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Background to neighbourhood planning

Progress with the Newbiggin by the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

Structure

Part 1 – What is neighbourhood planning

- Overview;
- Role of planning policies;
- Role of community actions;
- Key stages in preparing a neighbourhood plan.

Part 2 – Progress with the Newbiggin by the Sea NP

- Work to date;
- Draft Neighbourhood Plan;
- Next steps.





Part 1 – background to neighbourhood planning

What is a neighbourhood plan?

- Part of the development plan – same status as the local plan once it has passed referendum;
- Planning law requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise;
- Preparation of a neighbourhood plan allows the community to play a much stronger role in shaping their area;
- Enables communities to set out a positive vision for development in their area over the next 15-20 years;
- Provide local detail – particularly important in Northumberland;
- Meeting local needs and the plan should make sense to local people.

What can neighbourhood plans include?

- Should support the delivery of the strategic policies set out within the local plan;
- The town council can decide on the scope of the plan – it does not need to have a policy about everything;
- Must include planning policies – can only relate to matters which require planning permission;
- Can also include wider community aspirations for things that do not need planning permission e.g. public transport provision, parking restrictions;
- Cannot include policies that relate to minerals and waste development or nationally significant infrastructure projects.



What are planning policies?

Planning policies can only relate to matters that require planning permission = development

Development is defined in law:

- Building, mining, engineering or other operations and also material changes in the use of land or buildings;
- All development requires planning permission, however some is deemed 'permitted development'.



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What are community actions?

Community actions cover matters that don't require planning permission and normally include those matters covered by parish plans e.g.

- Measures to reduce speeding traffic;
- Changes to parking restrictions;
- Improving frequency of public transport services;
- Review of conservation area boundaries;
- Specific environmental or other community projects;
- Control/ management of dog fouling;
- Tackling incidents of antisocial behaviour.



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Key stages in preparing a plan

- Stage 1: designating the neighbourhood area (TC & NCC)
- Stage 2: preparing a draft neighbourhood plan (TC)
- Stage 3: pre-submission consultation (TC)
- Stage 4: submission of plan to the LPA (TC & NCC)
- Stage 5: independent examination (NCC)
- Stage 6: referendum (NCC)
- Stage 7: making the neighbourhood plan (NCC)



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The legal tests – ‘basic conditions’

Only a draft neighbourhood plan that meets all of the basic conditions, can be put to referendum and ‘made’. These are that the plan:

- Has had regard to national policies and advice issued by the secretary of state (NPPF, NPPG);
- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan; and
- Does not breach and is otherwise compliant with the relevant regulations.



Part 2 – Newbiggin by the Sea Neighbourhood Plan

Background

1. **February 2018:** the parish was designated as a neighbourhood area by NCC;
2. **Spring 2019:** early engagement on 'the big issues' for the plan;
3. **Summer 2020:** developed a draft vision, objectives and began developing the evidence base for the plan;
4. **Autumn 2020:** engagement on the draft vision and objectives, possible planning policy areas and community actions;
5. **Winter 2020:** engagement on how housing matters should be addressed in the plan;
6. **Spring 2021:** Final housing needs assessment completed, scope of the plan agreed and commencement of work on strategic environmental assessment and habitats regulations assessment;
7. **Summer/ Autumn 2021:** Identification of housing sites and open spaces and preparation of background papers including discussions with landowners;
8. **Winter 2021:** Preparation of draft plan and work on-going on strategic environmental assessment and habitats regulations assessment.



Key issues identified through consultation

1. A clear separation of settlements to enhance the character and distinctiveness of Newbiggin;
2. New 'wildlife corridors' to protect natural habitats, incorporating sustainable drainage for the Ashington developments and former Alcan ash lagoons;
3. Regeneration of the town through endorsing employment and providing appropriate infrastructure and start-up units;
4. Improved visitor attractions are needed to sustain visitor growth and contribute to commercial sustainability;
5. Improved pedestrian and cycle routes to public transport and a new link road to the strategic network from Woodhorn Roundabout;
6. Housing growth and improved choice to retain and attract families.

Structure of the draft plan

- Chapter 1 – introduction, explains what neighbourhood planning is about, how the draft plan has been developed and what happens next;
- Chapter 2 – provides a background to the town, its history and the key issues for the plan to address;
- Chapter 3 - defines the vision and objectives for the plan;
- Chapter 4 – relates to what makes Newbiggin distinctive;
- Chapter 5 – relates to creating a sustainable and thriving community;
- Chapter 6 – relates to good and sustainable connections;
- Annex 1 – community actions



Vision

By 2036 Newbiggin by the Sea will be successful, thriving and sustainable. A place where people want to live and work because of the rich and distinctive environment, range of services and facilities, leisure opportunities, as well as access to high quality housing, employment and protected open spaces with linked wildlife corridors.

