



# Strategic Environmental Assessment for the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report to accompany the Submission  
version of the plan

November 2017

## Quality information

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## Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
V1	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	Submission version	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	Nick Chisholm-Batten	Principal Consultant

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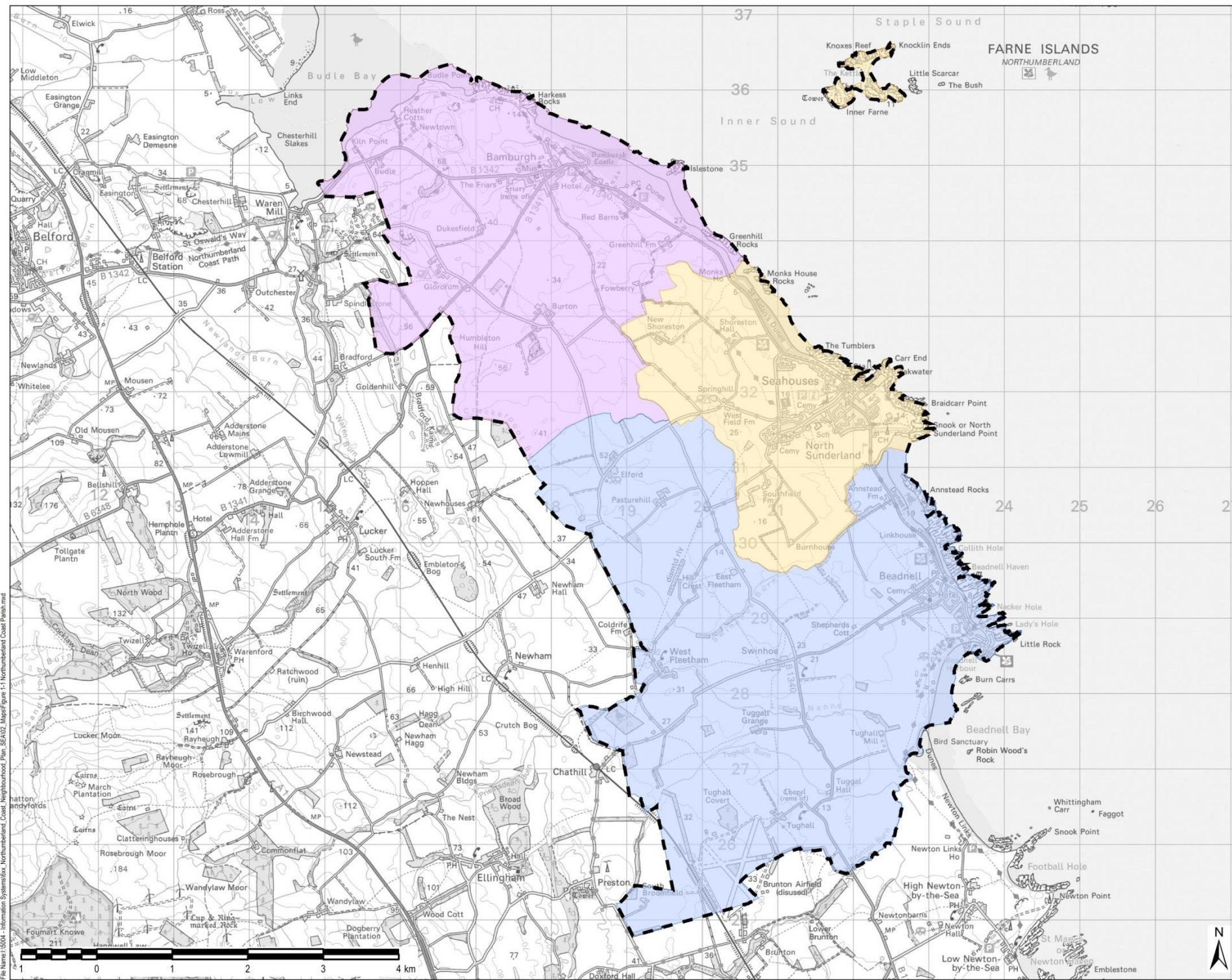
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## Table of Contents

Non-Technical Summary .....	
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background .....	1
1.2 SEA explained .....	2
1.3 Structure of this Environmental Report.....	3
<b>2. Local Plan context and vision for the NNCNP .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Local Plan context for the NNCNP.....	4
2.2 Vision for the NNCNP .....	4
<b>3. The Scope of the SEA .....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 SEA Scoping Report.....	5
3.2 Key sustainability issues.....	8
3.3 SEA Framework.....	10
<b>4. What has plan making / SEA involved to this point?.....</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	13
4.2 Overview of plan making / SEA work undertaken since 2013.....	13
4.3 Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Neighbourhood Plan .....	13
4.3.1 Appraisal of reasonable alternatives linked to landscape designations.....	13
4.3.2 Appraisal of alternatives for the use of housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area .....	16
4.4 Current approach in the Neighbourhood Plan .....	19
4.5 Development of Neighbourhood Plan policies .....	19
<b>5. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage? .....</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1 Introduction.....	21
5.2 Approach to the appraisal.....	21
5.3 Biodiversity and geodiversity .....	21
5.4 Climate change.....	22
5.5 Landscape and historic environment.....	22
5.6 Land, soil and water resources .....	23
5.7 Population and community .....	24
5.8 Health and wellbeing.....	24
5.9 Transportation.....	25
5.10 Conclusions at this current stage.....	25
<b>6. What are the next steps? .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix A Context review and baseline .....</b>	<b>27</b>



THIS DRAWING IS TO BE USED ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ISSUE THAT IT WAS ISSUED FOR AND IS SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT

**LEGEND**

- Coast Neighbourhood Area
- Bamburgh Parish Boundary
- Beadnell Parish Boundary
- North Sunderland Parish Boundary

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Purpose of Issue  
**DRAFT**

Client  
**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

Project Title  
**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Drawing Title  
**NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**

Drawn SJ	Checked BB	Approved NCB	Date 27/02/2017
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Drawing Number  
**FIGURE 1.1**

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## Non-Technical Summary

### What is strategic environmental assessment?

A strategic environmental assessment has been undertaken to inform the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan (NNCNP). This process is required by the SEA Regulations.

Neighbourhood Plan groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the Neighbourhood Plan, and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and the quality of life of residents.

### What is the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan?

The North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan (NNCNP) presents a plan for the three parishes of Bamburgh, Beadnell and North Sunderland in Northumberland for the period to 2031. Prepared to be in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999, it sets out a vision and a range of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan area. These relate to a range of topics, including, but not limited to, landscape and townscape character, the quality of life of residents, tourism and the protection and enhancement of the environment.

It is currently anticipated that the NNCNP will undergo a referendum in early 2018.

### Purpose of this Environmental Report

This Environmental Report, which accompanies the Submission version of the NNCNP, is the third document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (February 2017), which includes information about the Neighbourhood Plan area's environment and community. The second document was the Environmental Report prepared to accompany 'Regulation 14' consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan (July 2017).

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the NNCNP and alternatives; and
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

The Environmental Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the NNCNP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes;
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability issues;
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the NNCNP has been assessed;
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the NNCNP;
- The likely significant environmental effects of the NNCNP;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the NNCNP; and
- The next steps for the NNCNP and accompanying SEA process.

## Assessment of alternative approaches for the NNCNP

During the development of the NNCNP, the Steering Group considered different strategic approaches to guiding development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. A key consideration was the extent to which the key landscape designation present within the Neighbourhood Plan area, the Northumberland Coast AONB, should be a main determinant as to the location of new development.

To support decision-making on this element, the SEA process undertook an appraisal of two different alternative approaches linked to the AONB designation in the Neighbourhood Plan area. These were as follows:

- **Option 1:** Enable a spatial strategy which does not seek to preclude development within the Northumberland Coast AONB; and
- **Option 2:** Direct most development within the Neighbourhood Plan area to those areas outside of the AONB.

These two options were then subjected to assessment.

Following consultation with the local community, a further element in which the Neighbourhood Group was keen to explore further was the issue of permanent and second homes and holiday letting.

To consider this issue in more detail, and provide further sustainability context, the SEA process appraised two options, as follows:

- **Option A:** Introduce a policy through the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to restrain second home ownership and holiday rentals in the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area through introducing restrictions on the use of new housing; and
- **Option B:** Do not introduce restrictions on the use of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

In response to these appraisal findings, the Neighbourhood Plan recognises that the settlements of Seahouses, North Sunderland and Beadnell are the most sustainable in terms of access to services and community facilities. As such whilst these settlements are largely located within the AONB, it is recognised by the Neighbourhood Plan that community vitality would be best served by smaller scale housing which meets local needs within these settlements, and the facilitation of local employment opportunities and social, community, leisure and educational facilities.

However, the Neighbourhood Plan recognises the constraints provided by the AONB designation through seeking to constrain major development in the AONB, or affecting its setting except in exceptional circumstances. In this context, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide a balance between protecting and enhancing landscape character and supporting community vitality.

A central facet of this approach to supporting community vitality is the NNCNP's aim to restrict the use of new housing provision in the Neighbourhood Plan area as second or holiday homes. In this context the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to only support proposals for all new housing (excluding replacement dwellings) where first and future occupation is restricted to ensure that each new dwelling is occupied only as a Principal Residence.

## Assessment of the Submission version of the NNCNP

Utilising the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during the earlier scoping stage of the SEA, the SEA process assessed the policies put forward through the Submission version of the NNCNP. The Environmental Report has presented the findings of the appraisal under the following sustainability themes:

- Biodiversity and geodiversity;
- Climate change;
- Historic environment and landscape;
- Land, soil and water resources;
- Population and community;
- Health and wellbeing; and
- Transportation.

The assessment has concluded that the current version of the NNCNP is likely to lead to **significant positive effects** in relation to the 'population and community' and 'health and wellbeing' SEA themes. These benefits largely relate to the carefully targeted approach to housing provision proposed by the current version of the NNCNP, the focus on enhancing community provision in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the NNCNP's impetus on protecting and enhancing open space and green infrastructure networks. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan has a strong focus on protecting and enhancing landscape character and the setting of the historic environment, leading to **significant positive effects** in relation to the 'historic environment and landscape' theme. In relation to the 'biodiversity' sustainability theme, the scope and scale of the proposed policy approaches relating to the natural environment will help ensure that wide ranging benefits in relation to this theme are secured through the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Submission version of the NNCNP will initiate a number of beneficial approaches regarding the 'transportation', 'land, soil and water resources' 'climate change' sustainability themes. However these are not considered to be significant in the context of the SEA process given the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan and the scale of proposals.

## Next steps

The NNCNP and this Environmental Report has been submitted to Northumberland County Council for its consideration. Northumberland County Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to go forward to Independent Examination in terms of the NNCNP meeting legal requirements and its compatibility with the Local Plan.

If the subsequent Independent Examination is favourable, the NNCNP will be subject to a referendum, organised by Northumberland County Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to the Northumberland County Council with a request it is adopted. Once adopted, the NNCNP will become part of the Development Plan for the parishes of Bamburgh, Beadnell and North Sunderland.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan (NNCNP).

The NNCNP is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2012. The Neighbourhood Plan area, which includes the parishes of Bamburgh, Beadnell and North Sunderland (Figure 1.1), is being prepared in the context of the Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999.

This Environmental Report accompanies the version of the NNCNP submitted to Northumberland County Council in November 2017.

Key information relating to the NNCNP is presented in **Table 1.1**.

**Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan**

Name of Qualifying Body	North Sunderland Parish Council
Title of Plan	North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan (NNCNP)
Subject	Neighbourhood planning
Purpose	<p>The NNCNP is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan is being prepared taking into account of the existing Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999.</p> <p>The emerging NNCNP will be used to guide and shape development within Bamburgh, Beadnell and North Sunderland parishes.</p>
Timescale	To 2031
Area covered by the plan	<p>The NNCNP area covers the three parishes of Bamburgh, Beadnell and North Sunderland in Northumberland.</p> <p>(Refer to Figure 1.1)</p>
Summary of content	The NNCNP will set out a vision, strategy and range of community-led planning policies for the Neighbourhood Plan area.
Plan contact point	<p>John Woodman, North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group</p> <p>Email address: <a href="mailto:johncwoodman@hotmail.com">johncwoodman@hotmail.com</a></p>

## 1.2 SEA explained

The NNCNP has been screened in as requiring an SEA.

SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the NNCNP seeks to maximise the emerging Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to sustainable development.

The SEA has been prepared in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) which transpose into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive<sup>1</sup>.

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'. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.

In line with the SEA Regulations this Environmental Report must essentially answer four questions:

- What is the scope of the SEA?
- What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?
  - 'Reasonable alternatives' must have been appraised for the plan.
- What are the appraisal findings at this stage?
  - i.e. in relation to the Submission version of the plan.
- What happens next?

These questions are derived from Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, which present 'the information to be provided within the report'. **Table 1.2** presents the linkages between the regulatory requirements and the four SEA questions.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2001/42/EC

## 1.3 Structure of this Environmental Report

This document is the Environmental Report for the NNCNP and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed above with a view to providing the information required by the SEA Regulations.

Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

**Table 1.2: Questions that must be answered by the Environmental Report in order to meet regulatory<sup>2</sup> requirements**

Environmental Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... <sup>3</sup>
What is the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes</li> </ul>
What is the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The relevant environmental protection <b>objectives</b>, established at international or national level</li> <li>Any existing environmental <b>problems</b> which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance</li> </ul>
What's the scope of the SEA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan</li> <li>The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected</li> <li>Any existing environmental <b>problems</b> which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key <b>problems/issues</b> and <b>objectives</b> that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment</li> </ul>
What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline reasons for selecting the <b>alternatives</b> dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach)</li> <li>The likely significant effects associated with <b>alternatives</b></li> <li>Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of <b>alternatives</b> appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.</li> </ul>
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The likely significant effects associated with <b>the Submission version of the plan</b></li> <li>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing <b>the Submission version of the plan</b></li> </ul>
What happens next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The next steps for plan making/SEA process.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

<sup>3</sup> NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

## 2. Local Plan context and vision for the NNCNP

### 2.1 Local Plan context for the NNCNP

Northumberland County Council was established as a unitary authority on 1 April 2009 following Local Government reorganisation. It replaced the former County Council and six District/Borough Councils of Alnwick, Berwick, Blyth Valley, Castle Morpeth, Tynedale and Wansbeck.

The former Northumberland local planning authorities produced their own Development Plans to guide development in their areas. In this context the NNCNP area is located in the area covered by the Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999. The various Development Plans were then brought together to form the 'Northumberland Consolidated Planning Policy Framework'.

Up until July 2017, Northumberland County Council was preparing a new Local Plan to replace the Northumberland Consolidated Planning Framework. Following submission to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination, Northumberland County Council resolved to withdraw the Northumberland Local Plan: Core Strategy Pre-Submission Draft Plan and proposed modifications documents from submission on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017. This was with a view to undertaking a full review of the housing and employment numbers and strategic land use allocations on which the emerging Core Strategy had been based.

