



Northumberland
County Council

**Draft Humshaugh Parish Neighbourhood Plan
(March 2024)**

**Strategic Environmental
Assessment**

Screening Opinion

FINAL

Prepared by the Neighbourhood Planning Team, Northumberland County
Council

March 2024

Revision history

Version	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
V.1.0	November 2023	Screening Opinion based on the draft Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan (October 2023)	Sarah Brannigan	Planning Manager, Neighbourhood Planning Team
V.2.0	4 December 2023	Screening Opinion updated to take account of responses from Consultation Bodies.	Sarah Brannigan	Planning Manager, Neighbourhood Planning Team
V.3.0	25 March 2024	Final Screening Opinion on submission plan (March 2024).	Sarah Brannigan	Planning Manager, Neighbourhood Planning Team

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Summary of Screening Opinion

1. Humshaugh Parish Council, as the qualifying body, is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Humshaugh administrative parish area. The Plan seeks to address a number of local issues around sustainability, housing need, design, the natural and built environment, community and economy and transport and accessibility. It will be 'made' by Northumberland County Council and the Northumberland National Park Authority as the local planning authorities, and will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.
2. Based on the characteristics of the draft Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan and the area characteristics, the conclusion of the SEA Screening, in the opinion of Northumberland County Council, is the plan is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment and SEA is therefore not required.
3. This opinion is supported by Historic England the Environment Agency. Their representations are in Appendix I of this report. Natural England did not respond to the consultation.
4. In the Submission March 2024 version of the Plan, in addition to a limited number of modifications to policies for the purposes of clarification:
 - Policy 4: Humshaugh Conservation Area – the list of buildings identified as worthy of special attention has been modified to remove those that are listed.
 - Policy 5: Local Distinctiveness has been deleted and Policy 6: Design Codes (renamed 'Humshaugh Design Code') has been extensively rewritten to reflect the latest version of the Design Code. Subsequent policies have been re-numbered.
 - Policy 9: Sustainable Transport – this policy has been modified with the removal of paragraphs relating to rights of way.
5. It is the opinion of Northumberland County Council that these are minor modifications that do not change the conclusion of the SEA Screening.

1. Introduction

Neighbourhood Planning

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by a qualifying body under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by Humshaugh Parish Council (as the 'qualifying body') and will be 'made' by Northumberland County Council and the Northumberland National Park Authority as the local planning authorities.
- 1.2 The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent amendments) and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017.
- 1.3 Communities have a right to be able to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. However, communities are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative purposes to produce such a plan.
- 1.4 Humshaugh Parish Council is devising a Neighbourhood Plan for the Humshaugh administrative parish area. Once 'made' it will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.5 To be 'made', a neighbourhood plan must meet certain Basic Conditions¹ including compliance with EU obligations. One such obligation is the assessment of the effects of the plan on the environment. The procedures to be followed in determining whether a plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment are set out in European Union Directive 2001/42/EC (the 'SEA Directive'), which is transposed into UK legislation through The Environmental Assessment of Plans and programmes Regulations 2004 (the 'SEA Regulations').
- 1.6 The purpose of the SEA Directive is to provide a high level of protection of the environment and to integrate considerations of the environment into the preparation and adoption of plans with a view to promoting sustainable development.

¹ These are set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and in the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations (2012) (as amended).

