

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Environmental Report

Final Report

**A Report for Alnwick Town Council
Prepared by the Communities & Infrastructure Team,
Northumberland County Council**

03 September 2015

Prepared by:	Rob Naples Planning Officer Communities & Infrastructure Team Strategic Planning & Housing Northumberland County Council
Checked by:	
Approved by:	

Version	Comments	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by	Date
v0.01	Initial Draft	RN			29/04/2015
v0.02	Second Draft, taking account of feedback from Neighbourhood Plan Group.	RN			10/06/2015
v0.03	Final Report for consultation	RN	DE	DE	24/06/2015
v0.04 Final Report	Final Report taking account of consultation responses	RN			03/09/2015

Contents

Contents	3
Non-technical summary	7
Summary of assessment of plan aims and policies	9
Environmental baseline information	10
Identifying the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document	12
Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document	12
Assessment topic summaries	12
Sustainable Development	13
Housing	13
Economy & Employment	13
Town Centre & Retail	13
Community Facilities	13
Transport	14
Environment	14
Heritage, Design & Culture	14
Consultation	14
Introduction	17
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area	19
Policy Context	23
Chapter 2: Methodology	25
Approach taken to carrying out the SEA	25
Evaluation of the Submission Draft Plan	25
Evaluating the effects of Submission Draft Plan	25
The SEA framework	26
Relationship with other plans and programmes	26
Environmental Baseline Information	27
Definition of the SEA framework	27
Chapter 3: Summary of SEA context and objectives (SEA Stage A)	31
Key Environmental Protection Objectives	31
Review of baseline information	55
Land and Soil	56
Wildlife and Habitats	57
Landscape	64

Water Resources and Flooding	71
Heritage	76
Population.....	79
Housing.....	80
Economy and Employment	83
Chapter 4: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan aims and alternatives.....	87
Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan Aims	87
Assessment of Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Aims	88
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Reasonable Alternatives – Housing .	89
Housing Site Assessments	91
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Reasonable Alternatives – Employment.....	99
Employment Site Assessments.....	101
Chapter 5: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policies.....	105
Assessment of policies.....	106
Sustainable Development	106
Housing.....	107
Economy and Employment	108
Town Centre and Retail	109
Community Facilities.....	110
Transport	111
Environment.....	112
Heritage, Design and Culture.....	114
Assessment of the cumulative effects of the Neighbourhood Plan	116
Cumulative assessment of whole Plan against SEA objectives	117
Cumulative assessment of Plan topic areas against SEA Objectives	123
Chapter 6: Monitoring arrangements	131
Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives, guiding questions and potential monitoring indicators.....	132
Baseline Monitoring Recommendations covering SEA Directive Required Considerations.....	137
Chapter 7: Next Steps	143
Appendix A: Northumberland County Council Screening Opinion	145
Does the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan require Strategic Environmental Assessment?	145
Introduction	145
Background.....	145
Consideration.....	145

Annex A to Screening Opinion	146
Appendix B: Residential site assessment template.....	151
Appendix C: Employment site assessment template	161
Appendix D: Responses to SEA Environmental Report Consultation, July 2015	163
Appendix E: Summary of amendments to the SEA Environmental Report	175

Non-technical summary

0.01 This is the non-technical summary of the Environmental Report for the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan (ADNP). Neighbourhood Planning was introduced through the Localism Act in 2011 and gives local communities the opportunity to shape and define how their area should grow and change in the future. In Northumberland, Neighbourhood Planning must be led by Town or Parish Councils since there is no scope for Neighbourhood Forums.

0.02 This section of the Report provides a summary in non-technical language of the Environmental Report. The purpose of the Environmental Report is to provide information about, and an assessment of, the potential environmental and sustainability effects of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan. It has helped Alnwick Town Council in improving the final Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

0.03 Alnwick Town Council (“the Town Council”), together with Denwick Parish Council, is preparing the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan (“the Neighbourhood Plan”) in accordance with the provisions of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Alnwick Town Council is the qualifying body for neighbourhood planning purposes. Northumberland County Council (“the County Council”), as the local planning authority, designated the combined Town and Parish Area covered by the above Town and Parish Councils as the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area on 11 April 2013.

0.04 The purpose of this report is to provide a sustainability assessment of the policies and proposals of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with EU Directive 2001/42 on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004. This report covers Stage C and forms the Stage D report to accompany the Submission Neighbourhood Plan for examination.

0.05 This Environmental Report represents the results of the SEA process that has been undertaken in parallel to the production of the Neighbourhood Plan. It has been drafted to coincide with the Neighbourhood Plan consultation process, when stakeholders and the public will be given an opportunity to comment on the results of the SEA.

0.06 Consultation has taken place with the statutory environmental bodies, Natural England, English Heritage, and the Environment Agency.

0.07 The Neighbourhood has been prepared having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (“the NPPF”) and, in the opinion of the Town Council, is in general conformity with the saved strategic policies of the adopted Alnwick District Wide Local Plan and Alnwick

Local Development Framework Core Strategy, which set out the strategic planning context and policies for the former Alnwick District area.

0.08 The Neighbourhood Plan sets out 63 planning policies in total¹. These cover the following topics:

- Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick;
- Housing;
- Economy and Employment;
- Town Centre and Retail;
- Community Facilities;
- Transport;
- Environment; and
- Heritage, Design and Culture.

0.09 The Submission Neighbourhood Plan includes 8 ‘Plan Aims’, which reflect local circumstances. These are set out below:

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Aims	
Housing	○ To provide a range of good quality housing, particularly affordable housing, to meet local need.
Economy and Employment	○ To support, strengthen and diversify Alnwick as the principal employment and service centre for the wider area.
Retail and Town Centre	○ To maintain and develop a vibrant mix of retail and tourism facilities which provide a locally distinctive shopper and visitor experience in the town centre whilst fully meeting local needs.
Community, Leisure and Education Facilities	○ To provide high quality, accessible and affordable community, leisure and education facilities to meet the needs of all parts of the local community.
Sport and Recreation	○ To improve the provision of good quality, affordable sports and recreation facilities.
Transport	○ To improve movement around Alnwick and Denwick, enhance the pedestrian experience and improve the quality of public transport facilities and linkages.
Environment	○ To improve well-being and reduce the environmental impact of the people who live or work in and visit Alnwick and Denwick, to increase the amount of public open space that is readily accessible to all, protect and increase biodiversity, practice sustainable urban drainage and water management and make

¹ The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan also includes 60 “Community Action Proposals”. While these will help to achieve the Plan Aims and help to realise the Plan’s Vision, they are not planning policies and, as such, are not subject to the SEA process.

	us more resilient to increasing fuel prices and climate change.
Heritage, Design and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To protect and enhance the special architectural and historic character of the area as a unique ducal town and promote its key role in defining local identity and underpinning the local economy. ○ To secure a high quality in the design of all development and change within the plan area. ○ To sustain and enrich the cultural life of the area.

0.10 The Regulations state that an Environmental Report should outline:

- The Plan's relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;
- The environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or member state level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.

0.11 To fulfil this requirement, a review of relevant plans, policies and programmes has been carried out to identify environmental objectives which may provide constraints or synergies with the plan being formulated. These are set out in Chapter 3.

0.12 There are no internationally or nationally important designated nature conservation sites within the area. There is an SSSI some distance to the east of the plan boundary and international sites lie further afield, notably along the coast. Any ecosystem effects on internationally important sites should be identified and considered through the Appropriate Assessment to be carried out under the Habitats Regulations.

Summary of assessment of plan aims and policies

0.13 The Neighbourhood Plan aims were assessed against the SEA objectives as part of the SEA Scoping exercise. This was then set out in the SEA Scoping Report² and is reproduced in this Environmental Report. There is a reasonably positive correlation between the SEA objectives and the Neighbourhood Plan Aims. This assessment shows that, on the whole, there are no significant adverse effects on the baseline resulting from the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan policies have been specifically chosen and formulated to adhere to the principles of sustainable development as defined by the NPPF.

² http://www.alnwick-and-denwick-plan.org.uk/documents/SEA/2014_07_AlnwickandDenwickNP_SEA_Scoping_V0_02.pdf

0.14 The County Council and the Town Council will jointly monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan using the available data. The County Council's Annual Monitoring Report will provide some data at this level.

Environmental baseline information

0.15 The SEA Regulations require that the Environmental Report includes an examination of the current state of the environment and its likely evolution without implementation of the plan. It is recognised that forecasting the future without the plan can be difficult due to the absence of data or information.

0.16 The baseline data collected during the Scoping phase has been updated as the process has progressed. The SEA has focused on how the Neighbourhood Plan can influence environmental and sustainability conditions. Therefore, each SEA topic considers the effect that the Neighbourhood Plan can have and this is used to provide a sound basis for the SEA. A summary of main issues affecting the Neighbourhood Plan area are shown in the table below. Comprehensive and detailed information is provided in Chapter 3.

Summary of main baseline issues	
Land & soil	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Agricultural Land Classification Map for the area, below, shows that the Neighbourhood Plan area is predominantly Grade 3 agricultural land (good to moderate), with lower grade land to the south-west and west. Development should, where practicable, take up the lowest grade of agricultural land. However, with the highest grade locally being 3, this is not a major issue in the Neighbourhood Area. 	
Wildlife & habitats	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no internationally or nationally important designated nature conservation sites within the area. There is an SSSI some distance to the east of the plan boundary and international sites lie further afield, notably along the coast. Any ecosystem effects on internationally important sites should be picked up through the Appropriate Assessment to be carried out under the Habitats Regulations prior to submission of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) directs resources and projects towards conserving and enhancing threatened species and habitats. The baseline information highlights protected habitats and species which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Known to occur in the Neighbourhood Area; Not known fully but are likely to occur in the Neighbourhood Area; Not known fully but are unlikely to occur in the Neighbourhood Area. 	
Landscape	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan includes three separate National Landscape Character Areas, these being NCA1 "North Northumberland Coastal Plain", NCA2 "Northumberland Sandstone Hills" and NCA12 "Mid Northumberland". These are 	

<p>subdivided into Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and further subdivided into Landscape Character Areas (LCAs).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County Council's Key Land Use Impact Study includes an assessment of Alnwick's settlement edges, with a view to helping determine which areas would be most sensitive to future built development in terms of landscape sensitivity.
Water resources & flooding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The River Aln, flowing generally south eastwards forming the northern boundary of Alnwick, and a tributary watercourse named Stocking Burn flowing north eastwards towards their confluence, present fluvial flood risks to Alnwick in the form of Flood Zone 2 (1 in 1000 year), Flood Zone 3a (1 in 100 year), Flood Zone 3 plus an allowance for climate change (1 in 100 year +CC), and Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain). • The low-lying areas adjacent to the River Aln, Denwick Burn and Cawledge Burn are at higher risk from surface water flooding. There are several isolated areas within the town centre which have been identified as being at intermediate to low risk from surface water flooding.
Heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 340 listed buildings and 14 Scheduled Monuments within the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area, many of which are located within the designated Alnwick Conservation Area. • The Heritage at Risk Register 2014 lists 4 heritage assets at risk within the Neighbourhood Area. The first two are buildings, and the second two are Scheduled Monuments. These are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bondgate Tower, Bondgate Within, Alnwick; ○ General Lambert's House, 31 & 33 Narrowgate, Alnwick; ○ Camp on Alnwick Moor, Alnwick; ○ Heiferlaw defended settlement, Denwick
Population
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County, the largest unitary authority by geographic coverage, is also the most sparsely populated in England with only 63 people per square kilometre. Home to around 316,000 people, Northumberland remains largely rural, with its largest settlements having no more than 40,000 residents. • The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to boost the population, housing or job growth over and above what is, in any case, being planned for at the County level. The growth strategies should therefore be adequately tested through the Core Strategy SEA process.
Housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to accommodate the requirements set out by the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy. • The issue for the Neighbourhood Plan with regard to housing is the need to ensure a five year supply of housing land in sustainable locations within the town where this would not result in unacceptable impacts in sustainability terms.

Economy & employment

- Northumberland's increase in population in recent years has been a result of net inward migration and by 2031, 31% of the County's population is projected to be over 65. Counter to this, the core working age population is projected to decrease from 181,695 to 159,545 between 2012 and 2031.
- Alnwick has seen an increased level of economic activity in the last few years with 69.9% of its population being economically active.
- There are limitations to growth in terms of new development within Alnwick Town Centre, due to the historic layout of the town, the lack of availability of larger sites and buildings and issues associated with transport and car parking.

Identifying the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document

0.17 The SEA has been used to assess relatively broad strategies, with relatively few site-specific proposals. As a consequence, the main tool used to assess the effects of these strategies against the SEA and its objectives is 'expert judgement' and where possible, this is supported by documented evidence. The assessment matrices are included in Chapters 4 and 5.

Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document

0.18 Evaluating the effects of the draft plan has entailed the following:

- Identifying the effects of the draft plan against the SEA objectives, including identifying changes in the future baseline, which are predicted to arise from implementation of the plan;
- Assessing the significance of these effects. This means describing these changes in terms of the nature and the magnitude of the impact and the sensitivity of the receiving environment;
- An assessment of the likely changes to the future baseline which may have been caused by cumulative impacts.

Assessment topic summaries

0.19 The assessment process was carried out on a topic by topic basis, with analysis of individual policies being carried out below this. The full findings of the assessment, together with the assessment matrices, are set out in Chapter 5. The following is an assessment which focuses on the identification and assessment of significant effects, broken down by Neighbourhood Plan topic area.

Sustainable Development

0.20 The overarching Neighbourhood Plan Policy relating to planning for sustainable development performed well against the SEA Objectives. The overarching Neighbourhood Plan Policy relating to planning for sustainable development performed well against the SEA Objectives. The policy has been revised following the recommendations of the SEA Environmental Report. As a result, the policy has been reassessed and now performs much more strongly against the SEA Objectives. No further revisions are suggested.

Housing

0.21 Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the housing topic performed well against the SEA objectives. Many of those marked as uncertain were due to uncertainty regarding the location of future development but this is not a negative reflection on the policies themselves. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.

Economy & Employment

0.22 Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the economy and employment topic performed well against the SEA objectives. There were a number of uncertain effects, but the policies all performed very strongly against SEA objective 10 relating to the local economy and employment opportunities. Policy E2 was largely uncertain, mainly because the policy allows for a range of uses which can have different potential effects. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.

Town Centre & Retail

0.23 Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the town centre and retail topic performed reasonably well against the SEA objectives. It was considered that all of the policies would have a neutral effect on water and air quality. Policy TCR3 was considered to have an uncertain effect in relation to SEA objectives 1-3 and 7, due to the nature of the policy being supportive of development in a particular location but not allocating land for such purposes; this introduced an element of uncertainty but this is not considered to highlight any particular problems with the policy itself. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.

Community Facilities

0.24 Due to the nature of many of the policies in this section, a large proportion were assessed as having neutral effects when assessed against a number of the SEA objectives, particularly in relation to water and air quality. Policies CF6-8 were largely neutral but with some major and minor positive effects also seen in relation to objectives 7, 8 (in the case of Policy CF7) 11 and 12. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.

Transport

0.25 The majority of the transport policies, particularly Policies TRA1 and TRA2 were assessed as having a number of major positive effects when assessed against the SEA objectives due to their intention to promote and enhance active travel. Overall, the majority of the transport policies scored positively, with some neutral effects also seen. Some uncertain effects were observed but this is due to the uncertainty regarding specific locations and/or details of schemes that may come forward under these policies. These potentially uncertain effects are outweighed by the positive effects against other SEA objectives. It is not considered that any revisions to the policies are required.

Environment

0.26 Overall, the policies set out within the environment chapter performed very positively when assessed against the SEA objectives. Some policies were considered to have some neutral effects and there was no obvious relationship with objectives 9, 10 and 12 for Policies ENV1-10. While some policies recorded a number of neutral effects, the Environment policies performed very positively overall. Therefore, no amendments to the policies are considered necessary as a result of the SEA process.

Heritage, Design & Culture

0.27 All of the policies in this section performed positively when assessed against SEA objectives 2 and 3 which relate to local distinctiveness and built and cultural heritage. Other than this, the results were largely neutral, but this is as a result of the policies relating specifically to heritage, design and culture. The specific nature of the policies meant that, while there is a relationship between them and some of the SEA objectives, the effect of the policies is likely to be neutral in many cases. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.

Consultation

0.28 The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Environmental Report was consulted on during 2015. This allowed statutory consultees, the public and others the opportunity to comment on the contents of the Environmental Report. The results of this consultation were used to refine the Environmental Report and to guide the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

0.29 A number of amendments were made to the SEA Environmental Report following revisions which were made to the Neighbourhood Plan. A report setting out the amendments made to the SEA Environmental Report following revisions made to the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan can be found in Appendix D of this Environmental Report.

0.30 The next step is for Alnwick Town Council to submit the Neighbourhood Plan and its accompanying documents, including the SEA Environmental Report, to

Northumberland County Council who will publicise the Plan. A further opportunity for consultation bodies and others to make written representations will arise through that publicity.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

1.01 This document is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan (ADNP). The report has been prepared by the Communities & Infrastructure Team at Northumberland County Council in order to support Alnwick Town Council in meeting the obligations set out in The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (“the Regulations”). The report is prepared on behalf of Alnwick Town Council which is the ‘responsible authority’ for the purposes of those Regulations and is the qualifying body for the purpose of Neighbourhood Planning.

1.02 The Environmental Report describes the approach taken in undertaking an environmental assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan and in preparing the Environmental Report as required by the Regulations. To assist in determining the need for an environmental assessment under the Regulations, the local planning authority has provided its opinion regarding the need for SEA. This opinion is attached as **Appendix A**.

1.03 The justification for the geographic extent of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area was included in the Area Designation Application to Northumberland County Council in 2012. Accordingly, all parties (Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council and Northumberland County Council) considered that the Neighbourhood Area should cover the civil parishes of Alnwick, Denwick and Denwick Detached. This Neighbourhood Area was approved by Alnwick Town Council on 13 October 2011 and by Denwick Parish Council on 2 March 2012. Map 1 shows the extent of the Neighbourhood Area.

1.04 Northumberland County Council (“the County Council”), as the local planning authority, designated the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area on 11 April 2013. The County Council’s Decision Document³ is available via the County Council’s website.

1.05 Neighbourhood plans differ from other parts of statutory development plans. They are not development plan documents for the purpose of the Planning Acts. Accordingly, the provisions of Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which require an assessment of the sustainability of planning policies to be carried out by the local planning authority, do not apply. However, neighbourhood plans are part of the statutory development plan and are subject to independent examination before they can come into effect. The purpose of the independent examination is to establish whether the plan meets

³ <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=70a5093d-942e-44c6-85aa-a836e7542b29&version=-1>

certain ‘basic conditions’ set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Included within those basic conditions is the requirement that:

- ‘...the making of the plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development...’

1.06 To assist in meeting this basic condition, and to take advantage of efficiencies in assessing the performance of the Aims and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan as a whole, it was proposed to conduct a sustainability review alongside the SEA to consider the extent to which the Plan Aims and policies contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development. That review looked at economic and social impacts in addition to the environmental impacts required through SEA. The SEA objectives, therefore, are not split into social, environmental and economic topics. Instead, these topics were integrated through the SEA objectives from the start in order to ensure that a more holistic approach was taken. This helped ensure that the principles of achieving sustainable development were incorporated into the Aims and policies created in the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.07 The aim of the SEA is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. The scoping stage of the SEA covered the likely significant environmental effects of the Plan, as well as likely significant economic and social effects.

1.08 The SEA Scoping Report and this subsequent Environmental Report are therefore considered to be hybrid documents which not only carry out the function required under the SEA Directive⁴ as enacted in UK legislation through the Regulations, but also integrate a sustainability appraisal, covering the social and economic impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.09 In order to meet the ‘basic conditions’ referred to above, the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan needs to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan. However, Alnwick Town Council, as qualifying body, agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan would be prepared having regard to the emerging Core Strategy for the county with a view to align with the strategic development plan policies as they emerge. Accordingly, the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan SEA Scoping Report was in part derived from the Northumberland County Council Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal scoping report which accompanies the emerging Core Strategy for the county to ensure:

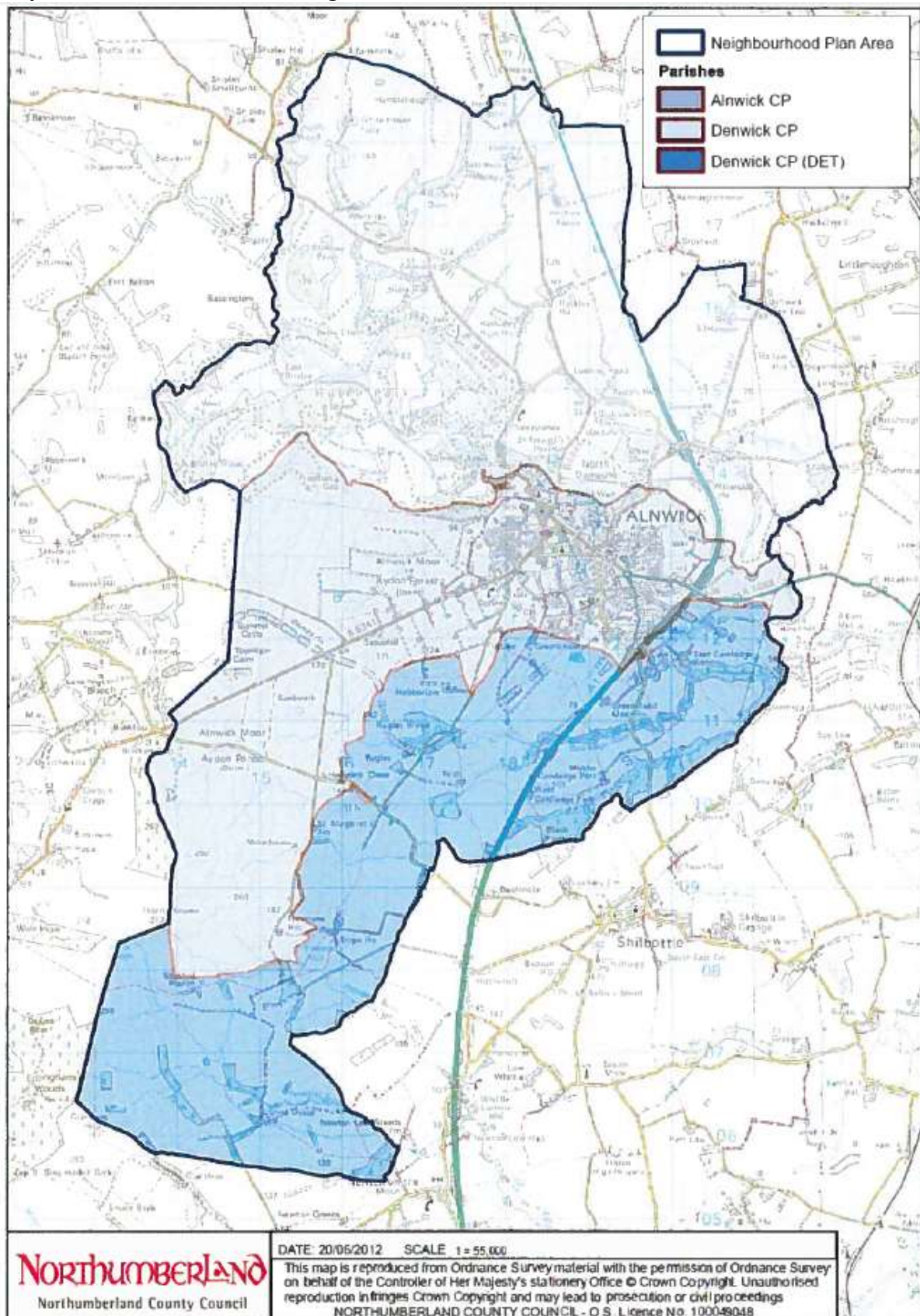
- (a) consistency with the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy; and
- (b) that all relevant legislation and policies are identified in the scoping process.

⁴ SEA European Directive 2001/42/EC

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area

1.10 Alnwick Parish is enclosed to the north by Denwick Parish and to the south by Denwick Parish Detached. The eastern section of Alnwick Parish is largely dominated by Alnwick town with a rural hinterland extending to the west and south west across Alnwick Moor. Denwick Parish extends north from the town outskirts almost to South Charlton and includes all of Hulne Park, the ducal home park. Denwick Parish Detached extends southwards from the town outskirts towards Shilbottle and Newton-on-the-Moor.

Map 1: Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area and Civil Parish Boundaries



1.11 The Plan includes planning policies on a wide range of topics, including: sustainable development for Alnwick and Denwick; housing; economy & employment; town centre & retail; community facilities; transport; environment; and heritage, design & culture.