In light of this, prior to July 2017, the NNCNP was prepared in the context both the existing Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999 and the emerging provisions of the Northumberland Core Strategy. Following withdrawal of the Northumberland Core Strategy, it was viewed that the Neighbourhood Plan remained in conformity with the relevant elements of the Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999. As such the NNCNP has been submitted to Northumberland County Council with a view to it being taken forward for Independent Examination.

### 2.2 Vision for the NNCNP

The vision for the NNCNP was developed following the review of extensive consultation exercises carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The vision for the NNCNP is presented below.



Recognising that our area was once the beating heart of the Kingdom of Northumbria, we want to reinvigorate this thriving community with an emphasis on 'People, Place and Prosperity' to create three vibrant, sustainable and attractive villages where people will want to live, work and play for centuries to come".

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Vision for the North Northumberland Coast  
Neighbourhood Plan



To support the Neighbourhood Plan's vision, the NNCNP sets out a number of Neighbourhood Plan policies. The latest iteration of these policies has been appraised in **Chapter 5** of this Environmental Report.

## 3. The Scope of the SEA

### 3.1 SEA Scoping Report

The SEA 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 Historic England.<sup>4</sup> These authorities were consulted on the scope of the NNCNP SEA in February 2017.

The purpose of scoping was to outline the 'scope' of the SEA through setting out:

- A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional and local plans and strategies relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Baseline data against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed;
- The key sustainability issues for the Neighbourhood Plan; and
- An 'SEA Framework' of objectives against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed.

Baseline information (including the context review and baseline data) is presented in **Appendix A**.

Comments received on the Scoping Report, and how they have been considered and addressed, are presented in **Table 3.1**.

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<sup>4</sup> 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*.'

**Table 3.1: Consultation responses received on the SEA Scoping Report**

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p><b>Natural England</b> <b>Michael Miller, Lead Sustainable Development Advisor, Northumbria Area Team</b></p>	
<p>Natural England welcomes the approach taken in the creation of the scoping report and agrees with the strategic emphasis of the document in safeguarding the conservation and preservation of designated landscapes and species in the area.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Natural England welcomes the level of detail within the Scoping Report with regard to housing delivery within the North Northumberland Delivery Area for the Core Strategy.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The Northumberland Core Strategy has however now been withdrawn. As such relevant text has been removed.</p>
<p>Natural England welcomes the inclusion of sites for designation as discussed in previous correspondence.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>It is noted Air Quality issues have been screened out within the Scoping Report, however Natural England wish to stress that air quality can be an issue for proposals on smaller scales, such as agriculture. As such Natural England request that provision for the control of air quality needs to be retained within the document, such flexibility allows for air quality issues to be addressed should the need arise during the lifetime of the plan.</p>	<p>Given the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the existing baseline for air quality (which highlights that no significant issues exist) it is considered that any effects on air quality are unlikely to be significant. As such this theme continues to be scoped out as a standalone topic for consideration through the SEA process. However air quality issues will be considered indirectly through the Transportation SEA theme.</p>
<p>Natural England is not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the proposals and policies within the plan. However the responsible authority should provide information supporting this scoping opinion, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.</p>	<p>Protected species have been considered through the assessment process.</p>
<p><b>Historic England</b> <b>Barbara Hooper, Principle, Historic Places Team</b></p>	
<p>The current baseline summary for landscape does not include reference to the Historic Landscape Character Assessment which exists for Northumberland.</p>	<p>The Landscape Character Assessment for Northumberland has been discussed in the baseline information in Appendix A.</p>
<p>The planning system is only one of a range of tools used to protect the historic environment, for example, positive management of assets is critical to their long term conservation etc., and the wording of this section should be amended (page 22 of the Scoping Report).</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p>Historic England do not have the capacity to confirm the list of heritage assets set out in the report, but welcome the inclusion of the Heritage at Risk assets. As well as welcoming the inclusion of local sites within the baseline and the inclusion of non-designated features comprise a large part of the contact people have with the historic environment. However the wording of this section must avoid the inference that all undesignated assets are of less than national importance as the National Heritage List for England is not exhaustive.</p>	<p>Comment noted and updates made.</p>
<p>There is no mention of the emerging North East Marine Plan, or the requirements of the UK Marine Policy Statement. In particular seascape, including Historic Seascape Characterisation should be considered, given the number of coastal assets in the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p>	<p>Both the Marine Plan and the Policy Statement have been discussed in the baseline information for this theme, presented in Appendix A.</p>
<p>It would be preferable if heritage assets were referred to as opposed to 'cultural' heritage assets.</p>	<p>Comment noted, and reference to cultural heritage removed.</p>
<p>There are many factors which can impact on a heritage asset, which will not be fully encompassed by the planning system, AONB Management Plan and Conservation Area Appraisals, e.g. climate change or poor management may have significant impacts.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>The SEA objective would be improved by referring to the need to conserve rather than maintain, and remove the reference to the cultural heritage resource, for example <i>'protect, conserve and enhance the Neighbourhood Plan Area's historic environment'</i>.</p>	<p>The SEA objective has been updated to match the suggestion made by Historic England.</p>
<p>The SEA objective refers to archaeology, which is not reflected at all within the assessment questions, in particular below ground archaeology. The SEA objectives should also be updated to consider seascape. The objectives should also incorporate improved management and high quality design.</p>	<p>The SEA objectives have been updated to incorporate the suggested inclusions.</p>
<p>Historic England would strongly recommend that the relevant conservation staff and archaeological advisers are consulted as part of the preparation of the SEA of the plan.</p>	<p>Northumberland County Council have been engaged in the SEA process.</p>
<p><b>Environment Agency</b> <b>Josh Kwok, Sustainable Places Advisor</b></p>	
<p>The Scoping Report appropriately considers flood zones and various sources of flooding in the Neighbourhood Plan area. However it does not appear to have taken into account historic flood events. Two historic flood events have occurred in the Neighbourhood Plan area, one at Brunton Burn and the second at Annstead Burn. The Environment Agency suggested introducing an additional paragraph to provide further detail with regard to these historic flood events.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>There is no reference made to the Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP), which is relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan area. The Scoping Report should ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan has appropriately considered the key issues as identified in the CMFP and that it aligns with relevant flood management policies.</p>	<p>The CFMP has been discussed in the baseline section for this theme.</p>

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
The issue of coastal change should be discussed further with reference to the Shoreline Management Plan. The SEA objectives should be worded in a way to ensure that the impact of coastal change is taken into full account by the Neighbourhood Plan.	The SEA objectives have been updated to incorporate coastal change.
The Final Water Resource Management Plan (2010-2035) mentioned in 6.3.1 has been superseded by the Final Water Resource Management Plan (2015-2040) with the findings being noticeably different from the previous version. The same issue has been highlighted in the Northumberland County Council – Water Cycle Study. With view of this the Environment Agency would advise a comprehensive review of the most up to date WRMP and WCS and to amend the SEA objectives as appropriate.	Comment fed back to Northumberland County Council.

## 3.2 Key sustainability issues

Drawing on the review of the sustainability context and baseline, the SEA Scoping Report was able to identify a range of sustainability issues that should be a particular focus of SEA. These issues are as follows, presented by seven environmental themes:

### 3.2.1 Biodiversity

- The Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites located in the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan Area contains a variety of protected habitats and species as listed in the annexes of the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).
- There are seven Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located wholly or partly within the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area. The entirety of the NNCNP area is located within an Impact Risk Zone for one or more of these SSSIs.
- If the integrity of the Biodiversity Action Plan Habitats and Species present in and around the Neighbourhood Plan area are not preserved and protected, loss, fragmentation and deterioration may result in terms of their quality and contribution to the natural heritage of the Northumberland Coast.

### 3.2.2 Climatic Factors

- Coastal, fluvial, surface water run-off flood risk within the Neighbourhood Plan area is likely to increase in the future as a result of development, land use change and climate change.
- Northumberland has observed greater reductions in GHG emissions per capita between 2005 and 2012 (27%) compared to the North East (20.5%) and England (a 16.7% reduction). NO detailed information on emission is available for the NNCNP area.

### 3.2.3 Landscape and Historic Environment

- The whole of the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area's coastline is located within the Northumberland Coast AONB boundary; the AONB covers approximately half of the Neighbourhood Plan area
- There are three conservation areas located within the NNCNP boundary: Bamburgh, Seahouses and North Sunderland. The latter two areas of these are supported by Conservation Area Appraisals.



- The Neighbourhood Plan area has a rich historic environment, with six scheduled monuments and over 70 listed buildings nationally designated for their cultural heritage asset.
- As of October 2016, there were 492 historic sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area that feature on the Historic Environmental Record for Northumberland.
- New development has the potential to lead to both beneficial and adverse effects on the historic environment, for example by affecting the setting of cultural heritage assets and landscape/townscape quality.

### 3.2.4 Land, Soil and Water Resources

- There are no designated 'Special Sites' within the NNCNP area, in terms of soil and groundwater contamination. The NNCNP area does not have a history of heavy industrial land use, which may have resulted in soil and groundwater pollution.
- Certain areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area are classified as 'Grade 2 and 3a agricultural land' (the best and most versatile).
- The NNCNP area falls within the Berwick and Fowberry Water Resource Zone, within which there considered to be no water resource constraints (in terms of availability versus current consumption levels).

### 3.2.5 Population and Community

- There is an ageing population within the Neighbourhood Plan area, with a significantly higher (between 13-25%) proportion of residents over 60 years of age in comparison to the regional and national trends.
- There has been a significant reduction (8.8%) in the population of Bamburgh parish. The population increases for Beadnell aligns to the regional average, with the increase observed in North Sunderland aligning to the increased growth seen nationally.
- The Neighbourhood Plan area performs excellently in terms of the outdoor quality of life, with good access to green spaces and the coast. Additionally, the Neighbourhood Plan area is regarded as a safe place to live, as reflected in the crime statistics.
- There are significant barriers to housing and services and geographical barriers observed within the neighbourhood plan area, with a poor quality of indoor life and limited access to opportunities for children and young people to enhance their skills.

### 3.2.6 Health and Wellbeing

- The majority of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area consider themselves to have 'very good health' or 'good health', however the percentage of the population with 'very good health' in the three parishes falls below the regional and national averages,
- Across the three parishes, the average percentage of the population who reported that their daily activities were limited in some way was 25.5% in the 2011 Census, compared to the average of 20.7% for Northumberland, 21.7% for the North East and 17.6% for England.
- An ageing population has the potential to increase pressures on healthcare services and is therefore a significant influence on the future health and well-being within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

### 3.2.7 Transportation

- The North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area does not currently have a railway station. The closest rail station is at Chathill, which has limited services.

- The closest A road to the Neighbourhood Plan area is the A1. The key routes in the area are the B1340, B1341 and the B1342 which run along the coast and/or connect with the A1.
- There is a regular bus service connecting Bamburgh, Seahouses and Beadnell to wider towns and cities, such as Berwick-upon-Tweed and Newcastle. Access to public transport is more challenging for residents within the neighbourhood plan area living away from the coast.

### 3.3 SEA Framework

These issues were then translated into an 'SEA Framework'. This SEA Framework provides a methodological framework for the appraisal of likely significant effects on the baseline. The SEA framework for the NNCNP is presented below.

**Table 3.2: SEA Framework for the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan**

SEA Objective	Assessment questions
<b>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b>	
Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support continued improvements to the status of the European designated sites of significance within the NNCNP area, including the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC, the Northumbria Coast SPA and the Lindisfarne SPA?</li> <li>• Support the status of the seven SSSIs located wholly or partly within the NNCNP area?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats?</li> <li>• Protect and enhance priority habitats, and the habitat of priority species?</li> <li>• Achieve a net gain in biodiversity?</li> <li>• Support enhancements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?</li> </ul>
<b>Climatic factors</b>	
Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities along the Northumberland Coast	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the number of journeys made?</li> <li>• Reduce the need to travel?</li> <li>• Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport?</li> <li>• Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?</li> <li>• Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources?</li> <li>• Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?</li> </ul>

SEA Objective	Assessment questions
Support the resilience of the Northumberland Coast to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at higher risk of flooding, taking into account the likely future effects of climate change?</li> <li>• Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change?</li> <li>• Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing surface water runoff (either within the plan area or downstream)?</li> <li>• Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the Neighbourhood Plan area?</li> <li>• Ensure that coastal change is considered through development in the Neighbourhood Plan area?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the plan area to the effects of climate change, including enhancements to ecological networks?</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape and Historic Environment</b>	
Protect, conserve and enhance the Neighbourhood Plan Area's historic environment.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve or enhance the Bamburgh, Seahouses and North Sunderland Conservation Areas?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest?</li> <li>• Conserve and protect features of below ground archaeological interest?</li> <li>• Conserve and protect heritage features through improved management and high quality design?</li> <li>• Support the integrity of the historic setting of key buildings of heritage interest?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance local diversity and character?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?</li> </ul>
Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the integrity of the Northumberland Coast AONB?</li> <li>• Support and enhance the local seascape?</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance landscape and townscape features?</li> <li>• Support the integrity of the Bamburgh, Seahouses and North Sunderland Conservation Areas?</li> </ul>
<b>Land, Soil and Water Resources</b>	
Ensure the efficient use of land.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of previously developed land?</li> <li>• Avoid the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, which in the NNCNP area may comprise Grade 2 and 3a agricultural land?</li> </ul>
Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the amount of waste produced?</li> <li>• Support the minimisation, reuse and recycling of waste?</li> <li>• Maximise opportunities for local management of waste in order to minimise export of waste to areas outside?</li> <li>• Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction?</li> </ul>

SEA Objective	Assessment questions
Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support improvements to water quality?</li> <li>• Minimise water consumption?</li> </ul>
<b>Population and Community</b>	
Cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve access to local, high-quality community services and facilities.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the development of a range of high quality, accessible community facilities?</li> <li>• Encourage and promote social cohesion and encourage active involvement of local people in community activities?</li> <li>• Minimise fuel poverty?</li> <li>• Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing local residents?</li> <li>• Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people?</li> <li>• Support the provision of land for allotments and cemeteries?</li> </ul>
Reduce deprivation and promote a more inclusive and self-contained community.	
Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes?</li> <li>• Support enhancements to the current housing stock?</li> <li>• Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?</li> <li>• Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs?</li> <li>• Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction?</li> <li>• Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	
Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within Bamburgh, North Sunderland and Beadnell parishes	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups?</li> <li>• Align to the five key priority areas outlined in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment?</li> <li>• Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards?</li> <li>• Promote the use of healthier modes of travel?</li> <li>• Improve access to the countryside for recreational use?</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation</b>	
Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the need to travel through sustainable patterns of land use and development?</li> <li>• Encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel?</li> <li>• Enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements?</li> <li>• Facilitate working from home and remote working?</li> <li>• Improve road safety?</li> <li>• Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?</li> </ul>

## 4. What has plan making / SEA involved to this point?

### 4.1 Introduction

In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include...

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.

The 'narrative' of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the Environmental Report. Specifically, this section explains how preparation of the current version of the NNCNP has been informed by an assessment of alternative locations for housing allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

### 4.2 Overview of plan making / SEA work undertaken since 2013

Plan-making for the NNCNP has been underway since 2013. Initial work incorporated a number of informal and formal consultation exercises carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, including on the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.

