



## Neighbourhood Planning Advice Notes

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### *Vision and Objectives*

*A neighbourhood plan doesn't have to have a vision and objectives, but they will help you to structure your plan. This note provides some guidance on how you can create a powerful and effective vision and objectives.*

#### **1. Vision**

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- 1.1 A neighbourhood plan vision is an overarching statement, or series of statements, describing what you want your neighbourhood area to be like at the end of the plan period. It may cover what you hope the area will look like, what facilities it will have and what it will be like to live and work there.
- 1.2 Your vision should be concise and locally distinctive. A strong, positive vision will give people a sense of ownership of your neighbourhood plan and help you to secure community support.

*Example:*

*"Hexham will continue to be the creative, enterprising heart of the Tyne Valley. The medieval Abbey and market town will remain true to its heritage and Hexham will be an attractive place for all people across the generations who live, work and visit here."*

*Hexham Neighbourhood Plan*

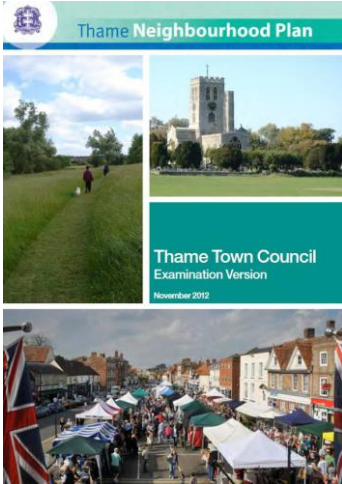
- 1.3 A template is included in Appendix A that may help you to develop a strong vision for your Neighbourhood Area.

## 2. Objectives

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- 2.1 Objectives set out what you want to achieve in order to help make the ‘vision’ a reality. For each element of the vision there may be one or a number of objectives. Objectives must relate to land use issues and should clearly link back to the issues you are seeking to address through your neighbourhood plan. Detailed policies and proposals will then follow from these objectives. Figure 1 below shows how the objectives relate to the vision.

*Figure 1: An example of a vision and associated objectives*

	<p><b>Vision:</b> <i>Thame must maintain its character as a real market town</i></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>continue to feel ‘compact’</i></li><li>• <i>continue to have a close relationship with the open countryside around it</i></li><li>• <i>retain its markets</i></li><li>• <i>continue to act as a centre for the surrounding area, not just residents</i></li><li>• <i>remain attractive to residents and visitors.</i></li></ul>
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### 3. Developing a Vision and Objectives

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3.1 When considering your vision and objectives, it is important to capture what makes your area special and to identify local issues. Figure 2 below gives an overview of the wide range of resources that you can draw from to identify the things that are good and should be protected in your area as well as the issues that you may want to address in your plan.