1.12 The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document (May 2015) sets out a Vision for the Plan area up to 2031. The Vision is set out below:

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Vision

- In 2031 Alnwick and Denwick will be a more attractive place to live and work offering a high quality of life in a safe, healthy, inclusive, community. The character of the town's heritage and the qualities of the natural environment will have been maintained and in some instances improved, protected by strong policies. The landscape setting will be protected and enhanced where necessary, with development concentrated on previously developed land and land to the south and east of the town. New development will have contributed to a sense of place and local distinctiveness and will be sensitively located, incorporating high standards of design, energy efficiency and sustainability;
- The town and its immediate hinterland will have expanded its population to a level sufficient to sustain and develop the service and employment base;
- An increase in the provision of affordable housing and housing suited to younger people in tandem with job opportunities will have reduced the flow of younger people leaving the area and offered opportunities for those who wish to come and live and work in the district. New and innovative models of providing housing for older people will have been established to cater for the rapidly increasing numbers of older residents in the plan area. There will be fewer households in housing need, houses will be more affordable to heat and power, and there will be a better match of housing type and size to need;
- There will be a strong and more diverse economy offering a wider range of quality job opportunities and industrial sites to support rural innovation as well as the opportunity of home-based working. The tourism and leisure industries will have developed sustainably to be a strong sector of employment opportunity;
- The town centre will be thriving and vibrant, providing a range of shopping and other services and facilities including living space;
- A new high school will have been achieved with school sites fully used by their communities for life-long learning, recreation and community activities. Vacated school sites will have been used for a mix of uses to the betterment of their communities;
- Alnwick will remain an active base for primary health care and will have secured a network of high quality linked open spaces designed to allow the local community to reach improved levels of health and fitness;
- The town will be well planned and accessible promoting inclusion of all sectors of the community in the life of the town and promoting well being and reducing dependency and isolation of older people and disabled people;
- Links to and from and within Alnwick will have improved with more journeys undertaken by

non-car modes of transport, in particular by walking and cycling. Connectivity to the A1 and the east coast mainline and north and south on these corridors will have improved, helping to sustain the local economy and providing a choice of transport opportunities;

- Sources of renewable energy will have been developed with strong local links between generation and efficient use. Waste production will have been reduced and recycling increased. Alnwick and Denwick will be making a positive contribution to the issue of climate change;
- Overall the town and village will have become a more sustainable neighbourhood where the quality of life has improved through social and community development, economic growth and sensitive environmental management.

1.13 Following this, aims are set which the Town Council intends will respond to the challenges facing Alnwick and Denwick and to help achieve the vision by 2031. These are intended to fully reflect the principles of sustainability:

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Aims	
Housing	To provide a range of good quality housing, particularly affordable housing, to meet local need.
Economy & Employment	To support, strengthen and diversify Alnwick as the principal employment and service centre for the wider area.
Retail & Town Centre	To maintain and develop a vibrant mix of retail and tourism facilities which provide a locally-distinctive shopper and visitor experience in the town centre whilst fully meeting local needs.
Community, Leisure and Education Facilities	To provide high quality, accessible and affordable community, leisure and education facilities to meet the needs of all parts of the local community.
Sport & Recreation	To improve the provision of good quality, affordable sports and recreation facilities.
Transport	To improve movement around Alnwick and Denwick, enhance the pedestrian experience and improve the quality of public transport facilities and linkages.
Environment	To improve well-being and reduce the environmental impact of the people who live or work in and visit Alnwick and Denwick, to increase the amount of public open space that is readily accessible to all, protect and increase biodiversity, practice sustainable urban drainage and water management and make us more resilient to increasing fuel prices and climate change.
Heritage, Design & Culture	To protect and enhance the special architectural and historic character of the area as a unique ducal town and promote its key role in defining local identity and underpinning the local economy.

Policy Context

1.14 In Northumberland, the Local Plan is currently the adopted Core Strategies and saved policies of the Local Plans of the former local planning authorities that made up Northumberland prior to Local Government reorganisation in 2009.

1.15 The County Council is currently preparing a new Northumberland wide Local Plan which will comprise a Core Strategy and a Delivery Document. Policies in the existing development plan will be superseded by the relevant policies of the Core Strategy and Delivery Document once these are adopted. The Alnwick District Wide Local Plan was adopted in April 1997 and, following the adoption of the Alnwick Core Strategy in October 2007, a number of Local Plan policies were superseded. However, a number of policies from the Alnwick Local Plan were 'saved' beyond September 2007 and continue to form the statutory development plan for the former Alnwick District, along with the Alnwick Core Strategy.

1.16 The County Council has consulted on two stages of Preferred Options. Subsequently, consultation took place on a consolidated document which brought together Stage 1 and Stage 2 Preferred Options into one document; the Core Strategy Full Draft Plan. It has been updated to reflect ongoing evidence base work and comments received during all previous rounds of consultation. Consultation closed in February 2015 and work is ongoing to prepare a Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy for consultation in October 2015.

1.17 The Core Strategy Full Draft Plan Consultation Document (December 2014):

- Set out the spatial vision, objectives and outcomes for Northumberland;
- Described the overall strategic approach to growth across Northumberland; and
- Proposed draft policy approaches for the economy, housing, the environment, climate change, infrastructure, minerals, waste and renewable energy.

1.18 Following this, the County Council is due to consult on its Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy between October and November 2015.

1.19 The outline timetable for the rest of the plan preparation process is as follows:

Date	Milestone
October to November 2015	Consultation on Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy
March 2016	Submission consultation
Summer 2016	Examination
Autumn 2016	Adoption

1.20 Since it is intended to submit the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents to the County Council before the consultation on the Pre-Submission Core Strategy, the strategic context for preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has been provided by the ongoing work by the County Council on policy development. This includes the draft policies contained in the Northumberland County Council Core Strategy Full Draft Plan as they apply to the particular circumstances of the Neighbourhood Area of Alnwick and Denwick and adjacent parishes.

1.21 Alnwick Town Council as Qualifying Body is aware of the implications of the High Court judgement of Mr Justice Lewis of 18 December 2014 which dismissed the application by Gladman Developments Ltd. for judicial review of a decision of Aylesbury Vale District Council of 10 September 2014 making the Winslow Neighbourhood Plan. Mr Justice Lewis stated:

.....the claim for judicial review should be dismissed. A neighbourhood development plan may include policies relating to the use and development of land for housing in its neighbourhood even in the absence of any development plan document setting out strategic housing policies..... therefore the examiner was entitled to recommend that the draft Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum.

1.22 The Town Council has prepared its Basic Conditions Statement in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended. It has therefore undertaken an assessment of the extent to which the Plan meets that basic condition requiring general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan. This recognises that the existing Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997) and Alnwick LDF Core Strategy (2007) are somewhat dated. Accordingly, having regard to this recent High Court judgement, the Town Council has taken into account the emerging strategic planning policy context when formulating the Plan's policies.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Approach taken to carrying out the SEA

2.01 A Screening Opinion issued by the County Council confirmed the need to undertake Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan. A subsequent Scoping Report identified the key issues that should be the focus of the SEA (i.e. those where a significant effect on the environment, economy and communities might occur as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan). The Assessment was undertaken with a view to informing the Basic Conditions Report in relation to addressing sustainable development. Consultation on the Scoping Report was carried out with the consultation bodies.

2.02 The SEA Scoping Report and subsequent Environmental Report are therefore considered to be hybrid documents which not only carry out the function required under the SEA Directive⁵ as enacted in UK legislation through the Regulations, but also integrate a sustainability appraisal, covering the social and economic impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Evaluation of the Submission Draft Plan

2.03 Evaluating the effects of the plan has entailed the following:

- Identifying the effects of the Plan against the SEA objectives, which were established and agreed at the Scoping stage, including identifying changes in the future baseline, which are predicted to arise from implementation of the plan;
- Assessing the significance of these effects. This means describing these changes in terms of the nature and the magnitude of the impact and the sensitivity of the receiving environment;
- An assessment of the likely changes to the future baseline which may have been caused by cumulative impacts.

Evaluating the effects of Submission Draft Plan

2.04 Once the effects have been identified, it is necessary to indicate the level of significance, for example whether the effects are positive or negative and whether the degree of significance is minor or major. The SEA Regulations specify the criteria that should be taken into account when determining the likely significant effects. These criteria essentially relate to the nature of the effects arising from the plan and the value and vulnerability of the receptors as follows:

- How valuable and vulnerable is the receptor that is being impacted?
- How probable, frequent, long lasting and reversible are the effects?

⁵ SEA European Directive 2001/42/EC

- What is the magnitude and spatial scale of the effect?
- Are the effects positive or negative?

2.05 The evaluation conducted in this Assessment involved judging whether or not a predicted effect was likely to be significant. The results of the evaluation are categorised by the nature of the effect using the key as shown in the table below. The assessment of significance involved the assessor considering the above criteria for each potential impact along with a consideration of the how the Plan will help to achieve (or not) the SEA objectives.

2.06 Following the SEA Screening Opinion produced by the County Council in relation to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, the SEA process was considered early in the Plan's preparation to help to draft the Plan policies. This enabled early consideration of any mitigation measures prior to publicity of the draft document.

2.07 In addition, it should also be recognised that it may be more appropriate for any future mitigation to be considered at different levels of assessment, for instance when a planning proposal comes forward, rather than through the plan-making process. This would allow mitigation measures to be implemented where and when most appropriate.

The SEA framework

2.08 In order to focus the assessment on the most important topics, a series of SEA objectives have been developed by:

- Reviewing the environmental objectives of a series of other international, national, regional and local plans and programmes;
- Analysing the baseline information to identify environmental problems and opportunities which need to be addressed;
- Consultation with statutory consultees (English Heritage, Environment Agency and Natural England).

2.09 The SEA objectives relate to important sustainability issues that the Plan should be helping to achieve, and elements of the Plan will be assessed against the SEA objectives. The SEA appraisal questions act as detailed reminders to the assessment team of issues that the appraisal needs to cover. The SEA objectives are shown between pages 23 and 26 of this Environmental Report.

Relationship with other plans and programmes

2.10 The Regulations (see schedule 2) state that an Environmental Report should outline:

- The plan's relationship with other relevant plans and programmes, the environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or

member state level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives relate to and influence the Plan; and

- Any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.

2.11 To fulfil this requirement, a review of relevant plans, policies and programmes has been carried out to identify environmental objectives which may provide constraints or synergies with the plan being formulated. This review has covered international conventions to EU policies through to local plans and strategies. These are included in the SEA Scoping Report.

Environmental Baseline Information

2.12 The SEA Regulations require that the Environmental Report includes an examination of the current state of the environment and its likely evolution without implementation of the plan. However, it is recognised that forecasting the future without the plan can be difficult due to the absence of data or information.

Definition of the SEA framework

2.13 The SEA Regulations do not specifically require the use of objectives or indicators in the SEA; however, they are a recognised way in which environmental effects can be described, analysed and compared. Each SEA objective should be a statement of what is intended, specifying a desired direction of environmental change.

2.14 During the scoping stage, the SEA objectives and appraisal questions were formulated to help focus the environmental assessment on the most important issues. The SEA objectives were developed by reviewing the environmental objectives of plans and programmes with the potential to affect the Plan area, and by analysing the baseline information to identify environmental problems and opportunities. The objectives were refined having taken account of comments received during the consultation on the contents of the Scoping Report.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives and guiding questions		
SEA objectives		Guiding questions
1	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gas? Will it reduce flood risk? Will it help mitigate existing level of flood risk? Will it increase 'Green Contributions' (SUDS, trees etc.)? Will it encourage new energy efficiency measures?

SEA objectives		Guiding questions
2	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	Will it keep the distinctive character of the townscape? Will it retain / enhance landscape character including that of the historic park and garden and historic landscape character?
3	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	Will it preserve and enhance local heritage and buildings and their settings? Will it allow the cultural heritage to be enjoyed by residents and visitors while retaining its integrity? Will it reduce the 'risk of decline' to the conservation area?
4	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	Will it ensure that the wider ecological network of international, national and local sites, priority habitats and wildlife corridors are not adversely affected? Will it adversely affect the wider ecological network of international, national and local sites, priority habitats and wildlife corridors? Will it meet specified targets in line with the Local BAP? Will it protect and increase the amount of tree cover? Will it protect statutory designated sites within or beyond the area? Will it protect non-statutory sites of local importance? Will there be a net positive effect on ecosystems – e.g. through ecosystem services? Will it protect and enhance the quality of rivers and inland waters? Does it comply with integrated catchment management plans? Will it impact on soil quality?
5	To protect and enhance water quality	Does it comply with integrated catchment management plans? Will it impact on groundwater quality?
6	To improve air quality	Will it impact on air quality? Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases?
7	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste.	Will it reduce waste production? Will it help maintain or increase the reuse of previously developed land and buildings in proportional terms? Will it increase the use of recycled / reclaimed materials in construction? Will it encourage recycling, reuse and the use of renewable resources? Will it increase water conservation?

SEA objectives		Guiding questions
8	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area	<p>Will it promote a safe lifestyle?</p> <p>Will it promote a healthy lifestyle?</p> <p>Will it reduce accidents?</p> <p>Will it add to opportunities for exercise, fresh air etc.?</p> <p>Will it reduce social isolation?</p> <p>Will it reduce crime?</p> <p>Will its implementation produce outcomes acceptable to all sections of the community?</p>
9	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	<p>Will it provide a wide range of housing types and tenure across the area?</p> <p>Will it encourage housing that is affordable for sale or rent?</p> <p>Will it provide sufficient homes within the community?</p> <p>Will it ensure housing is of a decent standard across all tenures?</p> <p>Will it reduce homelessness?</p> <p>Will it reduce the number of vacant properties?</p>
10	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of education, training and employment opportunities for all sections of society.	<p>Will it attract new inward investment?</p> <p>Will it increase business start-ups and continuity?</p> <p>Will it generate new employment?</p> <p>Will it protect existing jobs and business?</p> <p>Will it strengthen the local economy?</p> <p>Will this reduce unemployment?</p> <p>Will it help stem the relative growth in out-commuting?</p> <p>Will ensure that people have access to learning opportunities?</p> <p>Will it increase the use of ICT?</p> <p>Will it help retain younger people within the area?</p> <p>Will it reduce the outward migration of higher level skills?</p> <p>Will it increase the inward migration of higher level skills?</p> <p>Will it broaden the appeal of the town centre and help to revitalise and re-invent its role?</p>
11	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities.	<p>Will improve learning opportunities?</p> <p>Will it reduce isolation from services?</p> <p>Will it increase the amount of recreational facilities and open space?</p> <p>Will it develop and sustain community identity?</p> <p>Will it strengthen the links between communities within and beyond the plan area?</p>
12	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services	<p>Will it improve the integration of transport mode provision?</p> <p>Will it improve transport infrastructure?</p> <p>Will it link residential and employment developments with services?</p> <p>Will it reduce road congestion?</p> <p>Will it encourage use of alternative transport modes such as walking and cycling?</p> <p>Will it reduce trip generation by car and/or contribute to the</p>

		<p>increased use of non-car modes?</p> <p>Will it reduce conflicts between different modes of transport?</p> <p>Will it reduce the incidence of accidents relating to any mode of transport?</p> <p>Will it include measures to promote road safety?</p> <p>Will it include measures to reduce casualties resulting from any mode of transport?</p>
--	--	---

2.15 The table below shows the scoring methodology used in order to assess the Neighbourhood Plan Aims, alternatives, policies and proposals against the SEA objectives.

Table 1: SEA significance scores and criteria

Score	Description	Key
Major positive effect	The aim/policy addresses all the elements that are required to protect the environment and address the relevant sustainability issues in the Plan area and would help achieve the applicable SEA objective. The aim/policy also sets out how, where and when these policies will be implemented. They will have a positive impact in relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors.	✓✓
Minor positive effect	The aim/policy addresses all the elements that are required to protect the environment and address the sustainability issues in the Plan area and would help achieve the applicable SEA objective.	✓
Uncertain effect	It is unclear whether there is the potential for a negative or positive effect on the SEA objective.	?
Major negative effect	The aim/policy conflicts with some of the SEA objectives. The aim/policy also sets out how, where and when these policies will be implemented and these will have a negative effect in relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors.	XX
Minor negative effect	The aim/policy conflicts with some of the SEA objective.	X
Neutral effect	The aim/policy does not have an effect on the achievement of the SEA objective.	0
No relationship	The aim/policy does not relate to the achievement of the SEA objective.	-

Chapter 3: Summary of SEA context and objectives (SEA Stage A)

Key Environmental Protection Objectives

3.01 The requirement to undertake the context review arises from the SEA Directive which states that the Environmental Report should include:

“an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes”

“the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”

Annex 1(a) and (e)

3.02 In order to establish a clear scope, it is necessary - and a legal requirement of the SEA – to review and develop an understanding of a wide range of relevant plans, programmes, policies and strategies. Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan will need to be framed in the context of international, European, national, regional and local objectives and take account of strategic planning, transport, environmental, social and economic policies. The purpose of the review is to highlight the key elements of these plans and strategies that will influence the preparation of the SEA.

3.03 The table below lists the plans, policies and programmes that were reviewed as part of the scoping report⁶. However, since the publication of the Scoping Report, a number of these documents have since been updated and new ones added to the list.

International	
I01	Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment
I02	Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora
I03	Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds
I04	Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC)
I05	Water Framework Directive (2008/60/EC)
National	
N01	National Planning Policy Framework 2012
N02	National Planning Practice Guidance
N03	Environment White Paper, The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature
N04	Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services
N05	National Character Area Profiles

⁶ http://www.alnwick-and-denwick-plan.org.uk/documents/SEA/2014_07_AlnwickandDenwickNP_SEA_Scoping_V0_02.pdf

Regional	
R01	More and Better Jobs: A Strategic Economic Plan for the North East, North East Local Enterprise Partnership, March 2014
Local	
L01	Alnwick District Local Development Framework Core Strategy
L02	Alnwick District Local Plan Saved Policies
L03	Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy, March 2011
L04	Northumberland Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – Baseline Position 2008-09
L05	A Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2013-18
L06	Northumberland Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment 2008
L07	Strategy for Gypsies and Travellers in Northumberland 2013 to 2016
L08	Northumberland Economic Strategy 2015-2025 (Draft for Policy Board, November 2014)
L09	Northumberland Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP), 2010 – 2015
L10	Northumberland Local Transport Plan 2011-2026
L11	The Heat is on - Northumberland Strategic Partnership – Strategic Framework for Climate Change Planning, 2009
L12	Northumberland County Council Climate Change Action Plan, 2008
L13	Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan, 2008
L14	Northumberland Rights of Way Improvement Plan, 2007
L15	Northumberland Renewable Energy Strategy, 2003
L16	Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Issues & Options Consultation Document, May 2012
L17	Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Preferred Options Consultation Document, February 2013
L18	Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Preferred Options for Housing, Employment and Green Belt Consultation Document, October 2013
L19	Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Full Draft Plan Consultation Document, December 2014
L20	Alnwick Local Development Framework, Planning for Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document, November 2009
L21	Alnwick Local Development Framework, Alnwick Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document, May 2010
L22	Alnwick District Design Guide for Shop Fronts, 1995
L23	Alnwick District Design Guide for Stonework Repairs, 1997
L24	Alnwick Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2006 & Associated Alnwick Conservation Area Map
L25	Northumbria River Basin Management Plan, 2009
L26	Northumberland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, 2010
L27	Northumberland Green Infrastructure Strategy, 2011

3.04 The plans, programmes, policies and strategies identified do not act in isolation and links between their scale and objectives can be made. International, European and national plans and strategies often provide high level guidance, with their objectives being reflected in plans at a regional and local level. The list of plans, programmes, policies and strategies identifies the diversity of documents that are considered to have a bearing on the

