this stage.	Would need to be determined once scheme details are available.
	Potential for green infrastructure loss	No loss	Though there is loss of open green space, much of this is agricultural land.
	Access to green infrastructure	<400m - Ponteland Park is located to the south of the A696.	
	Distance to a GP / health centre	<1200m Several GP surgeries / Health Centres in Ponteland. Ponteland Medical Group is located at Meadowfield Industrial Estate.	
Environmental protection	Agricultural land	There is Grade 3b Agricultural Land on the northern side of the site.	Compensate for loss of best and most versatile land if possible through provision of allotment perhaps.
Built and natural heritage	Landscape sensitivity	Uncertain effects at this stage.	
	Potential effects on built heritage	The listed building which was identified during the Heritage Assets assessment is a Grade II listed farmhouse, located in the south of the potential site as part of the existing 'West Houses' group of properties.	This has only been assessed as a minor constraint as the building could be retained as part of any future development.
Climate change	Fluvial flood risk Surface water flood risk	In terms of Fluvial Flood Risk the northern area of the site has some medium level flood risk to the north, whilst there are High Level risk areas along the southern boundary	Whilst this has been marked as a major constraint, there may be scope for it to be mitigated.
Economy, Employment and	Marketability / deliverability	High	Ponteland and the surrounding area is a high value area in terms of property prices

Housing	Access to employment sites (housing sites only)	<1200m Ponteland Industrial Estate/Town Centre	
	Infrastructure constraints	Minor constraints due to no existing on site infrastructure to serve development	To be provided through development of the site
	Highway constraints	This site has minor highway constraints due to the existing local road network being inadequate to accommodate a development of this size.	The site is well connected to the strategic road network via the A696 which provides good access to the A1 and Tyneside.
Accessibility	Distance to bus stop	This site was assessed as having inadequate provision of nearby bus stops (>1600m) and a railway station. The nearest station is Morpeth, and it is very unlikely that this site will be able to accommodate a station as part of a proposal.	Creation of a new bus route and bus stops either through or close to the site would be ideal.
	Distance to train station		
	Proximity to a food shop	The site is close to the Waitrose and Sainsbury's stores in Ponteland (<800m),	Existing stores aren't realistically big enough to serve a development of this size. A proposal for this site should consider inclusion of retail provision.
	Proximity to a post office	The existing post office is slightly beyond the proximity threshold	Consideration of provision within development.
	Proximity to a primary school	1200m – 3200m	Given the location of existing education facilities, there could be a requirement for on-site provision.
	Proximity to a secondary school	1200m – 3200m	
Natural resources and waste	Land use	Mostly greenfield (>60%) This site has scored poorly on current land use as it mostly greenfield, which isn't as preferable from a planning perspective as redeveloping brownfield land.	Considering the scale of development proposed, purely brownfield alternatives were not considered realistic / reasonable.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	SSSI	Not within SSSI impact zone / doesn't require assessment	Though there are no designated sites nearby, there may be habitats or species of value on sites which would need to be assessed at a more detailed level.
	Local Wildlife	No constraints identified	
	European sites	>400m from SPA/SAC	

2. Bebside

SA Topic	Criteria	Score	Further considerations
Health wellbeing and cohesion	Effects on amenity	Uncertain effects at this stage.	Would need to be determined once scheme details are available.
	Potential for green infrastructure loss	No loss	Though there is loss of open green space, much of this is agricultural land.
	Access to green infrastructure	Access to the green space to the north west of the site was assessed as good, whilst access to the green space to the south east was assessed as poor because the railway line and the A189 block direct access from the site, meaning those who wanted to reach this open space would have to travel via Cowpen Road.	There may be scope for mitigation measures.
	Distance to a GP / health centre	1200m - 3200m Blyth Health Centre is located on Thoroton Street, Blyth. It contains Collingwood, Marine and Waterloo Medical Groups. A Community Hospital is also located here. Station Medical Group is located on Gatacre Street, Blyth, a short distance from the Medical Centre.	
Environmental protection	Agricultural land	There is Grade 3 Agricultural Land	Compensate for loss of best and most versatile land if possible.
Built and natural heritage	Landscape sensitivity	Uncertain at this stage	
	Potential effects on built heritage	No constraints identified at this high level	Detailed site assessment will be required to determine effects on setting.
Climate change	Fluvial flood risk	In terms of Fluvial Flood Risk there are areas of low risk land across the site.	
	Surface water flood risk	In terms of Surface Flood Water Risk there is a lot of low and medium risk land across the site.	There may be scope for mitigation measures.
Economy, Employment and Housing	Marketability / deliverability	Low	
	Access to employment sites (housing sites only)	>1200m-3200m Blyth Town Centre, Bedlington, and industrial estates at Cowpen are all located within 3200m of the site.	

	Infrastructure constraints	Minor constraints due to no existing on site infrastructure to serve development	To be provided through development of the site
	Highway constraints	This site has minor highway constraints due to the existing local road network being inadequate to accommodate a development of this size.	There would be particular issues along Cowpen Road which heads into the centre of Blyth, as this route already faces congestion issues at busy times.
Accessibility	Distance to bus stop	800-1600m	
	Distance to train station	>1600m Cramlington Railway Station is currently the closest railway station to Bebside at a distance of approximately 5km. Pegswood is approximately 7km and Morpeth 8km.	
	Proximity to a food shop	(<800m) ASDA is located to the east of the A189, east of Bebside.	Consideration of provision within development.
	Proximity to a post office	More than 3200m away	
	Proximity to a primary school	<1200m	May need to contribute towards new provision.
	Proximity to a secondary school	<1200m Blyth Academy is located to the south east of Bebside, on the east side of the A189. Bedlingtonshire Community High School is located to the north of Bebside and St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy is located to the west in Bedlington.	
Natural resources and waste	Land use	Mostly greenfield (>60%) This site has scored poorly on current land use as it mostly greenfield, which isn't as preferable from a planning perspective as redeveloping brownfield land.	Considering the scale of development proposed, purely brownfield alternatives were not considered realistic / reasonable.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	SSSI	Not within SSSI impact zone / doesn't require assessment	Though there are no designated sites nearby, there may be habitats or species of value on sites which would need to be assessed at a more detailed level.
	Local Wildlife	No constraints identified	
	European sites	>400m from SPA/SAC	

3. Earth balance

SA Topic	Criteria	Score	Further considerations
Health wellbeing and cohesion	Effects on amenity	Uncertain effects at this stage.	Would need to be determined once scheme details are available.
	Potential for green infrastructure loss		
	Access to green infrastructure		
	Distance to a GP / health centre	1200m - 3200m Three GP surgeries are within this distance. These are Guide Post Medical Group, Choppington; The Gables Medical Group, Bedlington; and Seaton Park Medical Group, Ashington.	
Environmental protection	Agricultural land	No agricultural land classified as best and most versatile	
Built and natural heritage	Landscape sensitivity	Uncertain at this stage	
	Potential effects on built heritage	No constraints identified at this high level	Detailed site assessment will be required to determine effects on setting.
Climate change	Fluvial flood risk	Zone 1	
	Surface water flood risk	In terms of Surface Flood Water Risk, the majority of the site is at a low risk of flooding.	
Economy, Employment and Housing	Marketability / deliverability	Medium	
	Access to employment sites	>1200m-3200m North Seaton Industrial Estate, Bedlington, Ashington and parts of the industrial estate at Cowpen are all within this distance.	
	Infrastructure constraints	Minor constraints due to no existing on site infrastructure to serve development	To be provided through development of the site
	Highway constraints	Minor constraints due to no existing on site infrastructure to serve development	To be provided through development of the site

Accessibility	Distance to bus stop	This site was assessed as having inadequate provision of nearby bus stops (>1600m) and a railway station	Creation of a new bus route and bus stops either through or close to the site would be ideal.
	Distance to train station		
	Proximity to a food shop	More than 3200m away	Consideration of provision within development.
	Proximity to a post office	More than 3200m away	
	Proximity to a primary school	1200m - 3200m	May need to contribute towards new provision.
	Proximity to a secondary school	1200m – 3200m	
Natural resources and waste	Land use	Mostly greenfield (>60%) This site has scored poorly on current land use as it mostly greenfield, which isn't as preferable from a planning perspective as redeveloping brownfield land.	Considering the scale of development proposed, purely brownfield alternatives were not considered realistic / reasonable.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	SSSI	Not within SSSI impact zone / doesn't require assessment	Though there are no designated sites nearby, there may be habitats or species of value on sites which would need to be assessed at a more detailed level.
	Local Wildlife	No constraints identified	
	European sites	>400m from SPA/SAC	

4. Stannington Station

SA Topic	Criteria	Score	Further considerations
Health wellbeing and cohesion	Effects on amenity	Uncertain effects at this stage.	Would need to be determined once scheme details are available.
	Potential for green infrastructure loss	No loss	Though there is loss of open green space, much of this is agricultural land.
	Access to green infrastructure	No accessible green infrastructure	The site is surrounded by agricultural land. Currently no green infrastructure provision. Potential for provision to be made through development.
	Distance to a GP / health centre	The nearest GP is in the centre of Bedlington, suggesting that this site would require a GP.	Potential requirement for provision of healthcare facilities.
Environmental protection	Agricultural land	No agricultural land classified as best and most versatile	
Built and natural heritage	Landscape sensitivity	Uncertain at this stage	
	Potential effects on built heritage	No constraints identified at this high level	Detailed site assessment will be required to determine effects on setting.
Climate change	Fluvial flood risk	In terms of Fluvial Flood Risk there are areas of low risk land across the site.	
	Surface water flood risk	In terms of Surface Flood Water Risk there is a low and medium level risk land across the site, whilst there is an area of high level risk just to the south of Moor Farm beside the railway.	There may be scope for mitigation measures.
Economy, Employment and Housing	Marketability / deliverability	High	
	Access to employment sites (housing sites only)	>1200m-3200m Industrial Estates at Cramlington and Morpeth Town Centre are located within this distance.	
	Infrastructure constraints	Minor constraints due to no existing on site infrastructure to serve development	To be provided through development of the site

	Highway constraints	This site has minor highway constraints due to the existing local road network being inadequate to accommodate a development of this size.	The site is well connected to the strategic road network via the A1 which provides good access to Tyneside. Local road access mitigation may be required.
Accessibility	Distance to bus stop	Assuming that the potential development would be located to the south west of the existing settlement. Close to existing bus stops and public transport links to Newcastle and Tyneside.	Without potential scheme details, further considerations are unknown.
	Distance to train station	The nearest train station is Morpeth, and it is very unlikely that this site will be able to accommodate a station as part of a proposal due to viability constraints.	Sustainable transport constraints unlikely to be overcome due to external factors.
	Proximity to a food shop	>3200m	
	Proximity to a post office	1200m - 3200m away	
	Proximity to a primary school	The nearest Primary Schools to the site are in Stannington Village and Bedlington. The nearest High Schools are in Bedlington.	The distances to these sites are over the threshold and so were assessed as poor provision, suggesting that a development of this size would require a new Primary School. Potential requirement for provision of education facilities.
	Proximity to a secondary school	>3200m away	
Natural resources and waste	Land use	Mostly greenfield (>60%) This site has scored poorly on current land use as it mostly greenfield, which isn't as preferable from a planning perspective as redeveloping brownfield land.	Considering the scale of development proposed, purely brownfield alternatives were not considered realistic / reasonable.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	SSSI	Not within SSSI impact zone / doesn't require assessment	Though there are no designated sites nearby, there may be habitats or species of value on sites which would need to be assessed at a more detailed level.
	Local Wildlife	No constraints identified	
	European sites	>400m from SPA/SAC	

5. Stannington St Mary's

SA Topic	Criteria	Score	Further considerations
Health wellbeing and cohesion	Effects on amenity	Uncertain effects at this stage.	Would need to be determined once scheme details are available.
	Potential for green infrastructure loss	No loss	Though there is loss of open green space, much of this is agricultural land.
	Access to green infrastructure	No accessible green infrastructure	The site is surrounded by agricultural land. Currently no green infrastructure provision. Potential for provision to be made through development.
	Distance to a GP / health centre	> 3200m Morpeth NHS Centre, Dark Lane, Morpeth, contains two GP surgeries, namely Greystoke and Gas House Lane surgeries.	
Environmental protection	Agricultural land	No agricultural land classified as best and most versatile	
Built and natural heritage	Landscape sensitivity	Uncertain at this stage	
	Potential effects on built heritage	Major heritage assets constraints as the land appears to be a designated a park and garden. Additionally, the site is deemed as having green space less than 400m from the site which would require protection from development.	Further detailed assessment required.
Climate change	Fluvial flood risk	In terms of Fluvial Flood Risk there are areas of low risk land across the site.	
	Surface water flood risk	In terms of Surface Flood Water Risk there is a medium level risk to land across the site.	Potential mitigation required,
Economy, Employment and Housing	Marketability / deliverability	Low	
	Access to employment sites (housing sites only)	>1200m-3200m The town of Morpeth is located within this distance.	

	Infrastructure constraints	Minor constraints due to no existing on site infrastructure to serve development	To be provided through development of the site
	Highway constraints	This site has minor highway constraints due to the existing local road network being inadequate to accommodate a development of this size.	The site is well connected to the strategic road network via the A1 which provides good access to Tyneside. Local road access mitigation may be required.
Accessibility	Distance to bus stop	The assessment for this site assumed that the potential development would be located to the south west of the existing settlement. Close to existing bus stops and public transport links to Newcastle and Tyneside.	
	Distance to train station	>1600m	The nearest train station is Morpeth, and it is very unlikely that this site will be able to accommodate a station as part of a proposal due to viability constraints.
	Proximity to a food shop	> 3200m	A farm shop is located on Stannington Station Road at a distance of approximately 3500m. The nearest supermarket is located within Morpeth, with a wider choice available within Newcastle to the south.
	Proximity to a post office	More than 3200m away	Consideration of provision within development.
	Proximity to a primary school	The nearest Primary Schools to the site are in Stannington Village and Bedlington. The nearest High Schools are in Bedlington. >3200m away	The distances to these sites are over the threshold and so were assessed as poor provision, suggesting that a development of this size would require a new Primary School. Potential requirement for provision of education facilities.
	Proximity to a secondary school		
Natural resources and waste	Land use	Mostly greenfield (>60%) This site has scored poorly on current land use as it mostly greenfield, which isn't as preferable from a planning perspective as redeveloping brownfield land.	Considering the scale of development proposed, purely brownfield alternatives were not considered realistic / reasonable.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	SSSI	Not within SSSI impact zone / doesn't require assessment	Though there are no designated sites nearby, there may be habitats or species of value on sites which would need to be assessed at a more detailed level.
	Local Wildlife	No constraints identified	
	European sites	>400m from SPA/SAC	

APPENDIX X: HOW THE THEMATIC OPTIONS WERE TESTED AT ISSUES AND OPTIONS AND PROGRESSED THROUGH THE STAGES OF THE PLAN

This Appendix is, in effect a summary of the results of the 'light touch' Sustainability Appraisal of Options carried out at the original 'Issues and Options' stage of the Core Strategy. Appendix II above has reproduced two of the tables from that appraisal, relating to the main spatial strategy questions (Questions 3 and 4). However a further hundred plus questions were asked, and similar SA appraisal tables were produced for each. The full set of these tables can be found at the back of the SA document that accompanied Issues and Options - see <http://northumberland.limehouse.co.uk/file/2187501>. That document also contains an explanation of the methodology used at the time.

The table below summarises these individual assessments and endeavours to trace each issue and its chosen option through the stages of the Plan to the eventual formation of policies and proposals, which will clearly reflect a range of factors (including evidence, circumstances and the views of the public and stakeholders) which will have to have been balanced against the sustainability appraisal. The analysis below also looks at whether, at that early stage, all possible options were actually assessed from a sustainability point of view.

The tables below are set out as follows:

The left hand column shows the subjects of the individual issues or questions that were posed at the Issues and Options stage. In some cases these are grouped – e.g. where two or three questions explored a particular issue.

The second column lists the options, as phrased in the consultation document.

The third column gives a brief verbal summary of which options performed best in the sustainability appraisal, (if any), and also gives an explanation of the ability or otherwise to test different options.

The fourth column is a 'light touch' desk top assessment of the results of the original assessment:

The number(s) shown (e.g. 1, 2 or 3) are those of the options that had a positive SA assessment at the time.

The plus signs seek to depict the relative strength of any positive result. It should be emphasised that this is based on a relatively quick reassessment of the verbal summaries at the end of the original individual assessments (against the twenty factors) and the prevalence or otherwise of green colours in the boxes associated with the assessment of the option concerned.

The colour that the column is shaded is intended to show whether more than one option was tested. Therefore the column is coloured pale yellow if it had been possible to assess alternatives or grey if just a single option (or occasionally no option) had been possible to test. In terms of those boxes shaded pale yellow, these can be divided between:

- cases where there were two or more explicit options;
- cases where a single option was given but it was clear that the alternative being posed was a 'do nothing' or 'status quo'.

The fifth column is intended for illustrative purposes, to show whether or there agreement between any option that came out positive in the SA and the outcome of the public consultation. This can, in some cases, help to explain why the most sustainable option was not taken forward, (although in most cases there was a good level of agreement).

The final (right hand) column summarises:

- The degree to which more than one option could be tested (colour coded)
- The SA options that were actually tested and the outcomes of those assessments.
- What consultees said at the time and how their support may or may not have related well to the sustainability of their preferred option or options.

The outcome in terms of how the option taken forward related to the most sustainable option or options at the Issues and Options stage. This includes a consideration of how and why there may have been a deviation from the most sustainable option as the stages of the plan progressed, an explanation of any other options that may subsequently have been tested along the way and how well the eventual course of action / policy etc. is likely to perform in sustainability terms. Clearly, even where the policy pursued has moved away from the most positive option in the original SA assessment, it has been sought to ensure that the effect will be, at the very least, neutral in sustainability terms. Hence a colour coding has been used – greens for positive effects, greys for a neutral effect or yellows for an uncertain effect etc.

