

## **NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

### **Introduction**

As part of the development of a neighbourhood plan for the North Northumberland Coast, it has been decided to incorporate settlement boundaries for the three main settlements in the Plan area (Seahouses (with North Sunderland), Beadnell and Bamburgh).

This paper presents the detail and reasoning behind the decision to define a settlement boundary for Bamburgh as shown on Map 1. This boundary will be incorporated into a Proposals map for the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan, and formal consultation on the boundary will take place through the pre-submission draft (Regulation 14) consultation on the Plan.

The boundary has been defined within the context of a requirement for the Plan to deliver sustainable development in the Plan area. As such, it is based on the need to ensure there is sufficient housing land available within the settlement boundaries, to accommodate small scale housing growth, over the plan period up to 2031.

The evidence base for the Northumberland County Council Core Strategy contains detail about housing delivery targets for sub-areas in the County. Seahouses 'sub-area' is contiguous with the neighbourhood plan area, and so the remaining housing requirement up to 2031 for that area currently stands at 110 houses (out of an overall requirement of 230, 120 of which have been completed).

There is enough land within Seahouses alone to accommodate this figure, as well as land within the settlement boundary of Beadnell. The settlement boundary for Bamburgh therefore seeks to positively promote the availability of land for some new housing delivery, whilst protecting the most sensitive areas of Bamburgh from new development.

### **Bamburgh Settlement Boundary**

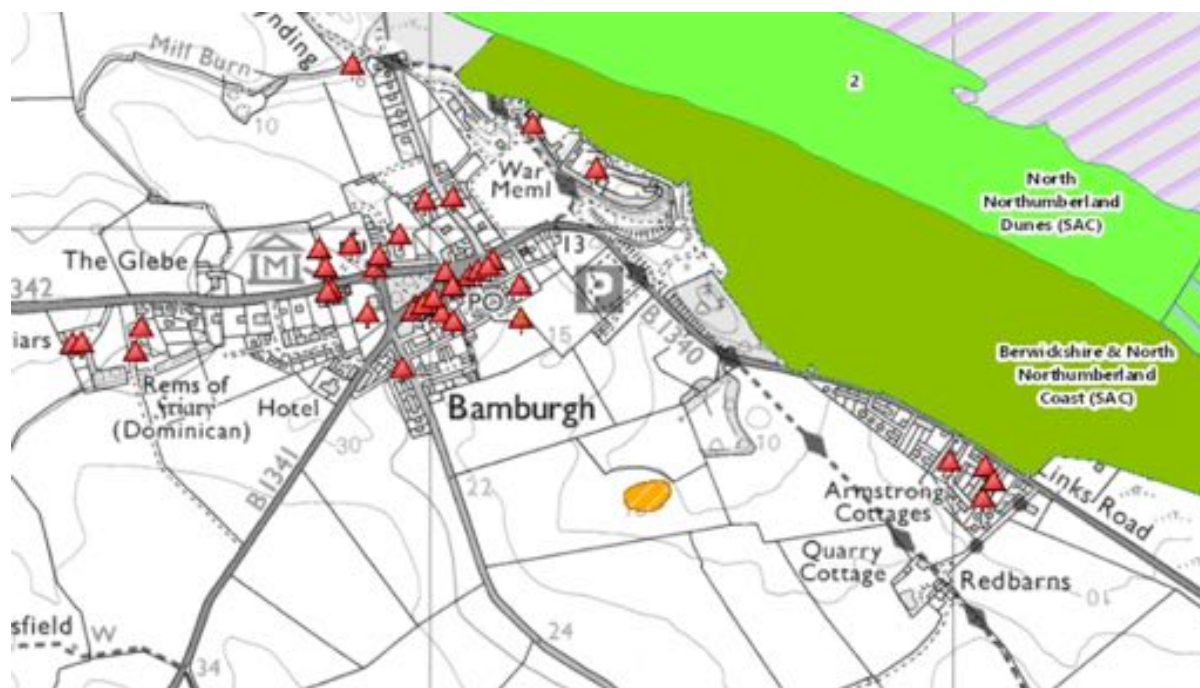
*'Bamburgh lies in a unique landscape and heritage setting, and as such presents especially sensitive context for accommodating additional housing needs. Insensitive siting and design of new housing would clearly present significant risk in relation to the established character of the settlement and of the AONB's special character, qualities and landscape. The village is an important tourist destination and maintenance of its special qualities is critical to its sustainable development.'* [Landscape Sensitivity Capacity Study - Northumberland Coast AONB 2013]