production of the Neighbourhood Plan. This list is not considered to be definitive and additional documents will continue to be reviewed and added.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
National		
N01. National Planning Policy Framework March 2012	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework, published in March 2012, replaces the former Planning Policy Statements and Minerals Planning Guidance.</p> <p>The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.</p> <p>At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a 'golden thread' running through both plan making and decision taking.</p> <p>LPA's should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area.</p> <p>The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.</p> <p>The NPPF set out 12 Core Planning Principles which should underpin plan making and decision making.</p> <p>In summary these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan led system, empowering local people • Not simply about scrutiny, should be a creative process • Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development and meet housing, business and other development needs • Seek to ensure high quality design • Recognise character of area and promote vitality of urban areas whilst protecting green belt and countryside and supporting thriving rural communities • Support transition to low carbon future and tackling climate change and its implications • Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution • Encourage effective use of land that has been previously developed • Promoting mixed use development • Conserve heritage assets • Manage patterns of growth which encourage public transport, walking and cycling • Support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. 	<p>The principles of the NPPF should be taken into account in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally.</p> <p>The 12 core planning principles will need to be taken into account in formulating the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
N02. National Planning Practice Guidance	The Government launched its Planning Practice Guidance on 6 March 2014. This guidance is a web-based resource which will be continually updated, making it much more accessible. The Guidance covers a wide range of topics, including that of Neighbourhood Planning and Strategic Environmental Assessment.	The guidance should be used throughout the production of the Neighbourhood Planning as it goes into detail on all of its key stages. It also explains how plans should approach key aspects such as renewable and low carbon energy, and rural housing which the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan may need to address.
N03. Environment White Paper, The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature	The Environment White Paper outlines the Government's vision for the future of landscapes and ecosystem services. It plans to encourage placing the natural environment at the heart of all decision making. It also plans to reconnect local people with nature, by creating a new Local Green Area designation to protect green spaces of particular importance to communities.	This document should be used to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, particularly the environmental policies.
N04. Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services	This new biodiversity strategy for England builds on the Natural Environment White Paper and provides a comprehensive picture of the implementation of the UK's international and EU commitments. It sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea. It builds on the successful work that has gone before, but also seeks to deliver a step change.	This document should be used to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, particularly the environmental policies.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
N05. National Character Area Profiles	<p>As part of Natural England's responsibilities as set out in the Natural Environment White Paper, Biodiversity 2020 and the European Landscape Convention, the profiles for England's 159 National Character Areas (NCAs) are being revised. These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.</p> <p>NCA profiles are guidance documents which can help communities to inform their decision-making about the places that they live in and care for.</p>	The NCA profiles should help ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is able to support the planning of conservation initiatives at a landscape scale, inform the delivery of Nature Improvement Areas and encourage broader partnership working through Local Nature Partnerships. The profiles will also help to inform choices about how land is managed and can change.
Regional		
R01. More and Better Jobs: A Strategic Economic Plan for the North East, North East Local Enterprise Partnership, March 2014.	<p>The North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) is a business-led strategic vehicle responsible for promoting and developing economic growth in the North East. It is funded by the seven local authorities and Government.</p> <p>The Strategic Economic Plan for the North East sets out the LEP's vision for the region, which is that by 2024 the region's economy will provide over one million jobs.</p> <p>As a minimum, the LEP aims to halve the gap between the North East and the national average (excluding London) on three quantifiable measures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gross value added (GVA) per full time equivalent (FTE), with wages and profits rewarding workers and investors and sustaining high levels of employment; 2. Private sector employment density, with more companies and jobs driving a high growth economy; 3. Activity rate, with no-one left behind, and those distant from or disadvantaged in the labour market helped to take advantage of the opportunities created by a successful growing economy. <p>The LEP also aims to fully close the gap on one quantifiable measure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Employment rate, with the scale and quality of employment matching an increasingly better qualified and higher skilled workforce. 	The Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the Strategy's growth agenda and consider how it can contribute towards meeting the quantifiable measures identified within the Strategy.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
Local		
L01. Alnwick District Core Strategy	<p>The Alnwick District Core Strategy was adopted in 2007; it sets out the council's strategic vision and objectives for the district and the policies by which this vision can be delivered. The core strategy also establishes the spatial vision for the district to 2021 and the spatial policies required to deliver it. It sets out the broad locational strategy for delivering housing and other strategic development such as employment and retail development. It does not identify individual sites, which are dealt with by other development plan documents within the local; development framework.</p> <p>The objectives of the Core strategy are to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the quality of life in the district's settlements by promoting healthy, safe and inclusive communities and ensuring equal access to homes, jobs, services, open space, recreational, cultural and community facilities and opportunities. 2. Provide sufficient land to meet the district's housing requirements, particularly the need for local affordable housing. 3. Provide sufficient land to meet local employment needs, facilitate economic diversification and achieve sustainable levels of economic growth. 4. Encourage the regeneration of and enhance the role, vitality and viability of the district's market towns as key service centres. 5. Promote the development of sustainable tourism. 6. Assist in the delivery of a sustainable integrated transport system and enhance accessibility for all. 7. Protect and enhance the quality and unique character of the countryside, and landscape and the geological and biological diversity of the natural environment throughout the district. 8. Prevent the unnecessary loss of valuable open land to development. Open land can be important for: farming, landscape quality, local character, recreation, functional floodplain, or ground water protection. 9. Protect and enhance the cultural heritage and built environment of the district. 10. Promote quality and good design in new development and enhancing local character, environmental quality and distinctiveness. 11. Ensure the most efficient use of natural resources prioritising: the reuse of previously developed land and buildings and opportunities for renewable energy use and by promoting energy efficiency, waste management and recycling and local sourcing in the design and construction of all development proposals. 	<p>There is a need to ensure that the objectives of the Alnwick District Core Strategy, where they are relevant, are taken into account in producing the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L02. Alnwick District Local Plan, Saved Policies	<p>The Alnwick District Wide Local Plan was adopted in 1997. The strategy is to maintain and enhance the environmental quality of the District whilst accommodating new development necessary for the economic well-being of the residents over the period from 1991 to 2006. The strategy aims to work towards achieving the objectives of 'sustainable development' i.e., development which meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to achieve their own needs and aspirations, a concept first established in the Report of the World Commission of Environment and Development in 1987 (the Brundtland Report).</p> <p>In order to achieve this the Plan will seek to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance the intrinsic qualities of the rural and built environment giving due weight to areas of national, regional and local importance. • Balance the need for development with the need to retain the intrinsic qualities of the rural and built environment. • Accommodate a continued slow growth in population based on the main service centres of Alnwick and Amble. • Provide land for a range of housing opportunities to cater for the needs of the indigenous population and the anticipated growth in population. • Provide land for a range of industrial and commercial opportunities to cater for employment needs of the indigenous population and the anticipated growth in population. 	<p>Saved policies in the Alnwick District Local Plan continue to form part of the statutory Development Plan unless superseded by the Alnwick Core Strategy (2007) the NPPF or other changes in national planning policy. It is legitimate that the Neighbourhood Plan is reviewing these insofar as they relate to the town of Alnwick and its surroundings and it is noted that the emerging plan seeks to put some policies and proposals in place that will replace some of these saved policies.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L03. Northumberland: Resilient for the Future – Sustainable Community Strategy for Northumberland March 2011	<p>The Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) sets out the sustainable vision for Northumberland which aims to make Northumberland a place that is resilient for the future. This vision and aim is expressed through the following seven “big partnership” issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making climate change work to our advantage • Creating sustainable communities • Rebalancing our economy • Giving everyone a voice and influence • Providing healthy lifestyle choice • Supporting our young people into adulthood • Delivering service differently • <p>Each big partnership issue contains Areas of Focus which provide more in-depth information on how each issue can be tackled in Northumberland. The delivery of the vision relies on having a coherent approach to managing future development and within the SCS an outline of Northumberland’s spatial policy framework is set out within the “Getting it right spatially” section.</p> <p>The SCS represents the overarching plan for improving the quality of life in Northumberland. As such its subsequent delivery relies heavily upon ensuring that its key messages and agreed priorities are reflected across the county’s entire policy framework. All of the seven Big Partnership Issues and their related Areas of Focus are relevant to the preparation of the LDF and SA.</p>	<p>The Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy is the spatial representation of the SCS and it is important that the two are closely linked, as together they provide the overarching strategic policy framework for the county in the longer term. There is the need to ensure that the Big Partnership Issues and Areas of Focus set out within the SCS are translated spatially into the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is not yet adopted and therefore while the Neighbourhood Plan will need to take account of the emerging Core Strategy, it should also have regard to the Northumberland Sustainable Community Strategy.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L04. Northumberland Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – Baseline Position 2008-09. Followed by the updated executive summary 2012.	<p>The document looks at a wide range of health and care issues and highlights priorities relating to improvements in people’s health and wellbeing. It examines existing and future demographic trends, key issues such as health inequalities, and social and environmental context. It reviews existing knowledge about health and wellbeing, as well as health needs, health and social care and clinical quality. It identifies gaps to be addressed and identifies key issues for commissioning. Document aims to identify areas for priority action through Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and Community Strategies, help commissioners to specify outcomes that encourage local innovation and to help providers shape services to address needs.</p> <p>Key focus includes understanding the current and future health and wellbeing needs of the population over both the short term (up to five years) to inform Local Area Agreements, and the longer term future (five to ten years) to inform strategic planning.</p> <p>Commissioning services and interventions that will achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities.</p> <p>The latest Executive Summary summarises the on-going JSNA work in Northumberland, highlights key messages and sets out some of the implications as well as key priorities for future commissioning and planning.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the requirements of the population and consider whether it can include policies which would help to address issues identified through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L05. A Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2013-18	<p>The strategy meets a statutory duty to identify and meet housing need across the County and outlines the approach for the next 5 years to achieve this. Its main aim is to ensure that the population of Northumberland have access to a home that is safe, warm, and affordable, and that help and support is available to those that are unable to meet their own housing need.</p> <p>This will be achieved by focusing work on three key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring affordable and quality housing. • Supporting people to lead healthy and independent lives. • Supporting sustainable local economies and communities. <p>The remit extends not only to ‘council’ or ‘social’ housing but also to the private rented sector and to owner occupation to ensure that local housing markets meet the needs of the population.</p> <p>Whilst there is much focus placed on building new homes that are affordable to local people, the work to ensure that the existing housing stock across the county is of decent standards and that the number of empty properties is reduced, is of equal importance. This strategy will help to deliver Northumberland’s Core Strategy target levels of housing in the broad locations identified.</p> <p>Issues such as older people’s housing and homelessness are also dealt with.</p>	<p>Where dealing with the future provision of housing, the objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to support objectives in the Housing Strategy which aim to deliver a range of housing accommodation to meet the needs of all parts of the community.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L06. Northumberland Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, 2008	<p>The Northumberland Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) study builds upon the regional report and provides a detailed housing perspective to the Strategy for Gypsies and Travellers in Northumberland (2008-2011). The GTAA sets out the current and future need for Gypsy and Traveller sites within Northumberland.</p> <p>The GTAA highlights that there is the need for an additional 11 extra residential pitches during the period 2008 to 2018. Additional permanent site provision should be close to the urban settlements of south east Northumberland. The GTAA states that it is difficult to translate unauthorised encampment information into estimates either of transit need or for the type of transit provision required. Within south east Northumberland the numbers of unauthorised encampments demonstrates a need for the provision of some form of transit provision requirements. This need is however, likely to reduce if and when a new permanent site is provided in the future. Whilst the Gypsy and Travelling community expressed a desire for a network of stopping places to be provided close to the market towns of Berwick upon Tweed, Alnwick, Morpeth and Hexham, the overall results of the GTAA concluded that there was no evidence to support this type of provision.</p>	Where dealing with the future provision of housing, the objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to support a range of housing accommodation to meet the needs of all parts of the community.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L07. Strategy for Gypsies and Travellers in Northumberland 2013 to 2016	<p>The Strategy for Gypsies and Travellers in Northumberland sets out the vision and objectives for Gypsies and Travellers for the period 2013-2016, outlining key initial actions that will take place during the period with the intention to develop a longer term action plan.</p> <p>The overall aim of the Strategy is to promote a better understanding of the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Northumberland across all partners and to ensure that future services are planned and delivered in an accessible way to meet those needs. To achieve the vision, the Strategy aims to identify the range of accommodation needs which exist in Northumberland and work with partners to meet those needs. The Strategy highlights the need for both more static and transit sites in Northumberland, although the level of need is not quantified. A key recommendation from the Strategy is to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment which will inform the way forward in terms of provision of accommodation.</p>	Where dealing with the future provision of housing, the objectives and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to support a range of housing accommodation to meet the needs of all parts of the community.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L08. Draft Northumberland Economic Strategy 2015-2025, November 2014	<p>The Northumberland Economic Strategy sets out a vision '<i>to deliver a prosperous Northumberland founded on quality local jobs and connected communities</i>'. The strategy considers current economic performance and establishes a strategic framework including a vision and thematic priorities to achieve growth.</p> <p>This includes the County Council's approach to delivery both in terms of partnership working and through the establishment of spatial delivery programmes intended to capitalise upon the County's economic assets.</p> <p>The long term ambition set out in this strategy is to create 10,000 new jobs in the county up to 2031. This establishes the baseline for the new Northumberland Local Plan which provides the spatial planning framework to enable business, housing and infrastructure development.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out six 'priority intervention areas' which are fundamental to achieving the vision for growth. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growing our sector strengths; 2. Strengthening the business base; 3. Enabling a more inclusive economy; 4. Developing a competitive labour force 5. Delivering infrastructure and connectivity 6. Supporting successful towns and communities. 	<p>Ensure that the emerging Economic Strategy is considered in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L09. Northumberland Area Tourism Management Plan (ATMaP), 2010 – 2015	<p>The overarching principles of the plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance, protect and celebrate Northumberland’s authentic and distinctive way of life, natural and built environment, and reputation • Understand our current and future visitors’ needs, and collaborate to use that knowledge to inform everything we do • Deliver a distinctive, quality experience to meet those visitors’ needs, and a visitor economy that meets the needs of our businesses and communities. • To convert the vision into reality, Northumberland’s tourism community will focus their efforts on the following aims and objectives: • Increase visitor spend in Northumberland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To raise awareness of Northumberland amongst potential visitors b) To increase visitor satisfaction c) To increase visitor spend per head d) To increase the length of visitor stay e) To increase visits, in particular from our priority segments • Derive maximum benefit from tourism across Northumberland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To enable tourism businesses to compete against the best in the country b) To enable the wider community and other non-tourism sectors to tap into tourism c) To increase visitor spend throughout the year d) To disperse visitors across Northumberland e) To develop a high quality workforce with valued skills and job satisfaction 	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan will need to consider ways in which to take the aims of the plan into account and to ensure that sustainable tourism development in the Neighbourhood Plan area reflects the aims of the plan.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L10. Northumberland Local Transport Plan 2011-2026	<p>The LTP seeks to build on the success of the previous Plans, taking account of national, regional and local policy context and stakeholder engagement, as well as having due regard to legal duties as the local Highway Authority. The following goals set out within the LTP are that within Northumberland the transport system should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Northumberland's economic competitiveness and sustainable growth by delivering reliable, resilient and efficient transport networks; • Minimise the environmental impact of transport by reducing carbon emissions and addressing the challenge of climate change; • Promote greater equality of opportunity by improving peoples' access to services and facilities. <p>To achieve these goals the LTP identifies the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Economic Growth; • Improve the performance of existing transport networks in those places that show signs of increasing congestion and unreliability; • Extend the reach of existing networks where it is needed to meet growing demand; • Strengthen our networks against the effects of climate change and extreme weather events; • Reducing Carbon Emissions; • Deliver sustainable low carbon travel choices; 	<p>The decision about where new development is located has clear implications for the transport infrastructure needed to support such development. The Neighbourhood Plan should therefore consider the goals of this transport strategy when developing policy.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Access to Services; • Improve transport connections to key services and facilities; • Safer and Healthier Travel; • Improve safety of the transport network, particularly for vulnerable road users; • Enable and encourage more physically active and healthy travel; • Quality of Life; • Improve transport connections within and between communities; • Provide better access to the natural environment; • Improve the integration of transport into streetscapes; • Protect the natural environment, heritage and landscape; • Protect the fabric of historic town centres. 	
L11. 'The Heat is On' Northumberland Strategic Partnership – Strategic Framework for Climate Change Planning, 2009	The Strategic Framework for Climate Change Planning in Northumberland seeks to provoke discussion by presenting an agenda for action; above all this document aims to: 'encourage partners to put in place effective and timely measures at both corporate and community levels to address the causes and implications of climate change in Northumberland by mainstreaming climate change planning within their own core business.'	Ensure that climate change issues are considered for both corporate and community groups and that the Neighbourhood Plan includes effective adaptation measures to the impacts of climate change.
L12. Northumberland County Council Climate Change Action Plan, 2008	<p>The Climate Change Action Plan was adopted in July 2008 and seeks to identify immediate actions that the Council can take to adapt to climate change and to establish systems and approaches to address longer term concerns. It focuses on three broad areas of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation – making the Council's operations more resilient to climate change that is already occurring and likely to increase; • Mitigation – reducing the impact of activities that are likely to contribute to future harmful climate change and; • Awareness Raising – increasing awareness of these matters with partners and communities across Northumberland. 	The measures included in the County Council's Climate Change Action Plan, particularly those relating to adaptation, should be considered in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L13. Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan 2008	The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for Northumberland has been developed to reflect those habitats and species which are characteristic of Northumberland's natural heritage and most at risk from loss, fragmentation and deterioration of quality. Individual plans have been developed for 22 species and 24 habitat types. The 24 habitat types are subsets of the main habitat types identified within the BAP, which are coastal, lowland, rivers & wetlands, upland, urban and woodland. Specific targets and priority actions have been identified for individual plans to maintain and/or increase the existing ranges of the relevant species or habitat. Specific actions within the individual plans vary depending on the species or habitat and range from practical conservation management and survey work, through to promotional activities and working with policy makers.	Ensure that the biodiversity of Northumberland is considered in the Neighbourhood Plan and that the actions contained in the plan are taken into account.
L14. Northumberland Rights of Way Improvement Plan, 2007	The Rights of Way Improvement Plan sets out the Council's statutory duties but also provides objectives and proposals to further improve the management, provision and promotion of wider rights of way and access network which meets the needs of the public.	Ensure that the plan is considered in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, should proposals affect PRoWs.
L15. Northumberland Renewable Energy Strategy, 2003	The Northumberland Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategy have been developed by the Northumberland Renewable Energy Group, funded by the Northumberland Strategic Partnership. Its purpose is to promote and develop renewable energy and energy efficiency across Northumberland and aid the county's aim of becoming an exemplar in Renewable Energy technologies.	Ensure that the measures the Strategy uses to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy are included in any relevant Neighbourhood Plan proposals.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L16. Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Issues & Options Consultation Document May 2012	The Issues & Options consultation document was the first public consultation document on the Northumberland Core Strategy. It identified the County's issues and presented options which could help address the issues identified. The document contained background information on the Core Strategy topics and set the context of the Core Strategy.	The background information, particularly the evidence base, to the Core Strategy should be taken into account in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Parts of the evidence base have been updated as the Core Strategy has progressed and therefore the Neighbourhood Plan should continue to take account of new evidence as this is made available.
L17. Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Preferred Options Consultation Document February 2013	The first Preferred Options consultation document was the first iteration of the Core Strategy to feature draft policies, and covered topic areas including housing, economy, town centres & retailing, Green Belt, minerals & waste, renewable & low carbon energy, sustainable construction, transport, ICT, community facilities, natural & historic environment and the water environment.	While the document has very limited weight, the Neighbourhood Plan should consider the weight that the emerging Core Strategy is given in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, under NPPF paragraph 216.
L18. Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Preferred Options for Housing, Employment and Green Belt Consultation Document October 2013	The Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy will guide development in the County until 2031. In taking account of both stages of the Preferred Options consultation should be noted that the second Preferred Options consultation document (October 2013) focused only on Housing, Employment and Green Belt issues. The document contains draft policies which signal the County Council's intentions regarding the future direction of planning policy in the County and is underpinned by a robust evidence base.	While the document has very limited weight, the Neighbourhood Plan should consider the weight that the emerging Core Strategy is given in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, under NPPF paragraph 216.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L19. Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Full Draft Plan Consultation Document, December 2014	The Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy Full Draft Plan brings together the two previous Preferred Options documents into one document. It has been updated to reflect ongoing evidence base work as well as consultation representations. The preparation of this document was delayed as a result of updated population projections, which required further work to be carried out.	While the document has very limited weight, the Neighbourhood Plan should consider the weight that the emerging Core Strategy is given in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, under NPPF paragraph 216.
L20. Alnwick Local Development Framework, Planning for Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document, November 2009	<p>The purpose of the document is to provide detailed guidance to support the positive implementation of the local development framework Core Strategy Policy S21 in relation to renewable energy.</p> <p>Policy S21 Renewable Energy is as follows; Proposals for the generation of all types of renewable energy will be supported within the district where the scheme: a) is fully in accordance with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East; b) has no adverse impact on communities, residential amenity, the local economy and land use or where the impact can be satisfactorily mitigated; c) reflects the Alnwick district Landscape Character Assessment; and, in the case of a wind farm; d) is within the landscape's capacity to accommodate change and neither individually nor cumulatively gives rise to a wind farm landscape. Developers of schemes that provide wind energy development of medium scale will be encouraged to seek opportunities of development in the broad areas of least constraint identified on the key diagram. The wider environmental, economic and social benefits of all renewable energy projects will be given significant weight.</p>	The Neighbourhood Plan ought to take this guidance into account when considering renewable energy in the area.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L21. Alnwick Local Development Framework, Alnwick Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document, May 2010	<p>This document provides guidance in relation to the landscape character of the District, how this affects new development and vice versa. It covers all rural parts of the District excluding those areas within the Northumberland National Park, which is covered by a different planning regime.</p> <p>It supports Alnwick Core Strategy Policy S13, which requires all proposals for development and change to take into consideration landscape character. The aim of the SPD is to provide guidance on what this means for the different landscape character areas covered by the core strategy within the former District excluding the area of the National Park as identified by the joint Alnwick and Castle Morpeth Landscape Character Assessment.</p> <p>Policy S13 of the core strategy, Landscape Character, is as follows; All proposals for development and change will be considered against the need to protect and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the district. All proposals will be assessed in terms of their impact on landscape features and should respect the prevailing landscape quality, character and sensitivity of each area as defined in the Alnwick District Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document.</p>	<p>This document ought to be considered whilst the Neighbourhood plan is being prepared.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L22. Alnwick District Design Guide for Shop Fronts, 1995	<p>The guide was introduced to set standards and give advice on the limits within which a good a designer has scope, in order to prevent the production of designs which are out of scale or out of keeping with the architectural quality of buildings throughout the District.</p> <p>It sets out seven principles of good design in terms of shop frontages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shop-front should be considered as part of the whole building and should be sympathetic to its architectural character, scale and design. 2. The design of the shop-front should respect the character of the adjacent properties. 3. Where one shop occupies two or more buildings of different architectural styles, no attempt should be made to create a single, unified shop-front across the combined frontage. 4. New shop-front designs should be of a standard appropriate to the architectural quality of the area. 5. Existing shop-fronts of good design should be retained, repairs being made only with appropriate materials and details. 6. Existing out of character shop-fronts should be replaced with designs and materials which respect the traditional character of the building. 7. While traditional designs are preferred, contemporary designs for shop-fronts may be acceptable. To succeed, a modern design must be of the highest standard, must respect the proportions of traditional shop-fronts, and must have due regard to scale and character of its surroundings. 	<p>The document has contributed to planning decisions over a number of years. It would be legitimate for the Neighbourhood Plan to review the guidance and change it if necessary.</p>

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L23. Alnwick District Design Guide for Stonework Repairs, 1997	This document aims to improve the quality of stonework repairs and renovations in the area by providing guidance on how this ought to be carried out.	The document has contributed to planning decisions over a number of years. It would be legitimate for the Neighbourhood Plan to review the guidance and change it if necessary.
L24. Alnwick Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2006 & Associated Alnwick Conservation Area Map	<p>The main aim of conservation areas is the preservation of buildings and the spaces between them, to suggest stability and continuity in a rapidly changing world. By preserving distinctive local character, conservation areas can improve the local economy, encourage tourism, attract grants and investment, raise property values, prevent un-neighbourly alterations and encourage traditional building trades.</p> <p>This document reviewed the boundaries of the conservation area, outlining other issues relating to management and making recommendations for changes.</p>	The recommendations in this document should, where appropriate, be considered when producing and implementing the Neighbourhood plan.
L25. Northumbria River Basin Management Plan	This document sets out measures to improve water in rivers, estuaries, coasts and aquifers. They are drawn up for different river basin districts under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Working through river basin management plans, the WFD requires that waters (including rivers, lakes, groundwaters, estuaries and coastal waters) are managed sustainably.	This document ought to be considered whilst the Neighbourhood plan is being prepared. Regard should be had to the potential impact of new development on the ecological standards of waterbodies.
L26. Northumberland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	This document contains information on flood risk locally and may assist in informing developers on the production of their Flood Risk Assessments.	The Neighbourhood Plan ought to take this guidance into account when considering the allocation of land for development.

Policies, plans and programmes		
Plan / policy / programme	Objectives and requirements	How to incorporate in Neighbourhood Plan
L27. Northumberland Green Infrastructure Strategy	This document identifies the green infrastructure network in Northumberland and in particular, considers environmental issues such as climate change and improved water management through the provision of multi-functional, well-connected, fit for purpose green infrastructure.	The Neighbourhood Plan should take account of this document when considering the provision of green infrastructure within the plan area.

Review of baseline information

3.05 The SEA Scoping Report set out the Task A2 review of baseline information. This took place under the topic areas identified below, drawing out, where relevant, any settlement specific issues. The baseline information covers any historical and or current issues, trends, thresholds and targets and any spatially specific aspects. A summary of this information is set out in the table below, under the respective Neighbourhood Plan Baseline Topic Areas (these cover all of the SEA Directive required considerations).

SEA Directive Required Considerations	Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan – Most Relevant Chapter Topics	Sustainability Theme
Biodiversity	(3) Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick (9) Environment	Environmental
Fauna		
Flora		
Soil		
Water		
Air		
Climatic Factors	(3) Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick (4) Housing (8) Transport (9) Environment	
Cultural Heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage	(3) Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick (6) Retailing and Town Centre (10) Heritage, Design and Culture	
Landscape	(4) Housing (9) Environment	
Population	(3) Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick (4) Housing	Social

3.06 This chapter includes baseline monitoring recommendations which are highlighted in red text. These are reproduced in Chapter 6: Monitoring Arrangements, together with monitoring recommendations for the SEA Objectives.

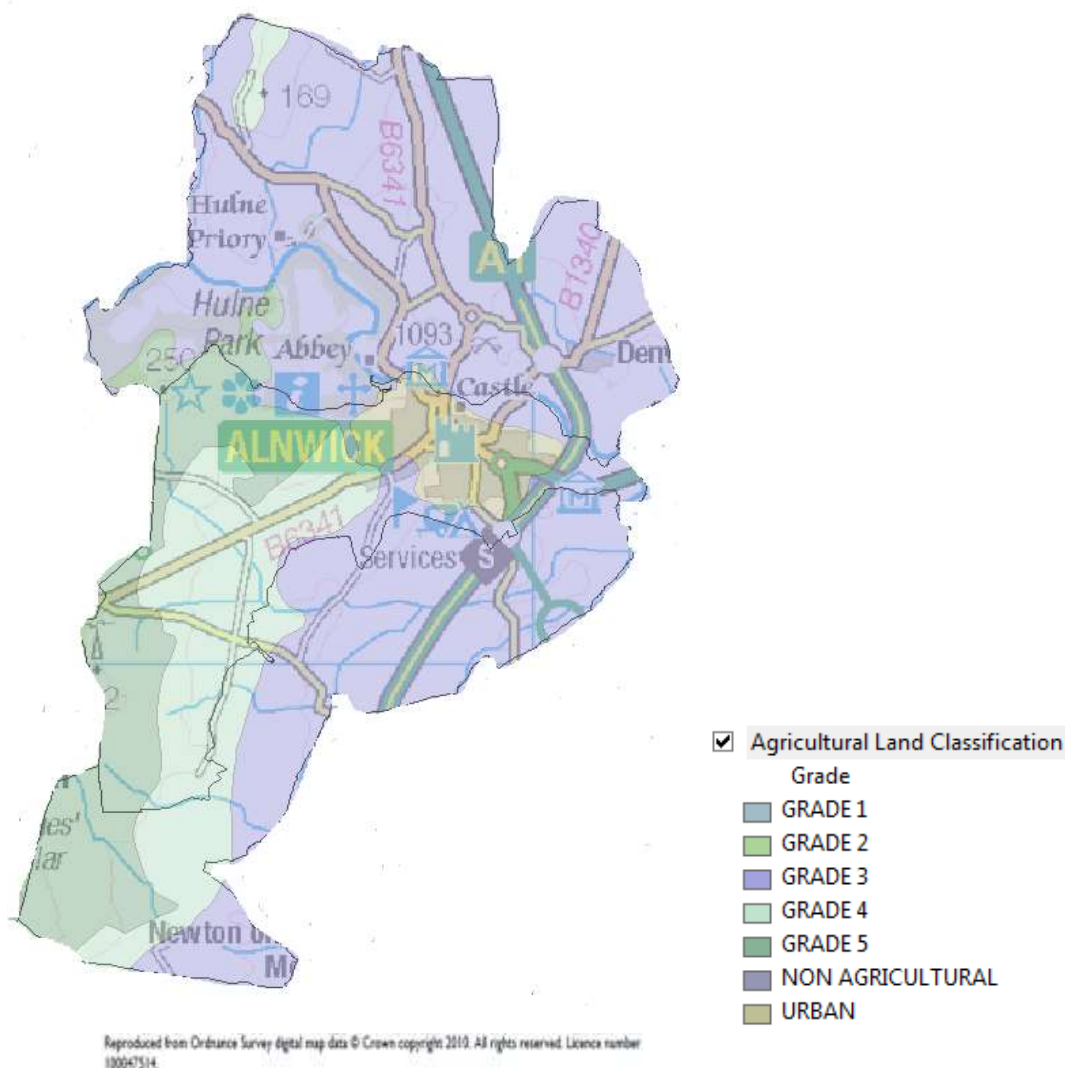
Land and Soil

3.07 At a national level, the policy approach is one of protection of all soils.

3.08 In terms of agricultural land, the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area is predominantly Grade 3 (Good to Moderate). The map below depicts the general classification, showing Grade 3 land in purple.

3.09 This topic is not covered explicitly in the Neighbourhood Plan, except in relation to Policy ENV8, where it is sought to avoid any relocation of allotments being to soils of poorer quality. At a national level the policy approach is one of protection of all soils.

3.10 The Agricultural Land Classification Map for the area, below, shows that the Neighbourhood Plan area is predominantly Grade 3 agricultural land (good to moderate), with lower grade land to the south-west and west. Development should, where practicable, take up the lowest grade of agricultural land. However, with the highest grade locally being 3, this is not a major issue in the Neighbourhood Area. While it is noted that the majority of allocations proposed are on the Grade 3 (as opposed to 4 or 5) adjoining the existing built-up area of the town, this outcome is difficult to avoid when other factors are taken into account. It is also noted that the plan seeks to increase the amount of food produced locally.



Baseline monitoring recommendation

In view of the overall aims set out in the plan and the land-take likely as a result of some proposals therein, it may be advisable to monitor the take-up of Grade 3 agricultural land.

Wildlife and Habitats

3.11 The Neighbourhood Plan's Environment chapter sets the aim of reducing the environmental impact of the people who live or work in and visit Alnwick and Denwick. A theme which runs through the plan is increase public access to natural asserts but also to protect and increase biodiversity. This forms part of a wider family of environmentally related aims and objectives.