- 1.7 The SEA Directive sets out criteria for assessing the significance of the impact of a plan or programme on the environment. Any assessment must consider both positive and negative effects.
- 1.8 In the first instance, it is necessary to ascertain if SEA is required. This process is referred to as 'screening'.
- 1.9 This report presents the findings of an SEA screening opinion on the draft Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan, provided by Northumberland County Council as the Local Planning Authority. It adopts a proportionate approach in applying a series of criteria, as set out in Schedule 1 the SEA Directive, to look at the draft Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan and determine whether any significant effects are likely.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

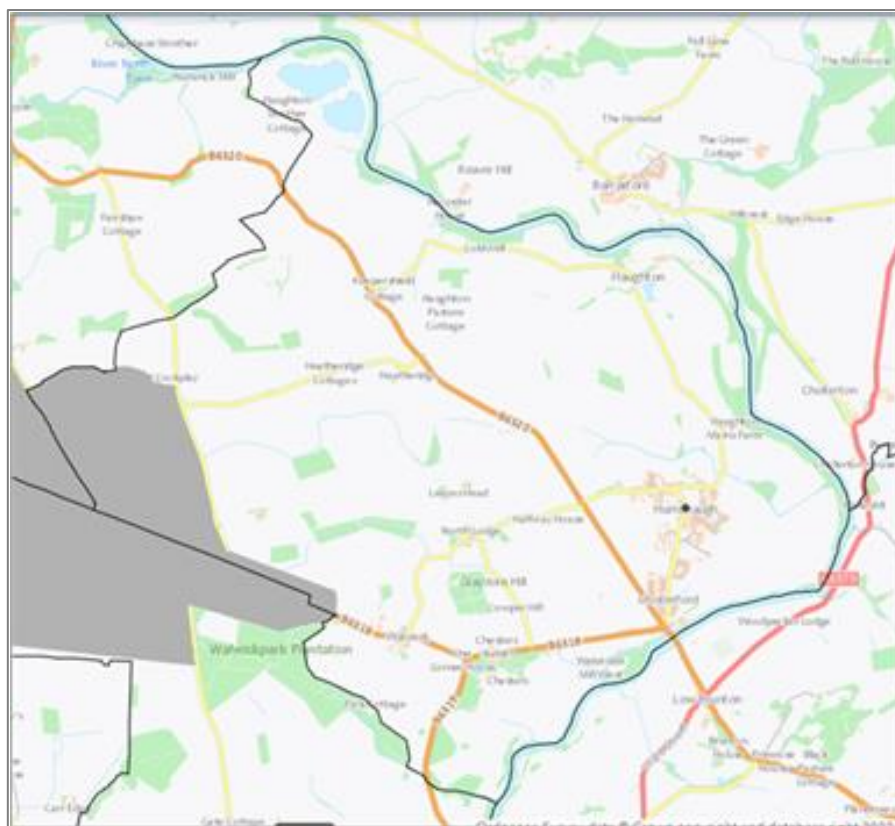
- 1.10 A Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have impacts on sites covered by the Habitats Regulations. The Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan is subject to a separate HRA screening assessment to ascertain whether an Appropriate Assessment is required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which relate to Articles 6(3) and (4) of the European Union Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna (the 'Habitats Directive').
- 1.11 A screening opinion has been provided confirming that appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required.

2. Humshaugh Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The Humshaugh Neighbourhood Area

- 2.1 Humshaugh Parish is a rural parish in the west of the County. The Neighbourhood Area covers the entire civil parish of Humshaugh (figure 1) and crosses the administrative boundaries of Northumberland County Council and the Northumberland National Park Authority (shown in grey on figure 1). The Park Authority has agreed that the County Council will be the lead authority to handle neighbourhood planning in Humshaugh Parish.

Figure 1. The Humshaugh Neighbourhood Area



Vision and Objectives

- 2.2 The vision sets out what the Humshaugh Parish Neighbourhood Plan intends to achieve over the plan period to 2036. It informs all of the plan objectives and draft planning policies.

Vision

In 2036 Humshaugh will continue to be a great place to live, be thriving and full of character. We will provide for the diverse needs of residents. The community will be sustainable, with good access to services and facilities.

We will have contributed to addressing the threat of climate change by achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions and adapting the Parish to cope with extreme weather events. We will have contributed to addressing the ecological emergency by reversing biodiversity loss within the Parish.

Our unique natural, built and historic environment will be maintained and enhanced for future generations. Our valued important spaces will have been protected.