A significant number of consultation events have since been carried out for the Neighbourhood Plan. This has included a range of exhibitions, public meetings and questions and answer sessions as well as workshops.

The following sections discuss the evolution of the NNCNP in association with the SEA process.

### 4.3 Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Neighbourhood Plan

A key element of the SEA process is the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' for the NNCNP. The SEA Regulations<sup>5</sup> are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the Environmental Report should present an appraisal of the '*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan*'.

The following sections therefore describe how the SEA process to date has informed the preferred approach for the Neighbourhood Plan area and potential policies for shaping new development in the three parishes. Specifically, this chapter explains how the NNCNP's development policies have been developed in relation to consideration of alternative spatial strategies relating to the key landscape designation in the Neighbourhood Plan area and in relation to the housing tenure.

#### 4.3.1 Appraisal of reasonable alternatives linked to landscape designations

During the development of the NNCNP, the Steering Group considered different strategic approaches to guiding development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. A key consideration was the extent to which the key landscape designation present within the Neighbourhood Plan area, the Northumberland Coast AONB, should be a main determinant as to the location of new development.

To support decision-making on this element, the SEA process undertook an appraisal of two different alternative approaches linked to the AONB designation in the Neighbourhood Plan area. These were as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

- Option 1: Enable a spatial strategy which does not seek to preclude development within the Northumberland Coast AONB; and
- Option 2: Direct most development within the Neighbourhood Plan area to those areas outside of the AONB.

These two options were subjected to assessment.

**Table 4.1** presents the findings of the appraisal of Option 1 and Option 2 outlined above. To support the assessment findings, the options have been ranked in terms of their sustainability performance against the relevant SEA theme. It is anticipated that this will provide the reader with a likely indication of the comparative sustainability performance of the two options in relation to each theme considered.

**Table 4.1: Appraisal findings: reasonable alternatives linked to landscape designations**

**Option 1: Enable a spatial strategy which does not seek to preclude development within the Northumberland Coast AONB; and**

**Option 2: Direct most development within the Neighbourhood Plan area to those areas outside of the AONB.**

SEA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt 1	Opt 2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>In terms of effects on nature conservation designations, the main areas covered by SAC, SPA and SSSI designations in the Neighbourhood Plan area are coastal, and within the AONB. As such, Option 2, which directs development away from the AONB is less likely to lead to significant effects on these European and nationally designated sites.</p> <p>All development has the potential to have significant impacts on biodiversity assets if located inappropriately and have poor design and layout. Likewise all development has the potential to promote net gains in biodiversity value. In this context, for all development, potential effects on biodiversity depend on aspects such as the provision of green infrastructure to accompany new development areas and the retention and incorporation of biodiversity features.</p>	2	1
Climate change	<p>In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, road transport is the significant contributor to emissions in the area. The extent to which the two options have the potential to support climate change mitigation through facilitating a reduced level of car dependency is therefore a key element.</p> <p>In this context, Option 2 is likely to encourage a distribution strategy which promotes development over a wider geographic area, including in less accessible, rural locations away from the main population centres of the Neighbourhood Plan area (Seahouses, North Sunderland and Beadnell). This is likely to increase car dependency and undermine potential opportunities for limiting greenhouse gas emissions from transport. Conversely Option 1 will support modal shift through encouraging new development in locations (i.e. the larger villages within the AONB) with closer proximity to the services, facilities and amenities present in the three main settlements of the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p>In terms of climate change adaptation, the extent to which the options promote climate change adaptation depends on the specific location, design, layout and scale of development, and the incorporation of features which support climate resilience.</p>	1	2
Historic environment and landscape	<p>Option 2, by limiting development within the AONB, will help minimise potential effects on the nationally designated landscape of this area. This will also help protect the historic setting of these areas, as well as the areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area with particular concentrations of heritage features, including Seahouses, North Sunderland and Bamburgh. Conversely, Option 1, through enabling an increased level of development to take place in these areas, has the potential to have impacts on landscape quality and historic setting of the AONB and on features and areas of historic environment interest.</p>	2	1

**Option 1: Enable a spatial strategy which does not seek to preclude development within the Northumberland Coast AONB; and**

**Option 2: Direct most development within the Neighbourhood Plan area to those areas outside of the AONB.**

SEA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt 1	Opt 2
Land, soil and water resources	Areas of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land present in the Neighbourhood Area (i.e. land classified as Grade 2 and Grade 3a agricultural land) are largely located in the parts of the Neighbourhood Area located outside of the AONB, inland from the coast. In this context, Option 2, through focusing development in these areas therefore has the potential to lead to increased pressures on higher quality agricultural land from new development areas when compared to Option 1.	1	2
Population and community	Option 2 is likely to encourage a distribution strategy which promotes development over a wider geographic area, including in less accessible, rural locations away from the main population centres of the plan area (i.e. Seahouses, North Sunderland and Beadnell). This may limit accessibility to existing services and facilities. In this context Option 1 has increased potential to support the provision of housing in locations that allow easier access to a broader range of local services and facilities.  In terms of education and skills, the effect of both options depends on the extent to which new housing provision is accompanied by new, expanded and improved education provision in the plan area.	1	2
Health and Wellbeing	Option 1 is more likely to lead to housing provision which is located in closer proximity to the centres of Seahouses, North Sunderland and Beadnell. This is likely to support the development of housing at locations which are more easily accessible to existing services, facilities and amenities, including health and leisure facilities, as well as the key asset of the coast. This will also support healthier lifestyles.	1	2
Transport	Option 1 has the potential to lead to an increased level of housing provision taking place closer to the main settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan area. This will support the vitality and viability of the three settlements, including through supporting local shops and amenities, promote accessibility, and reduce the need to travel.	1	2

#### 4.3.2 Appraisal of alternatives for the use of housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area

Following consultation with the local community, a further element in which the Neighbourhood Group was keen to explore further was the issue of permanent and second homes and holiday letting.

To consider this issue in more detail, and provide further sustainability context, the SEA process appraised two options, as follows:

**Option A:** Introduce a policy through the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to restrain second home ownership and holiday rentals in the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area through introducing restrictions on the use of new housing; and



**Option B:** Do not introduce restrictions on the use of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

As for the previous two sets of options, these two broad options were appraised as 'reasonable alternatives' against both the baseline and relatively (i.e. against each other). They were again considered through the SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions developed during scoping and ranked in terms of their sustainability performance against the relevant theme. The findings of the appraisal are presented in **Table 4.2**.

**Table 4.2: Appraisal findings: reasonable alternatives linked to housing use**

**Option A: Introduce a policy through the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to restrain second home ownership and holiday rentals in the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area through introducing restrictions on the use of new housing; and**

**Option B: Do not introduce restrictions on the use of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.**

SEA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt A	Opt B
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>Option B has the potential to lead to increased effects on biodiversity assets during peak holiday periods. This includes through increasing activities which affect designated sites in the plan area, including the two coastal SSSIs and SAC and SPA present in the Neighbourhood Area. However, these effects are unlikely to be significant given the current management of the sites.</p> <p>All sites have the potential to have significant impacts on biodiversity assets if located inappropriately and have poor design and layout. Likewise all sites have the potential to promote net gains in biodiversity value. In this context, for both options, potential effects on biodiversity depend on aspects such as the provision of green infrastructure to accompany new development areas and the retention and incorporation of biodiversity features. It is unlikely that the tenure of housing will affect the extent to which this is achieved.</p>	N/A	N/A
Climate change	<p>In terms of adaptation to the effects of climate change, an increase in the Neighbourhood Plan area's year round (rather than seasonal) population through Option A has the potential to increase resilience to extreme weather events. This includes through increasing the year round availability of 'human capital', which will help improve the maintenance of existing properties (and neighbourhoods) and enabling a more effective response to extreme weather events when they occur.</p> <p>In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, road transport is an increasingly significant contributor to emissions in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Whilst greenhouse gas emissions are likely to increase during peak holiday periods under Option B, Option A has the potential to increase the carbon footprint of the Neighbourhood Area during the rest of the year. Overall it is uncertain at this level of detail which of the options is likely to do most to limit greenhouse gas emissions over an annual period.</p>	1	2

**Option A: Introduce a policy through the Neighbourhood Plan which seeks to restrain second home ownership and holiday rentals in the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area through introducing restrictions on the use of new housing; and**

**Option B: Do not introduce restrictions on the use of new housing in the Neighbourhood Plan area.**

SEA theme	Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options	Rank of preference	
		Opt A	Opt B
Historic environment and landscape	A policy which seeks to restrain second home and holiday home ownership in the Neighbourhood Plan area is unlikely to have any significant implications for landscape quality or the integrity of the historic environment. Potential effects depend largely on the location, design and layout of new development areas.	N/A	N/A
Land, soil and water resources	In terms of soil quality and availability, the tenure of new housing in the plan area is unlikely to have significant effects.	N/A	N/A
Population and community	Data from the 2011 Census highlights that 39% of the housing stock in the Neighbourhood Plan area has no full-time resident, rising to 47% in Bamburgh Parish and 55% in Beadnell Parish. House prices are also double that of Northumberland as a whole. In this context, a policy restricting the use of new homes as second homes or holiday lets through Option A will provide increased opportunities for local people to secure a place on the housing ladder. Option A, through increasing the year-round population also has increased potential to support the viability of services and amenities, including health and education provision. It will also support the viability of public transport provision. This will promote accessibility to services, facilities and amenities amongst local people.	1	2
Health and Wellbeing	Option 1, through facilitating a larger increase in the year-round population of the Neighbourhood Plan area, has the potential to support the viability of health services and leisure and recreational facilities.	1	2
Transport	Congestion levels in the Neighbourhood Plan area (including in Bamburgh) are significantly affected by visitor traffic. In this context Option 2 is likely to contribute to congestion issues during peak times of the year, including the summer period. Due to relatively small proportion of the total housing stock that will be affected by the options, effects are likely to be limited. Whilst Option 1 has the potential to increase year-round traffic flows, it also has the potential to support the viability of year-round public transport networks. This will support accessibility for those living in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The relatively limited scale of development facilitated through the NNCNP is likely to limit potential effects in this regards. Option A, through increasing the year-round population also has increased potential to support the viability of services and amenities, including health and education provision. It will also support the viability of public transport provision. This will promote accessibility to services, facilities and amenities amongst local people.	1	2

## 4.4 Approach taken in the Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that the settlements of Seahouses, North Sunderland and Beadnell are the most sustainable in terms of access to services and community facilities. As such whilst these settlements are largely located within the AONB, it is recognised by the Neighbourhood Plan that community vitality would be best served by smaller scale housing which meets local needs within these settlements, and the facilitation of local employment opportunities and social, community, leisure and educational facilities.

However, the latest version of the Neighbourhood Plan recognises the constraints provided by the AONB designation through seeking to constrain major development in the AONB, or affecting its setting except in exceptional circumstances. In this context, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide a balance between protecting and enhancing landscape character and supporting community vitality.

A central facet of this approach to supporting community vitality is the NNCNP's aim to restrict the use of new housing provision in the Neighbourhood Plan area as second or holiday homes. In this context the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to only support proposals for all new housing (excluding replacement dwellings) where first and future occupation is restricted to ensure that each new dwelling is occupied only as a Principal Residence.

## 4.5 Development of Neighbourhood Plan policies

### 4.5.1 Regulation 14 consultation

The Regulation 14 consultation version of the NNCNP (July 2017) put forward a range of policies to guide development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. These were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering. To provide context on their sustainability performance, the Environmental Report accompanying the Regulation 14 consultation version of the NNCNP presented an appraisal of these policies.

Following Regulation 14 consultation on the NNCNP and Environmental Report, the Neighbourhood Plan was updated to take into account responses received during the six week period of consultation.

### 4.5.2 Submission version of the NNCNP policies

The Submission version of the NNCNP puts forward 25 policies to guide development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. These are grouped under eight objectives. The policies, and objectives under which they are grouped, are as follows.

Objective 1, Landscape: To secure new development that benefits our communities whilst affording the highest level of protection to our valued habitats, landscapes, seascapes villages and dark skies that make our area special.

Policies to achieve this objective are;

- Policy 1: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2: Landscapes and Seascapes
- Policy 3: Habitats and Species
- Policy 4: Coastal Management and the Coastal Strip

Objective 2, Sense of Place: To enhance the 'sense of place' in the three parishes by ensuring new development takes place at the right scale and in the right places, with an emphasis on high quality design which reflect the principles of the AONB Design Guide and the AONB Management Plan (date).

Policies to achieve this objective are;

- Policy 5: Design in New Development

- Policy 6: Shop Fronts
- Policy 7: Outdoor Advertising
- Policy 8: Sustainable Development within the Settlements
- Policy 9: Sustainable Development outside the Settlement Boundaries

Objective 3, Historic Environment: To protect and enhance Heritage Assets in the Plan Area, especially those that contribute to our 'sense of place' and those that are value and relevant to our local community.

Policies to achieve this objective are;

- Policy 10: Seahouses and North Sunderland Conservation Areas
- Policy 11: Bamburgh Conservation Area
- Policy 12: Historic Core of Beadnell
- Policy 13: Non Designated Heritage Assets

Objective 4, Housing: To put the heart back into our communities by making sure we have enough of, and the right mix of housing to meet the needs of the local community and to re-instate our sustainable communities.

Policies to achieve this objective are;

- Policy 14: Principal Residence Housing
- Policy 15: Local Connection Housing in Hamlets
- Policy 16: Housing Mix and Type
- Policy 17: Change of Use from Holiday Use to Principal Residence Housing
- Policy 18: Extensions and Annexes

Objective 5, Local Green Spaces: To ensure that our settlements have space for 'play', we will identify and protect Local Green Spaces in the Plan Area.

Policies to achieve this objective are;

- Policy 19: Local Green Spaces

Objective 6, Community Facilities: To protect, improve and where feasible provide year-round Community and Recreational facilities for that benefit residents as well as tourists.

Policies to achieve this objective are;

- Policy 20: Assets of Community Value and Community Facilities
- Policy 21: New Tourist and Community Facilities
- Policy 22: Footpaths and Cycle Ways

Objective 7, New and expanded business development: To provide a positive framework for new and expanded business development and facilitate a diverse, local and year round economy.

Policies to achieve this objective are;

- Policy 23: Business and Employment
- Policy 24: Broadband Infrastructure

Objective 8, Tourism: To ensure that tourism development can be accommodated without a negative impact on local communities and infrastructure.

Policies to achieve this objective are;

- Policy 25: Caravans, Camping, Bunkhouses and Chalets.

## 5. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?

### 5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the Submission version of the NNCNP. This chapter is structured as follows:

**Sections 5.3 to 5.9** present an appraisal of the Submission version of the NNCNP under the seven SEA theme headings; and

**Section 5.10** subsequently discusses overall conclusions at this current stage.

### 5.2 Approach to the appraisal

The appraisal is structured under the seven sustainability themes.

For each theme 'significant effects' of the current version of the plan on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations.<sup>6</sup> So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

Every effort is made to identify / evaluate 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 and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

### 5.3 Biodiversity and geodiversity

The Submission version of the NNCNP sets out a range of provisions to limit the impacts of development on features and areas of biodiversity interest, and to support enhancements to ecological networks within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Key sites of biodiversity importance in the NNCNP area include the North Northumberland Coast SAC, the Northumbria Coast SPA, the Lindisfarne SPA, and seven SSSIs.