3.12 It is noted that there are no internationally or nationally important designated nature conservation sites within the area. There is an SSSI some distance to the east of the plan boundary and international sites lie further afield, notably along the coast. Any ecosystem effects on internationally important sites should be picked up through the

Appropriate Assessment to be carried out under the Habitats Regulations prior to submission of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.13 It is important to note that the Northumberland Water Cycle Study flags up that any significant increase in flow from Alnwick Sewage Treatment Works (STW) due to proposed development could have adverse impact on Lindisfarne SPA/Ramsar/SSSI, Coquet Island SPA and the Farne Islands SPA, as well as the Marine Conservation Zone. However, when the Habitats and Birds Directives came into force in England and Wales, an exercise was undertaken to assess the relevance of Northumbrian Water assets upon these designations. Based on performance and permit levels at the time, it was concluded by the Environment Agency that it was not necessary to impose any tighter condition than already existed upon the Discharge Consent for Alnwick STW. The STW is currently compliant with these consent conditions. If development was planned which would take the consent out of compliance, a permit application from Northumbrian Water would be required to change settings and conditions to reflect this increase in population. When determining this application, the Environment Agency would impose new tighter effluence standards, following the principle of not allowing any downstream deterioration in water quality as a consequence of the population increase. It is anticipated that the Water Framework Directive standards applicable to the immediate receiving water, the River Aln, would be tighter than those required to protect the coastal designations and would be the primary control of effluent quality for this STW.

3.14 Clearly, Hulne Park and the Pastures is a nationally important Registered Park and Garden and will harbour wildlife habitats including protected species; but this will also be true of other parts of the countryside surrounding the town.

3.15 The Plan notes a lack of nature reserve sites. As a step towards remedying this, the Neighbourhood Plan proposes some areas for nature conservation.

3.16 The area does include ancient woodlands to the south of the town – again well away from proposals in the plan. There are a number of Tree Preservation Orders in the town covering significant areas of mature trees. These, especially where they link with other open spaces and where they form corridors, will harbour wildlife within the built-up area. It is noted that the plan seeks to give these areas strong protection and enhance the tree cover elsewhere, where larger scale development is proposed.

3.17 There are numerous protected species and habitat types across Northumberland. Not all are mapped or can be pinned down to particular locations. Any known effects on protected species and habitat types will certainly be picked up as detailed proposals come forward. Further information is available via the Northumberland Wildlife Trust's website – at <http://www.nwt.org.uk/northumberland-BAP>

3.18 Regarding habitats, the following information should be helpful:

3.19 **Protected Habitats known to occur in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area:**

- **Built environment** (covering many types of buildings, structures and manmade surfaces, which can harbour important lichens, birds, bats, etc.);
- **Gardens and allotments**, which can provide many services and opportunities for important wildlife;
- **Transport corridors**, which are linear strips of land adjacent to roads, railway lines, cycleways and bridleways. They can provide valuable habitat for a variety of small mammals, birds, invertebrates and wild flowers, facilitating the dispersal of plants and animals throughout the county;
- **Brownfield land**, which can be an important habitat for lichens, butterflies, moths, beetles and bees, and can act as an alternative for species that have declined due to the loss of native habitats in the wider countryside;
- **Native woodlands**, mostly semi-natural – some ancient – which has occupied its site, with little human change since at least 1600AD. It is the closest we have to natural woodland in the UK;
- **Trees & Hedgerows**, which provide a variety of valuable habitats in urban and rural areas;
- **Recreational & Amenity Space**, which can harbour wildlife (away from sports field areas) in built-up areas;
- **Rivers & Streams**, which are dynamic systems, continually modifying their courses and consequently, their immediate environment as they undertake their natural function of draining the surrounding land. Supporting a rich invertebrate fauna including many rare and specialist beetles.

3.20 **Protected Habitats where the distribution is not known fully but where it is likely that they occur in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area:**

- **Fen, Marsh & Swamp**, which are vegetated, non-woodland, habitats fed by groundwater and either permanently, seasonally or periodically waterlogged;
- **Ponds, Lakes & Reservoirs**, which can be formed naturally and some intentionally or otherwise, by human activity. For the purposes of the Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan, Ponds are defined as small water bodies between 1 metre sq. and 2 hectares in area.

3.21 **Protected Habitats where the distribution may or may not be fully known and where it is certain (or almost certain) that they will not occur in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area:**

- **Lowland Heathland**, (generally found below 300 metres), often boggy – characterised by various dwarf shrubs – a different complement of plants and birds to the more exposed and wetter upland heaths;
- **Lowland Meadows & Pastures**, (heather-dominated habitats that develop over mineral soils of low pH and over very shallow peat).

3.22 Protected Habitats where the distribution may or may not be fully known and where it is certain (or almost certain) that they will not occur in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area:

- Blanket Bog; Calaminarian Grassland; Coastal Heathland; Heather Moorland; Maritime Cliffs & Slopes; Reedbed; Rocky Shore, Reefs & Islands; Saline Lagoon; Saltmarsh & Mudflats; Sand Dunes; Whin Grassland.

3.23 Protected Species that definitely or almost certainly occur in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area:

- **Bats:**
10 out of 17 British species of bat have been recorded in Northumberland – see below.

Species	Frequency
Brandt's Bat (<i>Myotis brandtii</i>)	Rare
Brown Long Eared (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	Frequent
Common Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)	Common
Daubenton's Bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>)	Frequent on water
Leisler's Bat (<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>)	Rare
Nathusius' Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>)	Rare
Natterer's Bat (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>)	Uncommon
Noctule Bat (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)	Scattered
Soprano Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>)	Common
Whiskered Bat (<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>)	Uncommon

At least some of these will occur in the plan area.

The following possible threats to bats are matters the plan could aim to avoid through policy:

- Loss and fragmentation of insect-rich feeding habitats;
- Loss of or damage to linear commuting routes such as tree-lines or hedgerows;
- Loss of or damage to roosting sites, including buildings, hollow trees, and underground structures;
- Loss when demolition/restoration of certain types of older building use inappropriate building practices;

- Roost loss not being balanced by active general provision for bats elsewhere in new builds.
- **Barn Owls**
The following possible threats to barn owls are matters that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:
 - Loss of hunting habitat to large housing and industrial estates;
 - Loss of suitable nest and roost sites due to loss of mature trees, hedgerow clearance, and conversion/demolition of old farm buildings and human disturbance.
- **Farmland Birds**
The arable land, grasslands, hedges and hedgerow trees of Northumberland provide important nesting habitat for a range of migratory and resident species of bird. Some, such as the corn bunting, are increasingly rare. The following possible threats to farmland birds are matters that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:
 - Loss of farmland features such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees, wet areas, ponds and rough field corners that provide feeding and nesting sites.
- **Freshwater Fish (covering Atlantic Salmon, Brown and Sea Trout and the European Eel)**
Northumberland's rivers and streams are important locations for migratory salmonids in the UK. The following possible threats to these freshwater fish are matters that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:
 - Industrial and sewage pollution;
 - Urban run-off/bank erosion.
- **Garden Birds (covering Bullfinch, Dunnock, Goldcrest, House Sparrow, Song Thrush, Starling, Swallow and Swift)**
The above birds that frequent gardens and parks (but were originally woodland/rural species) has experienced declines. The following are threats to garden birds that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:
 - Loss of suitable nesting sites due to modern building design & construction;
 - Loss of feeding areas, through smaller gardens, the development of brownfield sites, etc.
- **Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)**
Widespread mammals, found in most lowland habitats, but most commonly seen in areas where there is grassland close to woodland, scrub or hedgerow. Urban and suburban gardens have become particularly important to hedgehogs seeking food

and nest sites. The following are threats to the hedgehog that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:

- Loss and fragmentation of suitable habitat to urban development;
- Tendency towards fences rather than hedges;
- Bonfires, garden ponds with steep sides and other hazards brought by domestic gardens.

- **Otter (*Lutra lutra*)**

At present, every river catchment in Northumberland boasts signs of otter. In more recent years, they have even started to populate some urban centres. The following are possible threats to the otter that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:

- Disturbance by activities like dog walking along riversides close to new development;
- Loss of habitat due to land drainage and flood defence works;
- Pollution of watercourses which can result from increased toxic discharges from treated sewage, which reduces water quality and subsequently populations of prey species such as fish and crayfish.

- **Red Squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*)**

The strategy to date has been to manage their decline through protection of their optimum woodland habitats as reserves. None of the reserves overlaps with Neighbourhood Plan area. Even so, and notwithstanding that the rival grey squirrels occur in the area, there are reserves to the north-west of the Neighbourhood Area. It would be advisable that the plan should have regard to protecting native woodlands and any woodlands where red squirrels may have been sighted.

- **Water Vole (*Arvicola terrestris*)**

They favour a slow-flowing water course with thick herbaceous riparian vegetation, where extreme fluctuations in water levels are rare. The upper reaches of rivers, small backwaters, ditches and ponds are strongholds for the species. They avoid excessively shaded watercourses with extensive shrub and tree cover. The following possible threats to water voles are matters that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:

- Development that leads to additional need for river engineering, bankside flood protection measures, culverting, riverside vegetation cover removal etc.

3.24 **Protected species that may occur in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area:**

- **Dingy Skipper Butterfly (*Erynnis tages*)**

Habitats include woodland rides and clearings, old quarries, railway lines and waste ground. The following possible threats to Dingy Skippers are matters that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:

- Loss of habitat through development/tree planting on open ground;
- Development close to these habitats bringing increased trampling of vegetation where larvae/pupae occur.

- **Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*)**

These frequent small to medium sized ponds in lowland parts of the County. The following are possible threats that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:

- Loss of suitable breeding ponds and/or nearby terrestrial habitat for foraging and/or hibernation opportunities through increased human activity;
- Habitat fragmentation caused by development leading to reduction in population size and flow of newts between sites;
- Pollution, reducing the amount of submerged vegetation.

- **White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)**

This is the only species of freshwater crayfish native to the UK. It is found in clean, calcareous streams, rivers and lakes – isolated populations have been recorded in the River Aln. The following are possible threats to the crayfish that the plan could aim to avoid through policy:

- Modifications to watercourses and water pollution that may indirectly result from development.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

The baseline would be the present known state of the protected habitats and species.

The above analysis, based on the Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan, could form a starting point whereby any additional development or other measures set out in the Plan could aim to avoid:

- *Negative effects that development may have on the species most likely to occur in the Neighbourhood Area;*
- *Negative impacts on any example of key protected habitats.*

The Plan could also aim to add to some habitats such as garden areas and native woodlands.

The results of the forthcoming detailed Water Cycle Study should be taken into account and there may be the opportunity to monitor progress in terms of water quality in the river, bearing in mind possible effects downstream, of insufficient dilution of any additional toxins.

In terms of the Plan, a particular baseline is that of zero nature reserves. The implementation of those proposed could be monitored.

Sustainability monitoring could pick out themes from the relevant BAPs which could be adversely affected or otherwise influenced by planning decisions and actions taken as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan, and assess the degree to which these could actually be affected.

Landscape

3.25 The Alnwick and Denwick NP area is on the junction of three National Landscape Character Areas: –

- NCA 1 “North Northumberland Coastal Plain”, taking areas east and north east of Alnwick. The Profile can be found at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5236546013757440?category=587130>

The description as it would apply to the area near Alnwick is: A narrow, windswept strip that runs from the Anglo-Scottish border south to the mouth of the River Coquet, bounded by Northumberland Sandstone Hills to the west. The gently undulating inland plain is dominated by arable farming, with large, regular fields bounded by gappy hedgerows and in some places grey sandstone walls, with some pasture for beef cattle and sheep. Woodland cover is sparse. The nationally important Whin Sill outcrops both inland and at the coast, supporting rare Whin grassland.

- NCA 2, Northumberland Sandstone Hills”, taking in much of Alnwick itself plus areas to the west. The profile can be found at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4600274240929792?category=587130>

The description as it would apply to the area near Alnwick is: A series of distinctive flat-topped ridges which provide panoramic views of the Cheviots and the coast. The ridgetops and upper slopes are covered with heather and grass moorland broken by large geometric blocks of conifer. Below this is pasture with some arable cultivation on the lower and dip slopes, broadleaved woodland on scarp slopes and along watercourses and a few notable parklands. There is a long tradition of rearing hardy sheep and cattle in this area. The Aln breaks through from the Cheviot Fringe. The Sandstone Hills play an important role in the recharge of the Fell Sandstone Aquifer; the quality and availability of water in this NCA are important for the supply of water locally and to northern Northumberland, and there are opportunities to help to reduce flood risk in this and downstream NCAs.

- NCA 12, “Mid-Northumberland”, stretching south from Alnwick. The profile can be found at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4839052410880000?category=587130>

This is described as an intermediate plateau of gently undulating farmland which forms a transitional area between the Northumberland Sandstone Hills to the west and the low-lying coastal plain to the east. A series of ridges and enclosed river valleys in the northern part of the area open out into a broader, flatter landscape in the south. Within this predominantly farmed landscape there are many small woodlands and shelterbelts, and a few areas of open water, relatively infrequent within Northumberland.

3.26 The National Profiles go into considerable detail. The Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment sub-divides these NCAs into Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and these, in turn are subdivided into Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). These are mapped – see: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=e469ff63-4f34-44e4-a596-9db43312f6d4&version=-1>, with the key to this at <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=0b168ea5-32d6-4f81-a715-53b3ed0cdabe&version=-1>.

3.27 Part A of the Landscape Character Assessment – see <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=ce99fc57-0610-4498-afc2-c9ce03fadb03&version=-1> contains descriptions of each LCT and, within these, the LCAs. (See the Map extract below)

3.28 Then Part B – see <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=b361865f-2c7e-4f4c-8ad0-abfd7cfc1313&version=-1> contains guidelines on each LCT, which are summarised on a map (<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=b361865f-2c7e-4f4c-8ad0-abfd7cfc1313&version=-1>).

3.29 In order to arrive at aims that could be monitored in terms of landscape character, the starting point would probably be the Part B document, where forces for change and guidelines are given for each of the three component landscape.

3.30 The LCT that includes the eastern edge of Alnwick (within NCA 1) and running east is Type 2 “Coastal Incised Valley”, comprising lower sections of the Aln, relatively shallow, but sharply incised in places. The guiding principle for this landscape is “MANAGE”: *“This landscape is generally well maintained, and the approach should therefore be to encourage the on-going custodianship, and to manage the pressures for expansion of Alnwick. New development should be guided to less sensitive locations, while maintenance should focus on the existing habitats such as riparian woodlands, hedgerows and flood plain meadows.”*

3.31 The LCT that runs NE from the town and includes Denwick (within NCA 1) is Type 3 “Farmed Coastal Plain”, comprising farmland – a gently rolling landscape of mainly arable farmland, well settled, and with a coastal influence. The guiding principle for this landscape is “MANAGE”: *“The principal aims of landscape planning policies and initiatives should be to encourage improved custodianship of a landscape that has declined in quality as a result of agricultural intensification. The areas of this LCT are located between the A1 and the popular coastal strip, and have scope to accommodate on-farm tourism.”*

3.32 The LCT that includes much of the central part of Alnwick itself, running out in a NW direction, including Hulne Park (within NCA 2) is Type 7 “Estate Valley”, dominated by the extensive parkland of Hulne Park and the distinctive landscape around Alnwick Castle. The guiding principle for this landscape is *“PROTECT”*: *“This area is a registered garden and designed landscape. The aim for this area must therefore be conservation. Change within this landscape should be carefully managed. Given the nature of the land ownership, large-scale change would appear unlikely.”*

Taken from Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment Part A

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data © Crown copyright 2010. All rights reserved. Licence number 100047514.

National Landscape Character Area





NCA 1: North Northumberland Coastal Plain

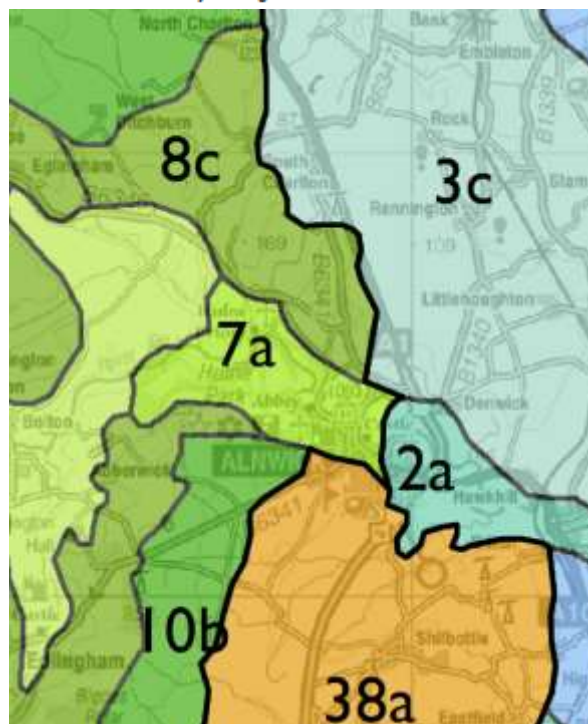
-  Broad River Mouth
 - 1a Tweed River Mouth
-  Coastal Incised Valley
 - 2a Lower Ailn
 - 2b Lower Coquet
-  Farmed Coastal Plain
 - 3a Haggerston
 - 3b Luckier
 - 3c Rock
-  Rocky Coastline
 - 4a North Tweed Coast
 - 4b Farne Islands Coast
 - 4c Craster Coast
-  Sandy Coastline
 - 5a Holy Island Coast
 - 5b Beadnell and Embleton Bays
 - 5c Ailn and Coquet Estuaries

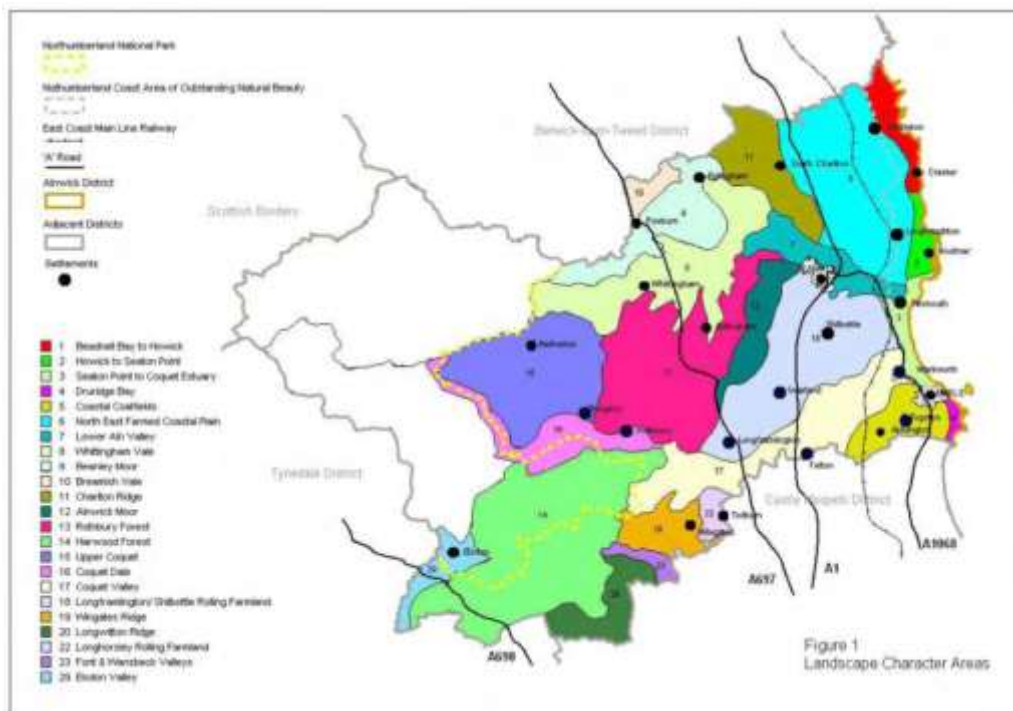
NCA 2: Northumberland Sandstone Hills

-  Broad Sandstone Valley
 - 6a Whittingham Vale
-  Estate Valley
 - 7a Hulne Park
-  Outcrop Hills and Escarpments
 - 8a Doddington Ridge
 - 8b Kyle and Chillingham Hills
 - 8c Charlton Ridge
 - 8d Beanley Moor
 - 8e Rothbury Forest
 - 8f Harwood Forest
 - 8g Sweethope and Blackdown
-  Sandstone Upland Valleys
 - 9a Coquetdale
-  Smooth Moorland
 - 10a Rosebrough Moor
 - 10b Alnwick Moor
-  Sandstone Fringe Farmland
 - 11a Belford Hills
 - 11b Butelaw and Colt Crag
 - 11c Hetton

NCA 12: Mid Northumberland

-  Broad Lowland Valley
 - 35a Coquet Valley
 - 35b Font and Wansbeck Valleys
-  Lowland Farmed Moor
 - 36a Ingoe Moor
-  Lowland Farmed Ridges
 - 37a Wingates Ridge
 - 37b Longwitton Ridge
-  Lowland Rolling Farmland
 - 38a Longframlington
 - 38b Longhorsley
 - 38c Whalton and Belsay
 - 38d Pont Valley
 - 38e North Tyne Ridge





3.33 The LCT that stretches NNW from Alnwick, between the A1 and Hulne Park (within NCA 2) and also an area of open countryside away from the town, to its SW, (towards Edlingham), is Type 8 “Outcrop Hills and Escarpments”. This comprises part of an area of rocky uplands running from the Kyloe Hills in the north, to Great Wanney Crag in the south; their distinctive form and rich semi-natural vegetation patterns contrast with the surrounding more intensively-farmed landscape. The guiding principle for this landscape is *“MANAGE”*: *“The hills are a distinctive feature of the Northumberland landscape, and have valuable landscape features which remain in good condition. The approach for this landscape should be to manage development, while maintaining the distinctive landform and moorland areas.”*

3.34 The LCT that stretches SW from closer into the town (within NCA 2) is Type 10 “Smooth Moorland”. This landscape occurs on the broad dip slope which lies to the east of the prominent scarp of the Northumberland Sandstone Hills. It is closely associated with the Outcrop Hills and Escarpments (Type 8 above), which form the western edge of the Smooth Moorland. The guiding principle for this landscape is *“MANAGE”*: *“The key qualities of this landscape have been affected by a number of influences, including a lack of landscape and field boundary management, unsympathetic blocky coniferous plantations, and development associated with the edge of Alnwick. Future management of this moorland and marginal agricultural land could become more directed towards environmental conservation and landscape improvement.”*

3.35 The LCT that includes the southern edge of Alnwick and running south from the town, straddling the A1, (within NCA 12) is Type 38 “Lowland Rolling Farmland”. This landscape is at the northern end of a large area of rolling or undulating farmland, stretching from the Tyne Gap to Alnwick. Although there are variations in enclosure, patterns, and tree

cover in this landscape, the overall form is relatively continuous. The guiding principle for this landscape is “MANAGE”: “Where key qualities are intact, their long-term viability should be secured, and where these are damaged, the approach for this landscape is to manage their restoration and replacement.”

3.36 The Countywide assessment was predicated by a document entitled Alnwick Landscape Character SPD (adopted May 2010), (see map extract below). This defined different but related character areas, each of which had guidelines. These continue to have planning status – as they are SPD, (having been through a consultation process, rather than being purely evidence). There is no conflict between the evidence guidelines put forward in the Alnwick Landscape Character SPD, as compared with the Northumberland LCA.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

The contents of these documents confirm that that most of the landscapes within which Alnwick sits require a certain degree of management, in order to maintain their key qualities and combat any negative forces for change. The aim could be to achieve development that helps the overall guidelines of managing or (in one case) protecting the landscape, taking into account the detailed forces for change and the detailed guidelines set out in the Part B document, the SPD and any more detailed landscape studies that may have been carried out in the overall area.

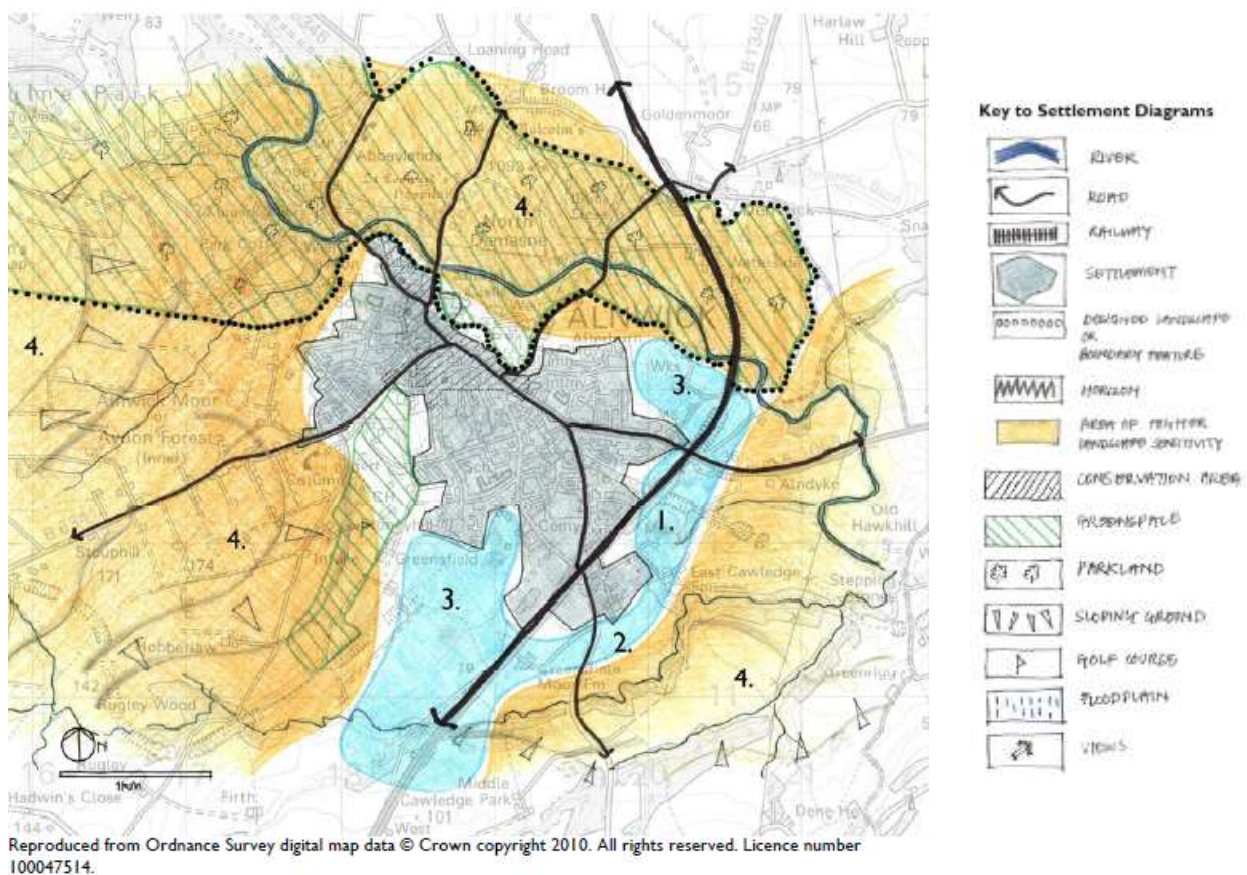
3.37 Another part of the County Council’s Core Strategy evidence base is the Key Land Use Impact study. This document includes a section looking at settlement edges, including around Alnwick, with a view to helping determine which areas around these settlements would be most sensitive to future built development in terms of landscape sensitivity. The document can be found at <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=874e5f83-acc9-4b5b-91e8-d27f9285a352&version=-1>.