2.3 To deliver the vision, four objectives have been developed:

Objective 1 – Sustainable development and climate change

Ensuring new development makes a positive and sustainable contribution to social, environmental and/or economic needs, and takes a proactive approach to reducing the Parish's contribution to climate change and to adapting the Parish to cope with the impact of climate change.

Objective 2 – Distinctive environment

Planning positively to protect and enhance the distinctive natural, built and historic character of the Parish. This includes our landscape, important spaces, biodiversity and heritage assets.

Objective 3 – Communities and the economy

Ensuring new development meets the needs of residents, visitors and the local economy. This includes supporting the right type of housing and economic development which reflects the distinct character of the area and local needs, as well as protecting and supporting the development of community services and facilities.

Objective 4 – Transport and accessibility

Promoting access to sustainable modes of transport, especially public transport, which connect people to a wider range of services, facilities, employment and educational opportunities. Meeting the transport needs of all residents and enhancing opportunities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including those using wheelchairs or mobility scooters

Draft planning policies

2.4 There are nine draft planning policies to deliver the objectives:

Sustainability and climate change

- i. **Policy 1: Community energy initiatives**
This policy support renewable and low carbon energy developments, which met the needs of the local community, subject to a number of criteria.

Distinctive environment

- ii. **Policy 2: Local Green Space**
This policy designates a number of Local Green Spaces within the Neighbourhood Area.
- iii. **Policy 3: Protected Open Space**
This policy designates a number of Protected Open Spaces within the Neighbourhood Area.
- iv. **Policy 4: Humshaugh Conservation Area**
This policy is supportive of proposed developments that preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting. It sets out key considerations that should be taken into account when considering the impact of development on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting.
- v. **Policy 5: Humshaugh Design Code**
This policy supports high quality design and sets out a list of criteria which should be met by development, where appropriate, in order to conserve and enhance local distinctiveness.

Communities and the economy

- vi. **Policy 6: Small scale rural exception sites**
This policy supports the development of affordable housing as an exception to meet local housing need, subject to a number of criteria.
- vii. **Policy 7: Community facilities**
This policy supports development proposals that would enhance the provision of community services and facilities. It also sets out criteria that must be met by development proposals that would result in the loss of a building or land which provide a community service or facility.
- viii. **Policy 8: Tourism**

This policy supports the development of tourism facilities and visitor accommodation within the Humshaugh settlement boundary, and, subject to certain limitations, the provision of tourism facilities in the countryside that would improve and diversify the tourist offer.

Transport and accessibility

ix. Policy 9: Sustainable transport

This policy supports development that maximises the use of sustainable modes of transport.

3. Baseline Information

Context

- 3.1 Humshaugh is a rural parish situated in the North Tyne Valley north of Hexham. Most of the population lives in the main settlement, Humshaugh. This settlement is within the commuting influence of Tyneside but its main role is as a local housing and service centre for its immediate surroundings.

Biodiversity, flora and fauna

- 3.2 The New Scroggs SSSI lies just within the north western boundary of the Parish. This is an area of calcareous grassland (lowland), which is recorded as being in a 'favourable' condition.
- 3.3 There are no European Sites within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 3.4 The Parish contains a number of small areas of priority habitats, including ancient and semi-natural woodland and deciduous woodland.

Issue: N/A

Population and human health

- 3.5 The population in 2021 was 711, an increase of 14% on the 626 recorded in 2001. The resident population is ageing: the proportion of elderly dependents has increased whilst the proportion of working age and young dependent residents has fallen. This trend has continued since 2001. Almost a third of residents are aged 65+ years.
- 3.6 At 52.7% the proportion of Humshaugh's population that is economically active (in employment including students) is similar to the average figure for the County. The Parish has a significantly greater proportion of residents in managerial, senior or professional occupations.
- 3.7 Overall, Parish residents do not suffer from higher levels of deprivation. Figures from the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation for income, employment, education, health, and crime are good to very good. In the 2021 Census the proportion of residents reporting very good or good health was slightly higher than the County as a whole.

