



Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Hexham Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report to accompany the submission version of
the Neighbourhood Plan

Addendum

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Quality information

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Hexham Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2012. The Neighbourhood Plan area, which includes the administrative area of Hexham Parish, is being prepared in the context of the Tynedale Local Plan with due regard to the emerging Northumberland Local Plan.
- 1.2 This document is an addendum to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report which accompanied the HNP for Regulation 14 consultation in October 2018.
- 1.3 The addendum accompanies the Environmental Report submitted with the Neighbourhood Plan to Northumberland County Council in February 2018 for subsequent Independent Examination.

2. This Environmental Report Addendum

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is being developed alongside a process of SEA, a legally required process that aims to ensure that the significant effects of an emerging draft plan (and alternatives) are systematically considered and communicated. It is a requirement that SEA is undertaken in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (the 'SEA Regulations') 2004.
- 2.2 The aim of this Environmental Report Addendum is essentially to present information on the updates to the Neighbourhood Plan since Regulation 14 consultation was undertaken in October 2018. This is with a view to informing consultation undertaken at publication of the HNP, and the subsequent Independent Examination process.
- 2.3 The addendum therefore considers the main updates made to the Neighbourhood Plan since Regulation 14 consultation, and presents, where appropriate, updates to the findings presented in the Environmental Report.

3. Appraising the updates to the HNP

Methodology

- 3.1 The focus of the appraisal is on the updates to the HNP; however, explicit consideration is also given to the effects of the HNP as modified (i.e. the cumulative effects of the updates and the rest of the Neighbourhood Plan previously consulted on).
- 3.2 The current appraisal identifies and evaluates 'likely significant effects' of certain proposed updates on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability themes identified through earlier stages of the SEA process as a methodological framework. To reiterate, the SEA themes are as follows:
 - Biodiversity
 - Climatic factors
 - Landscape and historic environment
 - Land, soil and water resources
 - Water quality
 - Population and community
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Transportation
- 3.3 The updates to the Neighbourhood Plan since Regulation 14 consultation include updates to in the region of 25 polices. As such the first task is to consider proposed updates in turn, with a view to identifying those that require detailed consideration through the SEA. Those which have been identified as requiring more in-depth consideration are then subsequently appraised in more detail. The detailed appraisal considers the likely impact of the change in policy and where relevant, compares the change against the appraisal that has already been undertaken and reported in the Environmental Report.

- 3.4 Assumptions are made cautiously, and explained within the text. The aim is to strike a balance between comprehensiveness and conciseness/accessibility to the non-specialist. In many instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on effects in more general terms.

Screening of the modifications

- 3.5 Table 3.1 below summarises the updates made to the Neighbourhood Plan policies since Regulation 14 consultation and indicates which ones have been screened in for the purposes of SEA. It also presents an overview of the rationale for the decision taken.

Table 3.1: Screening the Main Modifications for the purposes of SEA

Policy	Change	Screened in?	Rationale
HNP1	Minor updates to policy wording to provide additional clarity on community facility provision, including relating to dementia-friendly development.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP2	Additions to policy to provide additional clarity on SUDS and run off from brownfield sites.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP3	Minor updates to policy wording relating to listed buildings.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP4	Additional text has been included in the policy for non-designated heritage assets to incorporate provisions for archaeological features.	Yes	The change comprises significant additions to the policy for non-designated heritage assets.
HNP7	Policy HNP7 has been significantly expanded from focusing on listed parks and gardens in Hexham to setting out a range of provisions in relation to designated heritage assets.	Yes	This policy, which is a key historic environment policy, has been significantly reworked.
HNP8	Policy text has been reworked to provide additional clarity on housing numbers to be delivered and windfall sites.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocations remain the same).
HNP8.1	Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same).

Policy	Change	Screened in?	Rationale
HNP8.2	Includes an additional provision for the Telephone Exchange Site on the preparation of a Heritage Statement. Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same). Addition of provision in relation to a Heritage Statement supports the other policies of the HNP.
HNP8.3	Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same).
HNP8.4	Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same).
HNP8.5	Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same).
HNP8.6	Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same).
HNP8.7	Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same).
HNP8.8	Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same).