In relation to the European designated sites in the Neighbourhood Area, Policy 3 (Habitats and Species) seeks to ensure that the impact of proposals on and adjacent to these sites are assessed in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). This will help limit potential effects on the sites. In this context the HRA screening undertaken alongside the Neighbourhood Plan has considered potential effects on these sites in detail. This summarised that no significant likely effects are likely on these sites as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.

In relation to the SSSIs present in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the Farne Islands National Nature Reserve, the NNCNP states that proposals with a negative effect on these nationally designated sites will be refused '*unless the benefit of the proposal clearly outweighs the impacts*'. The cluster of internationally and nationally designated sites along the coastal strip will be supported by Policy 4 (Coastal Management and the Coastal Strip) which restricts development in this key area of ecological sensitivity.

More generally in relation to biodiversity, the policies of the NNCNP have a strong focus on improving habitats and ecological connections in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. In this context Policy 3 also sets out a range of provisions for promoting the conservation and restoration of priority habitats and species in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The creation of new habitats will also be supported,

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<sup>6</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

particularly where proposals align with opportunities identified in the most recent Shoreline Management Plan for habitat re-creation. This will be supported by Policy 8 (Development within the Settlements) which seeks to ensure the incorporation of landscaping within new development to improve habitats and provide linkages between wildlife corridors for the benefit of biodiversity. The Neighbourhood Plan also recognises that there are pockets of habitat in Seahouses which are not currently well connected. As such Policy 8 states that new development will be expected to contribute to enhancements to the village's wildlife corridors to help link these areas together. This will support ecological networks in the area.

Policy 19 (Local Green Spaces) stipulates that for an area to be allocated as Local Green Space, one of the criteria it must meet is to hold a local significance because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife. This therefore enables each parish to protect local areas of wildlife value by designation as a Local Green Space.

## 5.4 Climate change

The Neighbourhood Plan area's geography, its coastline and its environmental sensitivities highlights the requirement for it to adapt to a changing climate, including extreme weather events.

Policy 4 (Coastal Management and the Coastal Strip) is led by the principles set out in the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2), and seeks to ensure that new development does not take place in locations where sea defences may be required in the future. It also seeks to preclude development along the coastal strip or '*seawards of the settlement boundaries of any of the settlements except in exceptional circumstances or where they are necessary for the management of the protected natural habitats along the coastal strip*'. This will help support adaptation to coastal flood risk. The policy also acknowledges that there is potentially a need to realign the road between Bamburgh and St. Aiden's Dunes as sea levels rise and acknowledges that the strategy for Seahouses to Beadnell is to maintain the natural development of the dunes in the area. This will help support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to coastal flooding through recognising and responding to the likelihood for coastal change over the plan period.

In relation to surface water flooding, the use of SuDS within new development areas is promoted in Policy 5 (Design in New Development). This will support a more coherent approach to managing surface water flood risk. Overall however, in relation to both fluvial and surface water flood risk, it is anticipated that the provisions of the NPPF and actions resulting from the SFRA and Local Flood Risk Management Strategy will provide an appropriate level of protection in this regard.

The NNCNP's focus on the protection and enhancement of designated nature conservation sites, open space and green spaces will promote climate change mitigation through supporting carbon sequestration and promoting sustainable modes of transport; and climate change adaptation through helping to limit the effects of extreme weather events and regulating surface water run-off. The policies supporting biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan area (section 5.3) will further help increase the resilience of ecological networks to the effects of climate change through making provision for improvements to habitats and enhancing such networks.

In terms of climate change mitigation, road transport is an increasingly significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the Neighbourhood Plan area. In this context, by enhancing pedestrian and cycle linkages and usage, Policy 22 (Footpaths and Cycle Ways within the Plan Area) will support walking and cycling as an alternative to private car use in the area, which will support climate change mitigation. The broad spatial strategy facilitated by the Neighbourhood Plan, which supports smaller scale development in the key population centres of the Neighbourhood Plan area, will also help reduce the need to travel to services, facilities and amenities.

## 5.5 Landscape and historic environment

The NNCNP area has a valued landscape and a rich historic environment. In this context the coastline of the three parishes lies within the Northumberland Coast AONB, which covers approximately half of

the Neighbourhood Plan area, and there are significant clusters of historic environment assets present locally, as reflected by the designation of three conservation areas.

Policy 2 (Landscapes and Seascapes) seeks to conserve and if possible, enhance local landscapes, with all proposals being required to demonstrate how they respect landscape features identified in the Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment (2010). Weight will be given to conservation of local landscapes, the Heritage Coast, and the scenic beauty of the coast including views into and out of the AONB within the Neighbourhood Plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan also seeks to ensure all development within the AONB is undertaken in conjunction with the provisions of the Northumberland Coast AONB Design Guide.

The Neighbourhood Plan has a close focus on supporting the integrity of the conservation areas designated within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Policy 10 sets out the key Neighbourhood Plan policy for the Seahouses and North Sunderland Conservation Areas through presenting a range of provisions for conserving and enhancing these areas in conjunction with the Conservation Area Appraisals carried out. Given the detailed context provided by Conservation Area Appraisals, this provides an appropriate context for protecting the integrity of the two conservation areas. Policy 11 recognises the importance of the Bamburgh Conservation Area, by seeking to ensure development proposals are required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Within the conservation area, proposals will be supported where they make positive contributions to local character.

In relation to non-designated assets and areas of historic environment value, the historic core of Beadnell is considered in Policy 12, where, in the absence of a conservation area designation, it has been considered important to prevent further erosion of the character of the area. In this context, proposals within or affecting the setting of the historic core of Beadnell will be required to have special regard to the historic character of this area and its setting. This will support the protection and enhancement of this undesignated area of historic environment interest. Non-designated heritage assets are also considered through Policy 13. Any development which may affect non-designated a heritage asset or its setting, whether locally listed, or identified in the North Northumberland Neighbourhood Plan List (Appendix A of the Neighbourhood Plan) will be required to be sensitively designed with regard to the significance of the heritage asset, including archaeological, historic and architectural interest. These measures will help to support and enhance the heritage interest provided by historic features which are not protected by national or local designations.

Policy 5 (Design in New Development) sets out provisions for the high quality design of new development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. In this context the policy states that the design of new development in the area will need to respect local context and character and implement the use of appropriate landscaping and indigenous species to support local character.

In terms of other policies with the potential to support landscape / villagescape character and the historic environment, Policy 6 (Shop Fronts) seeks to ensure that new shop fronts are sympathetic to the character of the area in which they are situated, and opportunities are realised to restore and retain existing traditional shop fronts. It also refers to the Northumberland Coast AONB Design Guide, which contains guidance and principles with regards to alterations to shop fronts. Policy 7 (Outdoor Advertising) also seeks to ensure that advertising is designed to consider visual amenity and cumulative visual impact in relation to other advertisements within the area, particularly with consideration to impact on special qualities of the AONB.

## 5.6 Land, soil and water resources

The policies supporting habitats and species, as well as green space will also enhance the quality of land and water resources through promoting the ability of natural processes to support soil and water quality.

Areas of land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land is present in the Neighbourhood Plan area, with Grade 2 agricultural land present inland from the coast. However, given

the lack of allocations in the NNCNP, significant areas of the best and most versatile land are unlikely to be lost as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.

SuDS are promoted in Policy 5 (Design in New Development) and Policy 8 (Development within the Settlements), with potential benefits for water quality in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

## 5.7 Population and community

Data from the 2011 Census highlights that 39% of the housing stock in the Neighbourhood Area has no full-time resident, rising to 47% in Bamburgh Parish and 55% in Beadnell Parish. In this context the policies which seek to restrict the use of new homes as second homes or holiday lets (Policy 14 Principal Residence Housing and Policy 15 Principal Residence Housing in Hamlets) will support the availability and affordability of new housing, improving accessibility to the housing stock for local people. Alongside, through increasing the year-round population, the policy also has the potential to promote the viability of services, facilities and amenities and public transport provision. Further reinforced by Policy 20 (Assets of Community Value and Community Facilities), which seeks to protect key community facilities, this will support the quality of life of residents and promote community cohesion.

Policy 16 (Housing Mix and Type) will further facilitate housing delivery which will help meet local needs. In this context the policy seeks to provide a sufficient range of housing for all groups in the Neighbourhood Plan area, including housing suitable for the older population and affordable accommodation for young families to move into the area.

The economic vitality of the area will be supported by the NNCNP. Policy 23 (Business and Employment) sets out a range of provisions for different locations in Neighbourhood Plan area, including Beadnell, Bamburgh and North Sunderland. The policy also has strong support for proposals which allow for the extension and expansion of existing businesses, farm diversification and home working. This will help diversify the economy and encourage more start-up businesses to locate in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Homeworking and running a business from home will also be promoted by Policy 24, which seeks to enhance broadband infrastructure in the Neighbourhood Plan area and Policy 16 (Housing Mix and Type), which supports live-work units. This will further facilitate economic activity in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The NNCNP also recognises the importance of the visitor economy of the area. Policy 21 (New Tourist and Community Facilities) supports proposals which will maximise the visitor offer of the area, including through promoting the provision of a base for low-impact based water recreational facilities, wet weather attraction at Seahouses, a Heritage Hub at Bamburgh and the provision of 'bunkhouses' for short term accommodation for activity holidays. The visitor economy will also be supported by the Neighbourhood Plan's strong focus on protecting landscape character and the historic environment, and protecting and enhancing the natural environment, including the Neighbourhood Plan area's biodiversity resource.

## 5.8 Health and wellbeing

The policies of the NNCNP will bring a range of benefits for the health and wellbeing for residents. The main impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan's policies on health and wellbeing will be through protecting and enhancing the Neighbourhood Plan area's high quality environment. This provides space – including natural green space - for recreation and relaxation, as well as air and water quality benefits. There is now robust evidence that access to nature improves people's health and wellbeing through encouraging healthy outdoor recreation and relaxation. In this context the quality of life of residents will be further promoted by Policy 19 (Local Green Spaces). This identifies a range of open spaces in each of the settlements to be designated as Local Green Spaces, where development will not normally be permitted.

Health and wellbeing will also be supported by the policies which directly and indirectly promote healthier modes of travel, including walking and cycling. In this context Policy 22 (Footpaths and Cycle



Ways in the Plan Area) seeks to encourage walking and cycling in the Neighbourhood Plan area through enhancing pedestrian and cycle links between the main settlements of the area. This is an important element for the Neighbourhood Plan area as large amounts of car traffic in the summer months can make walking and cycling between settlements difficult.

Community vitality is also a key contributor to health and wellbeing. In this context the Neighbourhood Plan's focus on protecting and enhancing community facilities and supporting local amenities will support community cohesion and residents' quality of life.

## 5.9 Transportation

Transportation is currently a key issue within the NNCNP area, with the relatively poor accessibility of all three settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the lack of adequate public transport leading to a large degree of car dependency. There is also inadequate parking provision which has led to regular and disruptive on-street parking on narrow roads in all the villages, particularly in Bamburgh and Seahouses.

Whilst enhancements to public transport provision is outside of the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, Policy 22 (Footpaths and Cycle Ways in the Plan Area) will support proposals which will create and improve footpaths and cycle ways where there is not a negative impact on designated habitats. Particularly supported will be the improvement of the following footpaths in the Neighbourhood Plan area:

- path from Swinhoe to Budle Bay;
- path from Springhill Farm to Seahouses;
- path from Glororum to Bamburgh; and
- the old railway line in Seahouses.

In this context, the enhancements of these pedestrian routes will enhance pedestrian safety, encourage healthier modes of travel, and help limit car use for shorter journeys within the Neighbourhood Plan areas.

Reflecting local issues relating to parking, the Neighbourhood Plan has a strong focus on enhancing car parking provision. To help address this issue, Policy 8 (Development within the Settlements) encourages the incorporation of at least one car parking space per bedroom in all new residential development to reduce the impact of on-street parking for nearby streets. Proposals resulting in the loss of existing car parking spaces will also be refused unless equivalent alternative provision can be provided. This will help improve parking provision in the Neighbourhood Plan area, and reduce impacts of parking on the quality of the public realm.

## 5.10 Conclusions at this current stage

### 5.10.1 Potential significant effects

The assessment has concluded that the Submission version of the NNCNP is likely to lead to **significant positive effects** in relation to the 'population and community' and 'health and wellbeing' SEA themes. These benefits largely relate to the carefully targeted approach to housing provision proposed by the current version of the NNCNP, the focus on enhancing community provision in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the NNCNP's impetus on protecting and enhancing open space and green infrastructure networks. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan has a strong focus on protecting and enhancing landscape character and the setting of the historic environment, leading to **significant positive effects** in relation to the 'historic environment and landscape' theme. In relation to the 'biodiversity' sustainability theme, the scope and scale of the proposed policy approaches relating to

the natural environment will help ensure that wide ranging benefits in relation to this theme are secured through the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Submission version of the NNCNP will initiate a number of beneficial approaches regarding the 'transportation', 'land, soil and water resources' 'climate change' sustainability themes. However these are not considered to be significant in the context of the SEA process given the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan and the scale of proposals.

## **6. What are the next steps?**

The NNCNP has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority, Northumberland County Council, for its consideration with the updated Environmental Report. Northumberland County Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to go forward to Independent Examination in terms of the NNCNP meeting legal requirements and its compatibility with the Local Plan.

Subject to Northumberland County Council's agreement, the NNCNP will then be subject to independent examination. The Examiner will consider whether the plan is appropriate having regard to national policy and whether it is in general conformity with the Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999.

The Examiner will be able to recommend that the NNCNP is put forward for a referendum, or that it should be modified or that the proposal should be refused. Northumberland County Council will then decide what should be done in light of the Examiner's report. Where the report recommends modifications to the plan, Northumberland County Council will invite the NNCNP Steering Group to make modifications to the plan, which will be reflected in an updated Environmental Report. Where the Examiner's Report recommends that the proposal is to be refused, Northumberland County Council will do so.

Where the examination is favourable, the NNCNP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by Northumberland County Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to Northumberland County Council with a request it is 'made'. Once 'made', the NNCNP will become part of the Development Plan for the parishes of Bamburgh, Beadnell and North Sunderland.

## Appendix A Context review and baseline

### A.1 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

#### Context review

At the European level, the EU Biodiversity Strategy<sup>7</sup> was adopted in May 2011 in order to deliver an established new Europe-wide target to '*halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020*'.

The Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast European Marine Site Management Scheme (2014)<sup>8</sup> is a tool used by statutory authorities to co-ordinate their individual management responsibilities towards the site (encompassing the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC and Lindisfarne SPA). The scheme identifies activities that could hinder the conservation objectives of the site, identifies the statutory and voluntary management measures available and assigns responsibility. The scheme also identifies gaps in management and works with partners to address these. Twenty eight groups of potentially damaging human activities have been identified as occurring within or close to the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast European Marine Site, with Action Plans created to mitigate these potentially damaging activities located in the 2014 Management Scheme.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Contribute to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity by minimising impacts and achieving net gains in biodiversity wherever possible.
- Promote the 'preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks' and the 'protection and recovery of priority species'. Plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries.
- Set criteria based policies for the protection of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, giving weight to their importance not just individually but as a part of a wider ecological network.
- Take account of the effects of climate change in the long term. Adopt proactive strategies to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including green infrastructure (i.e. 'a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities').
- Plan positively for 'green infrastructure' as part of planning for 'ecological networks'.
- High quality open spaces should be protected or their loss mitigated, unless a lack of need is established.