3.38 For Alnwick, the map accompanying the chapter showed that many of the settlement’s edges are considered to be of higher landscape sensitivity and the chapters recommendations were to:

- Strengthen boundaries of settlement with woodland belts and trees;
- Retain existing mature trees and field boundaries, follow grain of settlement through new development.
- Review existing massing patterns (terracing, detached, positions of houses within plots and in relation to topography).
- Review architectural styles in the town, and refer to available design guides.
- Review and maximise use of traditional building materials.
- Provide sufficient open space with trees to reflect other areas of Alnwick and reinforce green network.
- Retain key views to and from the settlement and consider potential effects on key landscape characteristics as a result of new development.

3.39 The Key Land Use Impact Study includes guidelines which indicate relative sensitivity, and should be applied when considering proposals for new development. Areas referred to are shown with a corresponding number on the indicative settlement illustration shown on the following page:

1. Seek to retain the A1 to the east as the boundary to residential development.
2. Area of lower landscape sensitivity to the south-east, which may be suitable for small-scale development.
3. To the north-east and south, areas of lower landscape sensitivity to development.
4. Seek to protect character of areas of higher sensitivity, including historic landscapes to the north of Alnwick and areas of rising ground to the south-east, south-west and west, which are important to the setting of the settlement.



3.40 These recommendations clearly overlap with built environment and built heritage considerations. Nonetheless, they align well with the guiding principles of managing the forces for change in the area surrounding the town and giving protection to the Castle setting.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

It is clear from looking at the plan above that expansions of Alnwick into the surrounding countryside would almost certainly encroach on areas shown as being of

“Higher Landscape Sensitivity”. However the guidelines in the LCA and the Alnwick SPD make allowances for management of the landscape beyond Hulne Park itself. The aim therefore could be, wherever possible to avoid the incursion of built development into areas shown as being of higher sensitivity but where this is unavoidable, ensure that management measures along the lines of those suggested in the “Part B” LCA document, and/or the SPD, are incorporated.

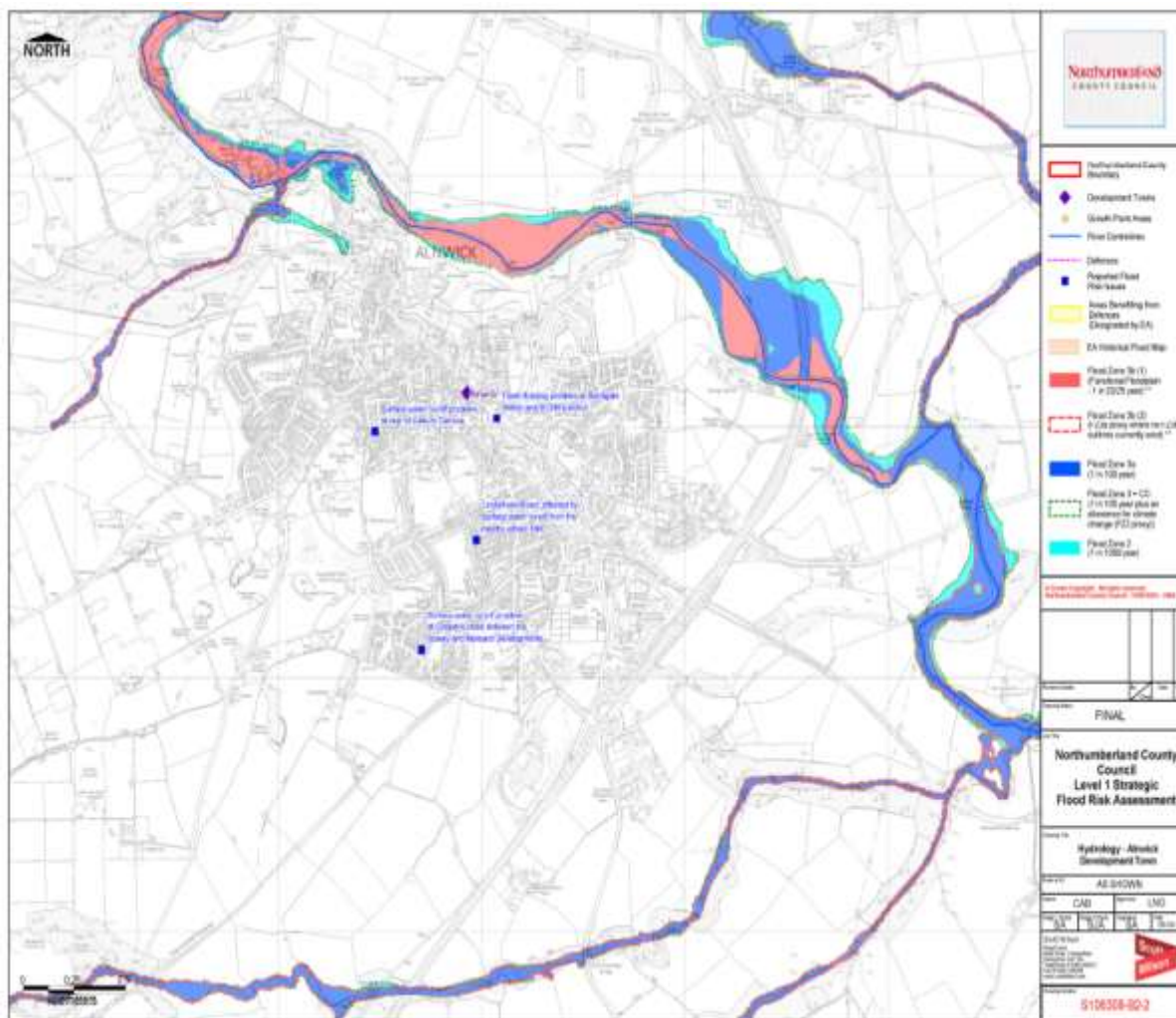
It is of significance that the plan includes a number of additions and enhancements to the network of green infrastructure in the town. In managing the impacts of new development on landscapes surrounding the town, any associated additions or enhancements to related green infrastructure could be included within the assessment.

Water Resources and Flooding

3.41 It is noted that the evidence base review for the Neighbourhood Plan includes water cycle and flooding aspects and that a number of issues were identified against which the plan’s development proposals should be tested. A policy promoting Sustainable Drainage Systems was previously included in the Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan but, as a result of the inclusion of such a policy in the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy, the related Neighbourhood Plan policy was removed as the subject was considered to be adequately covered at a strategic level.

3.42 The level 1 SFRA carried out on behalf of the County Council can be seen below⁷.

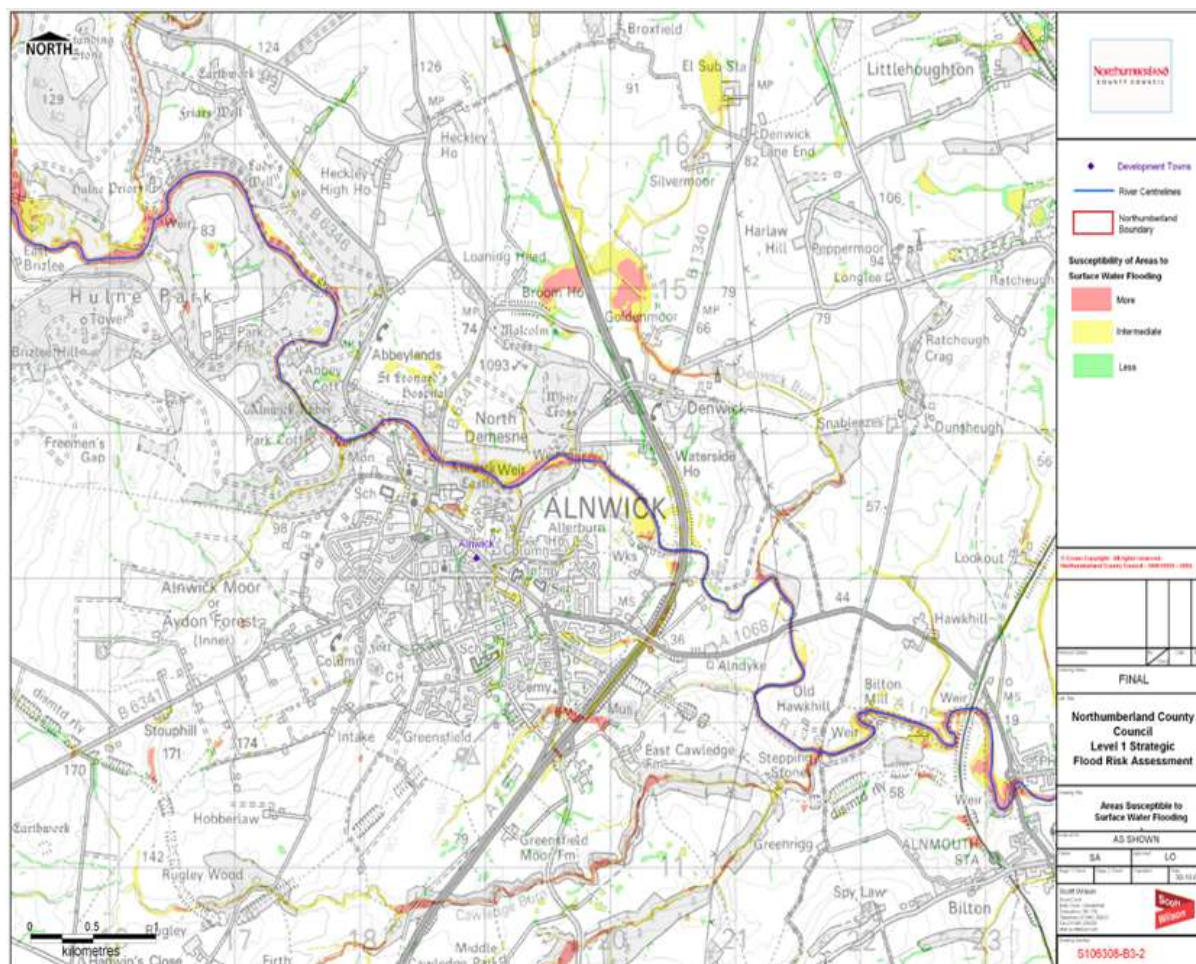
⁷ See <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=5e0e21c5-4044-40eb-aa84-c398e3aa6fc8&version=-1>



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data © Crown copyright 2010. All rights reserved. Licence number 100047514.

3.43 This shows that the River Aln, flowing generally south eastwards forming the northern boundary of Alnwick, and a tributary watercourse named Stocking Burn flowing north eastwards towards their confluence, present fluvial flood risks to Alnwick in the form of Flood Zone 2 (1 in 1000 year), Flood Zone 3a (1 in 100 year), Flood Zone 3 plus an allowance for climate change (1 in 100 year +CC), and Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain). Two small watercourses named West Burn and Wash Burn also flow northwards through the eastern area of the town, and an additional watercourse named Willow Burn flows generally north eastwards adjacent the south eastern boundary of the town.

3.44 Surface water flooding is dealt with separately on a different map shown below⁸. The map identifies that the low-lying areas adjacent to the River Aln, Denwick Burn and Cawledge Burn are at higher risk from surface water flooding. There are several isolated areas within the town centre have been identified as being at intermediate to low risk from surface water flooding. These generally tend to be the low-lying areas created as a result of developments such as low points in roads which produce localised ponding areas during

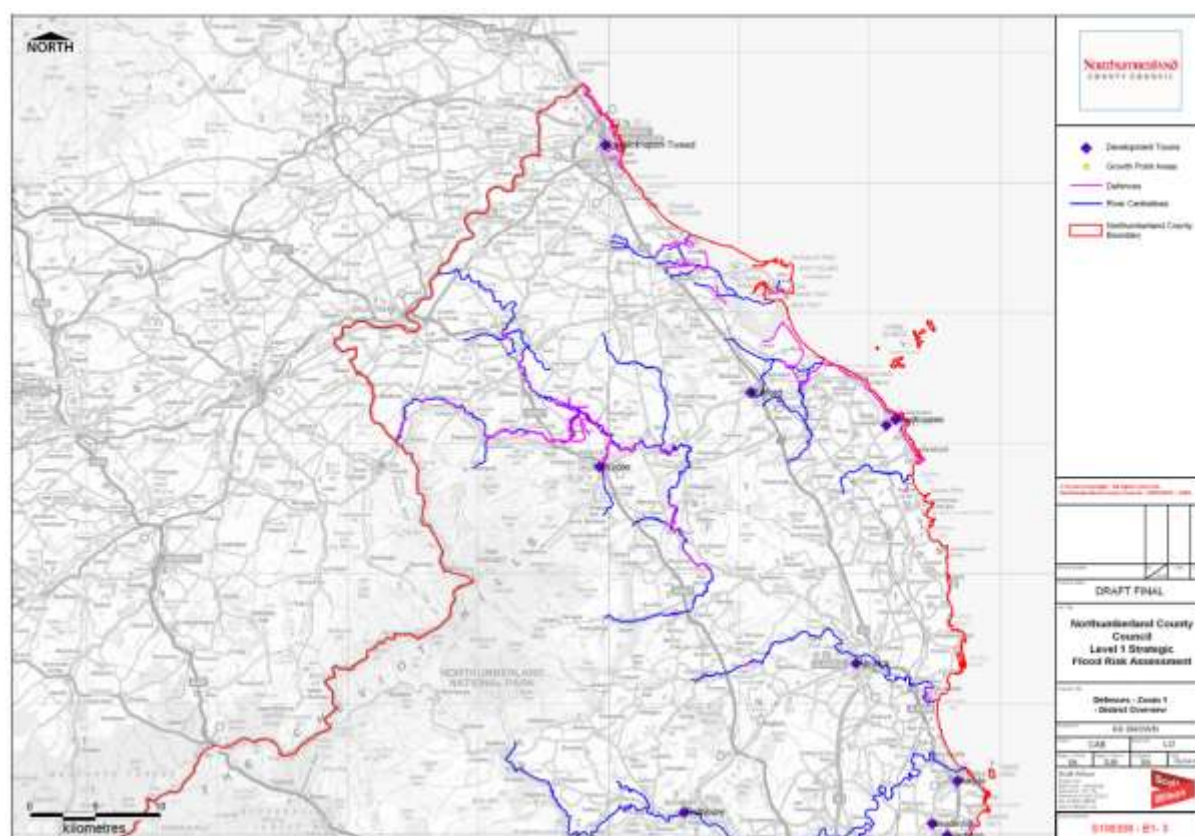


heavy rainfall events.

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data © Crown copyright 2010. All rights reserved. Licence number 100047514.

⁸ See <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=5c3e1978-1866-4744-b59f-8b13cb3fb70b&version=-1>

Flood defences are outlined for the wide area on another map shown below⁹.



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data © Crown copyright 2010. All rights reserved. Licence number 100047514.

3.45 Another useful source is the Northumberland Water Cycle Study¹⁰. This has already been mentioned in relation to possible wider effects on important natural habitats.

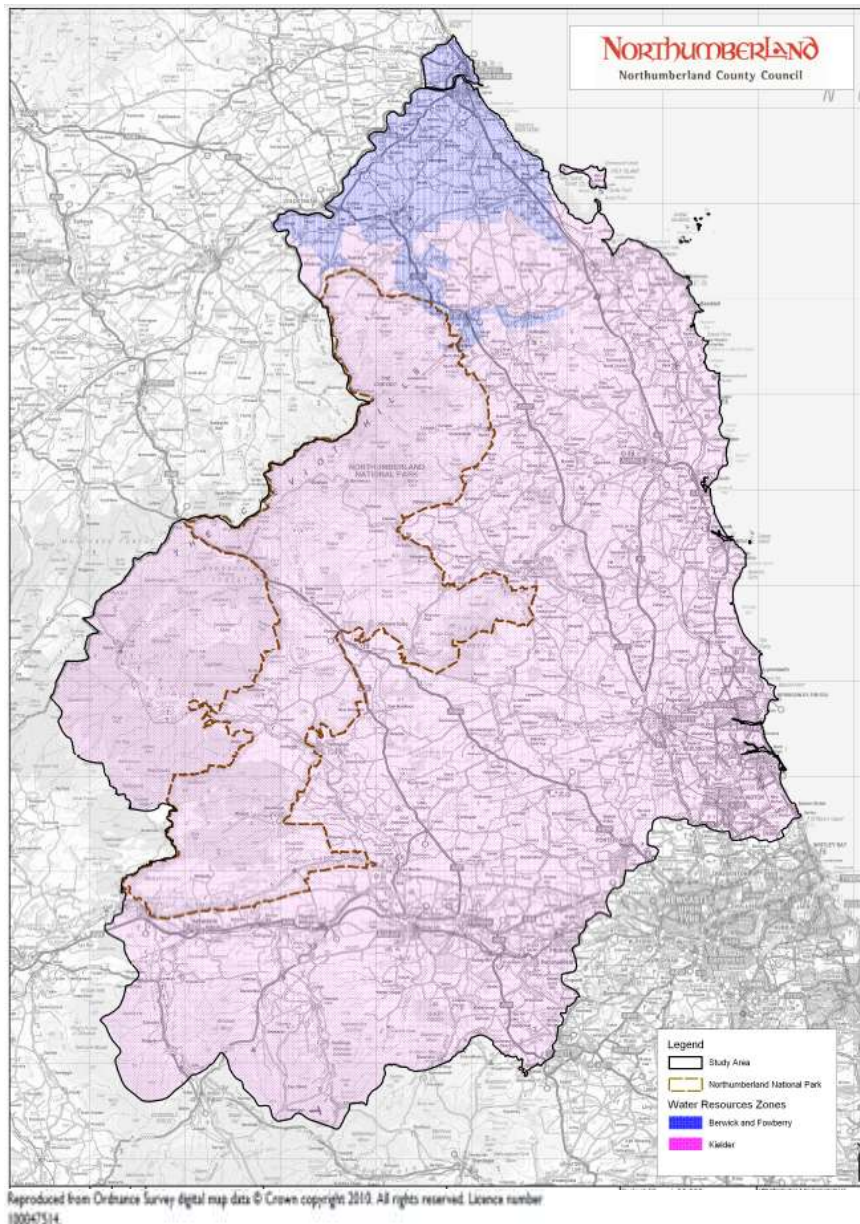
3.46 The study reports the Water Framework Directive Classification for Watercourses in Northumberland and sets out how different water bodies/courses are likely to be impacted by proposed development through discharge of treated wastewater effluent. The need for caution, in relation to any increased flow of treated water into River Aln carrying to important nature sites, has already been flagged up.

3.47 A key map in the study is Figure 6-1 which shows that Alnwick is within the Kielder water resource zone and therefore should not encounter difficulties with water supply¹¹.

⁹ See <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=87fbbae1-1acc-47bf-8aaf-b8fc5860d32e&version=-1>

¹⁰ See <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=6927f080-a730-4c48-85a4-9024f4b56497&version=-1>

¹¹ <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=39494046-8461-4604-8b96-3d6fa725a389&version=-1>



3.48 The study looked at various scenarios as to where future development might go around the town of Alnwick:

- Scenario 1, 575 new dwellings proposed
- Scenario 2 690 new dwellings
- In addition, 16.2 ha of employment land would also be planned for Alnwick.

3.49 Development would drain to Alnwick WwTW which is situated to the east of Alnwick west of the A1. Alnwick WwTW discharges treated effluent into the River Aln.

3.50 Having established these as the scenarios it went on to conclude the following:

- **East of Alnwick** - Local connections may be required into the 300mm diameter combined sewer to the west of the A1;

- **North of Alnwick** - Local connections may be required into the combined sewers in the vicinity of the Council Offices (525mm diameter) and slaughter house (900mm/300 mm diameter).
- **South of Alnwick** - Local connections into the existing 150mm diameter foul sewer adjacent the Lionheart Enterprise Park or the 225mm diameter foul sewer beneath Weavers Way may be required.
- **West of Alnwick** - Local connections may be required into the 225mm diameter combined sewers beneath Chapel Lands and Lower Barresdale.

3.51 Overall, it stated that development to the north and east of Alnwick would be most favoured as it is in closer proximity to Alnwick WwTW and would be less problematic to provide new sewers or connect into/increase the capacity of the existing trunk sewers. Discussions should be held with NWL to confirm that there is sufficient capacity, without reinforcements to the network and to ensure that appropriate connection points and discharge rates to the public sewerage network can be ascertained.

3.52 At the time of the study, neither a complete record of pipe sizes nor gradients were available. It was therefore recommended that the capacity of the network in this location to serve the proposed development should be assessed as part of the Detailed WCS.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

As follows:

- *There will be a need to ensure that proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan tie in with more detailed recommendations in the forthcoming Level 2 Water Cycle Study.*
- *It may be possible to monitor the amount of land / number of dwellings / square metres of floorspace that the plan may propose in the higher flood zones (2 and 3).*
- *The level of SuDs etc. actually implemented in association with development could be monitored, possibly also taking account of the information on past fluvial, surface water, sewer or flash flooding.*

Heritage

3.53 It is noted that the Neighbourhood Plan sets out in detail the heritage assets of the town and surroundings as follows:

- *Conservation Areas - Alnwick Conservation Area*
- *Protected Historic Buildings and Sites – 340 Listed Building entries, 14 Scheduled Monuments and a number of unlisted but Significant Buildings*
- *Historic Spaces – Market Place and other historic townscape spaces*
- *Outstanding Historic urban approach – entrance into Alnwick town from the north via B6341, across the Lion Bridge and up The Peth into the town centre*
- *Significant Historic urban views – including historic townscape views in Canongate, Bailiffgate, Pottergate, Bondgate Within and Bondgate Without*

- *Landscape Heritage – Historic Park and Garden (Grade I and very large), several characterful landscapes, historic field boundaries and protected trees .*

3.54 In the chapter that follows, the plan includes very detailed analysis of the assets in the context of place-making. For example, the context of the surrounding landscape is taken into account – impacts, views, vistas, townscapes etc. Assets at risk and opportunities for enhancement are also key aspects of the chapter, as is the impact of traffic and movement through the town.

3.55 As Heritage is seen as one of the key issues within the Neighbourhood Plan, it will be important to establish the baseline sustainability measurements and set out how progress has been made.

3.56 The topic paper quotes 340 Listed Building entries and 14 Scheduled Monuments within the defined area. Any update to, or monitoring of this can be achieved via the English Heritage website.¹²

3.57 The maps overleaf show the distribution of the main heritage assets.

¹² See <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/> - typing key words such as “Alnwick” or “Denwick” into the search facility. There is also a mapping facility which allows zooming in on buildings etc.



Maps showing Conservation / Heritage Features in Plan Area

NOT TO SCALE

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data © Crown copyright 2010. All rights reserved. Licence number 100047514.

Conservation Areas



Listed Buildings

De-Listed

Grade 1 Listed Buildings

Grade 2 Listed Buildings

Grade 2 Star Listed Buildings

Locally Listed Buildings

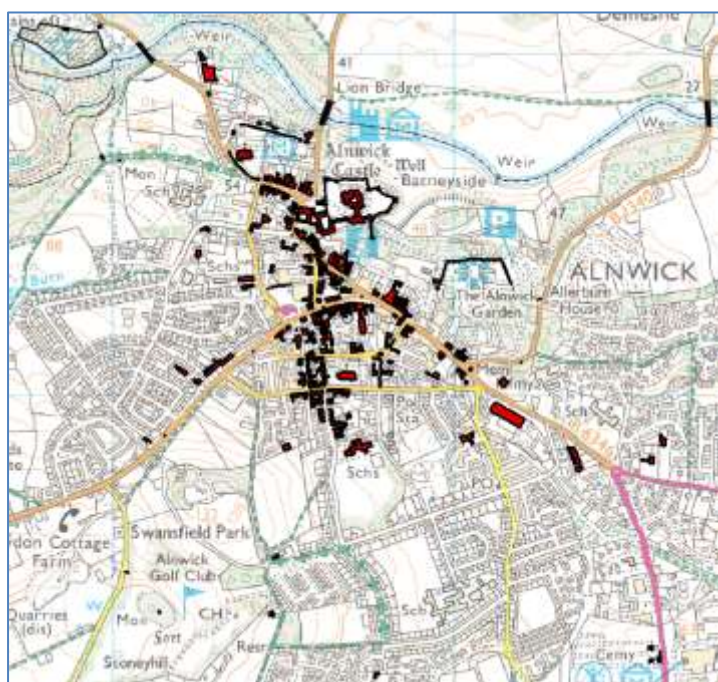
Parks and Gardens



Scheduled



Monument



Left: Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments: Central Alnwick

Below: Alnwick Conservation Area



3.58 While much of what is proposed in the plan is qualitative in nature, it does seek to reduce heritage assets at risk. Three levels of those currently at risk are given – those from the national register¹³, Grade II buildings and structures (locally identified) and publicly used buildings threatened by underuse and/or decay.