Issues: Ageing population.

Climatic Factors

- 3.8 No emissions data is available for the Neighbourhood Area. At the local authority level, detailed information is available for Carbon Dioxide (CO²). The main source of CO² emissions in Northumberland is now transport, which has shown only a very marginal reduction since 2005. By contrast, emissions from industrial and commercial sources have more than halved in the same time. Domestic emissions have also decreased albeit from a lower starting point. As a result, total emissions in Northumberland decreased by 40% between 2005 and 2017. The trend overall, therefore, is downwards though transport emissions remain problematic.
- 3.9 90% of households in the Parish have at least one car. This is over twice the County average (43.1%). This reflects the location of the Parish relative to major employment hubs and the largely rural nature of the area. However, the Census data does not report what proportion of these vehicles are electric or hybrid. At the same time, a greater proportion of working residents (42%) work mainly at home than for the County as a whole (27.3%). In addition, fewer people drive a car or van to work – 50.3% of working residents compared to 54.1% for Northumberland.

Issue: CO² emissions from transport.

Soil

- 3.10 The whole Parish is classed as grade 3 Agricultural land, i.e. good to moderate quality agricultural land. Land in the south eastern portion of the Parish, around Humshaugh Village, is identified as being of moderate to high fertility. Land elsewhere in the Parish is identified as being of low fertility.

Issue: N/A.

Water

- 3.11 The Kielder Water Resource Zone (WRZ) serves the Neighbourhood Area. There is a large surplus of supply over demand in the Kielder WRZ and the area is not classed as seriously water stressed.
- 3.12 There are no Groundwater Source Protection Zones in the area indicating that there is little risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. The Parish lies in a drinking water protected area (surface water). This is currently assessed as 'not at risk'.

- 3.13 The North Tyne from Barrasford to the South Tyne confluence is classed as 'moderate' for ecological status. The main issue preventing this stretch of water reaching 'good' status is physical modifications by the water industry.
- 3.14 The area adjacent to the North Tyne is at medium-high risk of flooding (this means that each year the chance of flooding is between 1% and 3.3%). The area immediately adjacent to the Humshaugh Burn is at medium risk of flooding (each year the chance of flooding is 3.3%). In these areas development is minimal, they lie outside the main village of Humshaugh. Within the village, there is a medium risk from surface water flooding along the southern edge of the built up area.

Issues: 'Moderate' water quality of the North Tyne.

Air

- 3.16 As of June 2018, the Humshaugh Neighbourhood Area has no recorded Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), and air quality is not automatically monitored anywhere within the Neighbourhood Area as part of the annual screening process carried out by Northumberland County Council. There are no significant and tangible air quality issues in the Neighbourhood Area.

Issue: N/A.

Material Assets

- 3.17 Most of the community facilities and services are located in the main village, Humshaugh. The settlement has a GP surgery, a first school, pub, hotel, B&B, village shop and village hall. The village is not well served by public transport: there is a bus route connecting Humshaugh with Hexham and Bellingham that runs every two hours during the daytime. National Cycle Route 72 runs just south of the Parish allowing easy access via bike to Hexham.

Issue: Lack of public transport options.

Heritage Assets

- 3.18 The Parish is rich in heritage. Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site extends along the southern portion of the Parish, and its buffer zone covers almost the full extent of the Parish. There are two scheduled monuments associated with the Wall: The Roman fort, vicus, bridge abutments and associated remains of Hadrian's Wall at Chesters in wall mile 27; and Hadrian's Wall and vallum between Chesters and the road to Simonburn in wall miles 27, 28 and 29. In

addition, on the very edge of the Parish are the remains of a medieval bridge, Chollerford and Chollerford Bridge, with abutments of previous bridge.