The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP)<sup>9</sup> sets out the importance of a healthy, functioning natural environment to sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal well-being. It was in part a response to the UK's failure to halt and reverse the decline in biodiversity by 2010 and it signalled a move away from the traditional approach of protecting biodiversity in nature reserves to adopting a landscape approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity. The NEWP also aims to create a green economy in which economic growth and the health of our natural resources sustain each other and markets, business and Government better reflect the value of nature. It includes commitments to:

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<sup>7</sup> European Commission (2011) Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 [online] available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/EP\\_resolution\\_april2012.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/EP_resolution_april2012.pdf) last accessed [30/01/17]

<sup>8</sup> Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast European Marine Site (2014): 'Management Scheme', [online] available to download from: <http://www.xbordercurrents.co.uk/resources/management-documents-2/> last accessed [23/02/17]

<sup>9</sup> Defra (2012) The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (Natural Environment White Paper) [online] available at: <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf> last accessed [30/01/17]

- Halt biodiversity loss, support functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks by 2020;
- Establish a new voluntary approach to biodiversity offsetting to be tested in pilot areas;
- Enable partnerships of local authorities, local communities and landowners, the private sector and conservation organisations to establish new Nature Improvement Areas; and
- Address barriers to using green infrastructure to promote sustainable growth.

The Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)<sup>10</sup> was adopted in 2008 and was prepared by the Northumberland Biodiversity Partnership. It sets out Action Plans for those habitats and species contributing to the natural heritage of Northumberland which are most at risk from loss, fragmentation and deterioration of quality. Each Action Plan contains a list of targets and priority actions.

The saved policies within the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan (1999) which directly addresses biodiversity within the NNCNP area include the following:

- Policy F6: Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar Sites;
- Policy F7: National Nature Reserves and Sites of Scientific Interest;
- Policy F8: Nature Conservation;
- Policy F9: Wildlife;
- Policy F10: Protected Species;
- Policy F11: Tree Preservation Orders;
- Policy F12: Trees and Woodlands; and
- Policy F13: Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands

## Baseline Summary

### Current baseline

#### Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation<sup>11</sup>

Designated under the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC contains four Annex I habitats and one Annex II species which are noted as the primary reasons for its designation. These are as follows:

Annex I Habitats:

- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide;
- Large shallow inlets and bays;
- Reefs; and
- Submerged or partially submerged sea caves.

The general character of the site is predominately marine areas and sea inlets (approximately 73%), with tidal rivers, estuaries, mudflats, sandflats, lagoons, sea cliffs and coastal sand dunes located in the remaining 27%.

Annex II Species:

- Grey Seal (*Halichoerus grypus*)

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<sup>10</sup> Northumberland Biodiversity Partnership (2008): 'Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan', [online] accessible from: <<http://www.nwt.org.uk/northumberland-BAP>> accessed [25/01/17]

<sup>11</sup> JNCC (no date): 'Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC', [online] available from <<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?euocode=UK0017072>> last accessed [25/01/17]

## Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area and Ramsar Site<sup>12</sup>

The Northumbria Coast SPA covers much of the coastline of the NNCNP area. The SPA is recognised as a wetland of international importance and is therefore also designated as a Ramsar Site under the Ramsar Convention.

The citation for the SPA states:

*'The Northumbria Coast SPA includes much of the coastline between the Tweed and Tees Estuaries in north-east England. The site consists of mainly discrete sections of rocky shore with associated boulder and cobble beaches. The SPA also includes parts of three artificial pier structures and a small section of sandy beach.'*

The site hosts populations of species contained in the annexes of the European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), including the Annex I listed Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) during the breeding season, and the Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*) and Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) over the winter.

## Lindisfarne Site of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserve

Located towards the northern boundary of the NNCNP area, Lindisfarne SSSI was notified in 1989 under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The SSSI contains five broad habitats and 53 notified features, including populations of the light-bellied Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla*), regularly over 2000 strong (approximately 40% of the global population)<sup>13</sup>. The SSSI is the only regular wintering site for this species in Britain. Based on the most recent condition assessment in 2009, approximately 29% of the SSSI is in favourable condition, with the remaining 71% classified as unfavourable-recovering.

The citation for this SSSI states:

*'Lindisfarne comprises a wide range of coastal habitats including extensive intertidal sand and mudflats which support internationally important wintering populations of waders and wildfowl, as well as coastal features and rock exposures of physiological and geological importance. The site supports a number of rare plants and invertebrates and important breeding populations of seabirds.'*<sup>14</sup>

Additionally, the site is recognised as a National Nature Reserve and is included in the list of Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention, also fulfilling the criteria for listing as a SPA under European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

## SSSI Impact Risk Zones

SSSI Impact Risk Zones are a GIS tool/dataset which maps zones around each SSSI according to the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location. Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs.

In addition to Lindisfarne, there are sections of a further six SSSIs located within the NNCNP area.; The entirety of the NNCNP area is located within an IRZ for one or more of all of the SSSIs (including Lindisfarne). As such, planning applications for residential developments exceeding certain thresholds may need to be assessed against the potential impact to the SSSIs.

## Long Nanny Tern Site

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<sup>12</sup> JNCC (2005): 'Northumbria Coast SPA', [online] available from: <<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1997>> last accessed [25/01/17]

<sup>13</sup> Natural England (no date): 'Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve' [online] available at: <<http://lindisfarne.nnr.blogspot.co.uk/p/about-lindisfarne-nnr.html>> last accessed [25/01/17]

<sup>14</sup> Natural England (no date): 'Lindisfarne SSSI', [online] available at: <<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=s1000140>> last accessed [25/01/17]

Long Nanny<sup>15</sup> has been recognised as a nationally important breeding site since 1977, and for three months of the year (May-July), it becomes a temporary home for three species of ground nesting bird: Little Tern (*Sternula albifrons*), Arctic tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) and the Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*). The site is managed by the National Trust.

### Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats and Species

The Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan<sup>16</sup> (2008) identifies a number of priority habitats and priority species which are characteristic of Northumberland's natural heritage and are at most risk from loss. The BAP priority habitats and species located in the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area are mainly located towards the northern and southern extent of the area, and also along the coastline (western boundary of the area). They include:

- Coastal Sand Dunes BAP along the coastal boundary of the NNCNP area;
- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland BAP in the north of the NNCNP area near to Newtown;
- Patches of Deciduous Woodland BAP patches in the north western section of the NNCNP area;
- Patches of Coastal Saltmarsh BAP and Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh BAP towards the southern extent of the NNCNP area near to Tughall Mill; and,
- Mudflats BAP at the northern extent of the NNCNP boundary, located within the Lindisfarne SSSI.

As mentioned above, the designated sites of interest within the NNCNP area supports populations of a number of internationally important species listed in Annex II of the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Annex I of the European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

### Future baseline

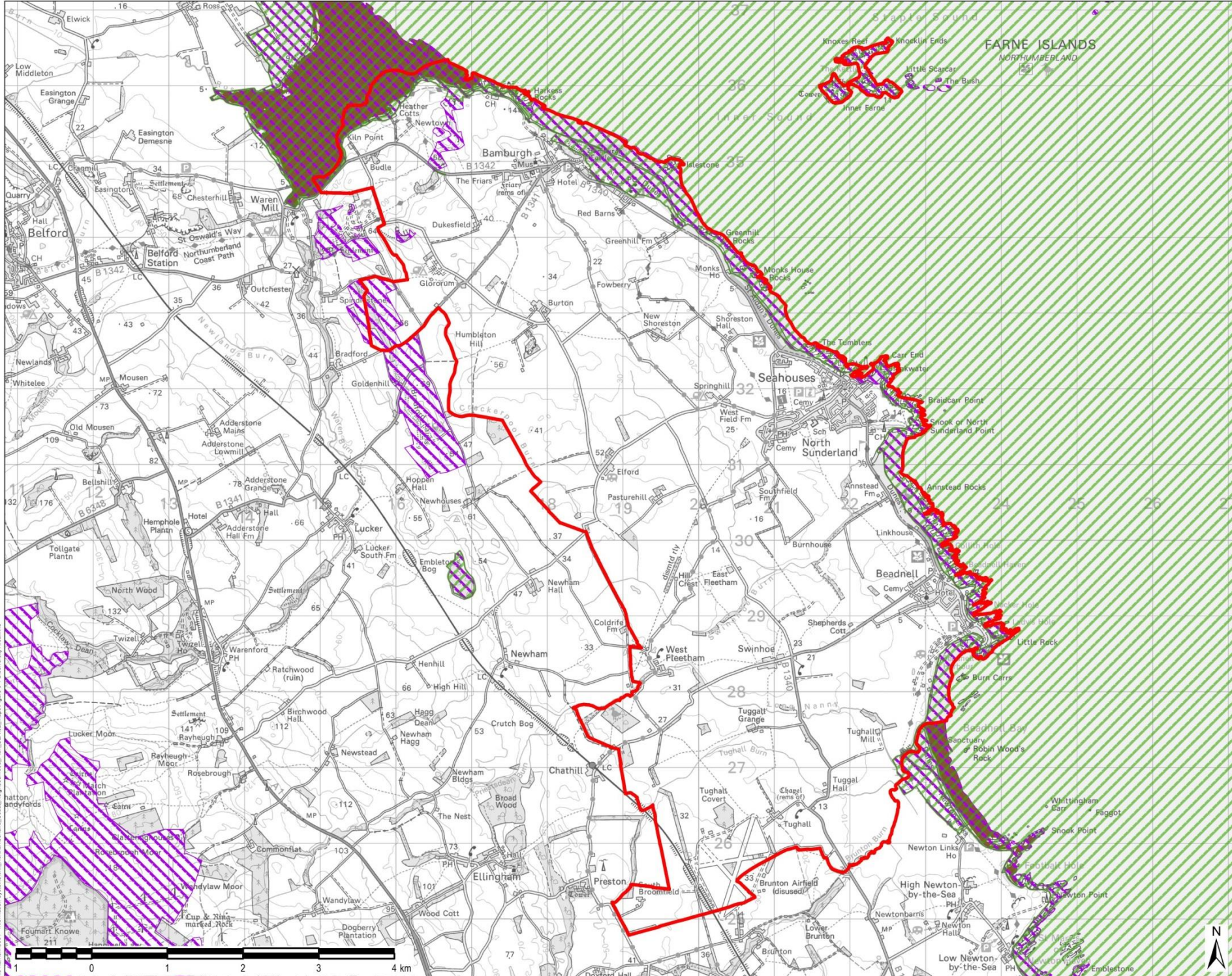
Habitats and species have the potential to come under increasing pressures from housing and infrastructure development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, including European, nationally and locally designated sites. This includes a loss of habitats and impacts on biodiversity networks. This may be exacerbated by the effects of climate change, which has the potential to lead to changes in the distribution and abundance of species and changes to the composition and character of habitats.

Benefits for biodiversity have the potential to arise from the increasing integration of biodiversity considerations within decision making.

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<sup>15</sup> National Trust (ca 2014): 'Long Nanny Tern Site' [online] available at: <<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/embleton-and-newton-links/features/the-long-nanny-little-tern-site>> last accessed [30/01/17]

<sup>16</sup> Northumberland Wildlife Trust (2008): 'Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan', [online] available to download from: <<http://www.nwt.org.uk/northumberland-BAP>> last accessed [30/01/17]



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**LEGEND**

- North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats
- Mudflats

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Purpose of Issue  
**DRAFT**

Client  
**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

Project Title  
**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Drawing Title  
**NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA: BIODIVERSITY DESIGNATIONS**

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## A.2 Climate Change

### Context Review

The UK Climate Change Act was passed in 2008 and established a framework to develop an economically credible emissions reduction path. It also highlighted the role it would take in contributing to collective action to tackle climate change under the Kyoto Protocol, and more recently as part of the UN-led Paris Agreement.

The Climate Change Act includes the following:

- 2050 Target. The act commits the UK to reducing emissions by at least 80% in 2050 from 1990 levels.
- Carbon Budgets. The Act requires the Government to set legally binding 'carbon budgets'. A carbon budget is a cap on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted in the UK over a five-year period. The carbon budgets are designed to reflect the cost-effective path to achieving the UK's long-term objectives. The first five carbon budgets have been put into legislation and run up to 2032.
- The Committee on Climate Change was set up to advise the Government on emissions targets, and report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- The National Adaptation Programme requires the Government to assess the risks to the UK from climate change, prepare a strategy to address them, and encourage key organisations to do the same. For more detail, visit the UK adaptation policy page.

The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment is published on a five-yearly cycle in accordance with the requirements of the Climate Change Act 2008. It requires the Government to compile an assessment of the risks for the UK arising from climate change, and then to develop an adaptation programme to address those risks and deliver resilience to climate change on the ground. For both the 2012 and the 2017 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, the Adaptation Sub-Committee commissioned an evidence report to achieve the following:

- *'Based on the latest understanding of current, and future, climate risks and opportunities, vulnerability and adaptation, what should the priorities be for the next UK National Adaptation Programme?'*<sup>17</sup>

The evidence report contains six priority risk areas requiring additional action in the next five years, see below:

1. Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure;
2. Risks to health, well-being and productivity from high temperatures;
3. Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation and industry;
4. Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity;
5. Risks to domestic and international food production and trade; and
6. New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive non-native species, affecting people, plants and animals.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate as a 'core planning principle'.

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<sup>17</sup> GOV.UK: 'UK Climate Change Risk Assessment Report January 2017', [online] available to download from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2017> last accessed [27/01/17]



- There is a key role for planning in securing radical reductions in GHG emissions, including in terms of meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008<sup>18</sup>. Specifically, planning policy should support the move to a low carbon future through:
  - planning for new development in locations and ways which reduce GHG emissions;
  - actively supporting energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings;
  - setting local requirements for building's sustainability in a way that is consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy;
  - positively promoting renewable energy technologies and considering identifying suitable areas for their construction; and
  - encouraging those transport solutions that support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.
- Direct development away from areas highest at risk of flooding, with development 'not to be allocated if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding'. Where development is necessary, it should be made safe without increasing levels of flood risk elsewhere.
- Take account of the effects of climate change in the long term, taking into account a range of factors including flooding. Adopt proactive strategies to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including well planned green infrastructure.

The Flood and Water Management Act<sup>19</sup> highlights that alternatives to traditional engineering approaches to flood risk management include:

- Incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings, and retro-fitting properties at risk (including historic buildings);
- Utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding, for example through the management of land to reduce runoff and through harnessing the ability of wetlands to store water;
- Identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere;
- Planning to roll back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and
- Creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)<sup>20</sup>.