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q1 / Q2 Spatial Vision and Spatial Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Vision and objectives as set out Alternative 	<p>It was not possible to assess these due to their wide scope and high level nature.</p> <p>Any alternative could be any number of possible combinations of aims and objectives.</p>	Not possible to assess any alternative	Indeterminate	<p>SA: NOT POSSIBLE TO TEST ANY OPTION.</p> <p>Consultees – Majority support for both</p> <p>OUTCOME The overall approach of the Plan is intended to be sustainable. Therefore it is unlikely that the objectives and vision set out would be less than neutral in SA terms.</p>	NEUTRAL
Q3 Strategic development options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the existing strategic approach Planning for lower rates of development Planning for targeted increases in development Alternative approach 	<p>Option 3 performed best in relation to economic and social objectives – e.g. supporting regeneration in settlements where additional growth was planned. The SA also highlighted that the preferred option is likely to have a mixture of uncertain or potential negative effects on the environment.</p> <p>Option 1 also performed in a similar pattern but less strongly as growth under this option would be less targeted than under Option 3</p>	<p>1+</p> <p>3++</p>	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 3, minor positive effect of Option 1 and minor negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees –The highest number of respondents agreed with the most sustainable option (Option 3) – around two thirds. About a quarter chose to suggest variations that were different from the three options set out.</p> <p>OUTCOME This strategic approach was taken forward modified later with a two-pronged strategic development option: 'Growing the economy' and 'Growing the labour force - building more new homes', (with associated measures and land / housing needs levels) and referred to the employment land needs and housing required. Strategic 'outcomes were developed to better articulate what was being supported through pursuing that targeted increases option. It is not considered that this has resulted in any significant departure from Option 3, as originally put forward. It will therefore continue to perform well in SA terms.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q4 Spatial distribution options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The existing distribution 2. Dispersed development 3. The existing distribution plus targeted growth 4. Alternative approach 	<p>Again, Option 3 performed best in relation to economic and social objectives.</p> <p>Option 1 also performed in a similar pattern but less strongly as growth under this option would be less targeted than under Option 3</p>	<p>1+</p> <p>3++</p>	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 3, minor positive effect of Option 1 and clear negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees –The highest number of respondents agreed with the most sustainable option (Option 3) – around two thirds, with most of the remainder choosing to suggest variations that were different from the three options set out.</p> <p>OUTCOME This strategic approach was taken forward modified only in terms of the relative emphasis put on the towns where growth was to be targeted, as more evidence emerged. It is not considered that this has resulted in any significant departure from Option 3, as originally put forward. It will therefore continue to perform well in SA terms. The introduction of Dissington Garden Village is viewed as separate from the overall spatial distribution strategy. Despite creating a separate new settlement, the location has been tested against alternatives. Taking account of its proximity to Ponteland and the beneficial interaction between the two settlements, it can be stated that the introduction of the garden village fits well with the best performing option (i.e. existing distribution plus targeted growth).</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q5 Sustainable development	1. That principles [set out in shortened form below] should form the basis of a policy on sustainable development	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a major positive effect across a range of factors, as would be expected of a strong approach on sustainable planning. SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.	1++ no real alter-native assessed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Four fifths of respondents supported the approach with the remainder suggesting variations on the approach.</p> <p>OUTCOME The eventual policy has promoted the principles set out with a degree of refinement and will continue to me strongly positive in sustainable planning terms.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
	2. Different approach					

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q6 Northumberland's Delivery Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the three Delivery Areas [North, South-East, South and West] would be the right ones for Northumberland If not, what would the right ones be? 	<p>It was not possible to assess these due to their wide scope and high level nature.</p> <p>Any alternative could vary in number and geography.</p>	Not possible to assess any alternative	Indeterminate	<p>SA: NOT POSSIBLE TO TEST ANY OPTION.</p> <p>Consultees – Half supported the proposed three areas, with the remainder against and/or suggesting variations on the proposed number or geography.</p> <p>OUTCOME The delivery areas are, in effect a tool that seeks to ensure the delivery of the sustainable strategy. The SA effect should be neutral. As the Core Strategy went through its stages, the number of delivery areas was increased to four and the geography was altered. This would allow a more tailored approach to how levels of development would be directed, to achieve goals such as boosting communities, conserving valued environments and supporting accessible locations. The effect would continue to be neutral – certainly no worse than neutral. Other policies will overcome any sustainable planning anomalies that may emerge – allowing varied approaches within a particular delivery area where good sustainable planning calls for this..</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q7 / 8 / 9 Settlement role and function	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5 tiered approach with a different set of development principles [as set out] applied to each tier and a named set of settlements in each tier. Alternative approach 	<p>The SA analysis combined Qs 7 to 9. In each case, it did not look at any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward and the myriad of alternative approaches that might be suggested. Therefore the “No” option could not be assessed.</p> <p>The SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a major positive effect on the economy and service provision aspects as the rigid approach being suggested would give certainty on the sustainable planning of these types of development and access to them.</p>	1++ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Three fifths of respondents supported the approach with the remainder opposing and/or suggesting variations on the approach.</p> <p>OUTCOME The eventual policy approach has allowed for greater flexibility. This may allow some additional development to drop down to lower tiers – something that may have proved to be a necessity in some areas, due, for example, to the shortage of SHLAA sites in some places, the realities of where spare infrastructure capacity exists, as well as community pressure to avoid allowing smaller settlements to decline. The overall effect, in SA terms, will still be positive, although it may not be as strong as the original approach was assessed as being. The proposed Dissington Garden Village will eventually contain some 2000 households. While it is assumed that the new village will sit below the second tier of settlements, it may well end up as larger than any other settlement at that lower level, (Stocksfield being the next largest at about 1,300). It is not considered that this presents an issue in terms of the sustainability of the strategy on settlement role and function, especially given that the settlement will take many years to reach a critical mass. Depending on the level of services that it eventually provides, it could be reconsidered, when the Core Strategy is reviewed, as to whether Dissington might be Tier 2.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q10 / 11 Evidence for establishing the housing requirement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Whether a table setting out housing requirements for each 5-year cohort for each of the then 3 proposed delivery areas, (based on scenarios such as RSS requirement, past completion rates, household projections or combinations of these), was the correct approach. And whether the evidence used to establish the housing requirement should vary across the Council's three Delivery Areas over each time period Alternative approach 	<p>SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a minor positive effect, insofar as it should ensure the delivery of affordable housing, with wider community benefits in the longer term – many of the other factors being assessed as neutral or uncertain.</p> <p>SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.</p>	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possible sources of evidence and scenarios.</p> <p>Consultees – Responses were mostly qualified, calling for additional options to be put forward, based on more reliable information and with evidence tailored to delivery areas, Subsequently, the Council commissioned further population and household modelling work looking at a range of up-to-date scenarios. These were further refined as the stages progressed.</p> <p>OUTCOME While the evidence was much revised, the fact that the initial evidence base was positively assessed means that adding to the evidence should give greater certainty that the solution that it would lead to would be a sustainable one. Therefore it can be stated that the outcome after the stages of the Core Strategy should, at the very least, be neutral, and may well continue to register as positive.</p>	NEUTRAL to Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & Consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q12 Proposed ranges of housing delivery	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the number of new homes to be provided through the Core Strategy should be set within the ranges specified for the (then) three Delivery Areas over each time period Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact overall, accounted for by the fact that soundly based housing targets, tailored to particular areas and particular time periods, should ensure the delivery of affordable housing, with wider community benefits in the longer term – many of the other factors being assessed as neutral or uncertain.</p> <p>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no change from the existing approaches in Local Plans, the overall effect will be neutral, with a large element of uncertainty. Clearly other ranges of figures could have been tested but these would not have been based on the evidence available at the time, as the ranges tested were.</p>	1+	Moderate	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to uncertain effect of not implementing the approach, (although other figures were not tested as they would not reflect the evidence available at the time).</p> <p>Consultees –Most respondents disagreed with the ranges, with confusion over their wide ranges. Later stages saw new delivery areas and forecasts changing and refining the figures, allowing for more informed responses.</p> <p>OUTCOME While the figures evolved considerably as the stages progressed, the fact is that they became more refined and a greater degree of certainty emerged as to how new housing numbers should be distributed throughout the period and across the County, so that a suitable planning solution could be arrived at. Therefore it can be stated that the outcome after the stages of the Core Strategy should, at the very least, be neutral, and may well continue to register as positive.</p>	NEUTRAL to Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q13 Distribution of new homes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To reflect the spatial distribution of the existing population Disperse development to smaller settlements Align with the existing and planned strategies Alternative option 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact insofar as existing communities would be boosted with additional people and homes</p> <p>Option 2 was assessed as strongly negative due to several factors relating to the lack of services in remote locations, increased journeys etc.</p> <p>If Option 3 was seen as providing the critical mass necessary in the main centres of population to deliver affordable housing and services on a sustainable scale and therefore demonstrated the most positive contribution to sustainable planning.</p>	<p>1+</p> <p>3++</p>	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 3, minor positive effect of Option 1 and major negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees –The highest number of respondents agreed with the most sustainable option (Option 3) although this was still below half. Over a third chose to suggest variations that were different from the three options set out.</p> <p>OUTCOME The overall strategy was progressed through the stages with variations being limited to capacity issues for individual towns rather than any strategic variation. Therefore it can be stated that a strongly positive strategy (from an SA point of view) was taken forward. While the Garden village proposal emerged at a later stage, this was not intended to affect the overall strategy on the distribution of new housing across the County as a whole.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q14 Previously developed land	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> That the Core Strategy should set a locally appropriate target for the use of previously developed land That the Core Strategy should not set a locally appropriate target for the use of previously developed land. 	<p>Option 1 was slightly positive from an SA point of view primarily due to the perception that PDL would be in towns where locations would involve less travel to work and services.</p> <p>Option 2 would be neutral, (i.e. continued reliance on the NPPF and out-of-date local plan policies) to negative, as viability considerations etc. could gradually increase the proportion of less sustainable green field land being used over time.</p>	<p>1+</p>	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Minor positive effect of Option 3, neutral to minor negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees –Over half of respondents agreed with the more sustainable option (Option 1).</p> <p>OUTCOME It was decided not to set targets but to simply give encouragement to the use of PDL. It is difficult therefore to demonstrate that the long term effect of not having targets will have a neutral or positive effect on sustainability.</p>	UNCERTAIN

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q15 Residential Gardens	3. That the Core Strategy should include a policy that restricts the development of residential gardens 4. That the Core Strategy should not include a policy that restricts the development of residential gardens.	Option 1 was slightly positive from an SA point of view. Option 2 would be neutral as the current approach would continue - looking at each case on its merits but bearing in mind residential gardens are NOT PDL. This could become negative over time as pressure to develop in gardens increases	1+	Very Good	SA: OPTIONS TESTED Minor positive effect of Option 1, neutral to minor negative effect of Option 2. Consultees –Approaching two-thirds agreed with the more sustainable option (Option 1). OUTCOME It was decided to apply option 2 – i.e. to continue the approach of looking at each case on its merits but bearing in mind residential gardens are NOT PDL. As it is possible that pressure to develop in gardens will increase over time without any restriction, it is difficult to argue that the overall sustainability effect will be positive or neutral as the plan period progresses.	UNCERTAIN
Q16 Housing Density	1. That the Core Strategy should include a policy on housing density 2. That the Core Strategy should not include a policy on housing density.	Option 1 was slightly positive from an SA point of view. Option 2 would be neutral as the current approach would continue - looking at each case on its merits but bearing in mind the fact that the plan allows for greenfield land to be used while encouraging the continued use of PDL	1+	Very Good	SA: OPTIONS TESTED Minor positive effect of Option 1, neutral to minor negative effect of Option 2. Consultees –Over half agreed with the more sustainable option (Option 1). OUTCOME It was decided to apply option 2 – i.e. NOT to set density standards but allow for local standards to be set if appropriate. As this could result in a greater take up of land and more spread-out places, it is difficult to argue that the overall sustainability effect will be positive or neutral as the plan period progresses.	UNCERTAIN

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q17 Delivering affordable homes - Targets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a countywide affordable housing target of 30% subject to assessments of individual sites economic viability including the availability of grant support and other known demands related to the development of the site? 2. Not to do so / alternative. 	<p>Option 1 – a minor positive effect, (major positives on the provision of affordable homes and more minor community and economic benefits being balanced by some mildly negative environmental impacts.</p> <p>Option 2 – a neutral effect of the ‘do nothing’ approach, although other targets (which would not have been true to the evidence at the time) were, of course, not tested.</p>	1+	Poor	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to slightly negative effect of continuing to apply current policy / not have targets, while other percentage targets (which would not have reflected the evidence available at the time) had not been tested.</p> <p>Consultees – While a third of responses favoured the 30% target, half opposed it, although this was split between local people and groups who saw a need for higher provision and the development industry who could not see the figure being sustainable across Northumberland.</p> <p>OUTCOME Further evidence at later stages adhered to an overall target for the county of 30% but with a lower target of 15% for new schemes unless monitoring justified raising this level. Not basing the amount of affordable housing sought on the best evidence available could be seen as unsustainable – e.g. if it would lead to surplus newly built affordable homes in rural areas being allocated to households from elsewhere who would then have further to travel. Therefore it is concluded that, from an SA perspective, the eventual approach would be, at worst, neutral.</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall												
Q18 Delivering affordable homes – Detailed Targets	<div>1. Include a policy requiring varying rates of social rented and intermediate housing across the three Delivery Areas as set out in table</div> <table><tr><td></td><td>Social Rented</td><td>Intermediate</td></tr><tr><td>N</td><td>80%</td><td>20%</td></tr><tr><td>S & W</td><td>95%</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>SE</td><td>95%</td><td>5%</td></tr></table> <div>2. Not to do so / alternative.</div>		Social Rented	Intermediate	N	80%	20%	S & W	95%	5%	SE	95%	5%	<div>Option 1 – a minor positive effect, (major positives on the provision of affordable homes and more minor community and economic benefits being balanced by some mildly negative environmental impacts.</div> <div>Option 2 – a neutral effect of the ‘do nothing’ approach, although other targets (which would not have been true to the evidence at the time) were, of course, not tested.</div>	1+	Good	<div>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to slightly negative effect of continuing to apply current policy / not have targets, while other percentage splits (which would not have reflected the evidence available at the time) had not been tested.</div> <div>Consultees – While over a third of responses favoured the approach, more either opposed it or proposed a variation on it.</div> <div>OUTCOME Such a splitting of the social vs intermediate elements was dropped later and the delivery areas were also amended. Greater flexibility in the process should allow for the most sustainable solution. Therefore it is concluded that, from an SA perspective, the eventual approach would be, at worst, neutral.</div>	NEUTRAL
	Social Rented	Intermediate																
N	80%	20%																
S & W	95%	5%																
SE	95%	5%																
Q19 Delivering affordable homes – Site thresholds	<div>1. Include a minimum site threshold before affordable housing sought</div> <div>2. Seek affordable housing provision or a contribution thereto, on all residential developments.</div>	<div>Both options having a minor positive effect, (major positives on the provision of affordable homes and more minor community and economic benefits being balanced by some mildly negative environmental impacts). While not looked at in detail, it can be surmised that, under Option 2, more affordable housing would be achieved, while some of this may be in less sustainable locations. This would even the outcome for both options</div> <div>Meanwhile, there would be a neutral effect of the ‘do nothing’ approach.</div>	1+ 2+	Good	<div>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Options 1 and 2, with likely neutral to slightly negative effect of continuing to apply current policy and/or not have targets.</div> <div>Consultees – Around 40% of responses favoured each of the approaches</div> <div>OUTCOME As the eventual threshold was set at two – a compromise between the two options, this should also be seen as likely to have positive SA credentials.</div>	Minor Positive												

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q20 Delivering affordable homes – Off-site contributions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a sequential policy to use off-site or financial contributions to provide affordable housing in the following priority order? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In settlement where contribution arises; o In parish or ward where contribution arises; o In the Delivery Area where contribution arises; o Where priorities identified throughout the County. 2. Not to do so. 	<p>Option 1 would have a minor positive effect, (major positives on the provision of affordable homes and more minor community and economic benefits being balanced by some mildly negative environmental impacts)</p> <p>Any alternative would presumably allow additional flexibility and may be less sustainable, neutral at first, less sustainable later as the cumulative effect of affordable housing not being located according to local needs takes hold..</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to slightly negative effect of continuing to apply current policy and/or not have such criteria.</p> <p>Consultees – Half of responses favoured the approach set out</p> <p>OUTCOME As the eventual approach strongly resembles that set out under Option 1, it almost certain to have similar positive SA credentials.</p>	Minor Positive
Q21 Delivering affordable homes – Rural exception sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core Strategy should include provision for the allocation of rural exception sites 2. Core Strategy should not include provision for the allocation of rural exception sites 	<p>Option 1 would have a neutral to minor positive effect, (major positives on the provision of affordable homes and more minor community and economic benefits being balanced by some negative environmental impacts reflecting the likely location of such sites in less sustainable locations)</p> <p>Any alternative would have to be taken as leading to a lower proportion of affordable housing needs being met in rural locations.</p>	1(+)	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Neutral to minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to slightly negative effect of continuing to apply current policy and/or not specifically allowing for rural exception sites.</p> <p>Consultees – A large majority of responses favoured the approach set out</p> <p>OUTCOME As the eventual approach promotes rural exception sites where needed and while it does not entirely preclude the possibility that such sites could be allocated in the future, this is no longer the intent of the policy. Nonetheless, the fact that the policy is a positive one that facilitates needed affordable housing in the correct locations, there will be positive SA outcome.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q22 Delivering affordable homes – Areas with high proportion of second / holiday homes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Core Strategy should include a policy specifically for affordable homes for local needs in places affected by a high proportion of second or holiday homes Core Strategy should not include a policy specifically for affordable homes for local needs in places affected by a high proportion of second or holiday homes 	<p>Option 1 would have a minor positive effect, (major positives on the provision of affordable homes and more minor community and economic benefits being balanced by some small negative environmental impacts reflecting the likely location of such sites in less sustainable locations)</p> <p>Any alternative would have to be taken as the application, in these areas, of the same policy approach as elsewhere in the County (whatever that may be).</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral effect of applying the countywide policy approach.</p> <p>Consultees – A large majority of responses favoured the approach set out</p> <p>OUTCOME It was concluded as necessary for the Plan to reflect need and not concentrate provision on certain places for reasons other than local need. At a later stage, two new policies on the AONB referred to the need to boost the availability of “permanently occupied” and affordable housing. In addition, the policy on rural exception sites included a provision that any market housing on such site should all be permanent residence housing. The general housing provision policy also sought permanent residence housing as an appropriate part of a good mix of housing. The resulting policy approach should have a net positive sustainability outcome, as the policy approach, aimed at tackling the second homes issue, has been strengthened.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q23 Meeting the needs of older and vulnerable people	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Core Strategy should include a criteria based policy to guide provision of housing suited to older people and people with disabilities Core Strategy should not include a criteria based policy to guide provision of housing suited to older people and people with disabilities 	<p>Option 1 would have a minor positive effect, (major positives on the provision of suitable homes and the likelihood that they would be in settlements with largely neutral or uncertain outcomes on other factors)</p> <p>Option 2 would have a neutral effect.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral effect of not having a specific set of criteria.</p> <p>Consultees – A large majority of responses favoured the approach set out</p> <p>OUTCOME The policy was developed and, at first including references to needs prioritisation and lifetime homes and neighbourhoods. Feedback led to the splitting of the policy in two, one part dealing with older and vulnerable people, the other with specialist needs housing. Subsequently, as a result of changes in national guidance, 'lifetime homes' standards could no longer be included. Nevertheless, the policy approach has been strengthened to require developers to demonstrate how proposals have considered the needs of older people and vulnerable groups. It is should deliver housing for these groups in sustainable locations and be positive overall in sustainability terms.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q24 Provision of Traveller sites	<p>1. Core Strategy should include the targets for additional pitches for gypsy and traveller sites [based on 2008 GTAA, showing that 10 pitches were required by 2013 in SE N'land; and a single additional pitch in the north of the county by 2013. None beyond that]</p> <p>2. Core Strategy should not include targets</p>	<p>Option 1 would have a minor positive effect, (positives on the provision of suitable homes, community wellbeing etc.; mostly neutral effects otherwise)</p> <p>Option 2 would have a neutral effect – i.e. less strong positive policy basis for delivering identified needs.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral effect of a less specific policy approach.</p> <p>Consultees – Two thirds of responses favoured the approach set out</p> <p>OUTCOME The option of basing the requirement on the 2008 GTAA was supported. However national policy statement, issued in 2012 made clear the need for up-to-date assessments looking forward over the lifetime of the Plan. Therefore, provision was looked at afresh in a GTAA carried out during 2014. This continued to find a need for additional permanent pitches biased towards SE Northumberland, but also identified a strong need for transit or stopping off points, (also with the emphasis on the SE area) Therefore the general support for adding necessary provision was carried forward, albeit that the policy was based on totally revised evidence. It should continue to have a positive SA outcome.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q25 Employment Land Supply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Core Strategy should plan for the range of 293 to 317 hectares of general employment land Alternative 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact due to the strong positives relating to the economy, with most other indicators registering as neutral or uncertain.</p> <p>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no new numbers on the supply of employment land, it can be understood that the short term effect would be largely neutral but that there would be negative effects in the longer term, either because of a surplus of land supply preventing release for other uses or due to a shortage. Both scenarios would eventually cause issues of sustainability.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to slightly negative effect of not basing the figure on up-to-date evidence</p> <p>Consultees – Split opinion between using these figures, although the two alternative responses, simply saying ‘No’ or actually suggesting an alternative range, added up to around 60% of responses</p> <p>OUTCOME In the end, further work led to a much reduced total, with an approach that would propose de-allocations in some places and mixed uses elsewhere. Given that this would entail the most efficient use of land, based on updated evidence, and given the previous assessment, it is highly unlikely that the outcome of a revised SA for this approach would be worse than neutral.</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q26 and Q28 Employment Land Supply – Strategic (and specifically “BEREZ” area)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Core Strategy should plan for specific strategic employment land provision for the low carbon and renewables sector Core Strategy should not plan for specific strategic employment land provision for the low carbon and renewables sector 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having very strong positives for the SA in terms of a number of factors relating to climate change, the environment and the economy</p> <p>Option 2, which can be taken as meaning moving forward without such a specific allocation would be neutral to begin with but begin to have negative impacts in the longer term. (NB not assessed in the published document as there could have been a high number of alternative options – too many to test individually).</p>	1++	General concept: Poor BEREZ: Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Major positive effect of Option 2</p> <p>Consultees – Support for an allocation but concern that the list of uses to be accommodated too narrow.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option carried forward through stages but WITH MODIFICATION widening the range of uses from the original BERES concept to embrace a wider range of growing and emerging sectors. Should still be positive in SA terms</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall												
<div>Q27</div> <div>Employment Land Distribution</div>	<div>1. Core Strategy should plan for the spatial distribution of land below</div> <div>2. Alternative distribution</div> <table><tr><td></td><td>Suggested de-allocations (hectares)</td><td>Potential new land requirement (hectares)</td></tr><tr><td>North</td><td>-13</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>S & W</td><td>-74</td><td>30-40</td></tr><tr><td>SE</td><td>-45</td><td>10</td></tr></table>		Suggested de-allocations (hectares)	Potential new land requirement (hectares)	North	-13	10	S & W	-74	30-40	SE	-45	10	<div>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact due to the strong positives relating to the economy, with most other indicators registering as neutral or uncertain.</div> <div>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no change from the existing distribution / area-by-area supply of employment land, it can be understood that the short term effect would be largely neutral but that there would be negative effects in the longer term, either because of a surplus of land supply preventing release for other uses or due to a shortage. Both scenarios would eventually cause issues of sustainability. Clearly, other distributions – different from current and different from the table on the left – were not tested.</div>	1+	Poor	<div>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to slightly negative effect of not basing the figure on up-to-date evidence</div> <div>Consultees – The two alternative responses, simply saying ‘No’ to these figures or actually suggesting an alternative range, added up to over 80% of responses</div> <div>OUTCOME In the end, the Delivery Areas were redefined and four instead of three were taken forward There were specific allocations for additional land in some towns, while, elsewhere deallocation or a more flexible approach to acceptable uses was suggested. Given that this would entail the most efficient use of land, based on updated evidence, and given the previous assessment, it is highly unlikely that the outcome of a revised SA for this approach would be worse than neutral.</div>	NEUTRAL
	Suggested de-allocations (hectares)	Potential new land requirement (hectares)																
North	-13	10																
S & W	-74	30-40																
SE	-45	10																
<div>Q29</div> <div>Rural Economy</div>	<div>1. Approach to rural businesses involving re-using buildings, new build related to settlements and farm diversification.</div> <div>2. Alternative approach</div>	<div>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact due to the strong positives relating to the economy, with most other indicators registering as uncertain.</div> <div>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no change from the existing approaches in Local Plans, the overall effect will be neutral, with an element of uncertainty attaching to changing Government policy on building in the countryside.. Clearly, other approaches – different from current and different from the set of measures proposed – were not tested.</div>	1+	Good	<div>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral effect of not implementing the approach, (although other groupings of measures were not tested as they could involve a number of possibilities).</div> <div>Consultees – Two thirds in favour of the approach</div> <div>OUTCOME Minor positive option carried forward through stages with later modification involving additional safeguards and more home working, neither of which should have had the effect of reducing the sustainability.</div>	Minor Positive												