- 3.19 The older part of Humshaugh Village is designated as a Conservation Area. There are a significant number of listed buildings in the Parish. There is a cluster within Humshaugh Village (mainly in and around the Conservation Area) and further clusters at Haughton, Heatheridge, Chesters Museum and Stables, North Lodge and Walwick. Of the 62 listed buildings in the Neighbourhood Area, one is Grade I listed (Haughton Castle), three are Grade II* (Stable Block 200m North of Chesters, Chesters Museum and Chesters) and 58 are Grade II listed.
- 3.20 The remains of medieval bridge, Chollerford (scheduled monument) is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. Its condition is described as 'extensive significant problems'.

Issue: Heritage assets at risk.

Landscape

- 3.21 The western part of the Parish, west of the C226 road, is part of the Northumberland National Park.
- 3.22 The landscape of Humshaugh Parish comprises the broad wooded valley that contains the River North Tyne in its middle reaches and main tributary valleys. This is a well-settled landscape with small historic villages on the valley sides, located at key crossing points, for example, Humshaugh. The settlement pattern in the wider area is characterised by dispersed farmsteads and large estate houses. Stone walls marking the outer limits of estate parkland are also characteristic.
- 3.23 This is a well managed landscape. Despite the relatively high density of settlement, the valley retains a distinctly rural, sheltered and tranquil character. Narrow, winding roads and lanes and lined with hedgerows and small woodlands reinforce this natural but managed character. The consistent topographic, land cover, field and settlement patterns create a complex yet unified visual composition.

Issue: N/A

4. SEA Screening

- 4.1 Criteria for determining the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from plans and programmes are set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Directive. The criteria are split into two categories: those relating to the characteristics of the plan and those relating to the characteristics of the effects and areas likely to be affected.² An assessment of the draft Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan (April 2021) against these criteria is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Assessment of the likelihood of significant effects on the environment

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?	
	Yes/No	Comment
The characteristics of the plan, having regard to:		
(a) the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	No	The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate land for residential or other forms development. Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for Humshaugh Parish and will be used in conjunction with the Northumberland Local Plan and the Northumberland National Park Local Plan to determine planning applications in the area.
(b) the degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	No	Due to the locally-specific nature of the policies, the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan on other plans and programmes within the wider development plan will be slight. Its policies are considered to be in general conformity with strategic policies in the existing development plan (the Northumberland Local Plan and the Northumberland National Park Local Plan). The Plan has been prepared having regard to national planning policies and guidance.

² Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. Annex II Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?	
	Yes/No	Comment
(c) the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	No	One of the Basic Conditions which the Neighbourhood Plan must meet is to contribute to sustainable development.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan	No	<p>The draft Plan seeks to address the following environmental problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change, including reducing the carbon footprint of the Parish; • Tackling the reliance of most households in the parish on fossil fuels to heat their homes, and supporting ways of moving to green energy options; • Providing more affordable housing and housing to meet locally identified need; • Improving availability and addressing local deficiencies in sustainable modes of transport. • Protecting leisure, recreation and other green space areas; • Enhancing the landscape and biodiversity in the Parish for future generations; • Protection and enhancement of community facilities and services for residents of all ages.
(e) the relevance of the plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	No	Neighbourhood plans cannot contain policies or proposals in respect of waste management since this is 'excluded development' by virtue of the Planning Acts. The Neighbourhood Plan has no particular relevance for the implementation of other Community legislation, apart from its limited association with legislation designed to ensure continued protection of European designated sites.