Further guidance is provided in the document 'Planning for SuDs'.<sup>21</sup> This report calls for greater recognition of the multiple benefits that water management can present. It suggests that successful SuDS are capable of 'contributing to local quality of life and green infrastructure'.

The saved policies within the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan (1999) which directly addresses climate change within the NNCNP area includes the following:

- Policy C12: Renewable Energy Schemes; and
- Policy C20: Renewable Energy Projects within the Coastal Zone

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<sup>18</sup> The Climate Change Act 2008 sets targets for GHG emissions reductions through action in the UK of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of at least 26% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline.

<sup>19</sup> Flood and Water Management Act (2010) [online] available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

<sup>20</sup> N.B. The provision of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 came into force on the 1st of October 2012 and makes it mandatory for any development in England or Wales to incorporate SuDs.

<sup>21</sup> CIRIA (2010) 'Planning for SuDs – making it happen' [online] available to access via [http://www.ciria.org/Resources/Free\\_publications/Planning\\_for\\_SuDS\\_ma.aspx](http://www.ciria.org/Resources/Free_publications/Planning_for_SuDS_ma.aspx) last accessed [30/01/17]

## Baseline Summary

### Current baseline

#### Contribution to climate change

In relation to GHG emissions, source data from the Department of Energy and Climate Change suggests that Northumberland has had consistently higher per capita emissions total than that of both the North East of England and England as a whole since 2005. Nevertheless, Northumberland has also seen greater reductions in emissions per capita between 2005 and 2012 (27%) compared to the North West (20.5%) and England (a 16.7% reduction).

No data is available for the three parishes comprising the NNCNP area.

#### Potential effects of climate change

The outcome of research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2009 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) team<sup>22</sup>. UKCP09 gives climate information for the UK up to the end of this century and projections of future changes to the climate are provided, based on simulations from climate models. Projections are broken down to a regional level across the UK and are shown in probabilistic form, which illustrate the potential range of changes and the level of confidence in each prediction.

As highlighted by the research, the effects of climate change for the North East of England by 2050 for a medium emissions scenario<sup>23</sup> are likely to be as follows:

- The central estimate of increase in winter mean temperature is 2°C and an increase in summer mean temperature of 2.5°C; and
- The central estimate of change in winter mean precipitation is 11% and summer mean precipitation is –15%.

A range of issues may result from such climatic changes for the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan area. These include, amongst others:

- Effects on water resources from climate change;
- Reduction in availability of groundwater for abstraction;
- Adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain;
- Increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100 year floods;
- A need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers;
- A need to upgrade flood defences;
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding;
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution;
- Spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
- Increased demand for air-conditioning;
- Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence;
- Risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature; and
- Flooding of roads.

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<sup>22</sup> The data was released on 18th June 2009: See: <<http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/>> last accessed [30/01/17]

<sup>23</sup> UK Climate Projections (2009) North East 2050s Medium Emissions Scenario [online] available at: <<http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk/23749?emission=medium>> last accessed [30/01/17]

## Flood risk

The eastern boundary of the NNCNP area comprises the North Northumberland coastline. Many areas along the coast are located within in Flood Zone 3 (medium-high risk of coastal flooding), meaning are classed as having a 0.5% or greater (1 in 200) chance of being affected by coastal flooding in any given year.. Additionally, the Swinehoe Burn is a watercourse extending west from Seahouses, with Long Nanny an additional watercourse extending east from Beadnell Bay. The land adjacent to both of these watercourses is also located in Flood Zone 3 (medium-high risk of fluvial flooding).

Two historic flood events have occurred in the NNCNP, one at Brunton Burn in the south of the Neighbourhood Plan area, and the other at Annstead Burn in the east of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The NNCNP area is located within the North East Northumberland Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP). The NNCNP lies within Sub-area 9 – Coastal. The main sources of flooding are from coastal streams, there are also agricultural flood defences and a tidal flood warning services for Seahouses and Beadnell. Flood risk within the area is currently low, and not expected to increase, however if maintenance is withdrawn from agricultural defences and channel maintenance, natural process will be allowed to operate. Communities and individuals will need to take an increasing role in managing the risk and consequences of flooding in the future<sup>24</sup>.

## Future baseline

Climate change has the potential to increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather events in the NNCNP area. This is likely to increase the risks associated with climate change (including fluvial, coastal and drainage related flooding) with an increased need for resilience and adaptation. Additional future development has the potential to exacerbate flood risks.

In terms of climate change contribution, GHG emissions generated in the NNCNP area may decrease with wider adoption of energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production and new technologies. However, increases in the built footprint of the NNCNP area would contribute to increases in absolute levels of GHG emissions.

## A.3 Historic environment and landscape

### Context Review

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Protect and enhance valued landscapes, giving particular weight to those identified as being of national importance.
- Heritage assets should be recognised as an 'irreplaceable resource' that should be conserved in a 'manner appropriate to their significance', taking account of 'the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits' of conservation, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to local character and distinctiveness.
- Set out a 'positive strategy' for the 'conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment', including those heritage assets that are most at risk.
- Develop 'robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics'.

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<sup>24</sup> Environment Agency (2009) North East Northumberland Catchment Flood Management Plan [online] accessible via: <[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/289148/North\\_East\\_Northumberland\\_Catchment\\_Flood\\_Management\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/289148/North_East_Northumberland_Catchment_Flood_Management_Plan.pdf)> last accessed [22/05/2017]

- Consider the effects of climate change in the long term, including in terms of landscape. Adopt 'proactive strategies' to adaptation and manage risks through adaptation measures including well planned green infrastructure.

The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England<sup>25</sup> sets out its vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life.

The Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2014-2019 sets out a 20 year vision to protect the special qualities from forces of change within the AONB, in particular: inappropriate development, visitor pressures, and changes in land management, climate change and non-native invasive species.

The vision statement for the AONB states:

*'A sense of remoteness and wildness is maintained, with wide open coastal and sea views, a naturally functioning coastline rich in wildlife, and a clear distinction between settlements and open countryside. The AONB is a living, working area with a celebrated history and culture, and a vibrant present in which social and economic wellbeing is successfully integrated with the conservation and enhancement of the special qualities of the area.'*<sup>26</sup>

Reflecting this statement, the AONB has three themes (listed below), and subsequently presents a series of policies and objectives to achieve this vision in the AONB, in addition to proposing an annually reviewed action plan to help deliver these goals.

- Conserve and enhance the special landscape, natural environment and heritage of the Northumberland Coast AONB;
- The Northumberland Coast AONB remains as a living and thriving landscape; and
- Celebrate and discover the Northumberland Coast AONB.

The saved policies within the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan (1999) which directly addresses the landscape and historic environment within the NNCNP area includes the following:

- Policy F2: Coastal Zone; and
- Policy F4: Intermediate Areas of Landscape Value

## Baseline Summary

### Current baseline

#### Landscape

The Northumberland Coast was designated as an AONB in 1958 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Following the introduction of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Government confirmed that landscape qualities of both National Parks and AONBs were equivalent. As such, the protection given by the land use planning system to natural beauty in areas designated as National Parks and AONBs should also be equivalent. Additionally, twenty four percent of the AONB lies within the North Northumberland Heritage Coast, which is recognised for its landscape, recreational and heritage interest. Although Heritage Coasts are 'defined' rather than

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<sup>25</sup> HM Government (2010) The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England [online] available at: <[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/publications/6763.aspx](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/6763.aspx)> last accessed [30/01/17]

<sup>26</sup> Northumberland Coast AONB (2014): 'AONB Management Plan' [online] available to download from: <<http://www.northumberlandcoastaonb.org/management-plan/>> last accessed [26/01/17]

designated, they are established to conserve, protect and enhance the best stretches of undeveloped coast in England<sup>27</sup>.

The Northumberland Coast AONB covers an area of 138 sq. km along a 64km stretch of the coastline between Berwick-upon-Tweed and the Croquet Estuary, and encompasses the entirety of the coastline located in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The AONB is situated in the Northumberland Coast Coastal Plan National Character Area (NCA), with the summary of the NCA profile<sup>28</sup> stating the following:

- *'The dramatic coastline is exceptionally varied, with rocky headlands and cliffs contrasting with long, sweeping sandy beaches backed by dunes, and extensive intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh around Lindisfarne (to the north of the NNCNP area)'*
- *'The Heritage Coast and coastal fringe are of national and international nature conservation importance for their geology, dune and coastal cliff habitats, offshore islands and intertidal habitats' previously discussed in Chapter 3.*
- *'The huge skies, striking views, tranquillity and natural beauty of this area draw a large number of visitors and tourism is now a very important part of the local economy'*

The most recent Landscape Character Assessment undertaken in 2010 on behalf of Northumberland County Council identified five Landscape Character Types and 12 Landscape Character Areas within the NCA, with the following located within the Neighbourhood Plan area<sup>29</sup>:

One character area within 'LCT 4 Rocky Coastline':

- *Farne Islands (4b): The western section of this area is punctuated by the eminence of Bamburgh Castle on its basalt outcrop. This feature dominates the low lying landscape, and the dune systems which stretch to Seahouses. Further south, the coast is rockier, though still with some dunes. Seahouses and Beadnell are important local tourist centres.*

One character area within 'LCT 5 Sandy Coastline':

- *Beadnell and Embleton Bays (5b): These two small bays have broad sandy beaches, backed by dune systems. The small villages of High Newton by the Sea and Embleton are set back from the coast, with Low Newton and Beadnell Harbour associated with the beach. The low hill by Low Newton offers a dramatic view across the bay to Dunstanburgh Castle. There is a large caravan park at Beadnell, and a coastal footpath runs the length of the area.*

With regard to the marine environment, the emerging North East Marine Plan<sup>30</sup> will cover an area of approximately 687km of coastline, covering over 6,000km<sup>2</sup> of sea. The Marine Policy Statement is the framework for preparing marine Plans and taking decisions in the marine environment. Both of these plans will have to be considered when planning development in the marine environment. These plans have a strong focus on sustainability, working towards the UK Administrations vision of having 'clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas'.

## Historic Environment

The Neighbourhood Plan area has a rich historic environment. Numerous features are recognised through historic environment designations, including the statutory listed buildings and scheduled monuments, which are nationally designated, and three conservation areas, designated at the local

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<sup>27</sup> Natural England (2015): 'Heritage Coasts: definition, purpose and Natural England's role', [online] available to access via: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heritage-coasts-protecting-undeveloped-coast/heritage-coasts-definition-purpose-and-natural-englands-role>> last accessed [23/02/17]

<sup>28</sup> Natural England (2014): 'NCA Profile: 01 North Northumberland Coastal Plain' [online] available to download from: <<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5236546013757440>> last accessed [26/01/17]

<sup>29</sup> Land Use Consultants (2010): 'Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment Part A: Landscape Classification', [online] Available from: <<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=ce99fc57-0610-4498-afc2-c9ce03fad03&version=-1>> last accessed [26/01/17]

<sup>30</sup>Marine Management Organisation (2017) The Emerging North East Marine Plan [online] available at: <<http://mis.marinemanagement.org.uk/north-east>> last accessed [22/02/17]

level<sup>31</sup>: Bamburgh Conservation Area (designated in 1972), North Sunderland Conservation Area (designated in 2005) and Seahouses Conservation Area (designated in 2005).

The 2014-2019 Northumberland Coast AONB Management Plan categorises the historic environment into four themes: ecclesiastical, castles and defence, fishing and farming, and industry and transport, highlighting that the history of human interaction and occupation of the landscape is integral to the character of the AONB.

Historic England is the statutory consultee for certain categories of listed building consent and all applications for scheduled monument consent. The historic environment is protected through the planning system, via conditions imposed on developers and other mechanisms. The Neighbourhood Plan Area contains two Grade I listed buildings, five Grade II\* listed buildings and sixty-eight Grade II listed buildings.

The Grade I listed buildings are as follows:

- Bamburgh Castle; and
- Church of St Aidan.

The Grade II\* listed buildings are as follows:

- Beadnell Hall;
- The Craster Arms;
- Budle Hall;
- Monument to Grace Darling circa 30 yards west of Church of St Aidan; and
- Dovecote circa 50 yards south of Armstrong House.

Scheduled monuments are sites of national importance and protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. According to the National Heritage List for England<sup>32</sup>, there are six scheduled monuments in the Neighbourhood Plan area, listed below:

- St Ebba's Chapel and monastic site (south eastern corner of NNCNP area)
- Benthall round cairn (south eastern corner of NNCNP area)
- Deserted medieval village and chapel at Tughall (south western corner of NNCNP area)
- Dovecote 150yds (140m) NE of Lepers' Hospital (north eastern corner of NNCNP area)
- Round barrow 520m WNW of Quarry Cottage (north eastern corner of NNCNP area); and
- Unknown wreck. 600m ENE of Bamburgh Castle (north east corner of NNCNP area).

Since 2008, Historic England has released an annual Heritage at Risk Register. The Heritage at Risk Register highlights the Grade I, Grade II and Grade II\* listed buildings, and scheduled monuments, conservation areas, wreck sites and registered parks and gardens in England deemed to be 'at risk'. The latest Heritage at Risk Register<sup>33</sup> highlights that there are three scheduled monuments deemed to be at risk in the Neighbourhood Plan area. These are:

- Round barrow 520m WNW of Quarry Cottage: Condition is generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems; principal vulnerability is from animal burrowing (at moderate risk).
- Benthall round cairn: Condition is generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems; principal vulnerability is from animal burrowing (at moderate risk).

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<sup>31</sup> Northumberland County Council (no date): 'Conservation Area Interactive Map' [online] available at: <<http://map.northumberland.gov.uk/Conservation/>> last accessed [26/01/17]

<sup>32</sup> Historic England: National Heritage List for England: <<http://list.historicengland.org.uk>> last accessed [26/01/2017.]