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q30 Tourism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria-based approach to tourism involving some restrictions on new build accom. in countryside, support for redundant building conversion, small scale caravan dev in non-sensitive locns and necessary facilities. Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact due to the strong positives relating to the economy, with most other indicators registering as uncertain.</p> <p>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no change from the existing approaches in Local Plans, the overall effect will be neutral. Clearly, other approaches – different from current and different from the set of measures proposed – were not tested.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral effect of not implementing the approach, (although other groupings of measures were not tested as they could involve a number of possibilities).</p> <p>Consultees – Majority in favour of the approach</p> <p>OUTCOME Minor positive option carried forward through the stages with the policy evolving, in order to strike the right balance between, on the one hand, recognising the importance of tourism (and visitors in general) to the economy and, on the other hand, protecting environmental assets. This evolution unlikely to make it any less positive from a sustainability point of view.</p>	Minor Positive
Q31 Strategic Tourism Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Agree with Core Strategy identifying Kielder Water and Forest Park; Hadrian's Wall Corridor; North Pennines AONB and Northumberland Coast were listed]. Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact due to the strong positives relating to the economy, with most other indicators registering as uncertain.</p> <p>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no change from the existing approaches in Local Plans, the overall effect will be neutral. Clearly, other approaches / other areas were not tested.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral effect of not implementing the approach, (although other areas / approaches were not tested as they could involve a number of possibilities).</p> <p>Consultees – Majority in favour of the approach</p> <p>OUTCOME Minor positive option MOSTLY carried forward through the stages. The full encouragement of large scale tourism development at Kielder was toned down, however, largely as a result of the Dark Sky Park being designated. It is considered that, if anything, this would increase the sustainability credentials of the policy approach, going forward.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q32 / 33 Shopping Needs	<p>3. The additional retail floorspace outlined would provide an appropriate basis for planning future shopping provision</p> <p>4. Different approach</p>	<p>SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a major positive effect, as this would allow town centres to grow in situ, boosting the economy and also helping some of the environmental factors, through town centres being the most accessible locations, with brownfield land available etc.</p> <p>SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.</p>	1++ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic, the set of figures being probed being a range based on the evidence emerging at the time from the town centre and retail study.</p> <p>Consultees – Consultees were split but a majority wanted a different approach, whereby growth was limited to what would be guaranteed to protect the existing town centres. Indeed this was borne out by subsequent downward revision of growth forecasts. Despite much more recent revisions back upwards, a strategy of consolidating town centres has continued reflecting expressed views of the majority of consultees.</p> <p>OUTCOME While the option with major positive SA assessed outcome was not carried forward fully, the eventual approach has continued to promote town centres as opposed to less sustainable locations. The outcome is therefore likely to be, at the very least neutral, and may well continue to register as positive.</p>	NEUTRAL to Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q34 Identifying town centres & primary shopping areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Should the Core Strategy define boundaries for the seven main town centres and are those shown correctly identified? Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact overall, accounted for by the fact that boundaries would be tightly defined, as now proposed – more so than the existing local plan positions, (on the whole), meaning a strengthening of the town centres and ticking a number of factors regarding accessibility, the environment, the economy and the community.</p> <p>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no change from the existing approaches in Local Plans, the overall effect will be neutral to negative, due to the wider definition, (on the whole) and the likelihood that boundaries would become outdated and not adhered to. Other possible sets of definitions were clearly not tested.</p>	1+	Very Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to negative effect of not implementing the approach, (although other groupings of measures were not tested as they could involve a number of possibilities).</p> <p>Consultees – Half in agreement, with the other half evenly split between not having boundaries at all and having them but differently defined.</p> <p>OUTCOME Minor positive option carried forward through stages with some modification to some boundaries agreed with consultees and/or via emerging Neighbourhood Plans. Nevertheless the strength and intent of the policy remained intact, so the SA would continue with an overall positive assessment.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q35 Larger-scale leisure facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of a policy to encourage delivery of large scale leisure facilities in south east Northumberland Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact overall, accounted for by the fact that this type of facility would be located within a town centre, within the County, so benefitting the economy and the community.</p> <p>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no change from the existing approaches in Local Plans, the overall effect will be neutral to negative, as, over time, there would be a likely to be a drift of such facilities to less sustainable locations for the people of Northumberland – e.g. involving more travel and with less benefit for Northumberland's economy and communities..</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to negative effect of not implementing the approach, (although other groupings of measures were not tested as they could involve a number of possibilities).</p> <p>Consultees – More than half in agreement, but with a significant minority wanting an alternative approach. Concern that the rural market towns could lose out to SE Northumberland. As a result of this, through later stages of the Core Strategy, large scale leisure facilities were, given greater scope to locate in Northumberland's towns generally, a reliance being put on impact testing to ensure that unsustainable locations would be avoided.</p> <p>OUTCOME Minor positive option was carried forward through stages in a modified form, allowing more scope for sustainable locations across the County. While this could mean that some facilities would be located well away from SE Northumberland, the balance would still be favourable in sustainability terms, insofar as the local communities and economy would benefit and inhabitants of these rural parts of the County would have less distance to travel than would otherwise be the case.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q36 Local leisure provision and non-retail uses in centres	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Core Strategy should support small scale visitor and leisure facilities in town centres and incorporate a criteria based approach to determine proposals for change of use from retail within defined shopping areas 2. Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a major positive impact overall, as this was seen as a strengthening of high streets, so benefitting the economy and the community.</p> <p>If Option 2 is assumed to be opting for no change from the existing approaches in Local Plans, the overall effect will be neutral, at least to start with, as the frontage policies would continue to be applied with occasional departures when deemed necessary. It could be said that, in the longer term, there could be negative effects, as there would be a lack of flexibility but this would assume continued recession in the retailing side of market town high streets.</p>	1++	Very Good	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED: Minor positive effect of Option 1, with likely neutral to negative effect of not implementing the approach.</p> <p>Consultees – Most agreeing with the flexible approach.</p> <p>OUTCOME major positive option not fully carried forward through stages as there was pressure to retain frontage policies – not revising them until more detailed plan came forward. A compromise would see a relaxation of the policies should decline have clearly and demonstrably have set in on the high street concerned.</p>	Minor Positive
Q37 Office accommodation in town centres	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strictly apply the sequential test to office uses” 2. Be more flexible to secure investment in accessible locations 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having positive impacts on several of the SA objectives; particularly relating to the economy and the community, strengthening town centres and reducing travel.</p> <p>Option 2 would also have positive effects, but these would be more weighted towards economic advantages.</p>	<p>1+</p> <p>2+</p>	Moderate	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Minor positive effect of both Option 1 and Option 2, for slightly different reasons.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for Option 2 – the flexible approach.</p> <p>OUTCOME One of the minor positive options under SA (Option 2) – i.e. to build in a flexible approach to offices – was carried forward through stages.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q38 Green Belt, General Approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Define the Green Belt extension at Morpeth; localised review elsewhere, including ensuring that development needs can be met; beneficial use of defined Green Belt areas Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a major positive impact with a whole range of factors scoring positively.</p> <p>SA could not assess any alternative approach as this could be drawn from a range of possibilities.</p>	1++ no real alternative assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Majority support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward spread between a number of policies in the Core Strategy document. The introduction of the Dissington Garden Village at a later stage in the process necessitated an additional Green Belt deletion. This was kept to an absolute minimum and proposed the beneficial use of remaining (immediately surrounding) tracts of Green Belt, which would continue to fulfil the purposes of the Green Belt. The positive SA assessment can therefore be regarded as surviving this change.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q39 Outer Green Belt Boundary – Morpeth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Is Option 1 for the proposed outer Morpeth Green Belt boundary (slightly the more narrowly drawn of the two) appropriate? Is Option 2 for the proposed outer Morpeth Green Belt boundary (slightly the more widely drawn of the two) appropriate? 	<p>As both of these solutions were similar in scope – widely drawn – there was little, if anything, to distinguish between how the SA assessed them – both coming out with a major positive outcome for sustainable planning</p>	1++ 2++	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of both Option 1 and Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 2 (wider solution) strongly favoured over alternatives that included option 1 and various other suggestions.</p> <p>OUTCOME One of the major positive options under SA (Option 2) - i.e. the widest drawing of the outer boundary – was eventually taken forward, (after a review of a decision at Preferred Options that it should be narrower.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q40 Inner Green Belt Boundary – Morpeth	<p>1. Approach involving W boundary tightly drawn; S boundary to retain the rural / maintain separation from Clifton and Hepscott; E boundary tightly drawn to the green corridor and separation from Pegswood; and N boundary having regard to the bypass route, and other factors.</p> <p>2. Alternative approach.</p>	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a major positive impact with a whole range of factors scoring positively, it being concluded that key sustainability factors – e.g. flood risk and biodiversity – had been duly considered in deciding how widely and precisely how to define the boundary..</p> <p>SA could not assess any alternative approach as this could be drawn from a range of possibilities.</p>	<p>1++ no real alternative assessed at first</p> <p>but alternatives later assessed</p>		<p>SA: Major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>However, the process of Green Belt review that took place at a later stage did assess all possibilities in terms of the contribution of land parcels towards the Green Belt</p> <p>Consultees – Marginal majority support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with marginal majority consultee support) carried forward as modified through further assessment.</p>	Options subsequently tested POSITIVE MAJOR

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q41 Treatment of Green Belt settlements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow Tier 1 and 2 settlements to develop and expand, and review potential development or expansion for Tier 3 and 4 settlements, while keeping the integrity of the Green Belt as a whole 2. Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed with mild positive impacts on sustainability on a number of counts, allowing, as it would, some necessary expansion of settlements to retain their sustainability, while keeping the integrity of the Green Belt as a whole (with all the sustainable benefits of keeping land open).</p> <p>As there was any number of possible alternative scenarios, no other option was tested.</p>	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Poor support for option put forward with the vast majority suggesting an array of alternative solutions involving no change to a wholesale review.</p> <p>OUTCOME The eventual approach was based on a much fuller review of the Green Belt's contribution around settlements. While it was sought to avoid any need to justify exceptional circumstances, the strategy relied on some amendment around existing settlements and it was then sought to limit these to upper tier settlements. So it could be said that an alternative approach was followed but that it retained elements of the original option 1. It is therefore clear that a revised SA assessment of the emerged approach would continue to find it to be positive in SA terms. As Dissington Garden Village will be a separate settlement, it is not regarded as affecting the overall sustainability of the approach to the treatment of <u>existing</u> Green Belt settlements.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q42 Green Belt, PDL and Major Developed Sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Should the Council rely on national planning policy in relation to previously developed sites in the Green Belt? Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as neutral. There was no relationship on a lot of factors. On the remaining factors, it was considered that there would be very little difference in what would occur on the ground.</p> <p>The SA analysis does not look at any alternative approach e.g. keeping the major developed sites or some element of them, creating new ones etc. Therefore the “alternative approach” option cannot be assessed.</p>	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Neutral effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic. Even so, given the assessment for option 1, the effect would (as likely as not) also be neutral</p> <p>Consultees – Majority support for option put forward – reliance on national policy.</p> <p>OUTCOME The eventual approach has indeed sought to scrap the ‘major developed sites’ policies and, instead, rely on national policy that allows for the development of brownfield sites in the Green Belt. The effect should therefore be neutral – as would the effect of virtually any other approach on this issue.</p>	NEUTRAL
Q43 Options for Coal Extraction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Rely on national guidance Identify broad areas of search 	The effects of both options were largely neutral or unknown as the impacts are highly dependent on location of coal extraction. Option 2 would have a minor positive effect in terms of community decision making.	2+	Poor	<p>SA OPTIONS TESTED: Minor positive effect of Option 2</p> <p>Consultees – concern about both options; wanted qualified version of broad areas with further work and policy detail providing the necessary reassurances.</p> <p>OUTCOME Minor positive option carried forward through stages WITH MODIFICATION</p>	Minor Positive
Q44 Options for Crushed Rock Supply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for extensions to existing, quarries, and new quarries, where acceptable Not to do so 	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a neutral effect. SA could not assess any alternative approach e.g. not allowing such extensions or only allowing them in reduced circumstances. Therefore the “No” option could not be assessed.	Neu-tral no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Neutral effect of option put forward DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for effect of option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Neutrally SA assessed (but consultee supported) option carried forward through stages</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q45 Options for Sand and Gravel Supply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria based policy Identify broad areas of search Identify individual sites 	The assessments of all options with regard to many of the SA objectives were uncertain as their impacts were dependant on the location of the proposal. Options 2 and 3, which identify areas or sites, were likely to have a minor positive effect in terms of prudent use of resources and public involvement in the choice of sites.	2+ 3+	Moderate	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Minor positive effect of Option 2 AND Option 3.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 2 (Broad areas) favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Minor positive option (Option 2) carried forward at first but then abandoned as created too much uncertainty. Less favoured option (from SA and consultee point of view – Option 1 (criteria-based) taken forward through stages BUT FURTHER REFINEMENT OF CRITERIA DESIGNED TO NEUTRALISE SA CONCERNS – Overall neutral</p>	NEUTRAL
Q46 Managing other Extractive Industries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria based / no peat extraction Unspecified alternative 	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a minor positive effect. SA could not assess any alternative approach as this could be made up of any combination of a number of disparate actions.	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Slight positive effect of option put forward DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for effect of option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME SA (slightly) positively assessed (and consultee supported) option carried forward through stages</p>	Minor Positive
Q47 Separation distances for mineral workings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Include separation distances Do not include separation distances 	Option 1 and 2 were assessed as having very similar positive effects in terms of effects on local communities and the environment as they both seek to ensure that these are not unacceptability adversely affected by minerals development. Option 1 was assessed as having a negative effect in terms of the supply of minerals as it could have a more limiting effect on the locations where minerals can be supplied from.	2+	Poor	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Minor positive effect of Option 2 ; Option 1 neutral.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 (including separation distances) favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Minor positive option under SA (Option 2) - i.e. not including separation distances – was carried forward despite Option 1 attracting public support taken forward through stages. It was seen as allowing greater flexibility</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q48 Mineral safeguarding areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a criteria based policy 2. Don't include a criteria based policy 	Many of the SA objectives were seen as having no relationship to the options. However in terms of rural and urban landscapes and natural resources Option 1 scored minor positive and major positive respectively; conversely Option 2 scored minor negative and major negative respectively.	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1 ; Option 2 major negative effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 (including criteria) strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. not including separation distances – was carried forward in line with consultation support for this option. Taken forward through stages. It was seen as allowing greater flexibility</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q49 / 50 Safeguarding mineral transport, processing and storage sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That identified approach and sites correct 2. Different approach 	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a minor positive effect. SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through stages</p>	Minor Positive
Q51 Restoration and after-use of mineral sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A specific set of opportunities for restoration sites 2. Different approach 	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a major positive effect. SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through stages albeit with some modification</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q52 New or enhanced waste recycling and recovery capacity	1. Focus- Tier 1 settlements and SE Northumberland 2. Different approach	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a minor positive effect. SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through stages albeit with some modification allowing for more rural facilities but in accessible locations</p>	Minor Positive
Q53 Types of location for enhanced waste recycling and recovery capacity	1. A particular set of locational principles favouring those near the arising, existing facilities and industrial areas 2. Different approach	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a minor positive effect. SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through stages with minor modifications, if anything, bringing in greater sustainability</p>	Minor Positive
Q54 Acceptability criteria for enhanced waste recycling and recovery capacity	1. A particular set of principles relating to siting of arising, 2. Different approach	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a minor positive effect. SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through stages, albeit with minor modification</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q55 Locating additional non-hazardous landfill capacity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine opportunities for expansion of existing sites 2. Set out locational policy and guidance criteria 3. Identify areas of search for new waste and disposal capacity 4. Alternative approach 	Option 1 had a largely neutral or unknown impact in terms of the SA objectives. Options 2 and 3 also had a number of neutral assessments against objectives which are dependent on location for potential future non-hazardous landfill capacity. Options 2 and 3 were seen to have a minor positive impact with regard to several of the SA objectives.	2+ 3+	Moderate	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Minor positive effect of Option 2 AND Option 3.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 4 (not specified as an option in the consultation) was in effect the choice – i.e. a combination of other options.</p> <p>OUTCOME One of the minor positive options (Option 2) was carried forward in combination with neutrally assessed Option 1. This “Option 4” choice met the consultee preference for some sort of combined option. At worst, this would represent a neutral effect in terms of the SA criteria.</p>	NEUTRAL
Q56 Hazardous landfill sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Core Strategy does not need to plan for sites up to 2030 2. The Core Strategy does need to plan for sites before 2030 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a major positive impact with regard to several of the SA objectives. It has a minor negative with regard to reduce travel and integrate transport.</p> <p>Option 2 was assessed as unknown or neutral with regard to the majority of objectives. It has a major negative with regard to reduce travel and integrate transport.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 but slightly negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME The minor positive option (Option 1) was carried forward, which met the consultees’ strong preference – i.e. not to plan for hazardous waste sites.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q57 Inert Landfill sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Core Strategy does not need to plan for sites up to 2030 2. The Core Strategy does need to plan for sites before 2030 	<p>Option 1 was largely neutral with regard to the SA objectives although a number of them were assessed as having a positive impact.</p> <p>Similarly Option 2 was largely neutral with regard to the SA objectives however some were assessed as having a minor negative impact.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 but slightly negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME The minor positive option (Option 1) was carried forward, which met the consultees' strong preference – i.e. not to plan for inert waste landfill sites.</p>	Minor Positive
Q58 Renewable energy targets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take account of national aspirations in Northumberland context – no local targets 2. Unspecified alternative 	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a very minor positive effect overall. SA could not assess any alternative approach as this could be drawn from a range of possible targets.	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Slight positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong opposition to the proposed approach – many wanting lower targets or a stop to these developments</p> <p>OUTCOME An alternative approach was taken forward involving no targets, (national or otherwise) and strong local criteria. The SA did not test this at all at the time, so the outcome in terms of the SA was uncertain. (It could not be said at the time that it would be neutral).</p>	UNCERTAIN