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?	
	Yes/No	Comment
The characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard to:		
<p>(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.</p>	No	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2023-2036. The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate land for development. Instead, it sets out policies supporting development subject to its accordance with other policy requirements. Effects of the Plan are expected to be indirect (due to not allocating sites) but long-term and permanent.</p> <p><i>Biodiversity, flora and fauna</i></p> <p>Policy 5 draws upon the accompanying design code to require consideration of the natural environment in development proposals, specifically the retention of hedgerows and trees.</p> <p>Policy 2 designates local green spaces. Policy 3 designates protected open spaces.</p> <p>These policies taken together are likely to give some protection and enhancement of habitats, including for priority species. In this way, they are likely to have a less than significant effect on protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p><i>Population and human health</i></p> <p>By supporting the provision of a range of house types and sizes on exception sites to meet the needs of all sectors of the community, including older people, policy 6 is likely to have a less than positive effect on housing stock.</p> <p>Policy 7 is likely to have a less than significant positive effect on access to services by supporting the provision of local services and facilities.</p>

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?	
	Yes/No	Comment
		<p>Policy 8 supports rural tourism development (subject to limitations) that would help to support a vibrant, mixed economy enabling more residents to work locally.</p> <p>Policies 2 and 3 help to protect valued open spaces in the Parish. These spaces can continue to be used by different groups for a range of activities that can promote health and social cohesion.</p> <p>These policies taken together are likely to give some support to the health and well-being of the local community. In this way, they are likely to have a less than significant effect on the local population.</p> <p><i>Climatic Factors</i></p> <p>Policy 1 supports renewable and low carbon energy development that meets the needs of the local community. This may contribute to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions as it supports a move away from a reliance on fossil fuel heating / electricity towards more sustainable energy sources.</p> <p>Policies 7 and 9 may help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as they advocate measures that could reduce private vehicle use locally through support for local facilities, the use of sustainable modes of transport and proposals to improve or extend the walking and cycling network locally.</p> <p>Policy 2 designates local green spaces. Policy 3 designates protected open spaces. These spaces could help to lessen surface water run-off to reduce the risk of flooding.</p> <p>Taken together, these policies are likely to have a less than significant positive effect on reducing the</p>

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?	
	Yes/No	Comment
		<p>level of contribution to climate change and supporting the resilience of the community to the potential effects of climate change.</p> <p><i>Soil</i></p> <p>The Plan is unlikely to have a significant positive or negative effect on soil quality.</p> <p><i>Water</i></p> <p>The Plan is unlikely to have a significant positive or negative effect on water quality of the North Tyne River.</p> <p><i>Air</i></p> <p>Policy 9 is likely to have a less than significant positive effect on air quality in the Neighbourhood Area as it supports, indirectly, a reduction in private vehicle use via the increased use of sustainable modes of transport and proposals to improve or extend the walking and cycling network locally.</p> <p><i>Material Assets</i></p> <p>Policy 7 is likely to have a less than significant positive effect on access to local services and facilities as it supports the provision and retention of such services.</p> <p><i>Heritage Assets</i></p> <p>Policy 5 supports high quality design which respects existing character and which has regard to the requirements of the Humshaugh Parish Design Code. This would help to support the integrity of the historic environment.</p>

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?	
	Yes/No	Comment
		<p>Policy 4 supports development that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting. The policy sets out locally specific considerations that would be used to assess the impact of development on the conservation area and its setting. This would help to ensure that development within or affecting the conservation area is sympathetic to its surroundings.</p> <p>Taken together, these policies are likely to have a less than significant positive impact on the character and quality of the historic environment in the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p><i>Landscape</i></p> <p>Consideration of the landscape is a factor in policy 5, which stresses the importance of the largely rural landscape in contributing to local distinctiveness. Applicants are required to demonstrate how their proposal, where relevant, would integrate into the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>Taken together, these policies are likely to have a less than significant positive impact on landscape by supporting the integrity of the landscape in the Neighbourhood Area.</p>
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	No	<p>It is unlikely that any significant environmental effects would be observed as a result of the policies contained within the draft Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan does not seek to facilitate a level of development above that of higher-level documents within the Development Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan supports sustainable development, which would protect and enhance the built and natural environment. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the Neighbourhood Plan</p>