3.59 The Heritage at Risk Register 2014 identifies four assets within the Neighbourhood Area as being at risk. Two of these assets are buildings within Alnwick Town itself:

- Bondgate Tower, Bondgate Within, Alnwick (refs 1006597 and 1041513);
- General Lambert's House, 31 & 33 Narrowgate, Alnwick (ref 1041425).

3.60 Further to this, the following Scheduled Monuments are also listed in the Register as being at risk:

- Camp on Alnwick Moor, Alnwick (ref 1006474);
- Heiferlaw defended settlement, 100 metres north of Holywell, Denwick (ref 1014080).

Baseline monitoring recommendation

The three lists of assets at risk could be taken as the baseline with future monitoring of net changes to their contents – possibly against a target of reducing the length of the three lists.

Population

3.61 It is noted that the plan does not seek to boost the population, housing or job growth over and above what is, in any case, being planned for at the County level. The growth strategies should therefore be adequately tested through the Core Strategy SEA process.

3.62 Essentially, the Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to accommodate the intended development in a sustainable way and, indeed, devotes a whole chapter to sustainable development. It seeks a good balance between growth in employment and housing, concentrating also on being able to accommodate the needed development within the constraints imposed by the capacity, urban form and character of the town and its surroundings. There are other aspirations such as a maximising of the use of brownfield land and the enhancement of the urban green space available.

3.63 Much basic population, household and employment information can be found on the “Northumberland Knowledge” website. Parish fact sheets accessed via this link <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=16218> provide considerably more information on each parish. Locality profiles are also useful, accessed via this link <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=15942>.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

¹³ Buildings at Risk are contained on the national Register which can be found through searching at <http://risk.english-heritage.org.uk/register.aspx>.

Based on the matters covered in the “Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick” chapter of the Plan, the type of sustainability factors that can be drawn from the Census, which the plan may wish to monitor, could include: baselines on economic activity levels, proportions of certain younger age groups and numbers of people regarded as not in good health. These items are only updated at a small area level when the Census is carried out every ten years. Items that could be monitored more regularly, (although possibly not based exactly on the plan boundary), would come from other sources and could include things like unemployment rates and benefits claimants.

Housing

(a) Quantity of Housing

3.64 The Housing chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to accommodate the requirements set out by the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy.

3.65 It is noted that the phasing of housing will be based on the sustainability principle of ensuring that necessary services and infrastructure will be in place. (NB phasing based on levels of supply being sustainable would need to be justified in terms of the practical considerations regarding infrastructure provision etc.)

3.66 It is further noted that the policy seeks to preclude housing provision being above a certain level unless accompanied by employment growth. While this is legitimate as an aim and a monitoring tool, it would be difficult to justify preventing additional housing that was otherwise acceptable, on these grounds.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

As it is likely that some of the housing targets, as set out in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy are likely to be amended following revised national population and household projections, it would be advisable for the emerging Neighbourhood Plan take this into account if possible.

Based on the quite legitimate aspiration of achieving, within the Alnwick Neighbourhood Area, housing development that is fully sustainable, the monitoring, if possible of net additions to the town’s employment base, over and above a baseline, may be seen as desirable. Setting a baseline and measuring the changes may be more difficult out with census years.

In terms of the relationship between the need for various infrastructure provision and the building out of certain housing areas, targets could certainly be set and the actual provision of these assets, as against houses built within the related schemes, could be monitored – although, again, these triggers could not be imposed through policy if legitimate planning reasons for departing from them were put forward by developers.

(b) Location of Housing Development

3.67 Policy H2 firstly seeks to prioritise previously developed land over greenfield land release. As with the employment issue, housing could not be refused on greenfield land purely because of such a priority, especially where five year supplies in the eventual monitoring area¹⁴ were not being met.

3.68 It could perhaps be made clearer that allocations are being made through this policy, which also seeks to tie the granting of permission on the larger greenfield allocations to masterplans being prepared. This is legitimate in relation to the earlier point of development being triggered when necessary infrastructure is in place.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

As a sustainable aim of the plan, the take-up of brownfield land within the plan area should certainly be monitored and evidence based targets could be set, based on the known proportion of the eventual allocations falling on that type of land, plus assumptions on windfalls. (Clearly this could not be used on its own to prevent development on greenfield land). The progress of masterplans should be monitored as this will ensure a sustainable, orderly sequencing of infrastructure provision and land release throughout the period of the NP.

Above all, it is important to take account of all evidence already available on the sustainability of allocated sites – through the SHLAA 2013 (<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=e043fb43-18ee-4a0a-a519-c22c9eeb60ec&version=-1>) and the further update being carried out, as well as other available evidence on wildlife, heritage, landscape, flooding and other constraints, as set out in the County Council's evidence base (see <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3458>) or available from other sources.

(c) Specific housing needs

3.69 The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to meet any particular targets on specific housing needs but simply to support it through a permissive policy. A mix of dwelling types is sought on larger sites. This is a sustainable aim in terms of accommodating the town's housing needs within the town.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

It may be that the Town Council would wish to set some targets on different types of housing that could then be monitored across the Neighbourhood Area.

¹⁴ This may be based on the NP area or something more widely defined.

(d) Affordable housing

3.70 The proposals on affordable housing in the Neighbourhood Plan are based on the Countywide evidence and emerging policy. It is noted that there is an intention to carrying out a neighbourhood plan specific housing needs survey. Such a survey could be used to justify the need and refine the percentage threshold to be applied locally. Until then, there might be a case for limiting mention of the 35% figure (which is only meant as a target for the whole of North Northumberland), to the plan's text.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

A future needs survey is likely to be based on lower quartile income and housing costs and could set a baseline for the plan area that could then be monitored alongside the actual provision of affordable housing units.

(e) Quality design and local distinctiveness

3.71 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to reach certain levels of building design including building for life.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

Any increase in the percentage of new homes built in line with the Building for Life 12, and the Lifetime Homes Standard (or successor documents) being applied could be monitored.

(f) Other sustainability issues on housing

3.72 The plan seeks to add to the housing stock in a sustainable, more effective, way through measures such as a permissive policy on house extensions, the avoidance of new build housing in isolated locations and the reuse of vacant space in town centre building

3.73 Stock condition information can be found in the Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), see <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=7cbf04f7-9941-423d-832a-fd6fdf2ee10d&version=-1>. Figure 4-3 within that document shows, for example, the percentage of private sector non-decent homes by ward, as at 2009. This shows a greater issue with non-decent homes in the rural surroundings of towns such as Alnwick than within the town itself.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

The 'Community Action Proposal' (numbered H CAP4) could provide one avenue for monitoring. Once vacant and disused accommodation within the town centre, suitable for refurbishment /conversion for housing, has been identified, its take-up for this purpose could be monitored.

The proposed housing needs survey could also survey second homes and set the estimated proportion as a baseline against which the results of future surveys could be measured.

Departures from the proposed restrictions on housing on isolated sites in the open countryside could also be measured.

(g) Gypsies and Travellers

3.74 It is noted that the plan states that the Northumberland Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment does not identify the need for any further pitches to be provided in the Neighbourhood Area in the period up to 2016. While this is the case, an updated study will be carried out during 2015, which will look ahead over a further period. This may require a site search to take place if significant additional permanent or temporary pitches are needed in the longer term. The revised GTAA may become available as a piece of evidence that would inform the plan. The 'Community Action Proposal' (H CAP5) to review Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the plan area would be in line with this.

Economy and Employment

3.75 The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan seeks to meet the needs of its population as well as those of the wider rural hinterland in terms of employment assets. Clear objectives encouraging sustainability are set in terms of the economy and tourism in the area. With regard to the economy the objectives seek growth and diversification with strong emphasis on the provision of employment opportunities and retaining a young and vibrant working population. Similarly when considering tourism the plan aims to grow the industry by improving the quality of and appeal of activities and services to attract more visitors.

3.76 Alnwick has seen an increased level of economic activity in the last few years with 69.9% of its population being economically active.

- 56.6% of the population work full (31-48 hours per week) time with a further 11% working over 49 hours per week.
- With regard to socio economic classification the largest proportion (20.9%), are employed in lower managerial, admin or professional occupations.
- The tourism economy in the area has contributed to employment opportunities both directly and in related industries for example 8.6% of the population are employed in Accommodation and Food service activities.
- Of those who are economically inactive the majority are retired (18.0% of the total population).

3.77 Higher levels of growth are being encouraged with the objective of attracting new investment and employment. The intent is to create greater opportunity to attract and retain young people and to retain a higher proportion of economically active people. Seeking economic prosperity in order to create a sustainable community the plan aims to

encourage an optimum level of growth. This is aimed to reduce the need for out-commuting for work and maximise opportunity for employment across the community.

3.78 The natural environment in which Alnwick is set is recognised as being of high importance, particularly with regard to tourism. However the Neighbourhood Plan recognises that the area still struggles to attract investment due to limitations with regard to the availability of appropriate employment land, free from constraints to development, (e.g. the sensitivity of the landscape in and around Alnwick limits the choice of locations for new employment areas). Northumberland County Council has undertaken a landscape review which helps to guide development to less sensitive areas, for example, away from the Capability Brown historic landscapes to the north of the town. Other factors such as ownership, accessibility and physical factors provide more of a constraint to the west.

3.79 Similarly there are limitations to growth in terms of new development within Alnwick Town Centre. This is due to the historic layout of the town, the lack of availability of larger sites and buildings and issues associated with transport and car parking. The plan encourages diversification of the area, in which traditionally solely retail development was sought. This is hoped to stimulate a more vibrant economy and new services. The plan does acknowledge that there may be issues regarding competition from other centres as well as out of centre developments.

3.80 The plan extensively discusses the impacts of tourism on the local economy, recognising the need for balance in encouraging this sector to grow without allowing inappropriate development which would destroy the areas appeal to the tourist market. The plan also points to the seasonality issue – facilities struggling to cope at peak times in summer, but visitor numbers falling away sharply from October until Easter, reflected in much reduced town centre trading.

3.81 The plan seeks to grow the tourism industry all year round and attract more visitors to the town centre. However it recognises that over-reliance on one sector for economic growth, could be at the expense of other sectors which contribute to the vitality of Alnwick as a market town and service sector.

3.82 The plan points to a lack, in Alnwick, of further education or dedicated training facilities beyond school leaving age, leading to young people moving out of the area. The Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges that such aims are not likely to be deliverable through the plan itself but will support development projects which are particularly attractive and beneficial to retaining and attracting younger people.

3.83 Overall, therefore, the plan's proposals on the issues of the employment and the economy recognise the importance of the town's natural and built environment both in terms of bringing in jobs and in terms of its constraining effects. It sets out a number of aspirations and also some practical proposals.

3.84 These include allocating land to the east of the A1 at Cawledge and Lionheart Business Parks to meet employment needs in the period to 2031, with ranges of uses defined for each. The Neighbourhood Plan also seeks to retain all existing employment sites in that use.

Baseline monitoring recommendation

There are a number of employment statistics that could be monitored. Some are published on a regular basis, others less often. However, such figures will normally cover a wider area than Alnwick alone.

As the key issue in terms of sustainability is the take-up of land for employment, through the two proposed allocations and the proposed retention of existing sites in that use, it is important to assess the proposals against what has already been assessed in the employment land review – see

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=3bcd8f8e-6220-4c5e-a92d-99da14c65af3&version=-1> – as well as in terms of the evidence on constraints that is available via the County Council's evidence base (see <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3458>) or from other sources.

Chapter 4: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan aims and alternatives

Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan Aims

4.01 An assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan Aims against the SEA objectives was carried out as part of the SEA Scoping Report. The initial assessment was carried out by County Council Officers and subsequently amended following feedback from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The subsequently revised assessment is set out in the following table.

4.02 As the following table shows, the majority of the Neighbourhood Plan aims perform positively and help to meet the requirements of the SEA objectives. However, there are a number of uncertainties about the effect that some of the Plan aims may have. Importantly, it should be noted that none of the plan aims were assessed as having negative effects against the SEA objectives.

4.03 It is therefore suggested that the Plan aims are compatible with the SEA objectives and that no revisions would be required. The emerging policies should seek to address the objectives and enable appropriate mitigation if/where required.

4.04 As the following table shows, the majority of the Neighbourhood Plan Aims perform positively and help to meet the requirements of the SEA objectives. However, there are a number of uncertainties about the effect that some of the objectives may have.

Assessment of Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Aims

<div><div>✓✓</div><div>✓</div><div>?</div><div>XX</div><div>X</div><div>0</div><div>-</div></div> <div>Major positive effect</div> <div>Minor positive effect</div> <div>Uncertain effect</div> <div>Major negative effect</div> <div>Minor negative effect</div> <div>Neutral Effect</div> <div>No relationship</div>	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Aims												
Housing: To provide a range of good quality housing, particularly affordable housing, to meet local need.	✓	?	✓	?	0	✓	?	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Economy and employment: To support, strengthen and diversify Alnwick as the principal employment and service centre for the wider area.	✓	?	✓	?	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓
Retail and Tourism: To maintain and develop a vibrant mix of retail and tourism facilities which provide a locally distinctive shopper & visitor experience in the town centre whilst fully meeting local needs.	?	✓✓	✓	0	-	?	✓	✓✓	-	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Community, Leisure and Education Facilities: To provide high quality, accessible and affordable community, leisure and education facilities to meet the needs of all parts of the local community.	✓	✓	✓	?	0	✓	✓	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Sport and recreation: To improve the provision of good quality, affordable sports and recreation facilities.	-	?	?	?	-	✓	-	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Transport: To improve movement around Alnwick and Denwick, enhance the pedestrian experience and improve the quality of public transport facilities and linkages.	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓✓	0	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Environment: To improve well-being and reduce the environmental impact of the people who live or work in and visit Alnwick and Denwick, to increase the amount of public open space that is readily accessible to all, protect and increase biodiversity, practice sustainable urban drainage and water management and make us more resilient to increasing fuel prices and climate change	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓	✓
Heritage, design and culture To protect and enhance the special architectural and historic character of the area as a unique ducal town and promote its key role in defining local identitv and underpinning the local economy.	?	✓✓	✓✓	✓	-	0	✓	✓	0	✓	0	0

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Reasonable Alternatives – Housing

4.05 The emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy sets an indicative housing target for Alnwick. However, it was considered that there may be different ways of distributing this growth within the Neighbourhood Area. A number of different options were discussed, utilising Northumberland County Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), feedback and ideas from the Neighbourhood Plan Issues and Options consultation and then refined through the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Draft (August 2014), as well as feedback from a workshop to consider spatial development options in summer 2013 and the results of a site assessment process. See Appendix B for details.

4.06 In addition to the indicative housing target for the main town of Alnwick, the emerging Local Plan sets an indicative housing target for the rest of the North Northumberland Delivery Area, which includes parts of the Neighbourhood Area which are outside Alnwick itself. However, any housing development in the open countryside part of the Neighbourhood Area will be restricted to single units where specific need applies.

4.07 The SEA Regulations¹⁵ require the SEA to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of “reasonable alternatives”, together with an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternative dealt with. These alternatives are then assessed through the SEA Environmental Report, which evaluates the likely significant environmental effects of each alternative, helping inform the preferred approach taken through the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.08 The site assessments were carried out consistently using the attached template by members of the neighbourhood plan steering group following a training session at a workshop in October 2013.

4.09 The completed site assessment forms for all housing and employment site options provided the information necessary to select the most sustainable site options. In response to representations made by Historic England and the Coal Authority, minerals safeguarding and coal issues, as well as significance of heritage assets have also been reviewed for each site. The results of the site assessments were provided to the County Council and all have been assessed against the sustainability objectives in the SEA Environmental Report.

4.10 The results of this assessment were then taken forward as the preferred approach to the distribution of housing within the Neighbourhood Area and are subsequently identified in the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment of all of the sites considered through the Neighbourhood Plan and SEA process is included in the following pages of this document.

¹⁵ Regulation 12(2)(b) and Schedule 2(8)

Housing Site Assessments

	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	✓✓ Major positive effect											
	✓ Minor positive effect											
	? Uncertain effect											
	XX Major negative effect											
	X Minor negative effect											
	0 Neutral Effect											
	- No relationship											
	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓
Site 1: Land at Roxborough Place, Alnwick	Overall, the site is anticipated to have a positive effect. The site scored positively against every SEA objective except Objectives 5 and 11, which resulted in neutral effects. The site is currently in use, mostly as a car park, but with some residential and business uses adjacent. Since the site is 100% previously developed land, the potential for any loss of habitat is nil. The site is well-located in terms of access to the town centre, facilitating sustainable access to schools, employment and services and facilities. It is likely that air quality will also be improved due to providing opportunities for sustainable travel into the town and reducing vehicle movements if the site changes use from a car park. The site contains a listed building (Corn Exchange) and is located within the Alnwick Conservation Area, but development of the site for residential development would provide opportunities to improve the site and ensure a high quality of building design.											
	✓	✓	0	?	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓
Site 2: Lindisfarne Middle School, Lindisfarne Road, Alnwick	Overall, the site scored positively against the SEA objectives. The site is well located to allow sustainable access to the town centre, helping to facilitate sustainable travel and improve health and wellbeing. Uncertain effects were seen against objective 4, as it is uncertain whether development in this location would have an effect on biodiversity. Neutral effects were seen against objectives 3, 5 and 10 as it is considered that development in this location would not impact on the baseline.											

	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	✓✓ Major positive effect	✓ Minor positive effect	? Uncertain effect	XX Major negative effect	X Minor negative effect	0 Neutral Effect	- No relationship					
	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
Site 3: Former Bus Garage, Lisburn Terrace, Alnwick	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓
	Overall, the site is anticipated to have a positive effect. The site scored positively against every SEA objective except Objectives 5 and 11 which observed neutral effects. The site has planning permission for a care home and has been cleared. Since the site is 100% previously developed land, the potential for any loss of habitat is nil. The site is well-located in terms of access to the town centre, facilitating sustainable access to schools, employment and services and facilities. It is likely that air quality will also be improved due to providing opportunities for sustainable travel into the town. The site is in close proximity to the Alnwick Conservation Area, but development of the site for residential development would provide opportunities to improve the site and ensure a high quality of building design.											
Site 4: The Old Vicarage, Ratten Row, Alnwick	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	0	✓
	Overall, the site scored positively against the SEA objectives. However, a number of uncertain effects were also recorded. Given the site's location on the edge of the conservation area, future development in this location would need to be sensitively designed so as not to affect the conservation area and the setting of heritage assets. The site is in a prominent location when approaching the conservation area from the north west on the B6346 (Canongate). The site is, however, well located to allow sustainable access to the town centre, helping to facilitate sustainable travel and improve health and wellbeing. Uncertain effects were also seen against objective 4, as it is uncertain whether development in this location would have an effect on the trees contained within the site. In addition, the Wash Burn appears to be culverted under the western part of the site.											

		Sustainability Objectives																									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12														
		To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services														
<table><tr><td>✓✓</td><td>Major positive effect</td></tr><tr><td>✓</td><td>Minor positive effect</td></tr><tr><td>?</td><td>Uncertain effect</td></tr><tr><td>XX</td><td>Major negative effect</td></tr><tr><td>X</td><td>Minor negative effect</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>Neutral Effect</td></tr><tr><td>-</td><td>No relationship</td></tr></table>		✓✓	Major positive effect	✓	Minor positive effect	?	Uncertain effect	XX	Major negative effect	X	Minor negative effect	0	Neutral Effect	-	No relationship	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	0	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓
✓✓	Major positive effect																										
✓	Minor positive effect																										
?	Uncertain effect																										
XX	Major negative effect																										
X	Minor negative effect																										
0	Neutral Effect																										
-	No relationship																										
Site 5: Land east of Allerburn Lea		<p>Overall, the site scored positively, with major positive effects when assessed against SEA objectives 8 and 9 due to the site’s ability to provide a large number of homes, as well as its location adjacent to the proposed green walking and cycling route, facilitating sustainable travel as well as promoting healthy lifestyles and providing opportunities for outdoor recreation.</p> <p>The site was assessed as having minor positive effects against SEA objectives 1, 5, 6, 10, 11 and 12. Again, this is due to the site’s location which facilitates sustainable access, as well as the site’s ability to provide critical mass to support local services, facilities and the local economy. The site was assessed as having neutral effects against SEA objectives 2, 3, 4 and 7. In terms of objective 3 relating to heritage, it is considered that, due to the site’s location, it would not affect the conservation area and is unlikely to have any positive or negative effects on heritage assets.</p>																									
Site 6: Alnwick Moor, Bank Top, South of B5341		✓	?	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0	0														
		<p>Overall, the site scores positively against the SEA objectives, given the site’s location close to the town centre but outside the conservation area. Development of the site would also allow for opportunities to improve water quality on the site, as well as improving air quality through reducing the need to travel by car into the town centre and therefore having health benefits by encouraging active travel such as walking and cycling. Uncertain effects were seen against objective 2 as it is unclear how development in this location may affect local distinctiveness. Neutral effects were seen against objectives 4, 10, 11 and 12 as the development of this site is not considered to have an effect on the baseline.</p>																									

		Sustainability Objectives											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
		✓	✓	✓	0	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Site 7: Duchess' High School, Howling Lane, Alnwick		Overall, this site preformed very positively against the SEA objectives. Minor positive effects are seen against most of the objectives due to the site's location close to the town centre, reducing the need to travel by car and enhancing opportunities for access by walking, cycling and public transport. The site is also close to the conservation area and would allow opportunities to improve the site in terms of the design of buildings. Similarly, once vacated by the school, the site allows the opportunity for the redevelopment of previously developed land. The site would facilitate access to the town centre, which would enable sustainable access to services and facilities and would help the local economy. The site was considered to have likely neutral effects against SEA objectives 4 and 5 due to the site's status as previously developed land.											
		✓	✓	?	?	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0	0
Site 8: Duke's Middle School, Hope House Lane, The Dunterns, Alnwick		Overall, this site performed positively against the SEA objectives. Minor positive effects are seen against most of the objectives due to the site's location close to the town centre, reducing the need to travel by car and enhancing opportunities for access by walking, cycling and public transport. Once vacated by the school, the site would allow the opportunity for the redevelopment of previously developed land. The site would facilitate access to the town centre, which would enable sustainable access to services and facilities and would help the local economy. Neutral effects are seen against objectives 5, 10, 11 and 12, with some uncertain effects against objectives 3 and 4; the effects that development in this location would have on the listed building and nearby conservation area, as well as biodiversity, are unclear, given the number of mature trees on the site currently.											

		Sustainability Objectives																								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12													
		To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services													
<table><tr><td>✓✓</td><td>Major positive effect</td></tr><tr><td>✓</td><td>Minor positive effect</td></tr><tr><td>?</td><td>Uncertain effect</td></tr><tr><td>XX</td><td>Major negative effect</td></tr><tr><td>X</td><td>Minor negative effect</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>Neutral Effect</td></tr><tr><td>-</td><td>No relationship</td></tr></table>	✓✓	Major positive effect	✓	Minor positive effect	?	Uncertain effect	XX	Major negative effect	X	Minor negative effect	0	Neutral Effect	-	No relationship												
✓✓	Major positive effect																									
✓	Minor positive effect																									
?	Uncertain effect																									
XX	Major negative effect																									
X	Minor negative effect																									
0	Neutral Effect																									
-	No relationship																									
Site 11: Land west of Chapel Lands, Alnwick	?	0	0	?	0	?	?	?	✓✓	0	0	0														
	Overall, the site score was uncertain or neutral against the sea objectives, with neutral or uncertain effects recorded against ten of the twelve SEA objectives; these related to local distinctiveness, built and cultural heritage, biodiversity, community services and facilities and sustainable access. Uncertain effects were seen against objectives 1, 4 and 6-8 as it is unclear whether development in this location would cause an increase in car journeys due to its distance from the town centre, which would obviously impact on air quality locally. Additionally, uncertain effects were also shown against objective 7 as the site currently provides informal open space which is used by local residents for dog walking etc. Objective 8 was also seen as uncertain due to the uncertain effects on active travel given the site’s location, as well as the potential loss of informal open space.																									
Site 12: Woodbine Cottage Field, Lower Barresdale	?	X	X	?	?	?	?	X	✓	0	X	0														
	The effects of this site when assessed against the SEA objectives are largely uncertain. Uncertain effects were seen against objectives 1 and 6 as it is unclear whether development in this location would cause an increase in car journeys due to its distance from the town centre, which would obviously impact on air quality locally. Additionally, uncertain effects were also shown against objective 7 as the site is designated common land. Uncertain effects were also seen against objectives 4 and 5. Minor negative effects were seen against objectives 2, 3, 8 and 11. This is due to the site’s status as designated common land and associated uses permitted on common land. A minor positive effect was seen against objective 9 as the site could deliver housing within Alnwick. Neutral effects were seen against objectives 10 and 12.																									