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q59 / 60 Assessing renewable and low carbon energy schemes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To use criteria – a particular set of criteria suggested with the option of adding further ones Unspecified alternative 	SA analysis showed the option proposed in combination via these questions, as having a neutral effect overall. SA could not assess any alternative approach as this could be drawn from a range of possible alternative approaches / criteria.	Neu-tral no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Neutral effect insofar as the different sustainability effects of applying the criteria in different cases will probably cancel out</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong opposition to having criteria and/or to the particular set proposed</p> <p>OUTCOME An alternative approach was taken forward involving much expanded criteria to address concerns. The SA did not test this at all at the time, so the outcome in terms of the SA was uncertain. (It could not be said at the time that it would be neutral). Nevertheless, as the eventual approach seeks to address the need to give some support to the role of renewables in tackling climate change, as well as addressing local environmental concerns through the strict criteria, (expanded over the stages to include issues such as photo-voltaic), it is unlikely that the assessment will be worse than neutral.</p>	NEUTRAL
Q61 Separation distances between wind developments and residential properties	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Include separation distances Do not include separation distances 	<p>There is no relationship between the impacts of Option 1 and many of the SA objectives however several are unknown. A minor positive impact was shown with regard to Health and wellbeing; and safer communities.</p> <p>The impacts of Option 2 are all either neutral or not related to the SA objectives.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME The assessed option was not carried forward as evidence showed that this would preclude some sustainable (e.g. urban brownfield) locations, possibly at the expense of less sustainable locations coming forward. Therefore, with Option 2 initially being assessed as neutral in sustainability terms, the likelihood is that it would remain neutral or better, as modified with additional precautionary criteria.</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q62 Commercial renewable and low carbon development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rely on criteria based policies 2. Identify broad areas of opportunity or specific locations to support criteria based approach. 	<p>Option 1 was identified as having a largely neutral impact in terms of most of the SA objectives however it would have a minor negative impact with regard to the reduction of greenhouse gases.</p> <p>Option 2 was assessed as having a minor positive impact with regard to economic SA objectives however the majority see a neutral impact.</p>	2+	Poor	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 2 with neutral to slightly negative effect of Option 1.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME The assessed option was not carried forward as the Council agreed with consultees that well-defined criteria would amount to a sounder approach and this was taken forward through subsequent stages. With Option 2 initially being assessed as neutral to slightly negative in sustainability terms, the likelihood is that it would be roughly neutral, as criteria have been refined through the stages, (including issues such as photo-voltaic), to take account of the SA criteria.</p>	NEUTRAL
Q63 Defining an Energy Hierarchy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include an energy hierarchy 2. Not to do so 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact. . SA could not assess any alternative approach as this could be drawn from a range of possibilities.</p>	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages as a concept</p>	Minor Positive
Q64 Passive Design	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a policy on passive design 2. Do not do so 	<p>Option 1 was shown to have a minor positive impact overall, while not having a policy, while largely neutral, could be seen as having a slight minor negative impact</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral to negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages as a concept, albeit in a modified form in the eventual design policy.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q65 Improving energy efficiency of existing building stock	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require improvements for alterations and extensions 2. Establish a carbon offset fund 3. Rely on building regulations 	<p>Option 1 was shown to have a minor positive impact with regard to number SA objectives which are largely related to the economy however it has no relationship or neutral impact on the majority. Option 2 was assessed as having a minor positive impact with regard to the majority of SA objectives. It has no relationship to the rest of the objectives apart from resilient economy which has an unknown impact. Option 3 had either no relationship or a neutral impact on all of the SA objectives.</p>	<p>1+ 2++</p>	Poor	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Minor positive effect of Option 1, with a more positive effect for Option 2</p> <p>Consultees – Options 1 (criteria) and 3 (b.Regis + subsidy) received most support.</p> <p>OUTCOME In the end, due to a change of Government policy, a modified version of Option 3 was taken forward in that there was to be a reversion to a reliance on building regulations. Option 3 had received support from around a third of consultees and had been neutral, (being essentially the status quo) under the SA assessment – Overall neutral</p>	NEUTRAL
Q66 Sustainable construction and small scale renewables	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Merton style policy 2. Align with national building standards 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having positive impacts on some of the SA objectives which will be seen mainly in the medium to long term with a major positive impact on the reduction of greenhouse gases. There are unknown impacts with regard to cultural heritage and decent and affordable homes for both options in the short to medium term.</p> <p>Option 2 was assessed as having a largely positive impact with regard to SA objective in the medium to long term especially in terms of environmental issues.</p>	<p>1++ 2+</p>	Poor	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Significant positive effect of Option 1, with a minor positive effect for Option 2</p> <p>Consultees – Option 2 (a target) was reasonably strongly supported with Merton receiving much less support. A third of respondents sought a hybrid approach.</p> <p>OUTCOME In the end, due to a change of Government policy, neither option could be taken forward in that there was to be a reversion to a reliance on building regulations. Given the absence of a strong local policy seeking to ratchet up standards, it could be surmised that there could, over time, be a negative SA effect. But it has not been tested. It could not be said at the time that a 'do nothing' alternative would be neutral.</p>	UNCERTAIN

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q67 BREEAM and CFSH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set standard targets for all development over a threshold. 2. Set variable standards for development based on viability 3. Make standards for certain aspects/credits of BREEAM and CFSH more or less demanding 	<p>Option 1 had unknown impacts on cultural heritage; decent and affordable homes as well as economic SA objectives. Option 1 was shown as having a minor positive impact on a number of SA objectives with a major positive impact on climate change adaptation.</p> <p>Option 2 was largely positive and was assessed as having a major positive impact in terms of the resilient economy and employment diversity and quality objectives as well as decent and affordable homes in the short term. There would be an unknown impact on a number of SA objectives if Option 3 were implemented. It was assessed as having a minor positive impact with regard to some SA objectives.</p>	<p>1+</p> <p>2++</p>	Poor	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Significant positive effect of Option 2b, with a minor positive effect for Option 2a and slightly less so for Option 2c, which would see local standards being set</p> <p>Consultees – Option 2(c) was most strongly supported along with other variations that would build in flexibility.</p> <p>OUTCOME In the end, due to a change of Government policy, none could be taken forward in that there was to be a reversion to a reliance on building regulations. Given the absence of a policy seeking to ratchet up standards, with or without local or other variation, it could be surmised that there could, over time, be a negative SA effect. But it has not been tested. It could not be said at the time that a 'do nothing' alternative would be neutral.</p>	UNCERTAIN

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q68 / 69 Accessibility and public transport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That policies should allow for a set of measures including improving bus/rail/cycle interchange, wheelchair facilities and appropriate provision for new development; 2. Alternative approach (in effect, do not include a policy to promote sustainable transport) 	<p>Option 1 was shown as either having a positive impact or no relationship to the majority of SA objectives. 1 also was assessed as having a major positive impact on health and well-being in the medium to long term. Its impacts on Education and training opportunities; and employment diversity and equality are unknown.</p> <p>Option 2: In a way, it could be said that the alternative for Q68 could be any of a number of choices of other measures. However it can be assumed that this alternative would entail fewer measures to promote the non-motorised over the motorised modes. On this basis it is found that Option 2 would have a neutral impact on the majority of SA objectives; however with regard to biodiversity and geo-diversity it would have a minor negative impact.</p>	1++	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: major positive effect of Option 1 with neutral to negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice in terms of walking and cycling facilities although the particular set of criteria given in Q68 was supported less than an alternative set.</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with consultee support in terms of the principles in any case) carried forward through the stages.</p>	Minor Positive
Q70 Parking standards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a policy setting out parking standards 2. Do not include a policy setting out parking standards 	For both options, the effect was largely uncertain as this will depend on the nature and location of development and the way in which parking standards are delivered.	Neu-tral (both)	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Both options assessed as neutral, as either the existing would continue or newly localised policies would cancel each other out</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST EITHER ALTERNATIVE, there will be a combination of possible scenarios.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for Option 1 – LOCAL parking standards</p> <p>OUTCOME Option 2 was pursued. This maintains the status quo but alternative standards will creep in as neighbourhood plans emerge and local policies are prepared. While the effects are uncertain SA wise, the overall impact can be assessed, with some confidence, as close to neutral</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q71 Safeguarding the route of the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne railway line, associated freight branches and necessary infrastructure	1. Include a policy 2. Do not include a policy	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having largely positive impacts in the medium to long term. Major positive impacts were seen in the long term with regard to several SA objectives which relate to the economy as well as reduce travel and integrate transport; and reduce greenhouse gases.</p> <p>Option 2 was assessed as having a neutral impact with regard to a number of the SA objectives and having minor negative impacts on employment diversity and quality; biodiversity and geo-diversity as well as in the medium to long term, resilient economy.</p>	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1 ; Option 2 major negative effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 (including policy) strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. safeguarding these routes – was carried forward through stages in line with consultation support for this option.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q72 Safeguarding freight infrastructure, routes and disused railways	1. Include a policy 2. Do not include a policy	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having largely positive impacts in the medium to long term. Major positive impacts were anticipated in the long term with regard to several SA objectives which relate to the economy as well as reduce travel and integrate transport; and reduce greenhouse gases. Option 2 was assessed as having a largely neutral impact with regard to the SA objectives. However some were assessed as having a minor negative impact these were employment diversity and quality; biodiversity and geodiversity and in the medium to long term resilient economy.</p>	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1 ; Option 2 major negative effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 (including policy) strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. safeguarding the infrastructure – was carried forward through stages in line with consultation support for this option.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q73 Protect existing rail freight facilities in the county	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a policy 2. Do not include a policy 	In the medium to long term Option 1 was assessed as having a positive impact against a number of objectives. Major positive impacts are expected with regard to resilient economy and employment diversity and quality in the long term. Both options were assessed as having unknown impacts with regard to air quality; reducing travel and integrating transport; and reducing waste. Several of the SA objectives were assessed as having a minor positive impact in the medium to long term if Option 1 were used; Option 2 would see a minor negative impact. These include objectives related to the economy, landscape and resources.	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1 ; Option 2 minor negative effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 (including policy) strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. safeguarding the facilities – was carried forward through stages in line with consultation support for this option.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q74 Mitigating development impacts on the road network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a policy to address these issues. 2. Do not include a policy to address these issues. 	Apart from those which have no relationship to it Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact on all SA objectives in the medium to long term. Conversely Option 2 was assessed as having minor negative impacts in the medium to long term with regard to all SA objectives apart from those which are not related to it and climate change adaptation which is neutral.	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with minor negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages with the development of a criteria-based policy.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q75 Enhancing the core strategic network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Core Strategy should facilitate improvements Core Strategy should not facilitate improvements 	<p>Option 1 was largely assessed as having neutral impacts in the short term but positive impacts in the medium to long term.</p> <p>Conversely Option 2 was assessed as having neutral impacts in the short term but negative impacts in the medium to long term with regard to many of the SA objectives.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: Option 1 (set of improvements) having neutral evolving to longer term minor positive effects; Option (no set of improvements) having neutral evolving to longer term minor negative effects</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with the slightly positive SA assessed outcome, at least in the long term, (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages with the development of a criteria-and targeted, sustainable schemes.</p>	Minor Positive
Q76 Supporting fishing and Freight movements at ports and harbours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Core Strategy should support continued freight movements and fishing activity at 11 ports Core Strategy should not support in this way 	<p>Many of the SA objectives were assessed as having a minor positive impact in the medium to long term if Option 1 were implemented. Of the objectives that did have a relationship with Option 1 there was a neutral impact on all SA objectives in the short term apart from air quality and climate change adaptation which were both unknown. Similarly with regard to Option 2 most of the related SA objectives were assessed as having a neutral impact in the short term however in the medium to long term there was a minor negative impact on several of them.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: Option 1 (support continued) having neutral effect; Option (no such support) having neutral evolving to longer term minor negative effects</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with a neutral SA assessed outcome, (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages with the possibility that this could become more positive with the development of criteria-to take account of ecological impacts of port expansion on sensitive stretches of coast.</p>	NEUTRAL to Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q77 Airports	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continued accommodation of airport expansion in line with the masterplan Not doing so 	Option 1 was assessed as having positive impacts in the medium to long term with regard to a number of SA objectives. In the long term it was assessed as having major positive impacts with regard to resilient economy. The impacts on SA objectives of implementing Option 2 are unknown for the majority. However with regard to employment diversity and quality; and reduce travel and integrate transport the impacts were assessed as neutral in the short term and minor negative in the medium to long term.	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1; Option 2 major negative effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 (airport masterplan approach) strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. safeguarding the facilities – was carried forward through stages in line with consultation support for this option.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q78 Planning for broadband infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A set of measures proposing infrastructure expansion through development, meeting certain criteria. Alternative approach 	Option 1 was assessed as having a major positive impact. . SA could not assess any alternative approach as this could be drawn from a range of possibilities.	1++ no real alternative assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q79 / 80 Improving Mobile Telecommunications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Include a policy Do not include a policy 	Option 1 was assessed as largely positive with regard to all of the SA objectives which have a relationship to it, apart from cultural heritage which is unknown. Option 2 has a neutral impact on the majority of SA objectives which it are related to however it would have minor negative impacts on the resilience of the economy; and employment diversity and quality.	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral to minor negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages with little change to the proposed criteria.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q81 Community Facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a policy to support and guide community facilities provision 2. Not doing so 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having major positive impacts.</p> <p>Option 2 would have a neutral effect.</p>	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1; Option 2 neutral effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 include policy) strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. policy promoting improved community facilities – was carried forward through stages in line with consultation support for this option.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q82 Sites for community facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include particular sites 2. Do not include a sites 	The SA impact could not be assessed for either option as not having sites would create uncertainty, as compared with having sites earmarked. On the other hand, having sites could mean any number of combinations of sites.	Uncertain	Indeterminate	<p>SA: DIFFICULT TO TEST EITHER ALTERNATIVE, there would be uncertainty either way.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for Option 1 – having sites, with suggestions put forward by consultees</p> <p>OUTCOME Option 2 was pursued – i.e. not earmarking particular sites. Nonetheless, over the stages, the suggestions influenced the criteria and the approach and it would be unlikely to lead to an unsustainable approach overall. Therefore a good degree of confidence that the overall effect would be neutral.</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q83 Approach to green infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The approach to green infrastructure is the right one 2. The approach to green infrastructure is not the right one 	The majority of SA objectives are assessed as positive with regard to Option 1. The assessment of Option 1 also showed that there would be an unknown impact with regard to safer communities; education and training opportunities; and natural resources. Major positive impacts were seen in the assessment with regard to health and well-being, minerals and waste site restoration as well as a number of others in the medium to long term. The impacts of implementing Option 2 were assessed largely as being neutral in terms of the SA objectives. However minor negative impacts were shown in the medium to long term with regard to the assessment of several SA objectives and climate change adaptation are expected to see major negative impacts.	Uncertain	Indeterminate	<p>SA: major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic. If the alternative is taken as the status quo, the SA shows a minor negative outcome.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages to which positive modifications were made such as the addition of Local Green Spaces.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q84 AONB policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a specific policy for the two AONBs 2. Do not include a specific policy for the two AONBs 	The impacts of implementing Option 1 were assessed as being largely positive in terms of the SA objectives. The assessment showed major positive impacts on cultural heritage; rural and urban landscapes; and ground, river and sea waters. Option 2 was assessed as having a largely neutral impact on the majority of the SA objectives which it had a relationship with, however some minor negatives can be anticipated with regard to cultural heritage; and rural and urban landscapes.	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1; Option 2 neutral to minor negative effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 include policy, strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. to have a policy approach specific to the AONBs while NOT carried forward at first (as the Preferred Option), WAS subsequently carried forward through stages from FDP onwards in line with consultation support for this option.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q85 The importance of specific landscape clusters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce policy criteria on enhancing green infrastructure 2. Do not introduce policy criteria on enhancing green infrastructure 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having some minor positive impacts in the medium to long term.</p> <p>Option 2 was assessed as having a neutral impact on all of the SA objectives it has a relationship with apart from health and well-being; and air quality which were unknown.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME In the end, the evidence was not yet sufficiently strong for a policy promoting AHLVs to be included. In the meantime, an assurance was given that a large amount of evidence exists to ensure that the landscape character assessment approach would be thorough and that visual impacts would be properly taken into account. As Option 2 – the “do nothing” option – was assessed as neutral, the implementation of a strong landscape character approach should ensure that the overall SA effect is at least neutral, if not better than neutral.</p>	NEUTRAL
Q86 Plan for the protection of the landscape through implementing the “guiding principles”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Implementing the “guiding principles” 4. Criteria that allows more flexibility 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having positive impacts on several of the SA objectives; particularly cultural heritage and rural and urban landscapes which are expected to see major positive impacts in the medium to long term.</p> <p>The impacts on many of the SA objectives of implementing Option 2 were assessed as neutral. Minor positive impacts are expected with regard to cultural heritage; and rural and urban impacts.</p>	<p>1++</p> <p>2+</p>	Moderate	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1.</p> <p>Consultees – Balanced between having guiding principles, not having them and a qualified approach..</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. to have guiding principles was carried forward through stages, notwithstanding the uncertainty conveyed by consultees.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q87 “Ecosystem approach” to nature conservation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The “ecosystem approach” 2. Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 is expected to have a positive impact on half of the SA objectives. However minor negative impacts are expected with regard to resilient economy.</p> <p>Option 2 (taken as status quo) was assessed as having a neutral impact on all SA objectives.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages with little change to the proposed criteria.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q88 Biodiversity and Geo-diversity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A set of measures regarding Biodiversity and Geo-diversity 2. Alternative approach 	Option 1 was assessed as having a major positive impact. . SA could not assess any alternative approach as this could be drawn from a range of possibilities.	1++ no real alternative assessed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q89 Recreational, sport and Open space provision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General policy to protect and enhance open space 2. Specific standards for open space provision 	<p>The impacts on several of the SA objectives if Option 1 were implemented were assessed as unknown. Some minor positive impacts were also seen, however with regard to community services and facilities; and community decision making these will only materialise in the medium to long term.</p> <p>Option 2 is expected to have largely positive impacts in terms of the SA objectives, with major positive impacts on those relating to the community in the medium to long term.</p>	1+ 2++	Moderate	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 2. Neutral to minor positive effect of Option 1.</p> <p>Consultees – Balanced between having criteria or specific standards - or a qualified approach..</p> <p>OUTCOME While neither option was taken forward, due to changed Govt. policy on the pooling of s106 resources and an encouragement of local standards, the policy nevertheless allows for local standards to be developed in due course and seeks to apply strong, sustainable planning criteria. On this basis, and given that both options received a positive SA assessment, the outcome is likely (to a greater or lesser degree) to be positive from an SA point of view.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q90 Sports facilities and playing pitches	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include a policy to increase the provision of high quality accessible sports facilities and playing pitches 2. Do not include a policy to increase the provision of high quality accessible sports facilities and playing pitches 	<p>The assessment showed that a number of SA objectives would experience positive impacts as a result of putting Option 1 in place. The assessment shows that major positive impacts would be seen in the medium to long term on objectives which relate to the community. The impacts of implementing Option 1 on many of the objectives were unknown.</p> <p>Of the SA objectives which have a relationship to Option 2 all would see a neutral impact if it were implemented.</p>	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1; Option 2 neutral effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 include policy, strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. to have a policy to increase the provision of high quality accessible sports facilities and playing pitches - carried forward through stages from FDP onwards in line with consultation support for this option.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q91 Sport facility hierarchy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include the sports facilities hierarchy in the Core Strategy 2. Do not include the sports facilities hierarchy in the Core Strategy 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as positive with regard to a number of SA objectives. For example health and well-being; education and training opportunities; and community services and facilities were all expected to see major positive impacts in the medium to long term. The impacts on a number of SA objectives were unknown.</p> <p>Of the SA objectives which have a relationship to Option 2 all would see a neutral impact if it were implemented.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME In the end, the evidence showed that taking a strict hierarchy forward could be unpopular and prove too rigid – e.g. precluding opportunities to deliver facilities in smaller settlements. As Option 2 – the “do nothing” option – was assessed as neutral, the chosen approach should ensure that the overall SA effect is at least neutral.</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q92 Open space, sports facilities and playing pitch provision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include policy criteria on open space, sports facilities and playing pitch provision 2. Do not include policy criteria on open space, sports facilities and playing pitch provision 	The assessment showed that by implementing Option 1 many of the SA objectives would experience a neutral impact. Minor positive impacts were anticipated with regard to the community based objectives, cultural heritage and decent and affordable housing. Conversely many of the SA objectives would see a minor negative impact if Option 2 were to be put in place, particularly in the medium to long term.	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: neutral to positive effect of Option 1 with minor negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME In the end, it was necessary to set out a more integrated, evidence-based way of ensuring necessary open space provision, supported during later stages. This was carried forward in a way that clearly ties provision sought to what is needed for the development and what is viable, taking account of the fact that resources can no longer be pooled to provide facilities over a wide area and that the development of local standards is being encouraged. While not specifically assessed, the “do nothing” approach was so close to zero and additional safeguards are being built into the policy such that the overall SA effect is likely to be neutral.</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q93 Protection of open space, sports and recreational facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include policy criteria to ensure that the protection of open space, sports and recreational facilities takes full account of local circumstances 2. Do not include policy criteria to ensure that the protection of open space, sports and recreational facilities takes full account of local circumstances 	<p>Of the SA objectives which have a relationship to Option 1 all would see a neutral impact if it were implemented.</p> <p>Of the SA objectives which have a relationship to Option 2 all would see a neutral impact in the short term if it were put in place. However in the medium to long term a number of them would see minor negative impacts. Some impacts of implementing Option 2 for example with regard to safer communities were unknown.</p>	All options neutral	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: BOTH options largely neutral, with a slight negative effect the longer there is no definitive set of policy criteria.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME The consultee-supported option was taken forward. This was assessed as neutral from an SA point of view.</p>	NEUTRAL