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?	
	Yes/No	Comment
		would result in significant effects, whether in isolation or cumulatively.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects		N/A
(d) the risks to human health or the environment.	No	There are no anticipated risks to human health or the environment from the Neighbourhood Plan.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	No	The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development, and whilst it will help to shape future development, the overall extent of future development is likely to be in line with the growth that would occur in the Parish without the Plan. There are no significant effects as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; • exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; • intensive land-use; 	No	<p>The baseline information for the Parish has been described in Section 3.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Area contains a number of internationally and nationally important environmental assets including a SSSI, a World Heritage Site, scheduled monuments, listed buildings and a conservation area. This makes the area highly valued but also sensitive and potentially vulnerable to disturbance and to change. The risk to their status and condition from implementation of the Plan is judged to be low.</p>
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status	No	The western part of the Parish, west of the C226 road, is part of the Northumberland National Park. Given the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and its focus on sustainable development, which is sympathetic to the qualities of the area, significant effects resulting from the Plan are unlikely.

5. SEA Screening Conclusion

- 5.1 On the basis of the assessment of the likely significance of effects on the environment of implementing the Plan as set out in Table 1 of this Screening Opinion, the conclusion is:

In the opinion of Northumberland County Council, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan *is unlikely to have any significant positive or negative effects on the environment*. Therefore, Strategic Environmental Assessment is NOT required for the Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan.

- 5.2 This conclusion is supported by the statutory consultation bodies.

Appendix I Responses from the Consultation Bodies



Ms Sarah Brannigan
Northumberland County Council
Neighbourhood Planning and Infrastructure
Planning Services
County Hall, Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]
Our ref: PL00794512

13 November 2023

Dear Ms Brannigan

**Environmental Assessment Regulations 2004: Regulation 9
Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan: SEA Screening Opinion, November 2023**

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the above Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion. As the public body that advises on England's historic environment, we are pleased to offer our comments.

Based on the analysis set out in the Screening Opinion, and within the areas of interest to Historic England, we agree that the emerging plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and, therefore, it does not need SEA. In coming to this view we have taken the following factors into consideration:

- The plan area contains many heritage assets including a conservation area, several listed buildings, scheduled monuments and the potential for non-designated assets.
- Heritage assets are fragile and irreplaceable and can be damaged by change through development both directly and indirectly by development in their setting.
- The plan is not expected to allocate sites for development.

As such, from the perspective of our area of interest, the need for SEA of the draft plan can be screened out as it is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects. However, the views of the other two statutory consultees should be taken into account before you conclude on whether SEA is needed. According to Regulation 11 of the above Regulations, I look forward to receiving a copy of your determination in this case.

We reserve the right to review our opinion should the plan change materially in its content and direction. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries relating to our comments or would like any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Jules Brown



BESSIE SURTEES HOUSE 41-44 SANDHILL NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE NE1 3JF
Telephone 0191 269 1255
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Northumberland County Council
Planning Strategy
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF

Our ref: NA/2009/103757/SE-
36/SC1-L01
Your ref:
Date: 27 November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Humshaugh Draft Neighbourhood Plan Consultation on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion November 2023

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the above consultation. In relation to those matters within our remit, we have reviewed the consultation document and have the following comments to offer:

We agree with the conclusion of the SEA screening assessment that the Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment. On this basis, we consider that the Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan will not require a SEA.

Together with Natural England, English Heritage and Forestry Commission, we have published joint advice on neighbourhood planning which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environment into plans. This is available at:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140328084622/http://cdn.environment-agency.gov.uk/lit_6524_7da381.pdf

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Yours sincerely

Lucy Mo
Planning Technical Specialist - Sustainable Places

Direct dial [REDACTED]

Direct e-mail [REDACTED]

Environment Agency
Tyneside House Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7AR.
Customer services line: 03708 506 506
www.gov.uk/environment-agency
End