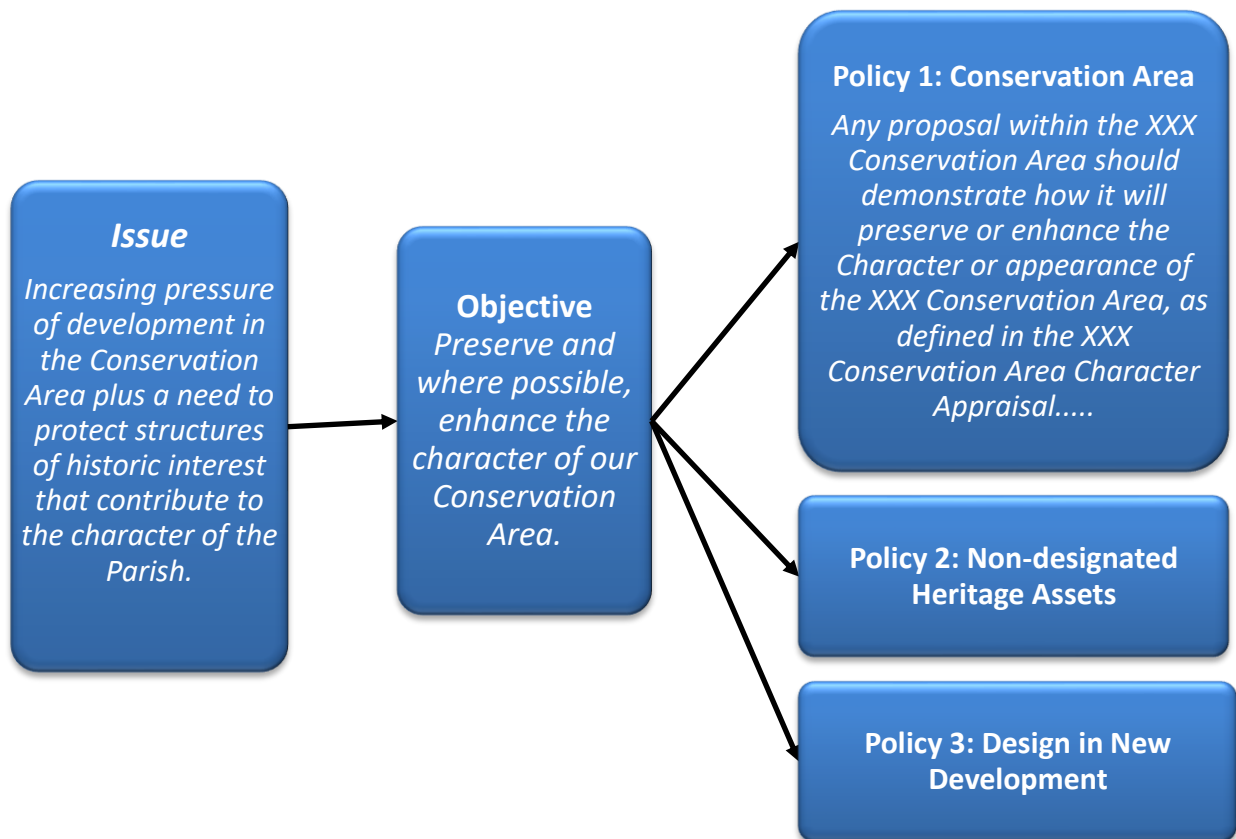
*Figure 2: Sources of information*



#### ***Identify objectives from the information collected***

3.2 Use the information to identify the main matters or issues, and group them together into common themes such as ‘housing’. These themes will then provide the basis for realistic objectives that planning policies can be built around. This is illustrated in figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Identifying objectives and planning policies from the issues



- 3.3 There may be cross-linkages between the objectives and policies, for example, a policy may address more than one objective. Similarly, at the end of the process you may have an objective but no related policies and if this occurs you may wish to consider if the objective is still important or whether it can be deleted. It could be the case that the objective cannot be achieved through the land-use planning system; it may be more appropriate for a wider regeneration strategy for example.
- 3.4 A template is included in Annex B that may help you to develop clear objectives for your neighbourhood plan.

### ***'Sense check' the emerging vision and objectives***

- 3.5 Once you have drafted your vision and objectives you should re-consult with the wider community to check that you have accurately captured their views and that the vision and objectives reflect their hopes and aspirations for their neighbourhood plan.
- 3.6 Getting community 'buy in' and support at this stage is essential and will stand you in good stead for the referendum.

### ***Review your objectives as you progress your plan***

- 3.7 You should always keep your vision and objectives in mind as you develop your plan; they should act as a marker. The policies should clearly flow from the issues and themes that you have identified in the vision and objectives. This will help you to structure your plan and remain focused.
- 3.8 As you develop your plan new issues may come to light or you may decide to change your priorities. This could be as a result of significant comments received during community consultation or you may find that there is insufficient evidence to justify a particular policy approach. Your objectives (and even the vision) are not set in stone and could require review and amendments to reflect these changes.

## Appendix A: Template for Developing a Powerful Vision Statement

### Draft vision statement:

XXXX will maintain its identity as a sustainable, thriving community, accessible to people of all ages, which values its rural setting, rich heritage, natural environment and open spaces. It will meet the needs of the current population and community of the future, without compromising its identity. The special qualities of XXXX will be maintained and enhanced for future generations, making the Parish a desirable place to live, work and visit.

Key questions to consider:	<i>Is the place named in the vision statement?</i>	
	<i>If the name is removed from the vision statement could it be 'Anytown', or is it locally-distinctive and relate specifically to <b>your</b> Parish?</i>	
	<i>Does the vision give a clear picture of the future of your area? (E.g. what you hope it will look like, what facilities it will have and what it will be like to live and work there).</i>	
	<i>Is the vision statement strong and positive? Will it engender a sense of ownership and gain community support?</i>	

## Appendix B: Template for Developing Clear Objectives

*This is pre-filled to show how it could be used. In this example, the matters / issues raised during the initial information gathering stage relate to a common theme, 'housing'. The last column directs you to consider next steps including whether more evidence is required.*

<b>Draft objective for housing:</b> <i>To support the provision of well-designed new housing which respects the distinctive landscape and townscape of XXXX Parish and provides variety and choice for people in order to enable more young families to stay or to move into the area, and to help those on lower incomes and older people to meet their housing needs.</i>		
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Key matters / issues raised</b>	<b>What must you consider?</b>
<b>E.g. housing</b>	<i>Not enough housing available to meet local needs.</i>	<i>What is the minimum housing requirement for the Parish in the draft Northumberland Local Plan?            What evidence is needed to justify additional housing?            Should the Parish consider allocating sites for housing in the Plan?            Is there a settlement boundary for the main village(s)?            Is there existing space within the settlement(s) to allow for more housing?</i>
	<i>New housing should be well designed and reflect local character.</i>	<i>Is there a conservation area in the settlement(s)?            Is there a previous village design statement?            Should the Parish look to create a Design Code to inform future development?</i>
	<i>Lack of variety in housing types / sizes to meet local need</i>	<i>Would it be useful to commission Community Action Northumberland to carry out a Housing Needs Assessment in the Parish?            Should the Parish consider 'community-led' housing?</i>