Policy	Change	Screened in?	Rationale
HNP8.9	Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy. Minor addition in relation to the conservation area element of the policy text.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy (proposed Neighbourhood Plan allocation for site remains the same).
HNP8.10	Includes additional provisions for the Bus Depot site relating to the management of flood risk. Further clarity on housing capacity has been included up front in the policy.	Yes	Changes comprise significant inclusions relating to flood risk management.
HNP9	Includes additional provisions relating to the management of flood risk.	Yes	Changes comprise significant inclusions relating to flood risk management.
HNP10	Refinements to policy text to enhance clarity.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP12	Refinements to policy text to enhance clarity.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP13	Minor updates of text to enhance clarity.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP14	Minor updates of text to enhance clarity.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP16	Minor additions to allotments policy text to enhance clarity.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP21	Minor updates of text to enhance clarity.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP22	Refinements to policy text to enhance clarity.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP24	Refinements to policy text to enhance clarity.	No	Comprises changes to the policy text to provide additional clarity. Does not constitute a change in the overall aim and focus of the policy.
HNP25	Includes minor additional provisions relating to potential impacts on heritage assets.	No	Comprises minor, insignificant changes given other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 3.6 The following sections present an appraisal of the updates which have been screened in as requiring closer examination through the SEA process.

Updates to Policy HNP4

Table 3.2: SEA themes for which updates may have an impact

Biodiversity	Climatic factors	Landscape and historic environment	Land, soil and water resources	Water quality	Population and community	Health and wellbeing	Transport
N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N

- 3.7 The update includes additional provisions relating to the fabric and setting of non-designated heritage assets in the Neighbourhood Plan area. This includes through including additional provisions regarding the recording of where losses occur, and additional provisions relating to non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest.
- 3.8 Overall the updates will not lead to significant effects, either on their own or in combination with other policies. This is due to undesignated sites already having a degree of protection through the policy wording presented in the previous Regulation 14 version of the Neighbourhood Plan. The changes to the policy will however have positive effects in relation to the conservation and enhancement of non-designated assets, which do not have the same level of protection as designated assets, and are important elements of the Neighbourhood Plan area's historic environment.

Updates to Policy HNP7

Table 3.3: SEA themes for which updates may have an impact

Biodiversity	Climatic factors	Landscape and historic environment	Land, soil and water resources	Water quality	Population and community	Health and wellbeing	Transport
N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N

- 3.9 Policy HNP7 has been expanded from focusing on 'listed parks and gardens' in Hexham to setting out provisions relating to a broader range of designated heritage assets. This includes in relation to listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and the Hexham Conservation Area.
- 3.10 In addition to setting out provisions in relation to designated assets' conservation (both in terms of their fabric and setting), the policy highlights the key features of importance for historic environment interest in the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 3.11 Whilst the changes to the policy provides a more comprehensive approach to the protection of designated historic environment assets in the Neighbourhood Plan area, overall the updates will not lead to significant positive effects, either on their own or in combination with other policies. This is due to designated sites already having a significant degree of protection through the planning process. The changes to the policy will however have positive effects in relation to the conservation and enhancement of designated assets.

Updates to Policy HNP8.10

Table 3.4: SEA themes for which updates may have an impact

Biodiversity	Climatic factors	Landscape and historic environment	Land, soil and water resources	Water quality	Population and community	Health and wellbeing	Transport
N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N

- 3.12 The updated policy includes a number of additional provisions which recognise potential flood risk issues at the Bus Depot/Land at Chareway Lane site. This includes a requirement that a Flood Risk Assessment is undertaken and submitted with any planning application, accompanied by a series of issues which the Flood Risk Assessment should consider, when carried out.
- 3.13 Whilst this provides additional clarity on flood risk for this particular site, these additions to the policy largely replicate the provisions of national policy. As such the change is not anticipated to be significant in the context of flood risk management and climate change adaptation.

Updates to Policy HNP9

Table 3.5: SEA themes for which updates may have an impact

Biodiversity	Climatic factors	Landscape and historic environment	Land, soil and water resources	Water quality	Population and community	Health and wellbeing	Transport
N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N

- 3.14 The updated policy includes an additional criterion which stipulates that any proposal within a Flood Zone 2 or 3 must be accompanied by a full Flood Risk Assessment to mitigate any impact on flooding and to ensure the resilience of housing development to flooding.
- 3.15 Whilst this provides additional clarity on flood risk, this additional criterion in effect replicates the provisions of national policy. As such the change is not anticipated to be significant in the context of flood risk management and climate change adaptation.

4. Next steps

- 4.1 The HNP, the SEA Environmental Report and this addendum have been submitted to Northumberland County Council for subsequent Independent Examination.
- 4.2 At Independent Examination, the Neighbourhood Plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the latest Local Plan.
- 4.3 If the Independent Examination is favourable, the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a referendum, organised by Northumberland County Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan for Hexham.