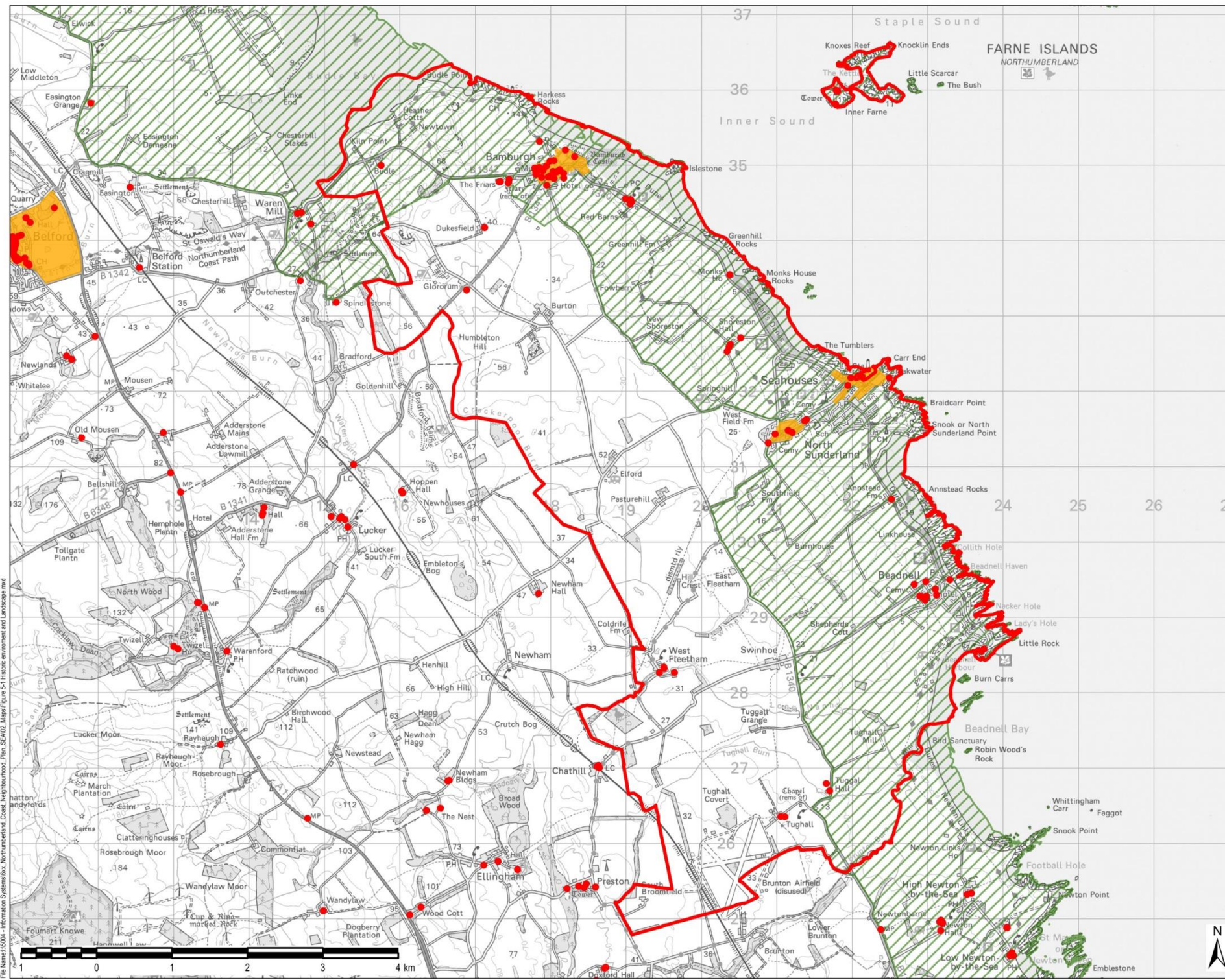
<sup>33</sup> Historic England (2016): 'Heritage at Risk Register 2016: North East', [online] available to download from: <<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/har-2016-registers/>> last accessed [26/01/17]

- St Ebba's Chapel and monastic site: Condition is generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems; principal vulnerability is from coastal erosion.

It should be noted that not all of the area's historic environment features are subject to statutory designations, and non-designated features comprise a large part of what people have contact with as part of daily life – whether at home, work or leisure. Although not designated, many buildings and areas are of historic interest and are seen as important by local communities. For example, listed on the 'Keys to the Past'<sup>34</sup> online database are 197 historical sites in Bamburgh, 164 historical sites in Beadnell and 131 historical sites in North Sunderland.

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<sup>34</sup> Northumberland County Council & Durham County Council (2017): 'Keys to the Past – last updated October 2016', [online] available at: <<http://www.keystothepast.info/article/8749/KeysToThePast-Home-Page>> last accessed [26/01/17] presents features listed on the Historic Environmental Record for Northumberland.



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**LEGEND**

- North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Listed Building
- Conservation Area
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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Purpose of Issue **DRAFT**

Client **NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

Project Title  
**STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Drawing Title  
**NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND COAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS**

Drawn SJ	Checked BB	Approved NCB	Date 27/02/2017
AECOM Internal Project No. 60472167		Scale @ A4 1:65,000	

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Drawing Number **FIGURE 5.1** Rev **0**

File Name: I:\004 - Information Systems\Box - Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan\_SEA\02\_Maps\Figure 5.1\_Historic Environment and Landscape.mxd



## Future baseline

New development areas in the Neighbourhood Plan area have the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets; for example, through inappropriate design and layout. It should be noted, however, that existing historic environment designations and the provisions of the AONB Management Plan offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings. Additionally, as Conservation Area Appraisals<sup>35</sup> exist for both North Sunderland and Seahouses Conservation Areas, these offer additional protection in terms of outlining suggested priorities for management and decision making for areas within these two conservation areas.

New development has the potential to lead to small, but incremental changes in landscape and townscape character and quality in and around the Neighbourhood Plan area; for instance, through the loss of landscape features and visual impact. However, new development need not be harmful to the significance of a heritage asset, and in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan area there is opportunity for new development to enhance the historic setting of the key features and areas and better reveal assets' heritage significance.

## A.4 Land, Soil and Water Resources

### Context Review

The EU's Soil Thematic Strategy<sup>36</sup> presents a strategy for protecting soils resources in Europe. The main aim of the strategy is to minimise soil degradation and limit associated detrimental effects linked to water quality and quantity, human health, climate change, biodiversity, and food safety.

The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) drives a catchment-based approach to water management. In England and Wales there are 100 water catchments and it is Defra's intention is to establish a 'framework for integrated catchment management' across England. The Environment Agency is establishing 'Significant Water Management Issues' and recently presented second River Basin Management Plans to ministers. The plans seek to deliver the objectives of the WFD namely:

- Enhance the status and prevent the further deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and associated wetlands which depend on aquatic ecosystems;
- Promote the sustainable use of water;
- Reduce the pollution of water, especially by 'priority' and 'priority hazardous' substances; and
- Ensure the progressive reduction of groundwater pollution.

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Protect and enhance soils. The value of best and most versatile agricultural land should also be taken into account.
- Prevent new or existing development from being 'adversely affected' by the presence of 'unacceptable levels' of soil pollution or land instability and be willing to remediate and mitigate 'despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate'.
- Encourage the effective use of land' through the reuse of land which has been previously developed, 'provided that this is not of high environmental value'. Whilst there is no longer a national requirement to build at a minimum density, the NPPF requires local planning authorities to 'set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances'.
- Produce strategic policies to deliver the provision of a variety of infrastructure, including that necessary for water supply.

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<sup>35</sup> Northumberland County Council (no date): 'Conservation Area Appraisals', [online] available to download from: <<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Planning/Conservation/Conservation.aspx?nccredirect=1>> last accessed [26/01/17]

<sup>36</sup> European Commission (2006) Soil Thematic Policy [online] available at: <[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/index_en.htm)> last accessed [30/01/17]

- With regards to waste, the NPPF does not contain any specific waste policies as waste planning policy will be published as part of the National Waste Management Plan.

Other key documents at the national level include Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England<sup>37</sup>, which sets out a vision for soil use in England, and the Water White Paper<sup>38</sup>, which sets out the Government's vision for a more resilient water sector. It states the measures that will be taken to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystems, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources. .

The saved policies within the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan (1999) which directly addresses Land, Soil and Water Resources within the NNCNP area includes the following:

- Policy F14: Land Reclamation; and
- Policy C13: Water

## Baseline Summary

### Current Baseline

#### Land quality

There are no 'Special Sites' within the NNCNP area, as designated under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act. The NNCNP area does not have a history of heavy industrial land use, which may have resulted in soil and groundwater pollution. There are no recorded pollution incidents related to industrial sites regulated under the EC Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive (IPPC)<sup>39</sup>.

This does not preclude the potential for localised soil or groundwater contamination to be present (e.g. from historical fuel oil spills, etc). One major historical spill has been reported within/adjacent to the NNCNP area: an oils/fuel spill with significant potential impact on local water quality in 2005<sup>40</sup>.

#### Quality of agricultural land

The Agricultural Land Classification classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the 'best and most versatile' land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. In terms of the location of the best and most versatile agricultural land, a detailed classification has been carried out in the towns of Beadnell and Seahouses<sup>41</sup>. In this context:

- there is an area of Grade 3a Agricultural Land to the south of Kennedy Green in Beadnell; and
- there are areas of Grade 2 and Grade 3a Agricultural Land located directly west of the Caravan Park in Seahouses, with Broad Road marking the western extent of these areas.

Coastal land along the eastern boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area is classified as 'non-agricultural'. All remaining land within the area which is yet to have a detailed assessment undertaken is classified as Grade 3, with small areas of Grade 2 Agricultural Land in the northern section of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

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<sup>37</sup> Defra (2009) Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England [online] available to download from: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-our-soils-a-strategy-for-england>> last accessed [30/01/17]

<sup>38</sup> Defra (2011) Water for life (The Water White Paper) [online] available at <<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm82/8230/8230.pdf>> last accessed [30/01/17]

<sup>39</sup> Environment Agency interactive map: 'Pollution Incidents' [online] <<http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/default.aspx>> last accessed [17/02/17]

<sup>40</sup> Environment Agency interactive map: 'Pollution Incidents' [online] <<http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/default.aspx>> last accessed [17/02/17]

<sup>41</sup> MAGIC Interactive Map (2017): 'Landscape; Post 1988 Agricultural Land Classification (England)' [online] layer available to view using the following mapping tool: <<http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>> last accessed [30/01/17]

## Watercourses

The main watercourses flowing through the NNCNP area are small streams, with Swinehoe Burn extending west from Seahouses, Crackerpool Burn located along the western boundary between Bamburgh Parish and North Sunderland Parish, and Tughall Burn located in Beadnell Parish.

Additionally, 'Long Nanny' is located between Low Newton and Beadnell, ultimately meandering into Beadnell Bay. This watercourse has been classified as having 'very good' water quality<sup>42</sup>

Water supply and waste water provision in the area is provided by Northumbrian Water. The Berwick and Fowberry Water Resource Zone (WRZ) serves the Neighbourhood Plan area, and the Final Water Resources Management Plan (2010-2035)<sup>43</sup> states that in a dry year there will be no constraint on the deployable output and therefore no resource constraints. The yield from the aquifers in the zone is considered to exceed the current license volumes.

Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been defined by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. The zones show the risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. The Neighbourhood Plan area contains no SPZs.

The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwater has nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or is thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. Areas associated with such groundwater are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) within which Member States are required to establish Action Programmes in order to reduce and prevent further nitrate contamination. Land towards the northern boundary of the NNCNP area contains a section of the Lindisfarne NNR Eutrophic NVZ<sup>44</sup>, designated as eutrophic due to the widespread growth of the opportunistic microalgae *Enteromorpha spp.*

## Future baseline

Due to increasing legislative and regulatory requirements, there are increasing pressures to improving recycling and composting rates.

In terms of water quality, the requirements of the Water Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality in watercourses in the wider area. Water quality is also likely to continue to be affected by pollution incidents in the area, the presence of non-native species and physical modifications to water bodies.

For the Berwick and Fowberry Water Resource Zone, in a dry year there will be no constraint on the deployable output and therefore no resource constraints, as mentioned in the Final Water Resources Management Plan (2010-2035)<sup>45</sup> by Northumbrian Water. The yield from the aquifers in the zone is considered to exceed the current license volumes. It is not expected that climate change would affect the ability to supply water in the zone<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Environment Agency interactive map: 'River Quality' [online] < <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/default.aspx>> last accessed [17/02/17]

<sup>43</sup> Northumbrian Water Limited (2010): 'Water Resources Management Plan 2010-2035', [online] available at: <[https://www.nwl.co.uk/assets/documents/NW\\_Final\\_WRMP\\_V.9.pdf](https://www.nwl.co.uk/assets/documents/NW_Final_WRMP_V.9.pdf)> last accessed [01/02/17]

<sup>44</sup> Environment Agency (2017): 'Lindisfarne NNR Eutrophic NVZ Data Sheet' [online] available to download from: <<http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/wiybyController?latest=true&topic=nvz&ep=query&lang=en&x=411905.6497335434&y=636110.3201913834&scale=7&layerGroups=1&queryWindowWidth=25&queryWindowHeight=25>> last accessed [30/01/17]

<sup>45</sup> Northumbrian Water Limited (2010): 'Water Resources Management Plan 2010-2035', [online] available at: <[https://www.nwl.co.uk/assets/documents/NW\\_Final\\_WRMP\\_V.9.pdf](https://www.nwl.co.uk/assets/documents/NW_Final_WRMP_V.9.pdf)> last accessed [01/02/17]

<sup>46</sup> Northumbrian Water Limited (2014): 'Final Water Resources Management Plan', [online] available to download from: <<https://www.nwl.co.uk/your-home/environment/current-WRMP.aspx>> last accessed [01/02/17]

## A.5 Population and Community

### Context Review

Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- To 'boost significantly the supply of housing', local planning authorities should meet the 'full, objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing' in their area. They should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.
- With a view to creating 'sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities' authorities should ensure provision of affordable housing onsite or externally where robustly justified.
- In rural areas, when exercising the duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities, local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate. Authorities should consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.
- The NPPF attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. It explains how good design is a key aspect in sustainable development, and how development should improve the quality of the area over its lifetime, not just in the short term. Good architecture and landscaping are important, with the use of design codes contributing to the delivery of high quality outcomes. Design should reinforce local distinctiveness, raise the standard more generally in the area and address the connections between people and places.
- The social role of the planning system involves 'supporting vibrant and healthy communities'.
- The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- Ensure that developments create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Places should contain clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public spaces, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.
- Ensuring that there is a 'sufficient choice of school places' is of 'great importance' and there is a need to take a 'proactive, positive and collaborative approach' to bringing forward 'development that will widen choice in education'.

The saved policies within the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan (1999) which directly addresses the Population and Community within the NNCNP area includes the following:

- Policy S6: Affordable Housing;
- Policy F31: Social and Economic Welfare
- Policy C3: School Improvements

According to the most recent census data available (see **Table 7.1**), North Sunderland and Beadnell have shown increases in population: 8.7% and 3.4% respectively. The increase for Beadnell broadly aligns with the regional and sub-regional trends, whereas the increase for North Sunderland aligns the higher population growth seen nationally. Comparatively, the population for Bamburgh has decreased by 8.8%, a notable contrast to the other parishes in the Neighbourhood Plan area and regional and national trends.

### Baseline summary

## Current baseline

### Age structure

Broadly speaking, the three parishes within the NNCNP area show similar age structures across all age groups, with the lowest percentage of the population within the 0-15 age group and the highest percentage of the population within the 60+ age group. Comparatively, the regional and national trends highlight the opposite, with a lower percentage of the population within the 60+ age group than the three parishes (between 13% and 25% lower) and a higher percentage of the population in the 0-15 age group (between 5 and 10% higher).

### Household deprivation

Census statistics measure deprivation across four 'dimensions' of deprivation, summarized below:

- **Employment:** Any person in the household (not a full-time student) that is either unemployed or long-term sick.
- **Education:** No person in the household has at least a level 2 qualification and no person aged 16-18 is a full-time student.
- **Health and Disability:** Any person in the household that has generally 'bad' or 'very bad' health, or has a long term health problem.
- **Housing:** The household accommodation is either overcrowded (with an occupancy rating of -1 or less), in a shared dwelling or has no central heating.