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q94 Local green spaces	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include an overarching policy objective to ensure the protection of local green spaces with specific designations being considered as part of the Northumberland Delivery DPD 2. Do not include an overarching policy objective to ensure the protection of local green spaces with specific designations being considered as part of the Northumberland Delivery DPD 	<p>The assessment showed that in the short term the majority of SA objectives would see a neutral impact if Option 1 were implemented. However in the medium to long term a number of objectives are assessed as having a minor positive impact and cultural heritage is expected to see major positive impacts.</p> <p>Of the SA objectives which have a relationship to Option 2 all would see a neutral impact if it were implemented; apart from rural and urban landscapes which see a minor negative impact in the medium to long term.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral to minor negative effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages with little change to the proposed criteria.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q95 Approach to flood risk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include the relevant Catchment Flood Management Plans together with their policy approaches in the flood risk policy 2. Do not include the relevant Catchment Flood Management Plans together with their policy approaches in the flood risk policy 	<p>Option 1 is assessed as having a positive impact on the majority of SA objectives which it relates to. In the long term major positive impacts are expected in terms of avoiding flood risk, safe communities, climate change and ground, river and sea waters.</p> <p>Of the SA objectives which have a relationship to Option 2 all would see a neutral impact if it were implemented.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages with little change to the proposed criteria.</p>	Minor Positive
Q96 Principles for flood risk management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A particular set of principles relating to flood risk management, 2. Different approach 	SA analysis showed the one option proposed as having a minor positive effect. SA could not assess any alternative approach due to the complex nature of the option being put forward.	1+ no real alter-native assess-ed	Indeterminate	<p>SA: Minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through stages, with a strengthening of the approach considered to have built in further sustainable planning criteria</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q97 Northumberland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include findings of SFRA in policy applying sequential test and exception test. 2. Do not include findings of SFRA in policy applying sequential test and exception test. 	<p>In the short term the impacts of putting Option 1 in place would be neutral. In the medium to long term its impacts would largely be positive however with regard to cultural heritage and resilient economy there would be minor negative impacts.</p> <p>Of the SA objectives which have a relationship to Option 2 all would see a neutral impact if it were implemented.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages albeit that the Core Strategy policy will not be adding any local dimension to the tests, other than referring to the Northumberland SFRA. This may be done at the Delivery Document stage and/or in relation to particular allocations.</p>	Minor Positive
Q98 Implementation of approved flood alleviation schemes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include criteria based enabling policy for implementation of flood alleviation schemes 2. Do not include criteria based enabling policy for implementation of flood alleviation schemes 	<p>The assessment of Option 1 shows a minor negative impact on cultural heritage in the medium to long term. However there is a positive impact on avoiding flood risk and safer communities; these are expected to be major positive impacts in the medium to long term.</p> <p>The assessment of Option 2 showed that apart from rural and urban landscapes; and ground river and sea waters which are unknown, the impacts on the SA objectives which have a relationship are expected to be neutral.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages of the Core Strategy. If anything, the sustainability credentials of the policy improved as additional criteria sought to ensure no adverse knock-on effects of schemes such as flooding simply being diverted elsewhere.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q99 Setting out the principles for measures to increase resistance and resilience to flood risk when considering development proposals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include policy for measures to increase resistance and resilience to flood risk 2. Do not include policy for measures to increase resistance and resilience to flood risk 	<p>In the medium to long term minor negative impacts are expected with regard to cultural heritage; and biodiversity and geodiversity if Option 1 were put in place. The assessment showed that several of the SA objectives would see positive impacts with avoiding flood risk and safer communities which see major positive impacts in the medium to long term.</p> <p>Of the SA objectives which have a relationship to Option 2 all would see a neutral impact if it were implemented.</p>	1+	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: minor positive effect of Option 1 with neutral effect of Option 2.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages of the Core Strategy albeit that no particular principles have been set out in this policy. It relies instead on cross referring to national policy and the Northumberland SFRA. More detail may be added at the Delivery Document stage and/or in relation to particular allocations.</p>	Minor Positive
Q100 Re separation and minimisation of water run-off and SUDS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include policy re separation and minimisation of water run-off and SUDS 2. Do not include policy re separation and minimisation of water run-off and SUDS 	<p>The impacts on SA objectives as a result of implementing Option 1 were assessed as being largely positive. In terms of resilient economy there is expected to be a minor negative impact in the short term however this improves in the medium to long term.</p> <p>The impacts of implementing Option 2 are largely negative particularly with regard to avoiding flood risk and climate change adaptation which are expected to see major negative impacts in the long term.</p>	1(+)	Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Overall: Option 1 was assessed as adding to the cost of development schemes and hence long term positive effects were cancelled out almost entirely by short term negative effects. However evidence shows that, properly planned, SuDS need not add to the cost of schemes. Indeed Option 2 – not including SuDS policy – was assessed as negative from an SA point of view.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 was the strong choice</p> <p>OUTCOME The consultee-supported option was taken forward. It is almost certain that the impact, from an SA point of view, will be positive insofar as evidence points to a low additional cost to development if SuDS are planned into developments from the start. In any case the option of not having such a policy is not really available any more due to revised Government policy advice.</p>	Minor Positive

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q101 Coastal Erosion and Coastal Change Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The approach to Coastal Erosion and Coastal Change Management is the right one 2. The approach to Coastal Erosion and Coastal Change Management is not the right one 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a major positive impact, including, as it did, criteria to counter coastal erosion and vulnerabilities, which would benefit communities, the economy and the environment alike.</p> <p>Option 2 would entail a different approach but, as this was not specified and could have consisted of any combination of a number of measures, the SA could not assess it.</p>	Uncertain	Indeterminate	<p>SA: major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE
Q102 Water Quality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The approach to Water Quality is the right one 2. The approach to Water Quality is not the right one 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a major positive impact, including, as it did, criteria to maintain and enhance water quality.</p> <p>Option 2 would entail a different approach but, as this was not specified and could have consisted of any combination of a number of measures, the SA could not assess it.</p>	Uncertain	Indeterminate	<p>SA: major positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with major positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages, with, if anything, a strengthening of the SA credentials, as the very high quality of some Northumberland water sources was recognised in later versions of the policy.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q103 Water supply and sewerage facilities and networks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The principles set out on water supply and sewerage facilities and networks are the right ones Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact, including, as it did, criteria to maximise existing capacity and ensure that necessary additional capacity would be added in a timely manner.</p> <p>Option 2 would entail a different approach but, as this was not specified and could have consisted of any combination of a number of measures, the SA could not assess it.</p>	Uncertain	Indeterminate	<p>SA: minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages, as informed by the emerging water cycle study, SHLAA information etc.</p>	Minor Positive
Q104 Conservation, protection and enhancement of heritage assets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Include a policy a policy for the conservation, protection and enhancement of heritage assets Do not include a policy for the conservation, protection and enhancement of heritage assets 	<p>The assessment showed that with regard to the SA objectives which do have a relationship to Option 1 its impacts are largely positive. Particularly with regard to cultural heritage; employment diversity and quality; and rural and urban landscapes which are expected to see major positive impacts if it were implemented. The impacts of putting Option 2 in place are neutral with regard to the majority of the SA objectives which it relates to. However a minor negative impact is expected on rural and urban landscapes.</p>	1++	Very Good	<p>SA: OPTIONS TESTED Major positive effect of Option 1; Option 2 neutral to negative effect.</p> <p>Consultees – Option 1 include policy, strongly favoured.</p> <p>OUTCOME Major positive option under SA (Option 1) - i.e. to include a policy for the conservation, protection and enhancement of heritage assets- carried forward through stages from FDP onwards in line with consultation support for this option.</p>	MAJOR POSITIVE

Topics	Options	Summary	SA – positive options and level of testing	Level of agreement between SA & consultees	SA – Actual or likely outcome of option taken forward through stages of Core Strategy	Overall
Q105 Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The principles set out on Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site its 'Buffer Zone' and beyond are the right ones 2. Alternative approach 	<p>Option 1 was assessed as having a minor positive impact due to the strong positives relating to culture and landscape, with most other indicators registering as neutral or uncertain.</p> <p>Option 2 would entail a different approach but, as this was not specified and could have consisted of any combination of a number of measures, the SA could not assess it.</p>	Uncertain	Indeterminate	<p>SA: minor positive effect of option put forward</p> <p>DIFFICULT TO TEST A PARTICULAR ALTERNATIVE, as this would have to be created as a combination of other possibilities, not all of which would necessarily be realistic.</p> <p>Consultees – Strong support for option put forward</p> <p>OUTCOME Option with minor positive SA assessed outcome (and with strong consultee support) carried forward through the stages.</p>	Minor Positive

APPENDIX XI: ISSUES CONSIDERED IN TERMS OF ALTERNATIVE DISTRIBUTIONS OF HOUSING GROWTH WITHIN EACH DELIVERY AREA AND WITHIN MAIN TOWNS AND SERVICE CENTRES WITHIN THOSE DELIVERY AREAS

South East Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	12,820		12,540		12,840		12,840 (no change)
Main Towns:	82%		83%		83%		83%
AMBLE <i>Some issues at PO2 stage but removed at later stages</i> Evidence showed past delivery rates and SNPP leading to a decline. A regenerating approach of the RSS+20% was adopted, requiring 740 additional dwellings over the plan period.	740	Possible issues but not necessarily resolvable through alternative approach	600	No Realistic Alternative	600	No Realistic Alternative	600 (no change)
	Despite significant physical constraints, opportunities existed for about two thirds of the requirement but still a shortfall. Reducing the figure to 620 (around the RSS figure) could have been considered this, coupled with low demand, although any redistribution within the area would have had to be to Ashington which may not have been feasible – see below. Cramlington had modest additional capacity but lies at the opposite end of the Delivery area and is unlikely to be appropriate.		Based on evidence, figure for Amble reduced to 600 – more realistic. The SHLAA now identified capacity for just over two-thirds of this new amount of housing but there was confidence that the residual amount could be made up in other ways.		The revised SNPP now indicating a population decline almost double that previously forecast gave emphasis to the need for growth / regeneration, (also, following the closure of the Alcan plant to the south). Revised SHLAA provided scope for the more than the 600 to be achieved. Evidence would be unlikely to support the notional alternative of an increased figure (based on the local housing market and past take-up).		

South East Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	12,820		12,540		12,840		12,840 (no change)
Main Towns:	82%		83%		83%		83%
ASHINGTON <i>Some issues at PO2 stage but removed at later stages</i> SNPP forecasts: 6% growth but dwelling-led strategy adopted, bringing growth closer to the 10% benchmark for main towns (although not being raised to too high a level due to the danger of housing market failure).	1,600	Possible issues but not necessarily resolvable through alternative approach	1,800	No Realistic Alternative	1,800	No Realistic Alternative	1,800 (no change)
	Additional SHLAA capacity (over and above the 1600) would allow for 1,940 that could be displaced from Bedlington / Amble if alternative lower scenarios had been tested there. HOWEVER it is important to balance growth need with avoiding market collapse means there probably was No Realistic Alternative		Evidence now called for a small increase from 1600 to 1800 dwellings. This could be met on deliverable SHLAA sites but with little margin above this. This availability situation and the importance of recognising the regeneration agenda for the town and so striking the right balance between genuine, sustainable population growth and the risk of housing market failure, suggested an absence of any realistic alternative.		A continued forecast decline in the population of working age reinforced the need for the preferred scenario to increase population in line with the town's role and regeneration aspirations. Constraints to the town's expansion and SHLAA allowed for the 1800 but with no buffer above this. Taking housing displaced from other parts of the delivery area would now be difficult, not just because of danger of market collapse but also because of pure capacity to do so. A reduced figure could lead to continued decline.		

South East Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	12,820		12,540		12,840		12,840 (no change)
Main Towns:	82%		83%		83%		83%
BEDLINGTON <i>Some issues at PO2 stage but removed at later stages</i> Scenarios including past policy and past delivery rates would lead to decline but the SNPP projection would lead to 9% growth, in line with the strategic approach This would, however require 1200 new dwellings.	1,200	Possible issues but not necessarily resolvable through alternative approach	1,280	No Realistic Alternative	1,280	No Realistic Alternative	1,280 (no change)
	The SHLAA showed not much more than a quarter of the desired figure as deliverable on achievable sites, unless infrastructure investment could open up a northern expansion area. Reducing the figure to 980 (around the RSS figure) could have been considered to overcome this uncertainty. However, this would rely on an housing being displaced to a main town in SE Northumberland. This would have had to be to Ashington or Cramlington –the locations of modest spare SHLAA capacity but Ashington may not have been feasible – see above, while Cramlington has long term limitations.		Evidence required a small increase in the housing number from 1200 to 1280. By now the SHLAA update showed that there was the ability to deliver well over half this total on achievable sites, with around 500 still relying on the opening up of an area to the north of the town through infrastructure investment. It is considered that this would provide the breathing space – i.e. a few years into the plan period – in order to secure the necessary investment for the remaining dwellings to be brought forward. Therefore it was considered that the lower level figure is no longer necessary to suggest as an alternative		Revised SNPP now indicated a much reduced population increase – i.e. 3% with a marked decline in working age population. This gave emphasis to the need for a 'step-change'. The figure was therefore kept at the ambitious levels previously sought. By this time, with a stronger market and the issuing of permission on sites previously identified as 'uncertain', the number of dwellings possible on achievable sites had almost reached the total sought – i.e. without the opening up of areas to the north requiring infrastructure investment. Therefore a lower-figure alternative still no longer necessary to explore.		