		Sustainability Objectives																									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12														
		To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services														
<table><tr><td>✓✓</td><td>Major positive effect</td></tr><tr><td>✓</td><td>Minor positive effect</td></tr><tr><td>?</td><td>Uncertain effect</td></tr><tr><td>XX</td><td>Major negative effect</td></tr><tr><td>X</td><td>Minor negative effect</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>Neutral Effect</td></tr><tr><td>-</td><td>No relationship</td></tr></table>		✓✓	Major positive effect	✓	Minor positive effect	?	Uncertain effect	XX	Major negative effect	X	Minor negative effect	0	Neutral Effect	-	No relationship	✓	0	0	?	0	0	✓	0	✓	0	0	✓
✓✓	Major positive effect																										
✓	Minor positive effect																										
?	Uncertain effect																										
XX	Major negative effect																										
X	Minor negative effect																										
0	Neutral Effect																										
-	No relationship																										
Site 13: Allerburn House, Denwick Lane, Alnwick		Overall, the site performs reasonably positively against the SEA objectives, particularly objectives 1, 7, 9 and 12. This is due to the site’s location within Alnwick, which would help to reduce vehicle trips into the town centre. Additionally, the site would include the re-use of the existing Allerburn House, which shows efficient use of existing land and buildings. Neutral effects were seen against objectives 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 11 as it is unlikely that development of the site will have an effect on the baseline. Uncertain effects were observed against objective 4, as the effect of development of this site is not clear in terms of protecting and enhancing biodiversity. This will be dependent on the density of development and how much of the existing mature trees and landscaping is retained as part of the new development.																									
Site 14: Greensfield Farm, south of Fairfields, Alnwick		✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	0	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓														
		The site has outline planning permission for 271 units. Overall, the site scored positively with major positive effects when assessed against SEA objectives 8 and 9 due to the site’s ability to provide a large number of homes, as well as its location adjacent to the former railway line which is safeguarded through the Plan for walking and cycling, facilitating sustainable travel as well as promoting healthy lifestyles and providing opportunities for outdoor recreation. The site was assessed as having minor positive effects against SEA objectives 1, 5, 6, 10, 11 and 12. Again, this is due to the site’s location which facilitates sustainable access, as well as the site’s ability to provide critical mass to support local services, facilities and the local economy. Neutral effects were observed for SEA objectives 2, 3, 4 and 7, as it is not considered that the site would have an effect on the baseline. A neutral effect was recorded against SEA objective 4 as the site has planning permission and is therefore likely to be developed for housing regardless of its inclusion in the plan.																									

		Sustainability Objectives											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
✓✓	Major positive effect	0	XX	XX	0	?	?	0	0	✓	0	0	0
✓	Minor positive effect	The site recorded neutral effects against seven of the SEA objectives. However, major negative effects were seen against SEA objectives 2 and 3, due to the site’s prominent location on the B6346 and in relation to the Alnwick conservation area. It is considered that development in this location would have a significant effect. Uncertain effects were seen against objectives 5 and 6 relating to water and air quality respectively. Minor positive effects were observed against objective 9 as development of this site would deliver housing. However, given the major negative effects against objectives 2 and 3 it is considered that this site has major sustainability issues regarding local distinctiveness, with the site being so prominent in the landscape approaching Alnwick from the North West along the B6346.											
?	Uncertain effect												
XX	Major negative effect												
X	Minor negative effect												
0	Neutral Effect												
-	No relationship												
		✓	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0	✓
		This site performs positively when assessed against the SEA objectives. Neutral effects were seen against SEA objectives 2-5, 10 and 11, as it is not anticipated that there would be an effect on the baseline in these instances. The remaining objectives saw positive effects; due to the site’s location within the town, it is in a strong position to enable access to the town centre and services and facilities, as well as facilitating access into Alnwick by sustainable modes of transport and helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.											

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Reasonable Alternatives – Employment

4.11 It was considered that there may be different ways of distributing employment land in Alnwick. A number of different options were discussed, giving consideration to land which already has planning permission, as well as land allocated for employment uses in the Alnwick District Wide Local Plan. Site selection also drew on the findings of the detailed site assessment process see Appendix C and the outcomes from Issues and Options consultation and discussions at the Spatial Development Options workshop in summer 2013.

4.12 The following table sets out the main sites which were considered likely to form the future supply of land for employment uses within the town, some of which include land which is capable of development and which will contribute to the overall employment land supply.

4.13 The following sites were identified through the neighbourhood planning process as having potential to contribute to the overall employment land supply in the neighbourhood area:

- Lionheart Extension, Phase 3;
- Cawledge Business Park Extension;
- Greensfield, Alnwick;
- Land south of Covance;
- Land south east of Cawledge Business Park;
- Willis Garage site.

4.14 An assessment of these sites against the SEA objectives was carried out through the SEA process and can be found on the following pages.

Employment Site Assessments

	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	✓✓	Major positive effect										
	✓	Minor positive effect										
	?	Uncertain effect										
	XX	Major negative effect										
	X	Minor negative effect										
	0	Neutral Effect										
	-	No relationship										
Site 1: Lionheart Enterprise Park Extension, Phase 3	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓✓	0	✓✓
	The site currently has planning permission for a sawmill and biomass power station and has also been earmarked for a new Council Depot and Fire Station. The site scores positively overall, as it is adjacent and well-related to the town, as well as being located close to the A1. The site's location minimises the risk of conflict with neighbouring uses and is well-located beside the strategic road network, reducing the need to travel into the town centre for employment and having a positive effect on air quality. Additionally, the site's location would result in a neutral effect on local landscape and townscape as well as built and cultural heritage.											
Site 2: Willis Garage site	✓	X	?	0	✓	?	✓	X	0	✓✓	0	✓✓
	The site has permission for retail use which is currently under construction. It is located near to existing residential areas and industrial scale buildings are likely to be obtrusive visually as well as having an effect on residential amenity. This has resulted in minor negative effects being recorded against objectives 2 and 8. The site did score major positives against objectives 10 and 12 but given the likelihood of the development of this site having negative impacts, together with the availability of more suitable sites for employment elsewhere in the neighbourhood area; it is considered that the overall sustainability of the site is poor.											

		Sustainability Objectives											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
✓✓	Major positive effect	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
✓	Minor positive effect												
?	Uncertain effect												
XX	Major negative effect												
X	Minor negative effect												
0	Neutral Effect												
-	No relationship												
Site 3: Land south of Covance		?	X	?	?	0	X	✓	?	-	✓	-	X
		The site is currently reserved for use by Covance and is therefore not available for general employment use. There is no direct access to the site, which has resulted in a negative impact in relation to objective 12. The site was assessed as having likely uncertain effects against objectives 1, 3, 4 and 8. Minor positive effects were seen against objectives 7 and 10. While mitigation could improve access to the site (and also likely improve the results of this assessment once accessibility is certain), it is considered that the site is not currently suitable to be considered to be allocated for general employment use through the Neighbourhood Plan at this stage.											
Site 4: Land south of Cawledge Business Park		✓	✓	0	?	0	?	✓	0	-	✓	0	0
		Overall, this site scores relatively positively. However, the development of the site would be reliant on new access and associated infrastructure. The positive and neutral impacts observed would not rule out the site on sustainability grounds.											

	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	✓✓	Major positive effect										
	✓	Minor positive effect										
	?	Uncertain effect										
	XX	Major negative effect										
	X	Minor negative effect										
	0	Neutral Effect										
	-	No relationship										
Site 5: Cawledge Business Park Extension	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓✓	0	✓✓
	This site would result in a southwards extension to the existing mixed use business park. The site scores positively overall, as it is adjacent and well-related to the town, as well as being located close to the A1. The site's location minimises the risk of conflict with neighbouring uses and is well-located beside the strategic road network, reducing the need to travel into the town centre for employment and having a positive effect on air quality. Additionally, the site's location would result in a neutral effect on local landscape and townscape as well as built and cultural heritage.											
Site 6: Greensfield, Alnwick	✓	X	?	0	✓	?	✓	X	X	✓✓	0	✓✓
	This site is likely to be more appropriate for alternative housing and educational needs. It is located near to existing residential areas and industrial scale buildings are likely to be obtrusive visually as well as having an effect on residential amenity. This has resulted in minor negative effects being recorded against objectives 2, 8 and 9. The site did score major positives against objectives 10 and 12 but given the likelihood of the development of this site having negative impacts, together with the availability of more suitable sites for employment elsewhere in the neighbourhood area, it is considered that the overall sustainability of the site is poor.											

Chapter 5: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policies

5.01 The following tables show an assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan policies against the SEA objectives using a scoring system. These are grouped together under their subject headings as they appear in the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Each Neighbourhood Plan policy was assessed against each of the SEA objectives, resulting in 12 separate assessments for each policy. The assessment of each policy looks at how the policy scores in sustainability terms overall (against the suite of SEA objectives).

5.02 Table 1 on page 26 shows SEA significance scores and criteria, which explains the rationale behind each of the scores used throughout the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan SEA process.

5.03 It was agreed with the Neighbourhood Plan Group that, due to the specific nature of the assessment itself, together with the need to ensure a consistent approach, that the assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan would be carried out by Northumberland County Council Officers. The assessment was then carried out under this arrangement and the results were subsequently presented to the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Group. A number of the assessments made were challenged by the Group and these were then subject to review by County Council Officers. The final assessment included within the Environmental Report was agreed and endorsed by the Neighbourhood Plan Group and was used to revise the Neighbourhood Plan policies where recommendations were made.

5.04 The assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan policies was revised to take account of the alterations made to the Neighbourhood Plan following the Pre-Submission consultation; the assessment contained within this document therefore relates to the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Assessment of policies

5.05 The following tables show an assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan policies against the SEA objectives using a scoring system. These are grouped together under their respective subject headings within the Plan. The table above shows SEA significance scores and criteria and explains the rationale behind each of the scores used throughout the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan process.

Sustainable Development

		Sustainability Objectives											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
✓✓	Major positive effect	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
✓	Minor positive effect												
XX	Major negative effect												
X	Minor negative effect												
?	Uncertain effect												
0	Neutral Effect												
-	No relationship												
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy													
Policy SD1: Planning for Sustainable Development in Alnwick and Denwick		✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Summary: The overarching Neighbourhood Plan Policy relating to planning for sustainable development performed well against the SEA Objectives. The policy has been revised following the recommendations of the first draft of the SEA Environmental Report. As a result, the policy has been reassessed and now performs much more strongly against the SEA Objectives. No further revisions are suggested.													

Housing

	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
✓✓	Major positive effect											
✓	Minor positive effect											
XX	Major negative effect											
X	Minor negative effect											
?	Uncertain effect											
0	Neutral Effect											
-	No relationship											
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy												
Policy H1: Quantity of Housing	✓	?	?	?	0	✓	0	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Policy H2: Location of Housing Development	✓	?	0	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	?	✓	✓✓
Policy H3: Ensuring a Choice of Housing	✓	?	0	?	0	0	?	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Policy H4: Affordable Housing	0	0	?	0	0	0	0	✓✓	✓✓	✓	?	-
Policy H5: Housing Design	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	-	-	0	✓	✓✓	✓	-	-
Policy H6: Existing Stock	✓	✓✓	✓✓	0	0	0	✓	0	✓✓	-	-	-
Policy H7: Housing in the Countryside	?	✓	✓✓	?	0	0	?	?	✓	✓	0	?
Summary: Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the housing topic performed well against the SEA objectives. Many of those marked as uncertain were due to uncertainty regarding the location of future development but this is not a negative reflection on the policies themselves. Therefore, no revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.												

Economy and Employment

<div>✓✓Major positive effect</div> <div>✓Minor positive effect</div> <div>XXMajor negative effect</div> <div>XMinor negative effect</div> <div>?Uncertain effect</div> <div>0Neutral Effect</div> <div>-No relationship</div>	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy												
Policy E1: Providing for economic growth	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	?	?	-	✓✓	-	✓
Policy E2: Location of Economic Development	?	?	0	?	?	?	?	?	-	✓✓	-	✓
Policy E3: Future Use of Existing Employment Sites	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓	0	-	✓✓	0	✓
Policy E4: Development on South Road	0	0	?	?	?	?	?	-	0	✓✓	-	-
Policy E5: Tourism Development	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?	?	0	-	✓✓	✓	✓
Policy E6: Employment and Training for Young People	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓✓	-	✓
Summary: Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the economy and employment topic performed well against the SEA objectives. There were a number of uncertain effects, but the policies all performed very strongly against SEA objective 10 relating to the local economy and employment opportunities. Policy E2 was largely uncertain, mainly because the policy allows for a range of uses which can have different potential effects. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.												

Town Centre and Retail

<div>✓✓Major positive effect</div> <div>✓Minor positive effect</div> <div>XXMajor negative effect</div> <div>XMinor negative effect</div> <div>?Uncertain effect</div> <div>0Neutral Effect</div> <div>-No relationship</div>	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy												
Policy TCR1: Primary Shopping Frontages	-	✓	✓	-	0	0	-	✓	-	✓✓	✓	-
Policy TCR2: Development Opportunities to Support Primary Shopping Frontages	-	✓✓	✓✓	-	0	0	✓	✓	-	✓✓	✓	-
Policy TCR3: Out of Centre Retail	?	?	?	-	0	0	?	-	-	✓	✓	✓
Policy TCR4: Local Convenience Retail	-	-	-	-	0	0	?	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Policy TCR5: Market Place	0	✓✓	✓✓	-	0	0	✓	✓	-	✓✓	✓	✓✓
Summary: Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the town centre and retail topic performed reasonably well against the SEA objectives. It was considered that all of the policies would have a neutral effect on water and air quality. Policy TCR3 was considered to have an uncertain effect in relation to SEA objectives 1-3 and 7, due to the nature of the policy being supportive of development in a particular location but not allocating land for such purposes; this introduced an element of uncertainty but this is not considered to highlight any particular problems with the policy itself. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.												

Community Facilities

	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
✓✓	Major positive effect											
✓	Minor positive effect											
XX	Major negative effect											
X	Minor negative effect											
?	Uncertain effect											
0	Neutral Effect											
-	No relationship											
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy												
Policy CF1: Protecting Key Community Facilities	0	0	✓	-	0	0	✓	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓	✓
Policy CF2: Outdoor Sports and Leisure	0	✓	✓	?	0	0	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓
Policy CF3: Greensfield Playing Pitches	0	✓	✓	?	0	0	✓	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓	✓
Policy CF4: Developing Greensfield for Education and Recreation	0	✓	-	?	0	0	✓	✓✓	-	✓	✓✓	✓
Policy CF5: Future Development of the Middle Schools	?	✓	✓	?	0	0	?	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓
Policy CF6: Dual Use of Greensfield Facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓✓	0	-	✓✓	✓✓
Policy CF7: Facilities for Older People	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓✓	✓✓	-	✓✓	✓✓
Policy CF8: Safeguarding Health and Medical Facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓	0	-	✓	✓
Policy CF9: Public Toilet Facilities	-	-	?	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	-
Summary: Due to the nature of many of the policies in this section, a large proportion were assessed as having neutral effects when assessed against a number of the SEA objectives, particularly in relation to water and air quality. Policies CF6-8 were largely neutral but with some major and minor positive effects also seen in relation to objectives 7, 8 (in the case of Policy CF7) 11 and 12. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.												

Transport

<div>✓✓Major positive effect</div> <div>✓Minor positive effect</div> <div>XXMajor negative effect</div> <div>XMinor negative effect</div> <div>?Uncertain effect</div> <div>0Neutral Effect</div> <div>-No relationship</div>	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy												
Policy TRA1: Walking	✓✓	✓	✓	0	-	✓✓	✓	✓✓	-	-	✓	✓✓
Policy TRA2: Cycling	✓✓	✓	✓	0	-	✓✓	✓	✓✓	-	-	✓	✓✓
Policy TRA3: Bus, Coach and Related Services	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	0	✓	-	✓	✓	✓✓
Policy TRA4: Goods and Services	✓	0	0	0	-	✓	0	0	-	✓	-	✓
Policy TRA5: Transport Links	✓	0	✓	?	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓✓
Policy TRA6: Environmental Impacts	✓	✓	?	?	-	✓	0	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Policy TRA7: Maintenance	0	✓	0	0	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
Policy TRA8: Traffic Management	✓	✓	0	0	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	✓✓
Policy TRA9: Parking	?	✓	0	-	-	?	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Summary: The majority of the transport policies, particularly Policies TRA1 and TRA2 were assessed as having a number of major positive effects when assessed against the SEA objectives due to their intention to promote and enhance active travel. Overall, the majority of the transport policies scored positively, with some neutral effects also seen. Some uncertain effects were observed but this is due to the uncertainty regarding specific locations and/or details of schemes that may come forward under these policies. These potentially uncertain effects are outweighed by the positive effects against other SEA objectives. It is not considered that any revisions to the policies are required.												

Environment

<div><div>✓✓</div><div>✓</div><div>XX</div><div>X</div><div>?</div><div>0</div><div>-</div></div>	Major positive effect	Major positive effect	Sustainability Objectives											
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
			To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy														
Policy ENV1: Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace	✓	✓	-	✓✓	0	0	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-		
Policy ENV2: Providing New Green Space Through Development	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	0	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-		
Policy ENV3: Safeguarding Green Space on Middle School Sites	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	0	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-		
Policy ENV4: Protecting Green Space	✓	✓	-	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-		
Policy ENV5: Local Green Space	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	0	0	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-		
Policy ENV6: Areas for Nature Conservation	✓	✓	-	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-		
Policy ENV7: Protecting Biodiversity	0	✓	✓	✓✓	0	0	✓	✓	-	-	-	-		
Policy ENV8: Future Allotment Provision	✓	✓	-	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	-	-	✓	-		
Policy ENV9: Protecting Trees	✓✓	✓	-	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-		
Policy ENV10: Landscaping of New Developments	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-		
Policy ENV12: Protecting Green Infrastructure	✓✓	✓	0	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓		

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
Policy ENV13: Sustainable Urban Drainage	✓✓	✓	0	✓	✓✓	0	✓✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
Policy ENV14: Small Scale Renewable Energy	✓✓	✓	✓	0	0	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0
Policy ENV15: Energy Conservation in New Housing	✓✓	0	0	0	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	0	0	0
Policy ENV16: Reducing Light Pollution	✓✓	✓	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	0	✓	-	-
Policy ENV17: Recycling Facilities	✓✓	0	-	-	0	✓	✓✓	✓	0	0	-	-
Summary: Overall, the policies set out within the environment chapter performed very positively when assessed against the SEA objectives. Some policies were considered to have some neutral effects and there was no obvious relationship with objectives 9, 10 and 12 for Policies ENV1-10. While some policies recorded a number of neutral effects, the Environment policies performed very positively overall. Therefore, no amendments to the policies are considered necessary as a result of the SEA process.												

Heritage, Design and Culture

	Sustainability Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
✓✓	Major positive effect											
✓	Minor positive effect											
XX	Major negative effect											
X	Minor negative effect											
?	Uncertain effect											
0	Neutral Effect											
-	No relationship											
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy												
Policy HD1: Protecting Landscape Setting	0	✓✓	✓✓	?	-	-	-	✓	0	0	-	-
Policy HD2: Heritage Assets at Risk	0	✓✓	✓✓	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-
Policy HD3: Protecting Designated Heritage Assets	0	✓✓	✓✓	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-
Policy HD4: Protecting Non-Designated Assets	0	✓✓	✓✓	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-
Policy HD5: Enforcing Protection of Heritage Assets	0	✓✓	✓✓	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-
Policy HD6: The Approaches to the Town	0	✓✓	✓	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-
Policy HD7: Design in the Wider Town	0	✓✓	✓✓	0	-	-	✓	✓✓	✓	?	-	-
Policy HD8: Protecting Town Gateways	0	✓	✓	?	-	-	?	✓	0	0	-	-
Policy HD9: Design in the Historic Centre	0	✓✓	✓✓	0	-	-	✓	✓✓	✓	?	-	-
Policy HD10: Vital Historic Spaces	✓	✓	✓	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0	0	-	-

	Sustainability Objectives												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
✓✓	Major positive effect	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	To protect and enhance water quality	To improve air quality	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of employment opportunities for all sections of society	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services
✓	Minor positive effect												
XX	Major negative effect												
X	Minor negative effect												
?	Uncertain effect												
0	Neutral Effect												
-	No relationship												
Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Policy													
Policy HD11: Streetscape Design		0	✓	✓	0	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	-
Summary: All of the policies in this section performed positively when assessed against SEA objectives 2 and 3 which relate to local distinctiveness and built and cultural heritage. Other than this, the results were largely neutral, but this is as a result of the policies relating specifically to heritage, design and culture. The specific nature of the policies meant that, while there is a relationship between them and some of the SEA objectives, the effect of the policies is likely to be neutral in many cases. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.													

Assessment of the cumulative effects of the Neighbourhood Plan

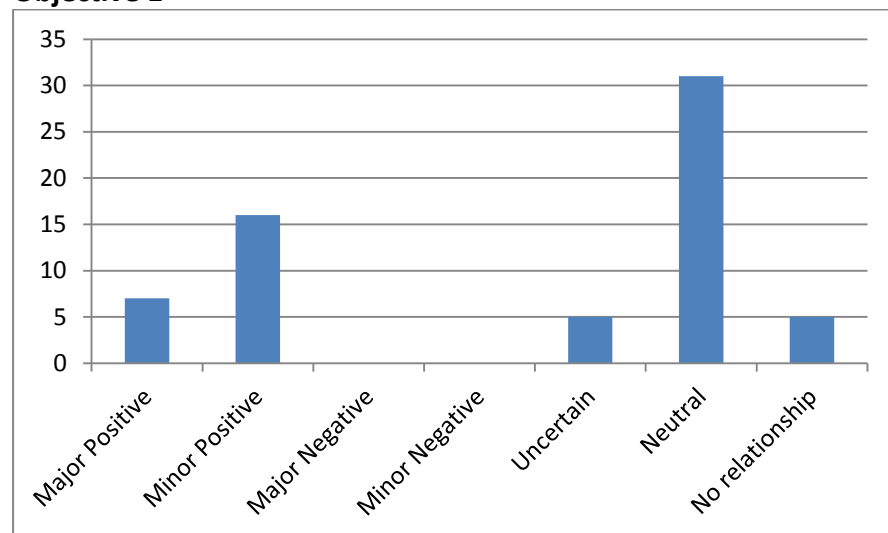
5.06 The following section of this chapter sets out individual tables and associated commentary on the cumulative effects of the Neighbourhood Plan policies when assessed against the SEA objectives. The effects are shown in terms of the cumulative effects of the plan against each separate SEA objective, and then also shown for each topic area as set out in the Plan, against the SEA objectives as a whole.

5.07 The totals shown in the graphs on the following pages relate to the total number of policies which scored against each of the assessment criteria. Therefore, the table below shows the total number of Neighbourhood Plan Policies against each of the assessment criteria. This was devised by tallying the number of individual policy assessments which are shown in the tables on the previous pages within Chapter 5.

SEA objective	✓✓	✓	XX	X	?	0	-
1	10	21	0	0	5	23	5
2	12	32	0	0	6	11	3
3	13	21	0	0	7	14	9
4	11	4	0	0	14	23	12
5	1	9	0	0	3	29	22
6	4	20	0	0	4	23	13
7	4	29	0	0	13	5	13
8	12	37	0	0	3	10	2
9	8	9	0	0	0	14	33
10	10	20	0	0	3	11	20
11	8	25	0	0	1	4	26
12	13	17	0	0	1	2	31

Cumulative assessment of whole Plan against SEA objectives

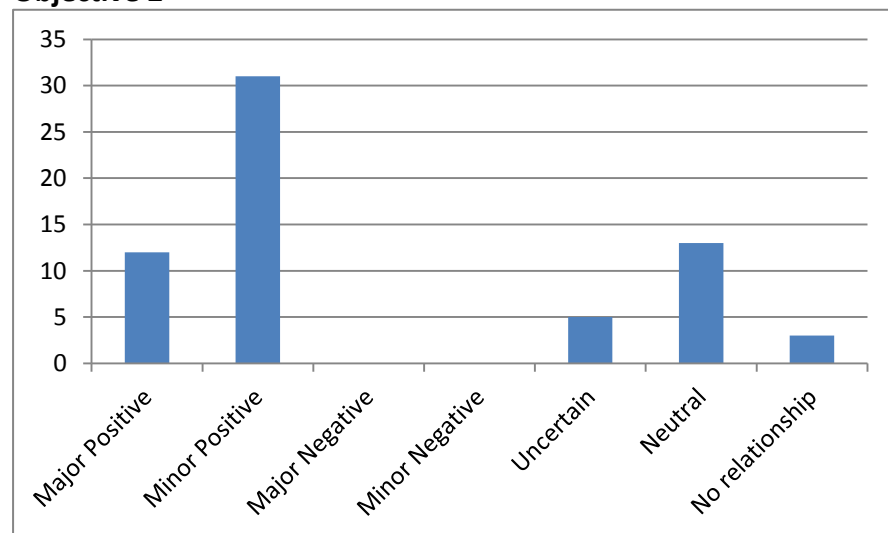
Objective 1



SEA Objective 1: To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects.

5.08 The Neighbourhood Plan as a whole has a mostly neutral effect against SEA Objective 1. A number of major and minor positive cumulative effects are expected, but there is also some uncertainty. The overall neutral-positive cumulative effects of the plan suggest that there are no sustainability issues regarding SEA Objective 1.