The proposed settlement boundary has been heavily informed by the Northumberland Coast AONB Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study (August 2013). The relevant section of this study is attached as Appendix A.

This study showed areas on the edge of Bamburgh which are considered to be most sensitive to development in landscape terms. In simple terms, these areas have been excluded from the settlement boundary. Areas that have been identified as potentially suitable for small scale housing have been included in the settlement boundary to allow for small scale development.

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Careful consideration has also been given to historic environment designations (scheduled monuments, listed buildings and their settings) as well as natural environment designations (see extract from Magic map below).



**North West Bamburgh:** The settlement boundary has been drawn tight along the B1342, excluding The Glebe on the other side of the B1342. The western edge of the settlement is formed along the access and bridleway to the east of Friary Farm, which is separated from the main settlement by two open fields (see pictures below).



Friary Farm is therefore excluded, as is The Glebe, which appears separate from Bamburgh, and is the only building on the other side of the B1342 (Radcliffe Road). This road has a solid stone wall, giving the sense of a boundary to Bamburgh (see picture below). It is also a sensitive approach to the settlement, with the church in the foreground, and the castle in the

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background. The photo (below right) shows The Glebe as seen from the entrance to Radcliffe Park.



**North East Bamburgh:** The boundary then follows logical topographical features, in the forms of walls, and boundaries to properties, to the rear of St Aidan's Church, and Bamburgh Hall Farm, and to the rear of the properties along the Wynding.

The area to the rear of the Wynding, and to the rear of Bamburgh Hall Farm is identified as being especially sensitive in landscape terms in the AONB Landscape Sensitivity Study (see map in Appendix A). The area seawards of the Wynding is sensitive, both in nature conservation and landscape terms. There is a significant opportunity for infill development within the proposed boundary to the west of the Wynding, as well as for conversions of existing buildings, for business or residential use.

Bamburgh Castle (Grade I listed) and its immediate setting is excluded from the settlement boundary, as are the green spaces associated with it. The Castle Green is proposed as a Local Green Space in the emerging neighbourhood plan. The protection of the setting of the castle is considered to be highly important, both close to its boundary, and in terms of wider views from within, and approaching, Bamburgh.

**South East Bamburgh:** The settlement boundary follows the B1340 until the end of the built development to the east, and follows natural boundaries to the rear of properties, allowing for an infill site in a well screened area adjacent to Armstrong House. The existing car park is excluded from the settlement boundary.

The settlement boundary includes a number of redundant buildings and excludes the allocated 'Local Green Space' part of the 'Duckett' Field which contains the Grade II\* listed Dovecot, which is also a Scheduled Monument. This building is considered to be highly important to the setting of Bamburgh, particularly from its position in the foreground of the

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Castle. Further to the south is a further scheduled area, and the site and its surroundings is likely to be archaeologically sensitive. Any development in this area will be small-scale, and will have to pay careful consideration to the scheduled areas, as well as the setting of the scheduled monument.

Land considered to be 'less sensitive' has been included in the settlement boundary (to the right of Ingram Road and south of Lindisfarne Avenue), and it is considered that this area could offer an opportunity to improve this gateway into Bamburgh from the south through careful landscaping of any new development. The proposed boundary has been drawn to be in line with existing development on the other side of Ingram Road.