South East Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	12,820		12,540		12,840		12,840 (no change)
Main Towns:	82%		83%		83%		83%
BLYTH <i>Possible town-wide constraint issues that would need resolution in the longer term</i> Past delivery would not increase working age numbers. A growth-led scenario – approaching 60% higher than the SNPP projection – was the preferred scenario but still just 80% of past policy, helping regeneration, while avoiding an oversupply (and any associated housing market collapse).	3,480 Around 85% of the 3480 figure could be met on available SHLAA sites – sufficient to allow the scenario to be delivered. However the town as a whole has highway access constraint issues. There may therefore still be arguments for testing a lower, with the displaced housing located elsewhere in SE Northumberland. However, there being no obvious location for any significant percentage of the total., (see Ashington and Cramlington would only offer relatively modest opportunities to accommodate overspill from elsewhere), and in order to support the role of the town, the necessary infrastructure investment may well be needed in the medium to long term.	No Realistic Alternative but town-wide constraint issues may need long-term resolution	2,860 The Full Draft Plan sought a lower increase in the housing number –2860 instead of 3480 which could be met on SHLAA sites that could be delivered (but with little or no margin above this). The availability situation for SHLAA sites and the importance of recognising the regeneration agenda for the town and so striking the right balance between genuine, sustainable population growth and the risk of housing market failure, means that there is unlikely to be a feasible alternative to test unless a reduction is necessary due to major infrastructure issues (see left)	No Realistic Alternative but town-wide constraint issues may need long-term resolution	3,100 The revised SNPP now indicated only 6% growth with declining working age numbers– suggesting a need to continue with higher (than past) growth. Again achievable SHLAA sites equated to the required numbers suggesting (again) no clear alternative if the correct housing balance was to be struck. The SLR at the Pre-submission stage continued to state that a central access road to the town was needed and investment was being sought. Without this, the total may need to be redirected, with the residual being located elsewhere but with no obvious alternative in SE Northumberland. Within the town, the alternative of Bebside has been raised recently but this would be separate from the town physically and may not be an acceptable solution, since it would load additional traffic onto the Cowpen Road..	No Realistic Alternative but town-wide constraint issues require investment	3,100 (no change)

South East Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	12,820		12,540		12,840		12,840 (no change)
Main Towns:	82%		83%		83%		83%
CRAMLINGTON Strategy achievable with no significant alternative approach available Past delivery rates would cause 8% DECLINE in population over the plan period while the SNPP, double this decrease to some 16%. Therefore a targeted growth strategy would be required, with strong efforts towards the opening up of the SW sector to guarantee significant, consistent housing delivery – approaching 3,500 over the Plan period.	3,480	No Realistic Alternative	3,820	No Realistic Alternative	3,820	No Realistic Alternative	3,820 (no change)
	The SHLAA showed that well over 4000 dwellings could be delivered on achievable sites – mainly in the SW sector but also on the Northern Expansion site north of the town centre. This is how the completion of the town was envisaged (albeit that the northern expansion of the town centre was to include more non-housing uses). It is difficult to arrive at feasible alternatives. There are clear demarcation lines represented, (in most directions) by the square of main roads around the outskirts of the town. There are other physical constraints such as Arcot ponds and the Green Belt to the south and (ultimately) the proximity of the river Blyth to the north.		Evidence supported a slightly higher increase in the housing number – 3820 instead of 3480 – recognising the scope identified for the town to continue to expand and meet its aims, one factor being the forthcoming opening of the emergency hospital at the eastern end of the town. The total could be met on available and achievable sites, reliance, once again being placed on the release of land at the SW sector and north of the town centre. Again, given the town’s clear demarcation by a system of roads and (to the S and W) the Green Belt, there would be little scope for any upward variance in the order to the proposed housing total. Any significant downward adjustment of the figure would undermine the town’s role within the agreed strategy.		The revised SNPP continued to forecast a severe fall in the population of the town over the plan period if the town were allowed to grow in line with past population trends, further emphasising the need to continue with the proposed strategy The total was left unchanged from the previous stage, achievable on available SHLAA sites, reliance, once again being placed on the SW sector and north of the town centre. Again, given the town’s clear demarcation by a system of roads and (to the S and W) the Green Belt, there would be little scope for any upward variation in the order to the proposed housing total, nor would there be much scope to vary how the town’s development would proceed. Significant downward adjustment would undermine the town’s role within the agreed strategy.		

South East Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	12,820		12,540		12,840		12,840 (no change)
Service Centres:	12%		12%		11%		11%
Guidepost / Stakeford / Choppington Some issues at PO2 stage but removed at later stages The three settlements together comprising a service centre would see population decline if past delivery rates or SNPP projections continued. A dwelling-led approach (420) could achieve the required growth.	420	Same figure (420) but differently distributed to reflect more certainty at Choppington	380	No Realistic Alternative	380	No Realistic Alternative	380 (no change)
	While achievable SHLAA sites almost equalled planned housing growth, the SLR considered that the location of much of it (close to Choppington) was not ideal and proposed growth areas south of Guidepost instead, where additional services were to be found. However, these sites required investment before they could move forward. This therefore begs the question as to whether an alternative of using the more readily available SHLAA sites (at Choppington) would have been preferable to the indicative expansion areas.		Evidence meant that the strategy sought a slightly lower increase in the housing number – 380 instead of 420 – still in line to meet its role as a service centre. It had also been established that the preferred sites from the previous stage, which had (at that time) been assessed as not readily achievable, were indeed not going to be achievable. Therefore the alternative of a more dispersed pattern of achievable SHLAA sites – e.g. including sites at Choppington – was taken forward.		The revised SNPP continued to forecast a severe fall in the population and the Core Strategy continued to seek 380 dwellings over the plan period, with achievable SHLAA sites equating to this figure – two thirds now close to Guidepost, as originally intended. Therefore the option being put forward met all the requirements of the strategy with little evidence of any realistic alternative needing to be pursued.		

South East Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	12,820		12,540		12,840		12,840 (no change)
Service Centres:	12%		12%		11%		11%
Newbiggin-by-the-Sea Strategy achievable; no significant alternative approach available Past policy / SNPP would lead to unacceptably high growth for a service centre although recent past rates would see population decline. Preferred Options (2) pursued 50% of past policy (320) – a 5 to 10% growth rate – appropriate for a service centre.	320	No Realistic Alternative	300	No Realistic Alternative	300	No Realistic Alternative	300 (no change)
	The 320 dwellings required could be met on deliverable SHLAA sites, with two areas for growth earmarked in the SLR. There was therefore no clear alternative that would require investigation.		Evidence led to a slightly lower increase in the housing number – 300 instead of 320 – being sought – still in line to meet its role as a service centre. The SHLAA confirmed that the preferred expansion areas from the previous stage should be deliverable and meet requirements. Therefore the preferred approach could be taken forward with no need for any investigation of alternatives.		SNPP continued to forecast a significant increase in the population. The decision was to continue to seek 300 dwellings. SHLAA showed well over this amount on achievable sites. Low recent completion would necessitate a significant boost in house building; but a lower growth strategy was not considered an option that should be pursued. Using the additional SHLAA capacity for overspill, say from Blyth, would also be inappropriate due to the local market and the role of Newbiggin.		
Seaton Delaval / New Hartley / Seghill / Holywell Strategy achievable; no significant alternative approach available Past policy based on Green Belt restriction but recent delivery projected almost 9% population growth. SNPP saw a 3% growth. Approach between these two taken despite restraint of Green Belt – i.e. dwelling-led (800).	800	No Realistic Alternative	780	No Realistic Alternative	780	No Realistic Alternative	780 (no change)
	SLR found the 800 could be contained within the existing inset limits but without much margin, negating the need for a Green Belt review – consistent with concentrating growth in Main Towns, where Green Belt boundaries had been examined and “exceptional circumstances” seemed to be justified. While a wider Green Belt review had yet to be carried out, available evidence showed that it could be possible to avoid the need to review boundaries below Main Town level. This did indeed seem to be the case here.		Evidence meant that the strategy sought only a slightly lower increase in the housing number, 780 instead of 800, still in line to meet the service centre role. It had also been established through the SHLAA that the ‘white land’ expansion areas should be deliverable, with a modest buffer. This means that there was no realistic alternative to the order of the figure or the locations where the housing would be provided.		SNPP now forecast a slightly greater increase in the population of this small area than previously predicted. It was considered appropriate to adhere to the strategy and continue to seek 780 dwellings. A significant percentage of this was already completed or underway. SHLAA showed that well over the remaining amount would be possible on achievable sites. Therefore it could be concluded that the option, set out previously, should be pursued and that there was no realistic alternative. Any buffer could be for beyond the plan period to avoid further Green Belt review.		

South East Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	12,820		12,540		12,840		12,840 (no change)
Rest of SE Delivery Area	6%		6%		6%		6%
Strategy achievable; no significant alternative approach available This area, between Amble and Ashington, had seen sluggish past delivery close to Ashington – less so further north. Chosen scenario recognised the need to allow some past demand to continue in the more rural locations, while seeking a dwelling-led acceleration in the more industrial parts – a total of 780 dwellings	780	No Realistic Alternative	720	No Realistic Alternative	780	No Realistic Alternative	780 (no change)
		Confidence that SHLAA sites, as assessed at the time, would be capable of delivering the required total, although many of these were concentrated in the parts of the small area where past development rates had been lower. Due to constraints and the overall strategy relating to villages below service centre level and regeneration, it was considered that there was no realistic alternative.		While the revised SLR did not re-examine “Rest of” areas, a reassignment of figures within the SE Delivery Area as a whole meant a slight reduction to 720 – i.e. adhering to the previous strategy and continuing to compromise between the very high and very low growth rates in different parts of this area in the past. There continued to be no clear alternative identifiable.		It continued to be considered important to encourage reasonable growth for places like Ellington and Lynemouth while respecting the constraints of smaller settlements. Revised SHLAA information showed that achievable SHLAA sites could, on paper, deliver more than double this amount of housing. However it was considered important to adhere to the overall strategy, in addition to which a much higher level in this area may well compromise sustainable development principles in some settlements.	

Central Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	6,270		5,680		5,940		
Main Towns:	54%		65%		78%		
HEXHAM Alternative approaches tested through stages Initial evidence showed that existing policy approach, of stability, would lead to slow growth of 1½% . SNPP would create close to 5% – still well below levels needed for a market town to sustain its community. Recent past delivery had been extremely slow as viable sites within the Green Belt boundary reduced. Preferred option was therefore for a dwelling led scenario – 45 per annum.	900 Achievable SHLAA sites remaining within the town would only sustain recent past delivery resulting in zero population growth. The dwelling-led scenario would therefore rely on a Green Belt deletion and one of two sectors around Hexham's edge, which make a moderate, rather than high, contribution to the Green Belt was chosen – to the west of the town. This had fewer physical and infrastructure constraints than one to the north. It was considered that there was no alternative to deleting a quantum of Green Belt and that NO acceptable alternative location for this existed.	No Realistic Alternative	720 Total dwellings now needed reduced from 900 to 720, based on up to forecasts, revisions to the area and (in particular) consultation feedback. The SHLAA (2014) now identified the capacity to deliver approximately 460 of these units on in-town achievable sites. This allowed Green Belt deletions to be reduced with just small deletions for development in the plan period and the west area safeguarded for beyond the Plan period. This left the delivery situation 'tight' and suggests that an alternative could have been put, at this stage, of retaining the larger western deletion as land for the current plan period, in case some of the suggested smaller sites proved undeliverable.	Include wider area in Green Belt deletions as a whole and for development in this period	720 The revised SNPP indicated over 10% FALL in working age, necessitating adherence to the growth planned previously. Not all deliverable within the town, so Green Belt deletions still needed. (SLR considered alternative ways of avoiding Green Belt deletion but none realistic – see below *). The solution proposed to minimise deletions varied from the previous stage – with additional smaller sites being brought forward as minor Green Belt deletions and a reduced area being earmarked for deletion and safeguarding for future housing to the west. (Green Belt evidence had not changed). Again, the approach left the delivery situation 'tight'. An alternative could have been put, as at the last stage – i.e. retaining the larger western deletion as land for the current plan period, in case some of the suggested smaller sites proved undeliverable.	Include wider area in Green Belt deletions as a whole and for development in this period	900 (an increase) No Realistic Alternative Further investigation of the deliverability of sites and the viability of delivery of needed infrastructure improvements resulted in a return to the initial approach (at the PO2 stage) – i.e. retaining the larger western deletion as land for the current plan period, with some safeguarded for beyond. Some of the earlier, smaller deletions also kept.
<p>*The SLR considered 4 alternative ways of avoiding Green Belt deletion at Hexham, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributing the dwelling deficit to other Main Towns and Service Centres in the Delivery Area (Morpeth, Ponteland, Prudhoe or, Corbridge); however Prudhoe and Ponteland were also constrained by the existing Green Belt, Corbridge was also constrained and, as a service centre, it would have been inappropriate for the village to provide for the overspill from a main town – even that closest to it. Morpeth taking some additional housing displaced from Hexham could, perhaps, have been considered as a realistic alternative, given that the inset boundary was being defined. The SLR (however) argued that it was not appropriate to increase the housing numbers in Morpeth further, given the significant amount of growth (2,000 plus) already proposed. In addition, Morpeth, while being in the same delivery area is distant from the Tyne Valley. • Distributing the dwelling deficit to other settlements in the Central Delivery Area (e.g. Stocksfield, Riding Mill, Ovingham, Heddon, Longhorsley); however, under the strategic options, already tested, it would be inappropriate for these villages to provide for the overspill from what was now defined as a main town. • Distributing the dwellings to settlements in neighbouring Delivery Areas; however alternative distribution strategies between delivery areas already tested. SLR argued too far from other delivery areas) • Reducing the number of dwellings to below 720 units. The conclusion of the SLR was that reduced growth would be likely to have a detrimental impact upon economic growth and the vitality of the Tyne Valley. 							

Central Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	6,270		5,680		5,940		
Main Towns:	54%		65%		78%		
<p>MORPETH <i>Opportunities for increased role of town maximised within constraints. Alternatives limited to distribution / phasing and were tested as far as possible through the stages.</i> Past delivery rates and SNPP would give zero growth, well short even of existing policy which sought only modest growth in context of earlier rapid growth (which had led to the Green Belt extension). The Core Strategy was to define the inset boundary of this Green Belt meaning that flexibility existed for a dwelling-led scenario – 1500 dwellings plus dispersed additional housing in the hinterland, (also reflecting the emerging Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan aspiration).</p>	<p>1,500</p> <p>Evidence, including the imminent northern bypass, showed Morpeth could take significant additional housing without harm to the historic setting – i.e. the inner boundary could be relatively generous. The strong housing market and easy commute to Tyneside provided the key opportunity in more rural Northumberland. This was the context for the Core Strategy approach. SHLAA assessments, based on physical constraints in certain directions and realistic totals for area(s) to the north, suggested that 1900 could be achievable / deliverable during the Plan period, not quite sufficient to suggest any strategy for delivering the 1500 significantly different from the expansion areas shown on the diagrammatic map. In terms of absorbing more, (as an alternative) – e.g. to avoid Green Belt deletions elsewhere – the 1500 was already considered a high figure for a rural market town. A lower figure could also be considered unrealistic due to the strength of the housing market – i.e. the houses would be delivered in any case. The fact that the other main towns in the Central Delivery area were also constrained also meant that it would be difficult to take numbers from the town and redistribute them within the Central Delivery Area in a way that matched the overall strategy.</p>	<p>Probably No Alternative unless necessary to take overspill from elsewhere.</p>	<p>2,100</p> <p>The small areas had been amended to match neighbourhood plans, meaning that Morpeth now incorporated a wider hinterland with 2,100 dwellings now proposed, although it was accepted that more than 1500 of these were likely to be achieved within the town itself – an increase on the previous stage. The SHLAA (2014) now identified the capacity to deliver approximately upwards of 2700 dwellings with the town itself able to accommodate up to 2000 – giving flexibility. While this may suggest that Morpeth could supply even more housing – e.g. to absorb some from Hexham, Prudhoe and/or Ponteland to avoid Green belt deletions there, this was not considered a reasonable alternative given the major step change in the house building rate that the figure of 2,100 would already represent. The only alternative that would be realistic would be in the sub-division within the inset boundary in terms of housing and employment for this plan period and the safeguarded element.</p>	<p>Probably No Alternative - other than a redistribution /different phasing of housing sites.</p>	<p>2,100</p> <p>The SNPP for Morpeth continued to indicate a static population and reduced numbers of children and people of working age. This reinforced and justified the strategy previously set out, using opportunities, provided through defining the Green Belt inset boundary and the building of the northern bypass, for the town to become more self-sustaining, catering for 2100 dwellings plus employment and future safeguarding. Again, the SHLAA available sites amounted to around a quarter more than needed for the plan period itself, giving scope, (along with some 'uncertain' sites, for land to be safeguarded for beyond the period). Again it was considered that there would be no significant strategic alternative to the amount of housing proposed, due to the increased role of the town already being proposed. There would also be no alternative way of setting the inset boundary (although that is not to say that there may not be some small possible variations – e.g. some appeal decisions in the southern part of the town affected this). The only alternative that would be realistic would be in the sub-division within the inset boundary in terms of housing and employment for this plan period and the safeguarded element, although the options on this were becoming more limited. The progress of the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan limited such options.</p>	<p>Probably No Alternative - other than a redistribution /different phasing of housing sites.</p>	<p>2,100 (no change) Some necessary amendments were made within the inset boundary, at each of the two Major Modifications stages. These covered both housing and employment for this plan period and beyond and reflected changing circumstances on planning permissions and the evolving position as to the availability (or otherwise) of the land concerned for particular uses within certain timescales. Notwithstanding this, the main strategic housing site and the land safeguarded for housing remained substantially unchanged.</p>

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TOTAL	6,270		5,680		5,940		
Main Towns:	54%		65%		78%		
PRUDHOE <i>No alternative to Green Belt deletion. Detailed solution evolved as evidence emerged. (In effect, alternative approaches were tested through the stages</i> Recent low past delivery rates would result in a 6 to 7 per cent decline in population. The preferred, 'targeted growth' scenario was more ambitious than limiting growth to migration. It would lead to a 13% growth, based on 1000 new dwellings.	1,000	No apparent Realistic Alternative based on available evidence at the time. Less than a fifth of the 1000 could be delivered on achievable SHLAA sites, although, when 'brownfield' land at former hospital was added in, the total could be taken above half. While there was some evidence that additional non-Green Belt capacity may exist if constraints removed (e.g. school reorganisation or highway investment), there were no firm proposals that would guarantee availability / bring certainty. Therefore proposed to apply 'exceptional circumstances' and remove some Green Belt W of Prudhoe. This extension proposal was based on high level Green Belt / constraints assessment work that had been undertaken and evidence, at the time, did not suggest any alternative, preferable ways of extending the town.	860	No apparent Realistic Alternative based on available evidence at the time. Proposed level of growth revised down to 860 dwellings, reflecting new information and necessary adjustments but the overall aim of stabilising and then boosting Prudhoe's population remained. ¼ of these could be identified without Green Belt deletion. However, little or no additional scope and, once employment land and safeguarding beyond the Plan period had been taken into account, there continued to be a need for exceptional circumstances, now clearly delineated and supported through the SLR work on constraints and the separate high level work on the contribution of the Green Belt itself. Again, evidence, at the time, did not suggest any alternative, preferable ways to extend town.	900	No Realistic Alternative (notwithstanding that new evidence had altered the solution) Revised SNPP predicted large declines in working age, emphasising need for same order of growth. Again, SHLAA achievable sites fell short (by c200). Green Belt deletions were justified via exceptional circumstances – to accommodate needed housing; employment and safeguarded land. (SLR considered alternative ways to avoid Green Belt deletion but none realistic – see below 🗑️) The solution proposed was different from previous stages –deletion S of Highfield Lane, rather than W of town. While this may have been tested previously, refined evidence on the Green Belt contribution and the developability and constraints relating to sites had now led to the changed solution. The same evidence precluded the earlier W extension proposals from further consideration.	900 (no change)

*The SLR considered 4 alternative ways of avoiding Green Belt deletion at Prudhoe, as follows:

- **Distributing the dwelling deficit to other Main Towns and Service Centres in the Delivery Area** (Hexham, Morpeth, Ponteland or, Corbridge); However, Hexham and Ponteland were also constrained by the existing Green Belt, Corbridge was also constrained and, as a service centre, it would have been inappropriate for the village to provide for the overspill from a main town. Morpeth taking some additional housing displaced from Prudhoe could, perhaps, have been considered as a realistic alternative, given that the inset boundary was being defined. The SLR (however) argued that it was not appropriate to increase the housing numbers in Morpeth further, given the significant amount of growth (2,000 plus) already proposed in the emerging plan. In addition, Morpeth, while being in the same delivery area is distant from the Tyne Valley.
- **Distributing the dwelling deficit to other settlements in the Central Delivery Area** (e.g. Stocksfield, Riding Mill, Ovingham, Heddon, Longhorsley); As lower tier settlements, under the overall strategy it would have been inappropriate for these villages to provide for the overspill from what was now defined as a main town
- **Distributing the dwellings to settlements in neighbouring Delivery Areas;** however alternative distribution strategies between delivery areas already tested. SLR argued too far from other delivery areas)
- **Reducing the number of dwellings to below 900 units.** The conclusion of the SLR was that reduced growth would be likely to have a detrimental impact upon economic growth and the vitality of the Tyne Valley.