Broadly speaking, all three parishes within the Neighbourhood Plan area contain a greater percentage of households which are deprived in some way in comparison with the rest of Northumberland, with the most notable differences to the regional and national trends observed in the 'Deprived in 1 dimension' category. Beadnell is the only parish within the NNCNP area where the percentage of households which are not deprived aligns with the regional and national trends.

### Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD) is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights, as described below. The seven deprivation domains are as follows:

- **Income:** The proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income, including those individuals that are out-of-work and those that are in work but who have low earnings (satisfying the respective means tests).
- **Employment:** The proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market, including those individuals who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness or disability, or caring responsibilities.
- **Education, Skills and Training:** The lack of attainment and skills in the local population.
- **Health Deprivation and Disability:** The risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. Morbidity, disability and premature mortality are also considered, excluding the aspects of behaviour or environment that may be predictive of future health deprivation.
- **Crime:** The risk of personal and material victimisation at local level.
- **Barriers to Housing and Services:** The physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services, with indicators categorised in two sub-domains.
  1. 'Geographical Barriers': relating to the physical proximity of local services
  2. 'Wider Barriers': relating to access to housing, such as affordability.

- **Living Environment:** The quality of the local environment, with indicators falling categorised in two sub-domains.
  3. 'Indoors Living Environment' measures the quality of housing.
  4. 'Outdoors Living Environment' measures air quality and road traffic accidents.

Two supplementary indices (subsets of the Income deprivation domains), are also included:

- **Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index:** The proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.
- **Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index:** The proportion of all those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation.

Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardised geographies designed to be as consistent in population as possible, with each LSOA containing approximately 1,000 to 1,500 people. In relation to the IMD 2015, LSOAs are ranked out of the 32,844 in England and Wales, with 1 being the most deprived. Ranks are normalized into deciles, with a value of 1 reflecting the top 10% most deprived LSOAs in England and Wales.

There are three LSOAs that are either fully or partially in the Neighbourhood Plan area:

- **E01027374:** Northumberland 003A extends across the entirety of Bamburgh parish.
- **E01027383:** Northumberland 003D covers the northern half of North Sunderland parish.
- **E01027384:** Northumberland 003E covers the southern half of North Sunderland parish and extends across the entirety of Beadnell Parish.

#### General trends:

**E01027374:** Northumberland 003A has a workforce with average levels of income, employment and education. The outdoor quality of life is excellent in comparison to indoor quality, although there are significant geographical barriers due to the LSOA's coastal location. Additionally, there are significant barriers to housing and services closely linked to housing affordability and accessibility issues (i.e. lack of access to public transport network, services, facilities and employment opportunities). The overall living environment within the LSOA is poor despite being a safe place to live, with limited crime.

**E01027383:** Northumberland 003D also has a workforce with average levels of income, employment and education. The outdoor quality of life is excellent, and it is one of the safest places to live with limited crime. The overall living environment however is generally poor, reflected in the geographical barriers limiting the access to opportunities to improve the relatively poor education and skills for both children and adults within the LSOA.

**E01027384:** Northumberland 003E has a workforce with lower levels of income and employment than the other LSOAs in the Neighbourhood Plan area, however the subsequent impact on the level of income deprivation affecting children and older people is small, with the LSOA in the top 40% least deprived domains for these categories. The outdoor quality of life is excellent, although the indoor quality is not - reflected in the significant barriers to housing and services and geographical barriers. Nevertheless, the LSOA is one of the safest places to live based on its position in the top 10% decile for reduced levels of crime.

#### Similarities between the LSOAs

##### *Poor performance (top 30% most deprived deciles)*

- Both the E01027374 Northumberland 003A and E01027384 Northumberland 003E LSOAs are most deprived in regards to the barriers to housing and services sub-domain. Furthermore, all three LSOAs are in the most deprived decile in the indoors sub domain.

- All three LSOAs fall in the top 30% most deprived deciles in the geographical barriers sub domain, reflecting their primarily rural setting.

*Good performance (top 30% least deprived deciles)*

- All three LSOAs fall in the top 30% in the living environment domain.
- All three LSOAs fall in the least deprived decile for the crime domain and the outdoors sub-domain. The NNCNP area is therefore a safe place to live within excellent opportunities to access fresh air and open spaces, given its proximity to the coast and setting within the Northumberland Coast AONB.

### Contrasts between the LSOAs

- E01027383 Northumberland 003D is within the top 40% most deprived in terms of health deprivation and disability. Comparatively, the other two LSOAs within the Neighbourhood Plan area are within the top 40% least deprived for the same domain.
- E01027383 Northumberland 003D has significantly fewer barriers to housing and services than the other two LSOAs, falling in the middle decile in comparison to the most deprived decile for both E01027374 Northumberland 003A, and E01023784 Northumberland 003E.
- E01023784 Northumberland 003E falls within the least 20% decile for the income deprivation affecting older people domain, with the other two LSOAs within the area within the middle decile for the same domain.

### Housing tenure

The proportion of people owning a home outright or with a mortgage in all three parishes within the NNCNP area in 2011 is greater than the North East and England averages. Comparatively, Bamburgh is the only parish where this proportion is lower than that for Northumberland: 64% compared to 66%.

Additionally, the proportion of socially rented houses in Beadnell and Bamburgh is over 50% lower than the regional and national averages, with North Sunderland broadly in line with the regional and national counterparts. As already highlighted above, the barriers to housing and quality in two of the three LSOAs within the Neighbourhood Plan area is a significant issue.

### Education

The parishes of Bamburgh and Beadnell have a higher proportion of all usual residents (16+) with Level 4 qualifications or above (31% and 30% respectively) compared to the average for Northumberland (26%), the North East (22%) and England (27%). Comparatively, the number of all usual residents within North Sunderland with no qualifications is 28%, which is 5% greater than the other two parishes and the national average, but aligns with the North West average.

### Employment

All three parishes within the NNCNP area have a significantly higher proportion of residents (aged 16-74) in skilled trade occupations compared with the regional and national averages. The same trend is observed for residents who are managers, directors or senior officials, with the averages for Bamburgh and Beadnell over 10% greater than the regional and national trends (reflecting the higher qualifications in the workforce). Three occupational categories have fewer residents within the Neighbourhood Plan area employed compared to the regional and national counterparts:

- Sales and customer service occupations;
- Administrative and secretarial occupations; and
- Associate, professional and technical occupations

## Future Baseline

The populations of Beadnell Parish and North Sunderland Parish grew between the years 2001 -2011, in comparison to the reduction seen in Bamburgh parish. It is unclear whether residents relocated out of the Neighbourhood Plan area. In common with many other areas, there is an ageing population within the NNCNP area.

The suitability and availability of housing for local requirements depends in part on the successful implementation of the policies within the North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan and appropriate housing policies taken forward through the Berwick upon Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999 and its successor.

## A.6 Health and Wellbeing

### Context Review

Key messages from the NPPF include:

- The social role of the planning system involves 'supporting vibrant and healthy communities'.
- A core planning principle is to 'take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all'.
- The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities'
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- Set out the strategic policies to deliver the provision of health facilities.
- Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

In relation to other key national messages in relation to health, Fair Society, Healthy Lives<sup>47</sup> ('The Marmot Review') investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is: "overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities".

The increasing role that local level authorities are expected to play in providing health outcomes is demonstrated by recent government legislation. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 transferred responsibility for public health from the NHS to local government, giving local authorities a duty to improve the health of the people who live in their areas. This will require a more holistic approach to health across all local government functions.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Northumberland identifies 5 key priority areas noted for making a fundamental difference to the health and wellbeing of those living in Northumberland (inclusive of the NNCNP area), referred to as 'our strategy'<sup>48</sup> They build upon the base JSNA report produced in 2009 and the following executive summary produced in 2012, and includes:

- Focus on those children and families, who without some extra help and support early on, would be at risk of having poorer health, not doing as well at school, and not achieving their full potential in their lives;

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<sup>47</sup> The Marmot Review (2011) The Marmot Review: Implications for Spatial Planning [online] available to download from: <http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=106106> last accessed [27/01/17]

<sup>48</sup> Northumberland County Council (ca 2012): 'JSNA Our Strategy' [online] available at: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Campaigns/jsna/Our-strategy.aspx> last accessed [27/01/17]



- Focus on tackling some of the main causes of health problems in the County including obesity and diet, mental health and alcohol misuse;
- Supporting people with long term conditions to be more independent and have full choice and control over their lives;
- Making sure that all partners in Northumberland work well together and are clear about what they themselves need to do to help improve the health and wellbeing of local people; and
- Making sure that all public services support disabled people and those with long term health conditions to stay active for as long as possible.

The saved policies within the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan (1999) which directly addresses the Health and Wellbeing of residents within the NNCNP area includes the following:

- Policy R2: Recreational Facilities;
- Policy R3: Outdoor Recreational Facilities; and
- Policy R10: Football Pitches at Seahouses
- Policy C2: Health Care Facilities

## Baseline Summary

### Current baseline

#### Health indicators and deprivation

Deprivation is a significant contributor to poor health and can have adverse effects on wellbeing. Elements related to poor housing quality, geographical barriers, education and employment are previously discussed in detail in A5. General health is generally favourable in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Although levels of very good health in the three parishes falls below the regional and national averages, the percentage of the people within the NNCNP area who consider themselves in 'good health' and 'fair health' is comparatively higher than the regional and national averages.

The lower levels of 'very good health' for the NNCNP area align with the disability data previously discussed. Across the three parishes, the average percentage of the population who reported that their daily activities were limited in some way was 25.5% in the 2011 Census, compared to the average of 20.7% for Northumberland, 21.7% for the North East and 17.6% for England. However, it is useful to mention that the higher averages for the Neighbourhood Plan area might also reflect the population structure, with over 40% of residents aged 60+ (greater than the regional and national averages).

### Future baseline

Broadly speaking, the health and well-being within the Neighbourhood Plan area is generally good in comparison with the regional and national averages. However, an ageing population has the potential to increase pressures on community and healthcare services and is therefore a significant influence on the future health and well-being within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

## A.7 Transportation

### Context review

European and UK transport policies and plans place emphasis on the modernisation and sustainability of the transport network. Specific objectives include reducing pollution and road congestion through improvements to public transport, walking and cycling networks and reducing the need to travel. National policy also focuses on the need for the transport network to support sustainable economic growth.

Northumberland County Council's third Local Transport Plan (LTP3 2011-2026)<sup>49</sup> presents the 15-year strategy for the county, addressing some of the key problems and future propositions. The vision for LTP3 is as follows:

*'To make Northumberland a place that is resilient for the future'*

The following objectives seek to achieve the vision above, and are summarised below:

- Supporting economic growth: improving the performance of existing transport networks in those places that show signs of increasing congestion and unreliability, in addition to extending networks to meet growing demand and strengthening the network against external threats of climate change and extreme weather events;
- Minimising greenhouse (GHG) emissions by offering sustainable low carbon choices;
- Improve access to services and facilities (tackling the deprivation statistics seen in A5);
- Safe and healthier travel: Improving the safety of the transport network, particularly for vulnerable road users, in addition to enabling and encouraging more physically active and healthy travel; and
- Quality of life: Improving connections between communities and providing better access to the natural environment.

The saved policies within the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan (1999) which directly addresses Transportation within the NNCNP area includes the following:

- Policy M7: Rail Service Improvements;
- Policy M9: Pedal Cyclists Policy;
- Policy M10: Cycle Parking Facilities;
- Policy M16: Traffic Calming;
- Policy M18 and M19: Road Improvements Seahouses;
- Policy M20: Road and Footpath Improvements Seahouses

## Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

#### Rail network

There are currently no railway stations within the Neighbourhood Plan area. The nearest station is Chathill, located approximately 2 km outside the western boundary of Beadnell parish in the neighbouring parish of Ellingham. With direct services only to stations to the south, there are two daily services to Newcastle (journey time approximately 1 hour or 1 hour 15 minutes depending on service) and intermediate stations. These services however depart early morning (7am) and late evening (7pm).

Alternatively, there are significantly more services to a wider range of destinations departing from Alnmouth Station, with hourly trains departing to Edinburgh, Newcastle and Berwick-upon-Tweed. However, Alnmouth Station is approximately 25 km away from Chathill. There are no 'A' roads or 'B' roads connecting the Neighbourhood Plan area to this station, making road access difficult.

#### Bus network

The principal bus route within the neighbourhood planning area is the X18<sup>50</sup>, navigating along the coast through Bamburgh, Seahouses and Beadnell and connecting the NNCNP area to the wider towns

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<sup>49</sup> Northumberland County Council (2011): 'Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) 2011-2026 Strategy Document', [online] available to download from: <<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Highways/Transport-policy/Transport-plan.aspx?nccredirect=1>> last accessed [30/01/17]

of Berwick, Alnwick and Amble, in addition to the city of Newcastle. As of September 2016, there is roughly a bi-hourly service between Monday-Saturday, with three services on Sundays every 4 hours.

### Road network and congestion

Whilst no 'A' roads pass through the NNCNP area, the A1 is accessible, which is a key national link between the Neighbourhood Plan area, Newcastle, Berwick, Edinburgh and further afield. With regard to the 'B' roads, the B1340 runs along the coastline (eastern boundary) through the village of Seahouses and Beadnell, with the B1341 and B1342 joining at the village of Bamburgh in the northern section of the Neighbourhood Plan area. The majority of the Neighbourhood Plan area is composed of a labyrinth of smaller routes extending between the small villages and hamlets which dominate the inland section of the area, away from the coast.

### Availability of cars and vans

The proportion of households with no access to a car or van is lower than the regional and national averages. Notably, the average for the North East is more than 10% higher than each of the three parishes, which is perhaps a reflection of the geographical location of the Neighbourhood Plan area (along the coastline) and the potential barriers to public transport given the absence of a railway station or a regular bus service away from the coast.

### Travel to work

The most frequently used method of travel to work is via driving a car or van. There are a higher percentage of people who either work mainly at or from home compared with the regional and national averages, notably within Beadnell Parish (11%). At least 40% of the population within the Neighbourhood Plan area are not in employment, a reflection perhaps of the ageing population within the area. 12% of the population in Bamburgh and 14% of the population in North Sunderland travel to work on foot; double the regional and national averages that Beadnell aligns to. This might be due to residents' geographical proximity to the larger villages contained within these parishes (Bamburgh in Bamburgh Parish and Seahouses in North Sunderland parish) compared to the sparsely populated hamlets within Beadnell Parish. Furthermore, fewer people travel by public transport (bus, minibus, coach and train) than the regional and national averages, indicating perhaps due to a lack of availability and frequency of services within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

### Future baseline

Compared to the regional and national averages, there is a higher percentage of the population within the Neighbourhood Plan area who work mainly at or from home or travel to work on foot. This trend is likely to increase with increased trends of home working and flexible working.

The extension of the 'Go Smarter Northumberland (GSN)' scheme from south-east Northumberland into the north-east has the potential to improve sustainable travel to work and contribute to an increasingly low-carbon travel culture.

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<sup>50</sup> Northumberland County Council (2016): 'Bus travel in Northumberland: diagram for north Northumberland', [online] available to download from: <<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Highways/Public-transport/Bus.aspx?nccredirect=1>> last accessed [30/01/17]