New employment opportunities have reduced the number of residents commuting out of the town for employment and they have access to sustainable modes of transport.

The town centre is vibrant, with a range of shops, social and leisure facilities. These services, facilities and leisure opportunities are now fully accessible, contributing to health and well-being and have resulted in a growth in visitor numbers who support the success of the local economy.

New development ensures the protection and enhancement of the area and safeguards the amenity of the local community.



Objectives

To deliver the vision, three objectives have been identified:

1. ***Distinctive place:*** Achieving a balance between development and maintaining the clear separation of settlements, conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, as well as protecting important open spaces;
2. ***Sustainable and thriving community:*** Supporting new development which meets the needs of existing and future residents. This includes providing the right types of housing, supporting investment in employment space and the visitor economy, as well as strengthening the role of the town centre and improving infrastructure to support health needs;
3. ***Well connected:*** Promoting access to sustainable modes of transport which connect people to a wide range of services, facilities and employment opportunities. As well as enhancing opportunities for safe and active travel and ensuring access for all.

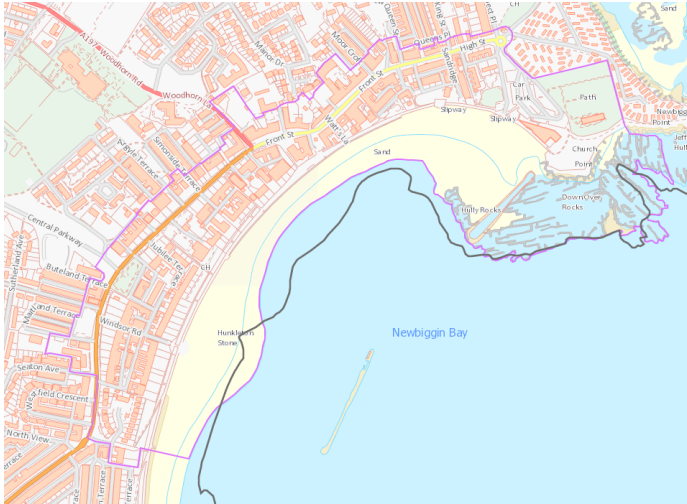




Distinctive place

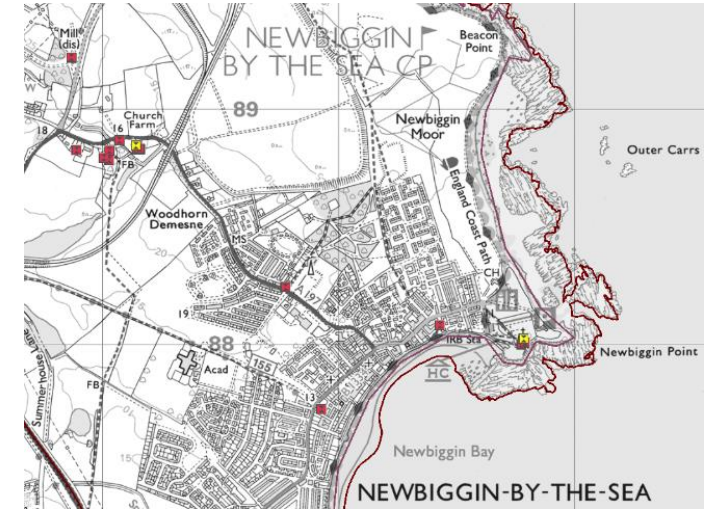
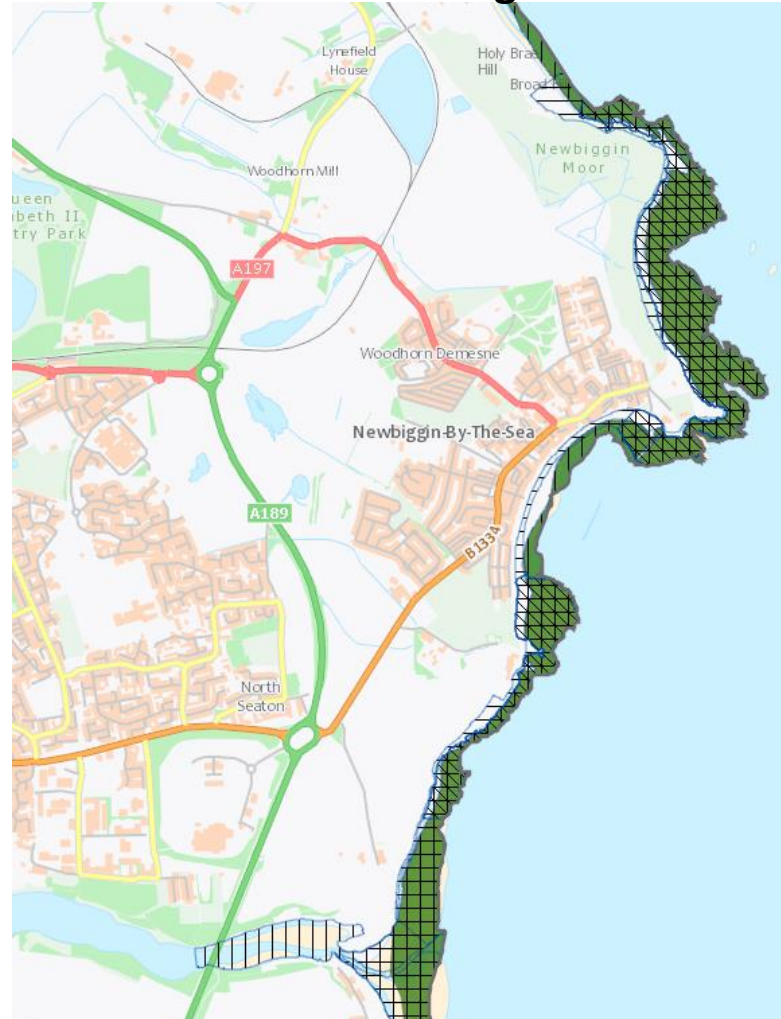
- **Policy N1: Design** – requiring new development to conserve local distinctiveness by respecting and responding to existing character;
- **Green infrastructure and the natural environment** – explains relevant local plan policies;
- **Policy N2: Local Green Space** – proposes the allocation of 8 sites for protection;
- **Historic environment** – explains the relevant local plan policies;
- **Policy N3: Newbiggin by the Sea Conservation Area** – seeks to ensure that new development preserves or enhances the character of the area and identifies important buildings.



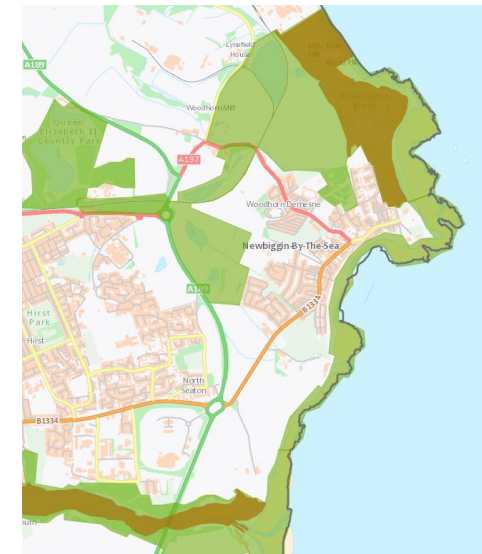


Conservation area

International and national environmental designations



Listed buildings



Local environmental designations

Sustainable, thriving and healthy community

- **Policy N4: Housing site allocations** – proposes the allocation of 3 sites to deliver between 144 and 173 dwellings;



Storey Crescent: 40-50 dwellings

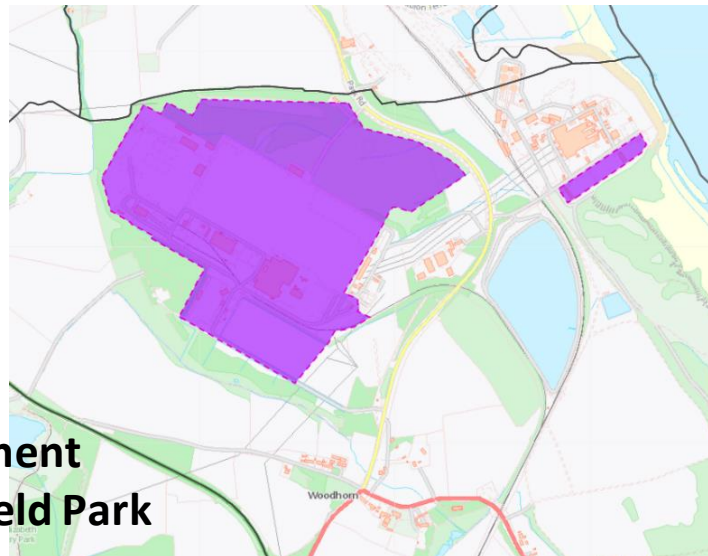
Land to the south of Newbiggin:

- Phase 1: 11-14 dwellings
- Phase 2: 93-109 dwellings



Sustainable, thriving and healthy community

- **Employment, local services and tourism** – explains the relevant local plan policies;
- **Policy N5: Community services and facilities** – seeks to identify and protect important services and facilities.



**Local plan employment
allocation at Lynefield Park**



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Well-connected



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- Reference is made to the **Northumberland Line** and the development of the **Newbiggin/ Ashington Link Road**

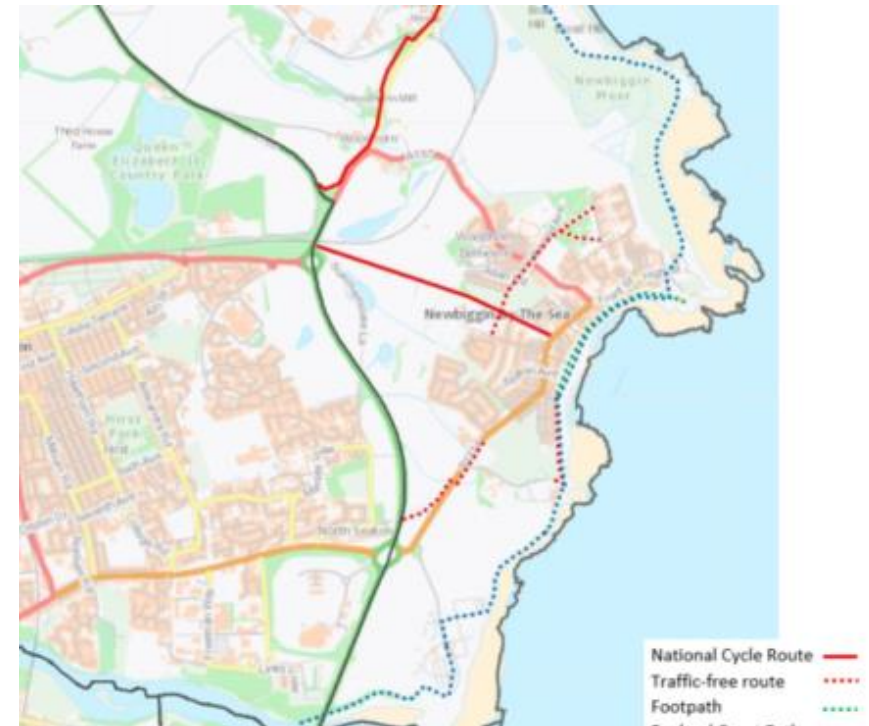


Well-connected



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- **Policy N6: Sustainable transport and new development** – requires new development to maximise the use of sustainable transport modes;
- **Policy N7: Walking and cycling network** – gives support to new development that would improve and/ or extend the walking and cycling network.



Community actions

Objective 1: Distinctive place:

1. Develop environmental enhancement projects particularly regarding improving wildlife corridors, public footpaths and bridleways;
2. Maintenance of open spaces, such as Central Parkway, East Lea Woods and Welfare/ Spital;
3. Work with NCC to update the Newbiggin by the Sea Conservation Area Appraisal;
4. Support projects to celebrate the diverse heritage of the area.

Objective 2 – Sustainable, thriving and healthy communities:

1. Work with others to seek to establish a business hub to provide office space and shared business support services;
2. Develop initiatives to promote Newbiggin by the Sea as a tourist destination.

Objective 3 – Well connected:

1. Maintenance of public rights of way; and
2. Working with NCC on highway improvement projects.



Key next steps

Finalise work on the plan and evidence base, including the SEA;

Consult on the draft plan for 8 weeks;

Amend the plan following consultation;

Submit the plan to NCC for examination;

NCC undertakes a further 8 weeks of consultation and appoints an examiner (with agreement of the TC);

Examination;

Plan amended following examiners recommendations;

NCC arranges referendum;

If plan supported at referendum NCC will then 'make' the plan.



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Any questions?