To the left of Ingram Road, the boundary is drawn tight to existing development. This area is considered to be highly sensitive in landscape terms, and is considered unsuitable for any development. The boundary crosses Lucker Road, and is drawn tight to the rear of Mizen Court. It follows natural boundaries, excluding land to the rear of Radcliffe Park. Although this land is less visually sensitive due to topography and its location away from views to and from the castle, it has significant access constraints, and so has been excluded from the settlement boundary.

The Mill Burn forms the boundary to the south and the boundary is then drawn tight to properties at the western end of Bamburgh, to the east of Friary Farm.

### **Armstrong Cottages**

Armstrong Cottages is part of Bamburgh village, although distinct from the main settlement. There are no facilities or services at Armstrong Cottages, and residents here are reliant on Bamburgh (and beyond) for their day to day services. A separate boundary is drawn tight around the built form of Armstrong Cottages. The B1340 (Links Road) to the north forms a clear boundary. Beyond this road are a multitude of national and European nature conservation designations. The boundary is drawn tightly around the existing dwellings and their curtilages (over 60 dwellings are situated at Armstrong Cottages).

### **Conclusion:**

The boundary proposed takes account of designations in the area, the Landscape Sensitivity Study (Appendix A), as well as historic environment designations. Consultations have taken place with local landowners for all settlement boundaries, and the final consultation at pre-

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submission draft stage of the neighbourhood plan, will give landowners, residents and businesses, the opportunity to comment on the extent of the proposed settlement boundary.

It should be noted that a settlement boundary does not exclude all development from taking place outside the boundary. It does however, indicate a presumption in favour of appropriate development, within the settlement boundary.



## APPENDIX A: Extract from Northumberland AONB Landscape and Settlement Development Capacity - Bamburgh

### Bamburgh

Bamburgh is located within landscape character area 4b Farne Islands Coast, within the wider Rocky Coastline LCT 4.

#### Key Landscape Characteristics

The key landscape characteristics for the Farne Islands Coast landscape character area as recorded in the NLCA Part A, Annex A, are as follows:

Criteria	Key Characteristics	Summary
Landform	Complex, strong topographical variety	Sandy bays, islands and rocky headlands
Land cover	Varied, but lacking complexity	Beaches, dunes and farmland
Scale	Medium	Focus on coastal edge and seaward views
Enclosure	Some enclosure	Some open areas and some enclosure within bays
Skylines	Varied	Headlands and rocky outcrops, although gentle rise inland
Views and landmarks	Landscape contains important landmarks, or is important in views	Bamburgh Castle and Farne Islands provide important features
Intervisibility	Intervisibility with some neighbouring landscapes	Some intervisibility, influenced by coastal aspect and rocky headlands
Receptors	Frequent properties and views from main transport routes.	Settlements and transport routes provide high level of receptors
Movement	Occasional to frequent movement	Frequent use by visitors of coastal transport routes
Remoteness	Some human activity reducing sense of remoteness	Towns and coast important for visitors
Settlement	Occasional towns or frequent villages	Several villages
Industry	No industrial influence	No industrial influence
Vertical features	Few vertical features	Bamburgh castle on distinctive rise
Linear features	Few linear features	Local roads and coastal edge
Historic features	Historic features are a prominent aspect of the landscape	Bamburgh castle forms a distinctive landmark
Recreation	Important for recreation for locals and visitors, national designation or attraction	Bamburgh castle, beach and towns are important for recreation
Condition	Well managed with some elements in poor repair	Coastal landscape under pressure from tourism development
Distinctiveness	Distinctive to Northumberland	Bamburgh Castle, coast and islands distinctive
Rarity	A unique landscape within the area	Combination of castle, coast and islands is unique

#### Key Landscape Qualities

The key qualities of LCT 4: Rocky Coastline as listed in the NLCA Part B are as follows:

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- Dynamic seascape environment
- Exposed coastal location, with dramatic views along the coast and out to sea
- Prominent natural and cultural coastal features including castles and the Farne

### Islands

- Traditional cores of former fishing villages, often with distinctive pantiled roofs
- Extensively accessible landscape with much tourist-oriented development.

### Constraints to Development

(i) Would new housing development affect the key qualities of the landscape as described in the NLCA?