Central Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	6,270		5,680		5,940		
Main Towns:	54%		65%		78%		
Service Centres:	18%		15%		5%		
PONTELAND Alternative approaches tested through the stages Past delivery rates would only see growth of about 1%, SNPP 2%, existing policy slightly more. At the PO2 stage, despite its population, Ponteland had been categorised as a service centre, reflecting previous consultation and the absence of certain services found in main towns. Notwithstanding this, the location, close to Tyneside gave the opportunity for Ponteland to make an important contribution to the overall strategy and a dwelling-led total of 850 units was preferred – a population growth of almost 15%.	850 Service Centre The Police HQ site, other deliverable SHLAA sites plus completions could deliver 500 but the remainder plus a shortfall of employment land could only be met by deleting Green Belt. A high level Green Belt assessment showed some quadrants making a moderate, rather than high contribution to Green Belt purposes. Taking account also of opportunities and constraints, an eastward extension towards Rotary Way, involving Green Belt deletion, was put forward. Arguably, an alternative could have been considered, whereby a lower housing figure – perhaps 500 max – would be used, thus avoiding Green Belt deletion. However, this would not have fully allowed for the opportunity to deliver a meaningful contribution towards the overall housing total coupled with employment land in a key location. Therefore, no realistic quantitative alternative without departing from the overall strategy.	Probably No Alternative - without undermining the overall strategy to deliver housing Reduced small area definition, updated evidence and consideration of responses led to dwellings sought being reduced to 640. Ponteland continued to be classified as a service centre. SHLAA now identified capacity for 550 on achievable sites. However, the issue of employment land and the agreed approach of adding safeguarded land meant that deletions were still justified. Refined Green Belt analysis justified deleting places on the town's edge in addition to the Rotary Way triangle allowing wider scope to enhance Ponteland's assets.. Arguably, an alternative of a lower housing figure and/or no safeguarding, (avoiding Green Belt deletion), could have been considered; but this would have precluded opportunity to provide for some development needs. Deletion of a lower quantity of Green Belt could have been considered. At the time, evidence supported the idea that wider deletions would support the town's development to the full. So it can be argued that the evidence supporting a reduced alternative approach did not exist.	640 Service Centre Possible alternative of a lower level of Green Belt deletion – not yet supported by evidence	900 MAIN TOWN No Realistic Alternative. See above	900 (no change, even though the Garden Village Proposal for 2000 further dwellings was added to the Core Strategy at the Further Major Modifications stage.) This change does not affect the OAN for the Ponteland small area (within which it lies), the Central Delivery Area or the Plan area as a whole, as it is part of a national initiative for garden villages that will separately contribute to national housing needs and deliver other planning benefits for the areas concerned. The Further Modifications stage also saw amendments to the distribution of land uses in SE Ponteland Green Belt deletion area but this did not affect the 900 total.		

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TOTAL	6,270		5,680		5,940		
Main Towns:	54%		65%		78%		
Service Centres:	18%		15%		5%		
PONTELAND CONTINUED... * The SLR considered 4 alternative ways of avoiding Green Belt deletion at Ponteland, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributing the dwelling deficit to other Main Towns and Service Centres in the Delivery Area (Hexham, Morpeth, Prudhoe or, Corbridge); However, Hexham and Prudhoe were also constrained by the existing Green Belt, Corbridge was also constrained and, as a service centre, it would have been inappropriate for the village to provide for the overspill from a main town. Morpeth taking some additional housing displaced from Ponteland could, perhaps, have been considered as a realistic alternative, given that the inset boundary was being defined. The SLR (however) argued that it was not appropriate to increase the housing numbers in Morpeth further, given the significant amount of growth (2,000 plus) already proposed in the emerging plan. • Distributing the dwelling deficit to other settlements in the Central Delivery Area (e.g. Stocksfield, Riding Mill, Ovingham, Heddon, Longhorsley); As lower tier settlements, under the overall strategy it would have been inappropriate for these villages to provide for the overspill from what was now defined as a main town • Distributing the dwellings to settlements in neighbouring Delivery Areas; however alternative distribution strategies between delivery areas had already been tested. • Reducing the number of dwellings to below 900 units. The conclusion of the SLR was that reduced growth would be likely to have a detrimental impact upon economic growth. • NB Alternatives to the Garden Village were tested separately – see separate part of this SA. 							

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TOTAL	6,270		5,680		5,940		
Service Centres:	18%		15%		5%		
Corbridge Strategy achievable; no significant alternative approach available Past delivery rates would result in a 7% population DECREASE and past policy approaches would have a similar outcome. Even a migration led scenario with housing to meet this demand would only perpetuate the ageing population. A dwelling-led scenario was preferred, resulting in 7% increase over 20 years with a requirement of 300 houses.	300	No Realistic Alternative Evidence showed the 300 dwellings to be possible within the existing inset boundaries, notwithstanding that investment would be required to open up part of the land and some uncertain SHLAA sites remained within the total. Adhering to the inset land would fulfil the strategic aim of limiting any deletions of Green Belt to main towns. Any reduction in the total would be unacceptable in strategic terms and the service centre role. Any increase would require a Green Belt deletion which would also be unacceptable in overall strategic terms. it also follows that there is no alternative way of locating housing within the inset boundary	240	No Realistic Alternative New information and adjustments within the delivery area saw a revision to 240 dwellings but the overall aim of stabilising and then boosting Corbridge's population remained. Approx. 140 were on deliverable sites but, as before, it was considered that 'uncertain' land at Milkwell Lane could be released for development if possible highway and constraints could be overcome. While the lower total would allow a small degree of flexibility within the inset area this would not provide scope for a real alternative arrangement, (some land would remain for beyond the plan period or in case unpredictable constraints emerged.	300	No Realistic Alternative The revised SNPP would still see a negative trend in respect of people of working age. The strategy for the village was therefore adhered to with the figure returning to 300. This time the large area north of Milkwell Lane was assessed (within the SHLAA) to be deliverable, taking deliverable sites to well over the required level. There was still no alternative scenario because most of the white land would be needed to achieve the figure and that this would not entail any amendment to the Green Belt boundary. Any true alternative would require Green Belt deletion, and exceptional circumstances would be difficult to demonstrate. It was possible that some of the area would not be developed until beyond the plan period but this would not alter the overall strategy.	300 (no change) NB Milkwell site had received outline permission, meaning that 300 plus dwellings had permission.

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TOTAL	6,270		5,680		5,940		
Rest of Central Delivery Area	27%		20%		17%		
Alternative approaches tested through the stages The "Rest of" part of the Central Delivery Area consisted of 3 different 'Small Areas', each with different characteristics. All had experienced slow past development reflecting the Green Belt constraints in some parts (Tyne Valley and its environs) and other constraints (combined with a slower housing market) in areas beyond. Achieving sustainable communities would require a dwelling-led approach in more remote areas, along with a strategy of dispersed, small scale growth in those rural Green Belt areas closest to Tyneside. This meant that upwards of 1700 dwellings would be needed over 20 years	1,720	Alternative: Reduce the figure by several hundred and allot the residual to Morpeth	1,120	No Realistic Alternative	1,020	No Realistic Alternative	840 (a decrease) No Realistic Alternative By this stage, further investigation on the deliverability of SHLAA sites and the viability of delivering housing needed in Hexham led to a need to increase the figure here by 180. Given the importance of adhering to the strategy on distribution between Delivery Areas, it was resolved to reduce the 'Rest of Central' figure correspondingly. This would still allow for local communities of inset villages to be sustained through development while placing less reliance on contributions from more remote brownfield areas (e.g. Newlands).
	Evidence from the SHLAA and constraints work demonstrated that the proposed housing levels may be deliverable in areas where Green Belt inset boundaries were still being defined (in the vicinity of Morpeth, or in areas beyond the Green Belt, but that this may load large amount of development onto these villages. This would mean that a more geographically balanced outcome may prove difficult without re-examining the existing Green Belt areas where the housing market potential was also (arguably) the strongest. However it was important to seek to avoid deletions, which would go against the preferred approach of limiting Green Belt changes to higher order settlements. While the forthcoming examination of the contribution of the Green Belt around all the villages within its general extent left open the option that inset boundaries around villages in the Tyne Valley area may be extended, it can nevertheless be concluded that an alternative scenario of a lower total could have been tested at the PO2 stage, with the residual housing being reallocated to Morpeth (the only main town or service centre in the Central Delivery Area that may have the necessary capacity to absorb this).		The proposed level of growth identified had been revised down to only two-thirds of the previous level. This reflected responses, the redefinition of the small areas, the increased growth that was being assigned to Morpeth, and the firming up of Green Belt policy, which sought to avoid amendments to the existing inset boundaries and to define new inset boundaries (in the Morpeth Green Belt extension zone) so as to allow growth but within a scale appropriate to each village. With this figure, it was possible to achieve a modest level of population growth when averaged across the whole of this extensive area, although it was accepted that a degree of restraint would continue to operate around the Tyne Valley Green Belt villages. With this figure, there would be no justifiable "exceptional circumstances" for making changes to the existing Green Belt, as the scope existed in other locations in the area –around villages where the inset boundaries had yet to be defined and some lying beyond the Green Belt. (NB it should be noted that the area includes the substantial development at the former St Mary's Hospital, Stannington).		The figure was reduced by a further 9% reflecting reallocation of numbers towards Morpeth and Ponteland, where additional scope had been identified to boost their roles as main towns. The revised SHLAA showed that this total could be met without amending Green Belt boundaries. A consistent approach to the Green Belt within the small area resulted: (a) almost no change was made to existing inset villages; (b) washed over villages with an infill boundary had these areas inset; and (c) newly inset village boundaries informed by existing Local Plan settlement limit. A key to avoiding Green Belt deletion in 'Rest of Central' was that many achievable SHLAA sites were brownfield <u>not</u> within or immediately adjacent to any particular settlement – e.g. at St Mary's Hospital, Longhirst Hall, and Newlands. While development away from settlements can be argued to be less sustainable in terms of access to services, overall it was considered preferable to deleting greenfield land from the Green Belt. Neither the SHLAA nor the scope around villages would suggest alternative ways of distributing these dwellings, nor would it allow the figure to increase. A further reduction was also difficult to envision due to limited scope elsewhere.		

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TOTAL	3,740		3,900		4,190		
Main Towns:	51%		48%		48%		
ALNWICK <i>Strategy achievable with no significant alternative approach available</i> Past delivery rates would lead to a large (21%) increase in Alnwick's population although SNPP projected just 6%. The preferred scenario was to apply past policy, which considered the town's historic character, adding a buffer of 20% to allow for an 11% increase over the plan period, in line with the overall strategy for main towns – a figure of 1000 new dwellings.	1,000	No Realistic Alternative About half of the thousand would be achievable on deliverable (or delivered) SHLAA sites. While this would represent past delivery levels for the town, it would rely on a much slower than previous rate of housing development in the hinterland area – i.e. a significant level of constraint. The remaining 500 would be possible subject to certain infrastructure investment and, in discussion with the Neighbourhood Plan group, it was resolved that significantly different alternatives to this would have been unacceptable. On the one hand, continuing the very high past delivery rates (averaged over the town and its hinterland) would be difficult given the absence of suitable SHLAA sites and so threaten the town or its wider hinterland or both. On the other hand, a lower figure - e.g. based on past policy, could lead to a very sluggish or even negative population growth and the issue of an ageing population would be exacerbated.	1,020	No Realistic Alternative Small areas had been amended to match neighbourhood plans, meaning a much reduced hinterland (Denwick parish). The revised SHLAA / SLR had demonstrated that some 850 dwellings could be achieved on deliverable sites meaning that, taking account of possible windfalls etc. it was possible to adhere to the approx. 1000 dwellings target for the town. The Council were also working closely with the Neighbourhood Plan group and both parties recognised that even this figure represented a certain level of constraint by necessity of the town's environmental character, but also the need to achieve this level of new development to allow for an element of growth. Again it is considered that there is no realistic strategic alternative that could have been put forward for the town, given the limited SHLAA site availability / deliverability and the need to strike a careful balance between conservation and necessary growth.	1,100	No Realistic Alternative The revised SNPP indicated around a rise of 3% - lower than previous forecasts, so emphasising the need to plan for growth as much as possible within the physical constraints of the town and its surroundings. Fortunately, the updated SHLAA / SLR could identify some 1100 deliverable developable sites, meaning that the strategy could be delivered. This was fixed as the number to be sought and aligned with the emerging Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan. Again it is considered that there is no realistic strategic alternative that could have been put forward for the town, given that achieving the figure would rely on the full set of identified deliverable / developable SHLAA sites and the need to strike a careful balance between conservation and necessary growth.	1,100 (no change)

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TOTAL	3,740		3,900		4,190		
Main Towns:	51%		48%		48%		
BERWICK-UPON-TWEED <i>Alternative approaches were not tested but this likely to be unnecessary – see Wooler, Rothbury and ‘Rest of’ areas</i> Recent past delivery rates in the town of Berwick itself would lead to a 13% increase in population over the Plan period, very similar to the former planned rate of increase. The SNPP however showed a slowing rate of growth for the town. The proposed strategy was to adhere to the past planning aspirations for the with surrounding areas more constrained This would mean 900 dwellings being sought	900	Alternatives: (1) increase total to take Rothbury / Wooler displaced units; (2) keep number but vary locations	840	Alternatives: (1) increase total to take ‘Rest of North’ displaced units; (2) keep number but vary locations	900	Alternatives: (1) increase total to take ‘Rest of North’ displaced units; (2) keep number but vary locations	900 (no change)
	1700 were available on achievable SHLAA sites. This clearly suggested an ALTERNATIVE OPTION to vary where the 900 additional dwellings would be located within the town. A second ALTERNATIVE OPTION would be to increase the housing total for Berwick, making use of more of the available sites to accommodate units displaced from elsewhere in the Delivery Area (possibly Wooler and/or Rothbury). It would also need to be demonstrated that the housing market would be strong enough deliver this higher amount of housing.		Slightly reduced total of 840 was influenced by revised household, population and employment forecasts; revisions to the area basis on which housing numbers were analysed; consultation feedback, redistribution of development within delivery areas; further analysis of development opportunities; and newly emerging evidence. Nevertheless the strategy was broadly similar and in line with that agreed for the County's main towns. The updated SHLAA confirmed scope for 1700 plus units on suitable, available and achievable sites. Therefore the two alternative possibilities continued to exist at the Full Draft Plan stage, the only difference being that any displaced units would be more likely to be from the “Rest of North” area, rather than Rothbury or Wooler.		Revised SNPP indicated a lower rise in population – around 7% rather than 10%. The strategy of arresting the decline in the working age population was continued along with, enabling a greater mix of housing, and supporting Berwick's role as a main town serving a wide hinterland extending into the Scottish Borders. This would entail increasing housing provision slightly – back to 900. Revised work on the SHLAA and the SLR constraints analysis had led to a reduction in the deliverable and developable sites by around 300 to 1400 but this still gave well above the capacity needed. Therefore the alternative options remained available, should they be necessary to test – i.e. to vary where the 900 additional dwellings would be located within the town OR to increase the housing total for Berwick, making use of more of the available sites – e.g. if housing numbers from elsewhere needed to be displaced to the town.		

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TOTAL	3,740		3,900		4,190		
Service Centres:	34%		24%		22%		
Belford Strategy achievable with no significant alternative approach available Belford was part of a small area that also included the Seahouses area. Housing delivery rates were high and, and could grow the population by 37%, (although the ‘second homes effect’ could lower this in the coastal zone of the small area) The SLR assessed the continuation of past rates – and indeed the SNPP level of growth – as unacceptably affecting character. Therefore the preferred approach split the dwellings required between the two service centres with Belford accommodating 200.	200 The SHLAA had identified many more than 200 as deliverable. The scenario in the preferred options document proposed an extension of the settlement southward. Other directions were considered much less acceptable in terms of landscape and conservation constraints. While the SHLAA appeared to allow for more housing to be loaded onto Belford, should Seahouses, (or indeed other parts of the North Delivery Area), be unable to accommodate the housing required, the impact on local character and role could be unacceptable and therefore this could not have been considered to be a valid alternative – i.e. not all achievable SHLAA sites should be seen as future development sites.	No Realistic Alternative	230 The overall figure to be sought in the combined Belford / Seahouses area was reduced slightly from 500 to 460 but the weight of where this development should be located was necessarily weighted more towards Belford due to lower constraints and less uncertainty over SHLAA sites. This meant a slight increase in the housing sought – to 230 – but this was still well within what the SHLAA would allow for in terms of achievable sites, while not overloading the settlement in terms of its character.	No Realistic Alternative	230 Revised SNPP now indicated a lower rise in population. Even so, this would still result in an 11½% FALL in the working age population. The strategy therefore continued to be one of arresting the decline in the size of the working age population. So 230 additional dwellings continued to be proposed for the Plan period as a whole. While the SHLAA indicated additional capacity over and above this, it could not be considered that the village could offer to accommodate more dwellings due to its character. It was also considered unacceptable to err below the level set out in the Core Strategy due to the need to arrest the decline in the working age population and the relatively high demand that was indicated by recent past completions in the area as a whole.	No Realistic Alternative	230 (no change)

North Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	3,740		3,900		4,190		
Service Centres:	34%		24%		22%		
Seahouses Strategy achievable with no significant alternative approach available Seahouses was part of a small area that also included the Belford area. Housing delivery rates were high and, and could grow the population by 37%, (although the 'second homes effect' could lower this in the coastal zone) The SLR assessed the continuation of past rates – and indeed the SNPP level of growth – as unacceptably affecting character. Therefore the preferred approach split the dwellings required between the two service centres with Seahouses accommodating 300.	300 SHLAA sites include a large area that was identified for the gradual expansion of Seahouses / N. Sunderland to its west. Other directions would be unacceptable in terms of landscape and conservation constraints. Given the above, it would be difficult to envisage a valid alternative.	No Realistic Alternative	230 The overall figure to be sought in the combined Belford / Seahouses area was reduced slightly from 500 to 460 but where this development should be located was weighted more towards Belford and away from Seahouses. In part, this was due to the fact that there was a degree of uncertainty attaching to the achievability of the area west of N. Sunderland that had been identified as an expansion area at the previous stage. Even so, there was considered to be sufficient scope within the SHLAA to ensure the delivery of the 230 sought, albeit that this needed to be weighed against the strong danger that new and existing dwellings would be taken over as second homes, so undermining the strategic aims of reducing the deficit in the working population.	No Realistic Alternative	230 Revised SNPP indicated a lower rise in population over the 20 year period – around 8½% rather than 13%. Even so, this would still result in an 11½% FALL in the working age population. The strategy therefore continued to be one of arresting the decline in the size of the working age population. So, as at the previous stage, 230 additional dwellings were proposed for the Plan period as a whole. The SHLAA indicated sufficient capacity and suggested that this could be increased if uncertain sites could be brought forward in due course. Even so, considerable constraints made it difficult to put forward any alternative that would increase the total to be accommodated there (e.g. back-up to 300), although this may be possible in future, as the emerging neighbourhood plan was indicating aspirations for incremental growth including the additional development necessary to counteract the second homes trends. It was also considered unacceptable to err below the level set out in the Core Strategy due to the need to arrest the decline in the working age population and the relatively high demand that was indicated by recent past completions in the area as a whole.	No Realistic Alternative	230 (no change)