Bamburgh lies in a unique landscape and heritage setting, and as such presents especially sensitive context for accommodating additional housing needs. Insensitive siting and design of new housing would clearly present significant risk in relation to the established character of the settlement and of the AONB's special character, qualities and landscape. The village is an important tourist destination and maintenance of its special qualities is critical to its sustainable development.

The scale of housing to come forward through the emerging development plan may however be modest. At a strategic level the key qualities of the Rocky Coastline LCT are unlikely to be seriously compromised as a consequence. Nevertheless, new housing almost anywhere in Bamburgh present a risk at the local level upon its special character.

There may be potential for housing development on very limited parts of the village periphery where significant harm to established character and the special landscape features and qualities of the AONB could be avoided. The sensitivity of the village and the opportunity for views from elevated positions on and around the castle, and important views towards it on approaches to the village, means that such capacity is quite severely restricted in landscape terms, even for the anticipated modest scale of development necessary to meet local need (as prescribed by the spatial policy context). Careful identification of sites and robust application of the suite of planning policy for siting, landscape and design is essential if Bamburgh's very special landscape and built environment qualities are to be conserved. Proposals for housing development should be subject to the detailed landscape and visual impact assessment with emphasis on how new housing may impact upon the characteristic relationship of the village to its wider setting and particularly in respect to the character of its historic core and on its relationship with the castle and important open spaces therein.

Landscape, built environment and heritage constraints can be seen to be significant to most parts of the settlement's periphery. In particular, views from the south-eastern, south-western and western approaches to the village, are critical to the village's special character and qualities, particularly with respect to the visual dominance of the Castle and how vistas open and close to it along these approaches. Whilst the castle and its prominence are central to the special character of the village, the well-integrated transition between surrounding farmland and coastal environs and the sometimes loosely defined built extent of Bamburgh its open spaces are also important to local distinctiveness.

In this context development which: threatens the balance of open space and built area; is incongruous on the settlement fringe; or impedes upon important views into and out of the settlement would be likely to have a harmful impact upon local special qualities. Sites around

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Bamburgh capable of accommodating housing development, even to a modest scale are consequently limited.

The western fringe of the village has extended over recent years between the B1341 and B1342, although recent housing in this area at Radcliffe Park now presents a relatively sensitive interface between open countryside and the village. To the south-east of the B1341, vistas of the castle are dramatic and relatively free from interruption because of a break and fall in relief to the east. Subsequently development in this area would present significant risk to the special character of the village. Approaches from the south-east are in close proximity to the castle, and open fields to the west are important to its setting, although this is harmed visually by the car park. Approaches to the village from the north-west afford intermittent views to the castle, but the church of St Aidan and important open space, particularly on the coastal side, are also fundamental to the character of the village itself, as well as being increasingly important to the setting of the castle as distance is reduced. The village environs immediately north of the castle are characterised by the close proximity to the dunes and beach, and further development in this area may serve to dilute historic settlement form by consolidating sporadic inter-war ribbon development along the Wynding.

Opportunities to accommodate modest housing development are therefore limited in landscape terms to small, scattered infill sites around Bamburgh. Some capacity on its south-western fringe may present some limited opportunity for small scale new housing, but significant attention should be afforded to village form and the prominence of the sites from the castle, and views to it. For example, a tightly enclosed continuation of development to the south of Lindisfarne Avenue may limit landscape impact and reflect village form, but would demand high design standards. Impacts upon the historic dovecote and its setting would also be important considerations in this location. Landscape capacity for limited growth may also exist to the west as a modest continuation of the Radcliffe Park development. However, particular attention would need to be afforded to design and materials and also to boundary details.

(ii) Would new housing affect other features of importance in landscape terms?

Delivery of new housing on the periphery of the village or in open space within it should have full regard to the historic settlement form and street pattern, although this will be challenging. The western parts of the village lie gently rising land and consequently roofscapes and building heights are important in the settlement's character and distinctiveness, particularly from the castle. New development should not serve to break the gentle ridgeline south of the B1341 which affords views to the castle from the south-west, nor serve to interrupt vistas from within the village to the castle and/or towards the dunes and sea which are important characteristics. Open spaces are important to local character across much of the village.

(iii) Would new housing development affect zones of visual sensitivity around Iconic landscape features or key views from important viewpoints?

The whole of the village and its setting falls within the zone of visual sensitivity to the iconic castle. Any development would have the potential for significant visual impact on it and all development proposals should be scrutinized in relation to the potential for this. The eastern fringe of the village, primarily the castle and shoreline/dunes fall within the zone of visual sensitivity to Lindisfarne Castle and Priory. However, at this distance, and having regard to the likely scale of development and the priority afforded to avoiding harm to the castle's immediate setting, the likelihood of harm to that zone are considered negligible.

Bamburgh lies within the view cones of several identified important viewpoints:



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- • Halidon Hill;
- • Cocklawburn Beach;
- • Galliheugh Bank;
- • Farne Islands;
- • Greensheen Hill;
- • Ros Castle; and
- • CATERAN Hill.

Modest housing development is highly unlikely to be of a scale or prominence across the village to present harmful visual impacts from these viewpoints, the majority of which are at significant distance from the village and/ or are screened by intervening landform or features. Some potential for visual prominence may exist in relation to the Farne Islands, but only for development north of the castle along the Wynding. Vistas from this point to the mainland are however limited and at distance.

(iv) Would new housing development affect other key views or views from sensitive routes?

Other key viewpoints identified by this study which may afford vistas to the settlement include: •  
Glororum

Views into or across the village are possible from the important viewpoint at Galliheugh Bank to the west and Glorum crossroads to the south-west. Chesterhill offers splendid views over the village and to the castle and islands beyond, and the sensitivities of such vistas are considered in preceding paragraphs. Glorum crossroads offers a spectacular first view of the Castle on approaches to the village, but the village itself is of very limited prominence in the vista as a consequence of falling relief. The importance of resisting development which occupies land across or above the break in slope on this edge of the village is pertinent in respect to this viewpoint.

All roads leading into Bamburgh are identified as being sensitive and present important views. The significance of vistas into and across the village from these has been addressed in the preceding paragraphs, and underlines the overall sensitivity of Bamburgh to new development.

### Opportunities for Landscape Enhancement / Mitigation

(i) Are there opportunities for landscape enhancement or other mitigation measures associated with new housing development that could help strengthen landscape character?

This study suggests that modest housing development may be best directed towards the south-western and southern periphery of the village in relation to conserving its special qualities. The intrinsic landscape character in these areas may be considered to be less significant than the built and historic characteristics of the village and particularly the dramatic castle and coastline with island seascape beyond. Limited opportunity exists to enhance wider landscape character therefore. However, well located and sensitively designed modest housing developments should seek to enhance the relationship of the village within its rural setting by ensuring boundary treatments, landscaping and orientation of buildings and rooflines reflect established character.

Limited enhancement of the existing, relatively recent interface between new housing and the rolling arable landscape of the western edge of Bamburgh may be secured through additional housing in this area north of the B1341.