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	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	3,740		3,900		4,190		
Service Centres:	34%		24%		22%		
Rothbury <i>Some issues at PO2 stage but removed at later stages</i> At the Preferred Options stage, Rothbury small area included a wide hinterland. Past rates or past policy (projected forward) would lead to a slight decline in the number of people in the area and a rapidly ageing profile. By contrast, the SNPP, projected forward, could lead to a population increase of 15%+. The preferred dwelling-led scenario (aiming at a 5% increase in the population) would allow for 380 dwellings.	380 Once SHLAA sites had been discounted (or deemed “uncertain”), to reflect a range of constraints, this left only around 100 dwellings deliverable and developable (including past consents and completions). Achieving anywhere close to the preferred scenario would therefore rely on significant infrastructure investment. Therefore an alternative scenario could have accepted that the strategic expansion may not be viable / feasible and diverted the remaining requirement to Berwick, where additional capacity existed. However, a static or declining population for a service centre could have been seen as unacceptable. (The mitigating factor would be that, if the constraints of past policy could be relaxed, there may be a chance that the local housing market would, in any case, deliver the requirement on small local sites.	Alternative: Reduce the figure to around 200. Reassign the remainder to Berwick	200 The Full Draft Plan almost halved the earlier total to 200 dwellings reflecting a reduction in the definition of the Rothbury ‘small area’ to exclude much of the earlier hinterland, as well as up to date household, population and employment forecasts, consultation feedback, further analysis of development opportunities; and other newly emerging evidence. In addition, the SHLAA was now able to identify achievable sites to more than cover this new total. An alternative distribution of some units to other small areas was therefore no longer necessary. With additional capacity, it was considered whether the number should even be increased further (either to ensure a more rounded population profile or to take displacement from elsewhere). However, it was considered that the village contains too many constraints to justify this and, besides, the market may not support it.	No Realistic Alternative	200 The revised SNPP indicated that the rise in population over the 20 year period, could be even higher than the 15%+ indicated at the Preferred Options (2) stage, at almost 23%, far more than required to sustain a service centre and of an order that could create issues regarding the overall character of Rothbury. It was considered important to retain a dwelling led scenario due to the town’s ageing population and past under delivery. Added to permissions and completions, the SHLAA / SLR continued to identify sufficient but not excessive scope for the 200 dwellings needed to deliver Rothbury’s growth needs.	No Realistic Alternative	200 (no change)

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	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req
TOTAL	3,740		3,900		4,190		
Service Centres:	34%		24%		22%		
Wooler <i>Some issues at PO2 stage but removed at later stages</i> Recent past development rates had been above the rate of development needed to keep pace with the migration-led SNPP; but both were too low to allow Wooler to maintain its service centre role and allow the working age population to grow. The preferred scenario would allow for 380 dwellings.	380 The SHLAA discounted many sites due to constraints including highway capacity and flood risk, leaving around 70 (including past consents and completions) deliverable. Achieving the preferred scenario would rely on two large development areas to the east and north of Wooler, both of which would require significant infrastructure investment. An alternative scenario would have assumed that the strategic expansion onto these sites may not be viable / feasible and would have diverted the remaining requirement to Berwick, where additional capacity existed. However, this may have been seen as unacceptable in terms of the likelihood of population remaining static or even declining – especially the working age population. The mitigating factor would be that past development rates had been reasonable healthy and there may be a chance that the local housing market would, in any case, deliver on small local sites.	Alternative: Reduce the figure by 50 to 150. Reassign the remainder to Berwick	280	No Realistic Alternative Updated household, population and employment forecasts; revisions to the area basis on which housing numbers were analysed; consultation feedback, redistribution of development within delivery areas etc. showed that the numbers to be sought should be reduced by 100 from 380 to 280. While this meant that the settlement of Wooler would only be contributing 7% of the North Area's additional dwellings, instead of 10%, this would still be sufficient to ensure the town's continued viability as a thriving service centre. Updated information from the SHLAA and on completions, permissions etc. showed a considerable change in what would be achievable – now some 230 dwellings. With other opportunities that may exist in the form of small schemes (conversions etc.) coming forward in a widened hinterland area within the Wooler small area, it was clear the required numbers could be achieved.	280	No Realistic Alternative The revised SNPP indicated a change in the predicted rise in population (over the 20 year period) from 1%, (predicted at the Preferred Options (2) stage), up to around 6%. While this was in line with the order of rise required to sustain a service centre, it was important to retain a dwelling led scenario due to the town's ageing population and uncertainties such as the water supply and other constraints that may still throw up unexpected barriers to development. Added to permissions and completions, the SHLAA / SLR continued to identify scope for the 280 dwellings needed to deliver the town's growth needs – around 7 per cent in terms of population over the 20 year period. There was no realistic alternative that needed to be tested.	280 (no change)

North Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	3,740		3,900		4,190		
Rest of North Delivery Area	16%		28%		30%		
Alternative approach not tested at latter stages, as the approach tested much more likely to be deliverable and would appear sustainable unless other factors intervene At the Preferred Options 2 stage of the process, the area that was classified as Rest of District comprised areas outlying Berwick (Norham and Islandshire), Wooler and Alnwick. Altogether it was necessary for these areas to contribute almost 600 dwellings to ensure that the Delivery Area would meet its requirements. Definitions and numbers changed subsequently	580	No Realistic Alternative	1,100	Probably No Realistic Alternative –given the opportunities available and the relative take-up between Berwick and the “Rest of North”	1,250	Probably No Realistic Alternative –given opportunities & relative take-up between Berwick & “Rest of North” May need to be revisited	1,250 (no change)
	Based on past delivery, coupled with SHLAA opportunities suggested in some of the villages concerned, it was considered that 600 could be comfortably met in a relatively dispersed manner, in keeping with the scale, role and character of these villages. For example Norham and Islandshire alone had been delivering some 34 dwellings per annum; the wider Alnwick hinterland included some sizeable villages.		SLR did not specifically re-examine the “Rest of” areas. Redefinition of the Delivery Area meant much larger “Rest of” area, including more villages – e.g. around Rothbury. It would need to account for more than a quarter of the North Area total. Updated SHLAA confirmed the ability to accommodate the numbers without ‘overloading’ settlements. While there were more SHLAA sites achievable, any upward variation in this figure would not be an alternative option, as this could see some of the villages becoming out of scale with their role and character – contrary to the overall strategy. While the figure of more than 1000 seems large, the area contains a several sizeable villages – e.g. Lesbury / Hipsburn / Alnmouth, Shilbottle, Warkworth, Longframlington etc., many with significant achievable SHLAA sites and the possibility of new development stemming of the loss of services and the ageing of the population. Were there to be overdevelopment of villages, relocation of some housing to Berwick, where capacity exists, would be a fall-back.		2011 - 2015 development rate of 50+ per annum, over 20 yrs., would approach the figure. Updated SHLAA confirmed capacity for this without overburdening villages. More SHLAA sites could be achieved but an upward variation in this figure should NOT be seen as an alternative option, as some villages could become out of scale with their role and character. While the figure of more than 1250 seems large, the area contains several sizeable villages – e.g. Lesbury / Hipsburn / Alnmouth, Shilbottle, Warkworth, Longframlington, etc., many of which offer significant achievable SHLAA sites. Were there to be the threat of villages over-expanding ⁷⁵ , an alternative of moving numbers to Berwick could have been considered. However, on balance, at present, this alternative NOT realistic because: (1) High numbers are being delivered in any case in the “Rest of” area; (2) SHLAA sites exist without show-stopping constraints to deliver well over the 1250; (3) Berwick market may not be strong enough to deliver the further dwellings.		

⁷⁵ This could occur if, for example investment in certain villages to remove constraints (e.g. WWTWs) was not forthcoming and necessitated greater loading onto villages with capacity.

West Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	1,480		1,400		1,350		
Main Towns:	27%		29%		30%		
HALTWHISTLE Probably No Significant Realistic Alternative – monitoring of actual delivery necessary As at the PO2 stage, if the level of past development was projected forward over the plan period the population would decrease by 4.4% The SNPP, while seeing more houses built, would also result in a population decline. Therefore the preferred scenario was to allow the settlement to expand, especially to the west – i.e. a dwelling led approach (400 units) bringing about 10% increase in the population – compatible with Haltwhistle's 'main town' role.	400 Sufficient possibilities were available in terms of deliverable SHLAA sites. However, notwithstanding this, the town does have significant constraints, including the barriers to expansion represented by the River Tyne, the A69, the Tyne Valley railway, and the topography and designations to the north and south of the town, as well as some infrastructure difficulties associated with waste water treatment and narrow residential roads. This, in effect means that, if the 10% growth scenario is to be adhered to, there would be very little scope to vary how and where the town could expand by this amount. The only alternative would be a lower growth rate, which may give some greater flexibility as to how smaller scale expansion could take place. However this would not give the level of growth that the strategy has set for the County's market towns. In addition, the only possible location that could absorb some additional dwellings within the West Delivery Area would be Allendale and this may not be appropriate.	Probably No Realistic Alternative Unless constraints / the market dictate lower figure, (with outside possibility of some being reassigned to Allendale).	400 Information from the SHLAA and on completions, permissions etc. showed that some 350 dwellings could be built in the plan period on 'suitable, available and achievable' sites within the town and its immediate environs. While this would fall short of the 400 that was seen as being required to achieve the 10% (approx.) growth level necessary for the town to retain its role, it was considered that the additional houses could come forward, insofar as Haltwhistle has fewer "showstopper" constraints than most of Northumberland's market towns. The only alternative would be a lower growth rate, which may give some greater flexibility as to how smaller scale expansion could take place. However this would not give the level of growth that the strategy has set for the County's market towns. In addition, the only possible location that could absorb some additional dwellings within the West Delivery Area would be Allendale and this may not be appropriate.	Probably No Realistic Alternative Unless constraints / the market dictate lower figure, (with outside possibility of some being reassigned to Allendale).	400 The revised SNPP indicated around a very slight rise in population over the 20 year period, (rather than the slight decline suggested in earlier forecasts). However this would fall far short of what would be needed to sustain the town. The SHLAA / SLR continued to identify scope for the order of dwellings needed to deliver the town's growth needs, (based on the overall strategy of concentrating sustainable development in towns). Indeed the full 400 could be found on deliverable and developable sites – although with the identified constraints unchanged, there appeared to be very little scope for flexibility within the town, assuming the figure would be adhered to. The only alternative would be a lower growth rate, which may give some greater flexibility as to how smaller scale expansion could take place. However this would not give the level of growth that the strategy has set for the County's market towns. In addition, the only possible location that could absorb some additional dwellings within the West Delivery Area would be Allendale and this may not be appropriate.	Probably No Realistic Alternative Unless constraints / the market dictate lower figure, (with outside possibility of some being reassigned to Allendale).	400 (no change)

West Northumberland Delivery Area	Preferred Options 2		Full Draft Plan		Pre-submission Draft		
	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Req. put forward	Alternatives that could have been tested	Major Modifications and Further Major Mods. to PSD Req.
TOTAL	1,480		1,400		1,350		
Service Centres:	41%		41%		43%		
Allendale Strategy achievable with no significant alternative approach Allendale and Haydon Bridge – a single ‘small area’. The current policy approach would result in a population decrease. Conversely, recent levels of development rolled forward could compromise the character of both stages. The selected scenario at PO2 stage was between these, aligning with the SNPP and requiring 300 across Haydon Bridge, Allendale and surroundings, leading to population growth across the small area of 5% - appropriate for service centres under the overall strategy. The figure is, however not split evenly because of Allendale’s greater constraints – hence 100 in Allendale.	100 Completions, permissions and SHLAA, set against constraints allowed for the 100 dwellings on identifiable sites in the settlement (and its environs) over the plan period with the character of the village limiting the scale of development. While this would lead to a below 5% population growth, there was considered to be no realistic alternative in terms of both the acceptable scenarios and, given the chosen scenario, how this could be accommodated on the ground. While Haydon Bridge may be able to offer more than 200 plots (up to 290), this too would not represent an acceptable alternative as it would load too much onto Haydon Bridge and too little onto Allendale, given their comparable service centre roles and the need to accommodate a degree of growth in both. NB there may be scope for upward flexibility for Allendale, to compensate for the village’s constraints, through a more relaxed regime on conversions in the surrounding countryside, instigated by the subsequent making of the Allendale Neighbourhood Plan.	Probably No Realistic Alternative , although possible scope for small additional number, if displaced from Haltwhistle.	100 Updated information on completions, permissions etc. plus progress on the Allendale Neighbourhood Plan confirmed the area’s ability to accommodate the proposed 100 with scope for additions through the identification of additional SHLAA opportunities and more relaxed policy regime on conversions etc. However it was thought important to adhere to the 100, rather than raising this figure, due to the limitations of the AONB – most SHLAA sites on the edge of the village (or outside it) having to be discounted because of this – and the upper limit of 9 being placed on any individual development in the Allendale Neighbourhood Plan.	Probably No Realistic Alternative , although possible scope for small additional number, if displaced from Haltwhistle.	100 The revised SNPP indicated around a 6% rise in population over the 20 year period, (rather than 5%) but this still tied in with the overall strategy for service centres to retain their role and still called for the order of growth previously identified. The SLR continued to recognise the most important constraint to development as the AONB designation, adding to this some issues of WWTW capacity. Even so, the revised SHLAA assessments still offered sufficient capacity to accommodate the 100 dwellings proposed, with the added possibility that the (now ‘MADE’) Allendale Neighbourhood Plan could allow scope for building conversions etc. to add to the total..	Probably No Realistic Alternative , although possible scope for small additional number, if displaced from Haltwhistle.	100 (no change)

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TOTAL	1,480		1,400		1,350		
Service Centres:	41%		41%		43%		
Bellingham Strategy achievable with no alternative approach available Maintaining the current policy approach would lower the population. If development at the level of recent years continued, growth would be at a level which may begin to threaten the service centre role. The preferred scenario sought growth slightly lower than the national population projections to maintain and strengthen this role Bellingham. This would require an additional 300 dwellings over the plan period. Even though this was the same as Allendale and Haydon Bridge put together, it was considered important especially given the need to retain the village's central role within a wide rural hinterland.	300 No Realistic Alternative It was known that constraints included some continued sewer flooding risk in the east of the village even with the Bellingham Wastewater Treatment Works upgrade. Other constraints were topographical (the river) or in terms of nearby designations – the National Park. In this context, completions, commitments and other deliverable SHLAA sites could account for the 300 but with very little additional scope. Therefore, there was considered to be NO REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE in terms of both the acceptable scenario and, given the chosen scenario, how this can be accommodated on the ground.	280 No Realistic Alternative Updated information from the SHLAA, and on completions etc. led to a lower figure for deliverable sites. However, considering updated population and other forecasts, and taking account of infrastructure issues and views expressed, it was still found that the order of development required to meet the strategy and retain the settlement's role should be close to the previous version – in this case 280 instead of 300. As the village's physical and infrastructure constraints were essentially unchanged, there continued to be NO REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE, either in terms of the acceptable scenario or, given the chosen scenario, how this could be accommodated on the ground.	280 No Realistic Alternative The revised SNPP indicated a much lower projected rise in population over the 20 year period than previously, with the total now projected to barely rise and alarming negative changes projected in the working age population. This gave even stronger emphasis to the need for a dwelling-led approach to retain the role of Bellingham as a service centre and avoid increased isolation and decline. The revised SHLAA indicated a continued capacity for the 280 sought at the previous stage of the Core Strategy and the figure of 280 was retained in the pre-submission document. The SLR continued to recognise the significant constraints previously identified, meaning NO REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE, either in terms of the acceptable scenario or, given the chosen scenario, how this could be accommodated on the ground.	280 (no change)			

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TOTAL	1,480		1,400		1,350		
Service Centres:	41%		41%		43%		
Haydon Bridge Strategy achievable with no alternative approach available Along with Allendale – a single ‘small area’. Maintaining the current policy approach would result in population decline. Conversely development at recent rates could begin to compromise local character. The selected scenario is in between these extremes, aligning with sub-national population projections and requiring 300 dwellings to be built across Haydon Bridge, Allendale and their surroundings, leading to population growth across the small area of 5% - appropriate for service centres. The figure is, however not split evenly because of Allendale’s far the greater level of constraints – hence 200 for Haydon Bridge.	200	No Realistic Alternative	200	No Realistic Alternative	200	No Realistic Alternative	200 (no change)
	Constraints in Allendale meant Haydon Bridge taking 200 of the 300 for the small area. In fact 290 was identified as being deliverable in Haydon Bridge but an imbalance would be created if Haydon Bridge were to contribute this very high proportion of the 300 dwellings required across the wider area that includes Allendale and Allendale’s role would be unacceptably be undermined, while Haydon Bridge would perhaps be growing more than justified by its service centre role. Therefore, taking into account limitations around Allendale and the need to accept that not all sites in Haydon Bridge would necessarily be delivered, it was considered that Haydon Bridge could reasonably deliver 200 of the 300 required in this housing area. While this will lead to more than 5% population growth, there is NO ALTERNATIVE in terms of the acceptable scenarios. In terms of where this could be accommodated within Haydon Bridge, there may be some flexibility but the issues of flood risk, access and local character are likely to be factors that may eliminate some sites from the equation. Therefore overall, there was considered to be no realistic alternative within the constraints of the overall strategy agreed for service centres.		Updated information on completions, permissions etc. confirmed the area’s ability to accommodate the proposed 200. Further consideration of SHLAA sites had somewhat limited the unconstrained sites available – e.g. land to the south east of the settlement was found to be more highly constrained than other areas due to its prominent position on entry to the settlement and highway access issues from nearby roads; meanwhile, employment designations constrained some other sites. The generally least constrained area at the western end, between the railway and the river, still had some limitations due to flood risk. Nevertheless, it was still possible to adhere to the 200 – although with no real scope for any variation on this level upwards or as to where within the village the dwellings might be located.		The revised SNPP indicated around a 6% rise in population over the 20 year period, (rather than 5%) but this still tied in with the overall strategy for service centres to retain their role and still called for the order of growth previously identified. The SLR constraints to development did not alter, and the revised SHLAA assessments still offered sufficient capacity to accommodate the 200 dwellings proposed, albeit on a series of small sites, with no real scope for alternative sets of sites to be put forward within the village.		

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TOTAL	1,480		1,400		1,350		
Rest of West Delivery Area	32%		30%		27%		
Comprised two small areas at PO2 stage. For 'West Tynedale', a remote, dispersed area continuing past delivery or SNPP would have only a small positive growth effect with more sustainable growth achieved applying existing policy. In the case of the Humshaugh area – also rural but with some larger villages – most scenarios, including past delivery, the SNPP projection and past delivery would lead to population decline.. So a dispersed scenario was chosen which would see a more relaxed approach to building on the edge of these larger villages. Altogether this would require 480 dwellings over the plan period within the "Rest of" area.	480	No Realistic Alternative Many SHLAA sites had been suggested but many had been discounted or were uncertain. Nonetheless it was considered possible for this number to be delivered on developable SHLAA sites, spread across a large number of small settlements without adverse effect, although, once again, there was little scope for going above this level or to vary the way these would be distributed across the areas without bringing unacceptable SHLAA sites into play – i.e. NO REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE.	420	No Realistic Alternative While the revised SLR did not specifically re-examine the "Rest of" areas, the reassignment of figures within the West Delivery Area's main towns and service centres meant that it was possible to reduce the "Rest of" figure by 60 to 420, recognising that this would still represent a large increase in delivery over past rates, in an area with many remote villages and hamlets where demand will be lower than within more obvious commuter zones closer to Tyneside. Updated SHLAA information confirmed the area's ability to accommodate the proposed numbers but still with very little scope for variation upwards or in the way the numbers could be distributed geographically.	370	No Realistic Alternative It continued to be considered important to achieve a higher delivery rate than previously in order to prevent decline. Amendments to the overall West Delivery Area figure and the figures for the main towns and service centres meant a lower figure again – at 370 – a figure that would still result in a sustainable population growth if achieved. Revised SHLAA information showed that most of this could be achieved on acceptable SHLAA sites in and around the numerous villages and statistics suggested that individual small windfalls could be relied upon for the remaining minority of dwellings. Yet again, there was little or no scope to allow for different patterns of development, so long as the 370 figure was adhered to – i.e. STILL NO REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE	370 (no change)