### Delivery of Recommendations within the NLCA Part B

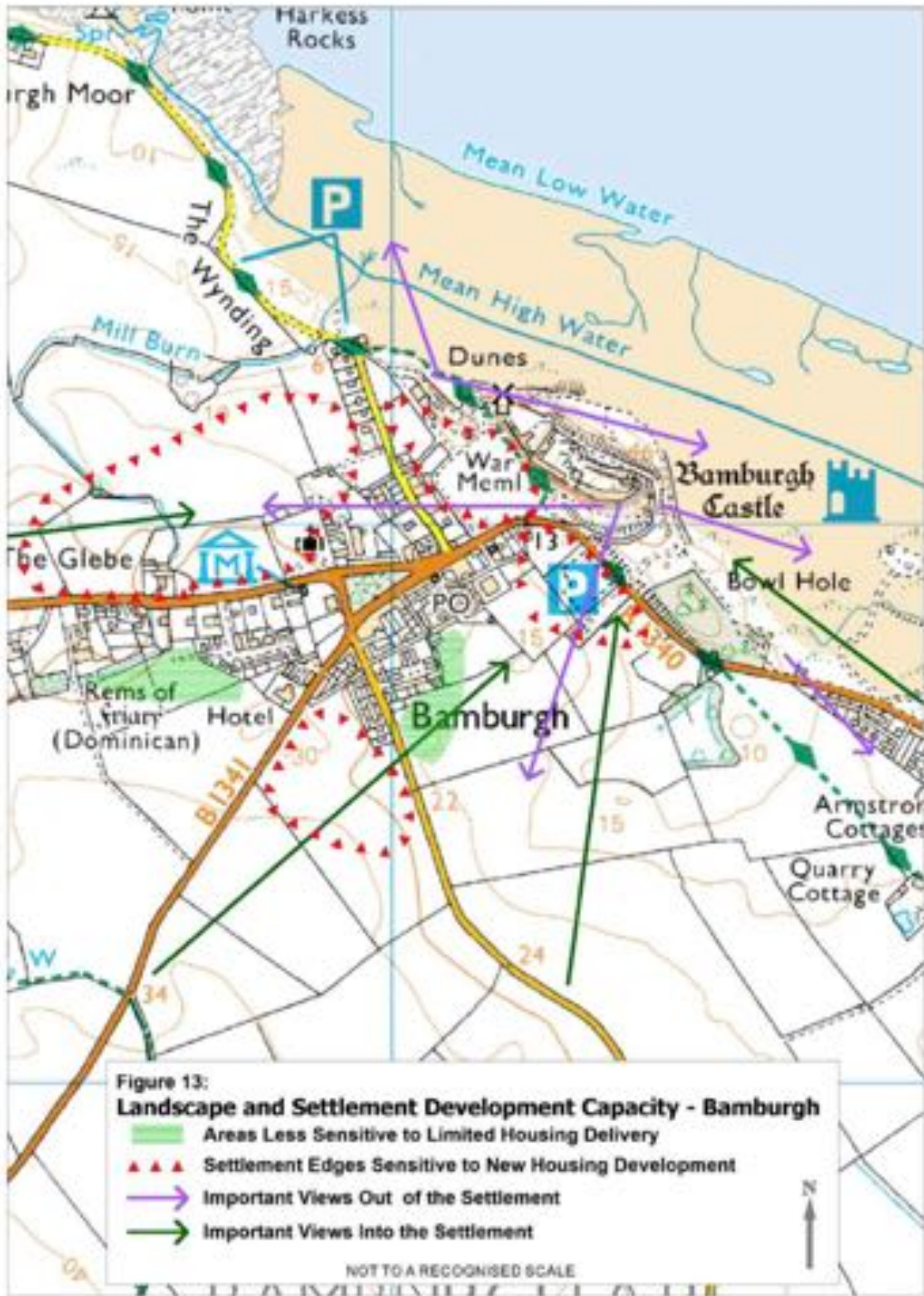
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(i) Would new housing compromise or help deliver the key guiding principle and the principle aims and land management guidelines for this landscape?

The guiding principle for this LCT is to protect the landscape. The vision statement in the NLCA Part B to achieve this is described as follows:

Subject to appropriate application of planning policy, landscape and other considerations as examined above, the scale and nature of potentially appropriate housing development at Bamburgh would be most unlikely to inherently compromise protection of the Rocky Coastline's special qualities, such as the undeveloped coastline, historic village setting and features, key views into and out of the village. In doing so the special 'sense of place' which is dominant around and within Bamburgh should be safeguarded.

Limited opportunity does exist for modest delivery of housing on the edge of the settlement of Bamburgh without compromising aspirations for the LCT. In doing so modest opportunity for enhancement of the relationship of the settlement to its landscape setting is presented, but wider enhancement of landscape character would be limited.



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