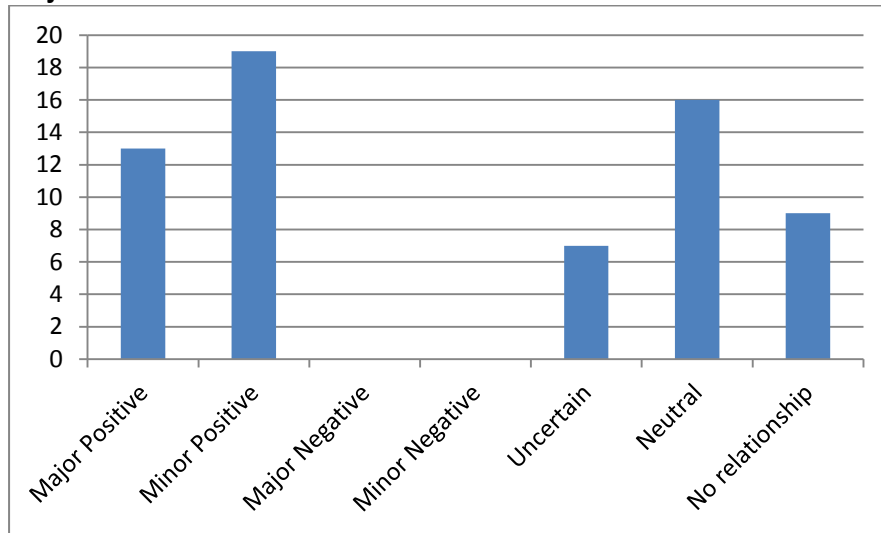
Objective 2



SEA Objective 2: To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes.

5.09 The Plan has an overall positive cumulative effect, while some parts of the plan were assessed as neutral. A small number were assessed as having no relationship to SEA Objective 2. Overall, the cumulative effect of the plan is positive.

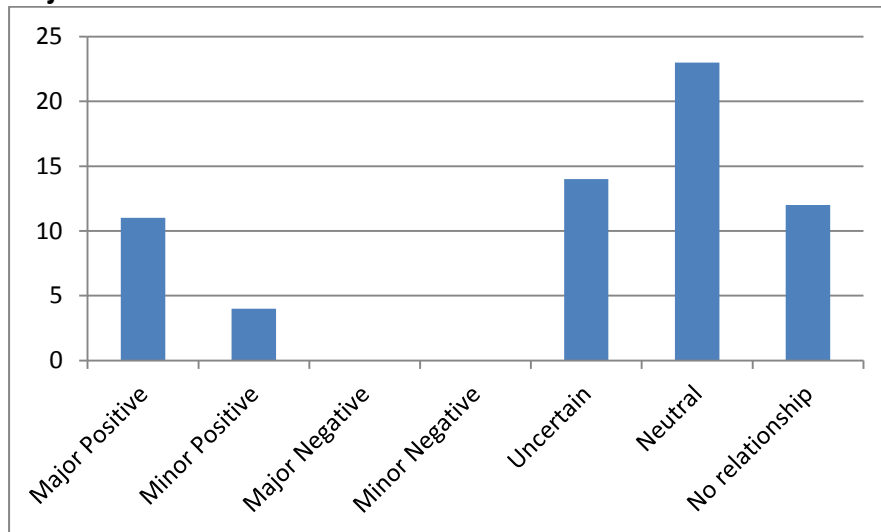
Objective 3



SEA Objective 3: To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage.

5.10 32 policies were assessed as having a positive effect against SEA Objective 3, with 13 of these having major positive effects. 16 were assessed as being neutral, with 7 being uncertain and 9 having no relationship with the SEA objective.

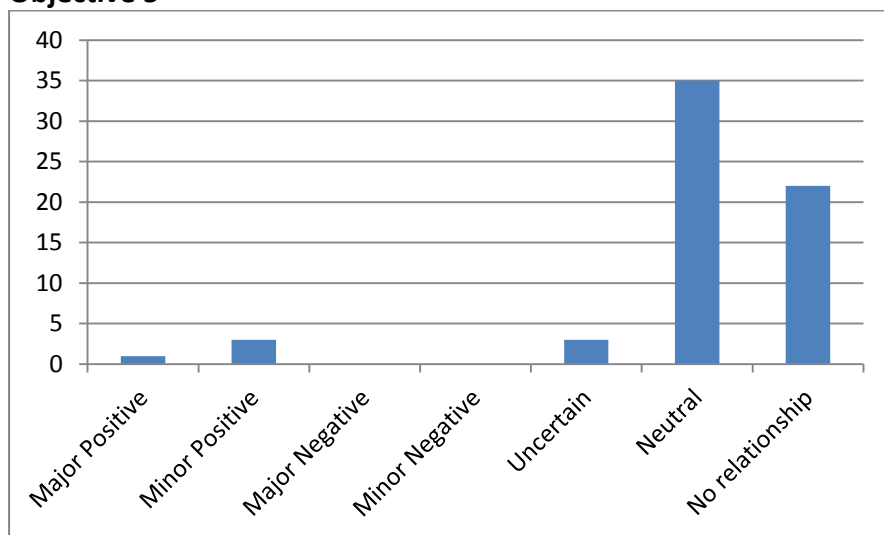
Objective 4



SEA Objective 4: To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network.

5.11 While a large proportion (14) of the policies were assessed as having an uncertain effect against SEA Objective 4, 15 of the policies performed positively (11 of which were assessed as having major positive effects and 4 having minor positive effects), with a further 23 being assessed as being neutral and 12 having no relationship with the SEA Objective.

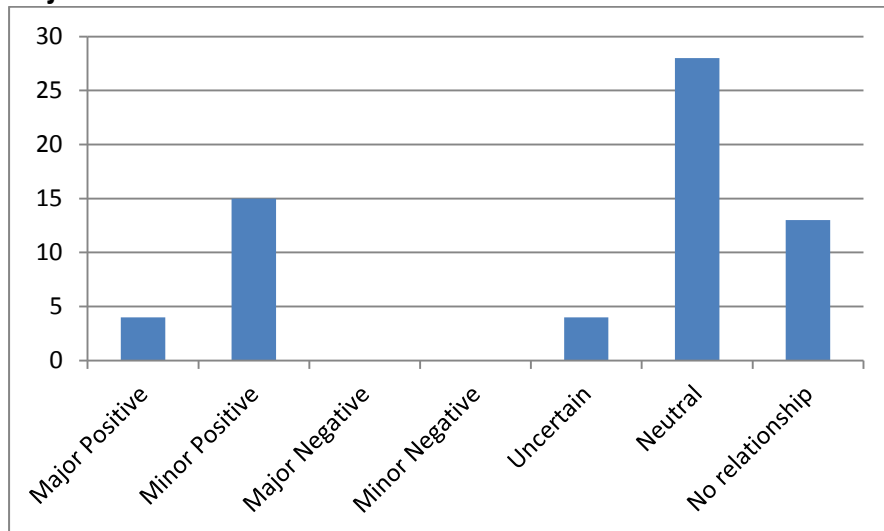
Objective 5



SEA Objective 5: To protect and enhance water quality.

5.12 35 of the policies were assessed as having a neutral effect on this SEA Objective. It is considered that this is due to the specific nature of the objective itself. Similarly, many of the policies/aims did not relate to the objective at all for the same reason. 4 policies were assessed as having a positive effect, with the policy relating to Sustainable Urban Drainage showing a major positive effect. A smaller number (3) were assessed as having uncertain effects, Crucially, none were assessed as having a negative effect.

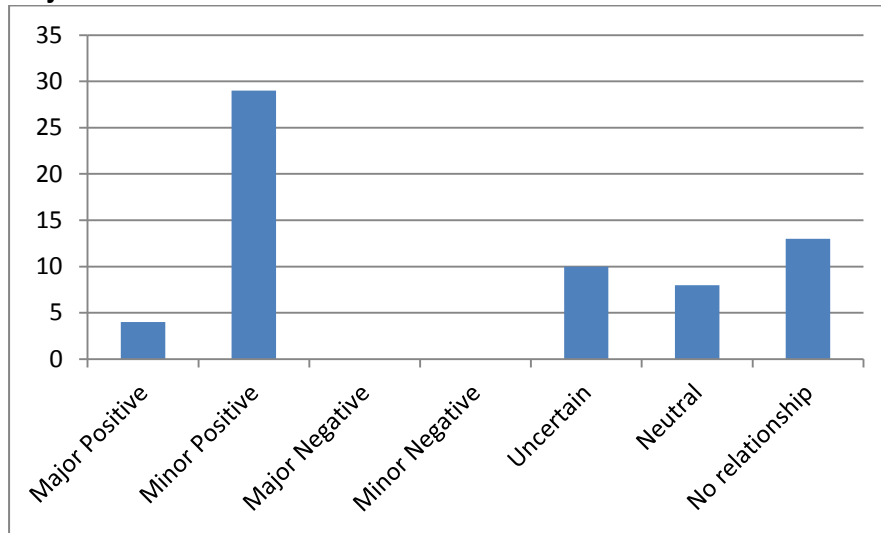
Objective 6



SEA Objective 6: To improve air quality.

5.13 28 policies were assessed as having a neutral effect on the baseline if implemented. A total of 19 were seen as having positive effects, of which 4 were seen as major positive. The remaining 17 were split between uncertain (4) and having no relationship (13). The main reason for this is due to the specialised nature of the SEA objective. The overall effect of the Plan against SEA Objective 6 is neutral, with mostly positive and some uncertain effects.

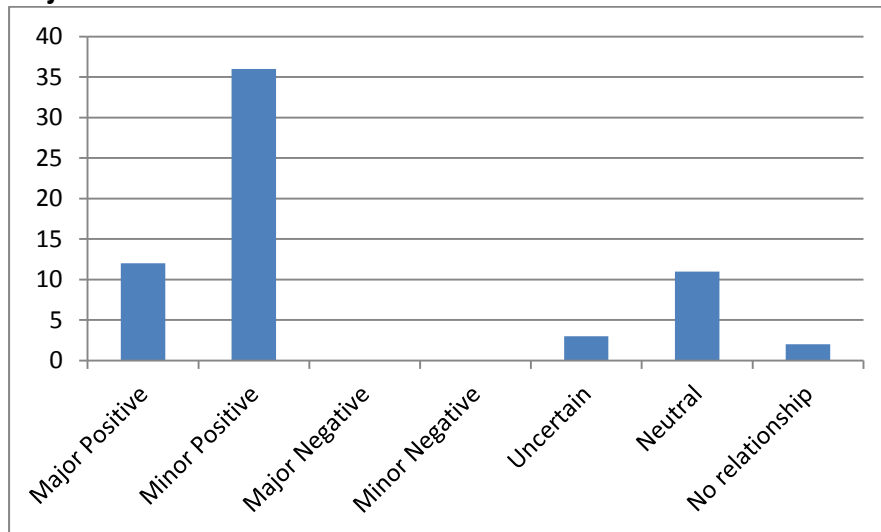
Objective 7



SEA Objective 7: To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste.

5.14 33 of the policies/aims were assessed as having a positive effect, 29 of which were minor positive. Of the remaining policies, 8 were assessed as having a neutral effect, with 10 being uncertain and 13 having no relationship with the SEA Objective. The overall effect of the Plan against SEA Objective 7 is positive, but with some uncertain and neutral effects.

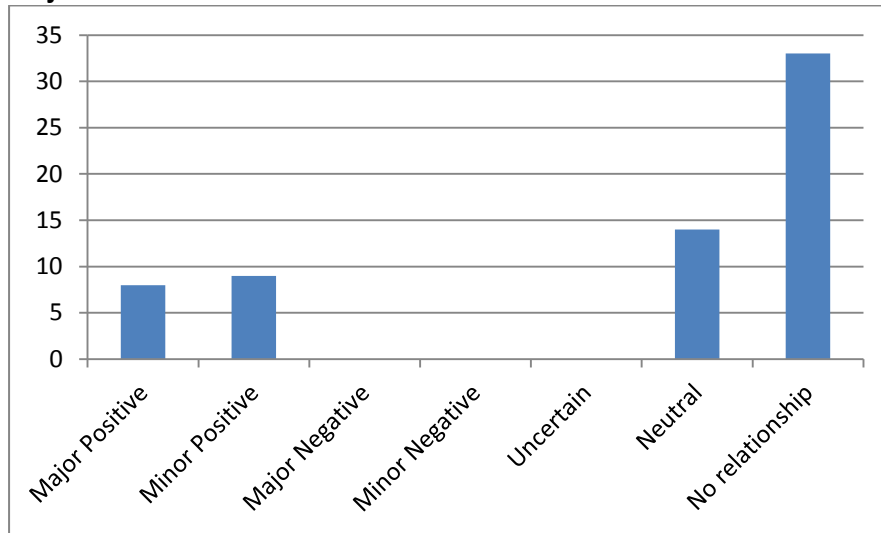
Objective 8



SEA Objective 8: To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area.

5.15 The overall effect of the Plan against SEA Objective 8 is positive, with 48 of the policies assessed having a minor/major positive effect. 11 policies were assessed as having neutral effects, 3 uncertain and 2 having no relationship. Overall, the Plan performs very positively against this Objective.

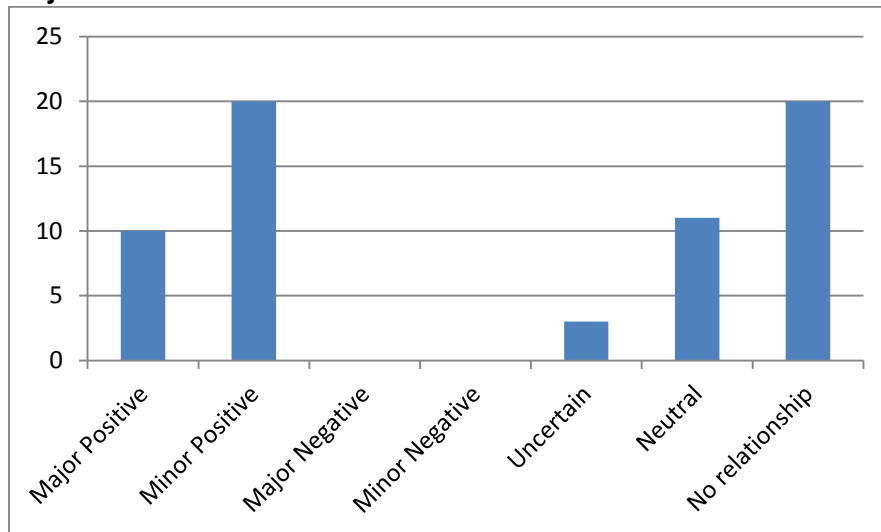
Objective 9



SEA Objective 9: To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes.

5.16 While the Plan was recorded as having neutral effects (14), these are slightly outweighed by positive effects overall when combining major and minor positive effects (17 combined). 33 of the policies assessed were considered to have no relationship to this SEA objective; this is mostly due to the specific nature of the objective itself but also the number of policies in the Plan which are very specific.

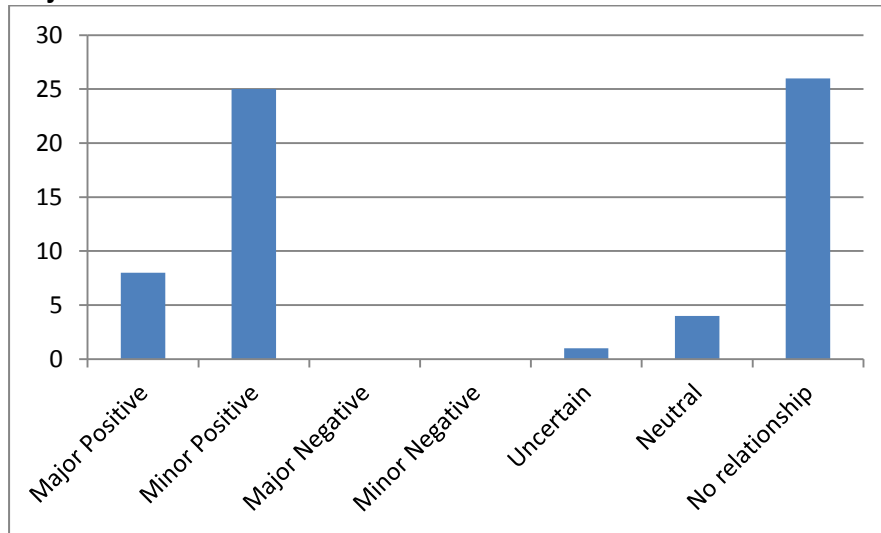
Objective 10



SEA Objective 10: To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity of education, training and employment opportunities for all sections of society.

5.17 30 of the policies/aims assessed were considered to have a positive effect (major and minor combined). Three were assessed as having uncertain effects and 11 were assessed as having a neutral effect. 20 did not have a relationship with the SEA objective. Overall, the cumulative effect of the Plan against SEA Objective 10 is positive.

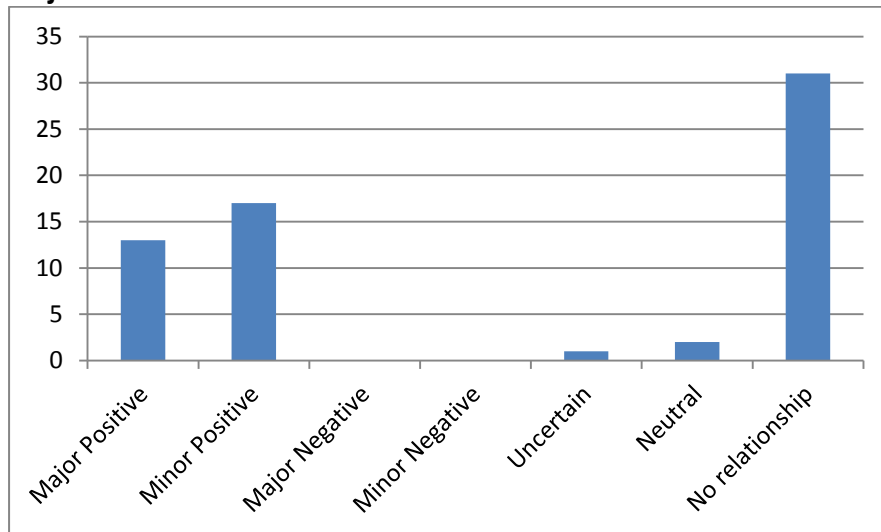
Objective 11



SEA Objective 11: To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities.

5.18 33 of the policies assessed were considered to have a positive effect (major and minor combined). One was assessed as having uncertain effects and 4 were assessed as having a neutral effect. 26 did not have a relationship with the SEA objective. Overall, the cumulative effect of the Plan against SEA Objective 11 is positive.

Objective 12

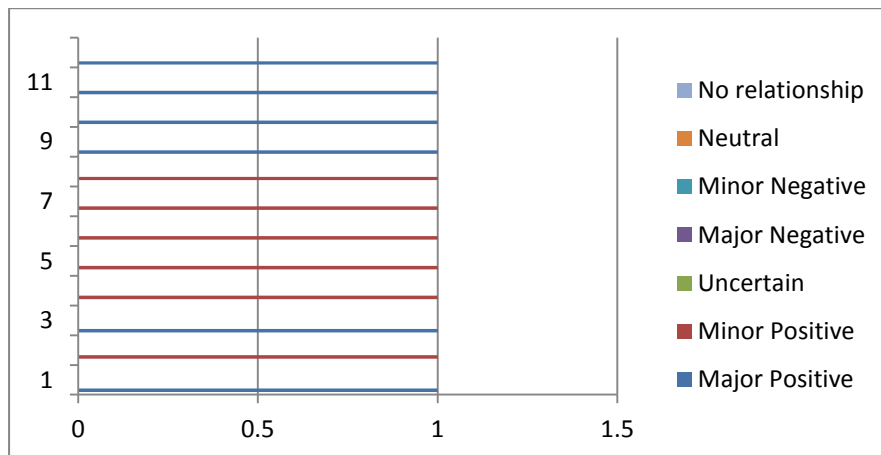
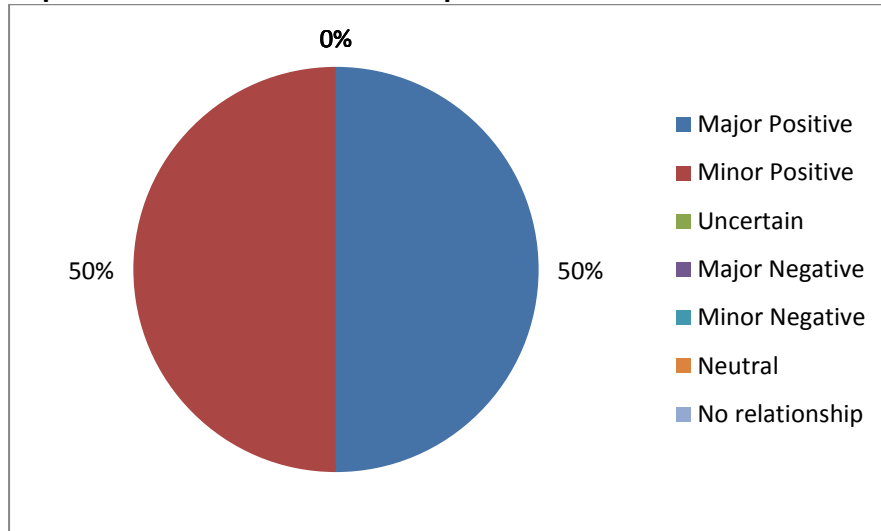


SEA Objective 12: To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services.

5.19 Overall, the Plan performs positively against this SEA Objective, with 30 of those policies assessed having a positive effect on the baseline. 31 showed no relationship with the SEA Objective, with very small numbers being recorded as uncertain and neutral (1 and 2 respectively).

Cumulative assessment of Plan topic areas against SEA Objectives

Topic Area 1: Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick

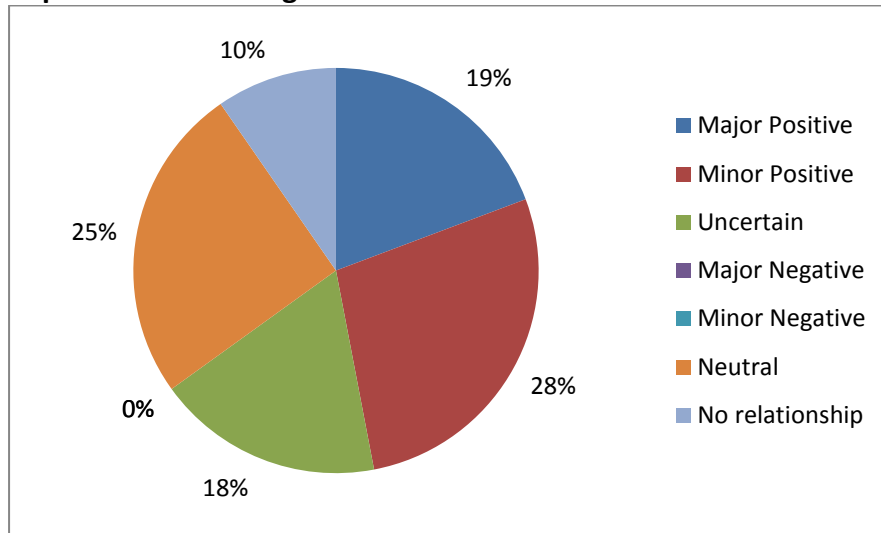


5.20 The Sustainable Development policy performs positively against all SEA objectives, with the exception of Objective 4, against which an uncertain effect has been indicated. A neutral effect was recorded against Objective 5. 50% of the results showed a major positive effect, against an 84% positive result overall.

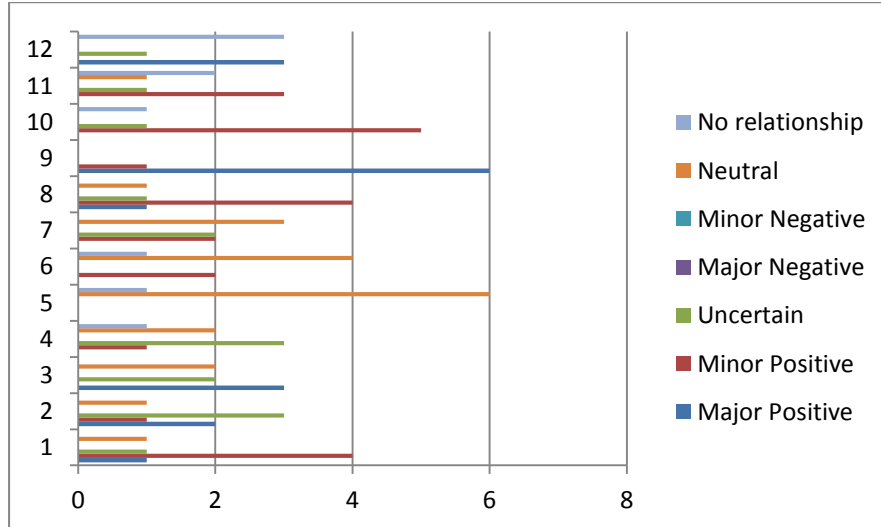
5.21 The overarching Neighbourhood Plan Policy relating to planning for sustainable development performed well against the SEA Objectives. No revisions to this policy are suggested as a result of the SEA process.

5.22 The second table shows the assessment of the Sustainable Development policy against the SEA Objectives. As there is only one Sustainable Development Policy (Policy SD1), the first graph is more useful in determining its overall effects.

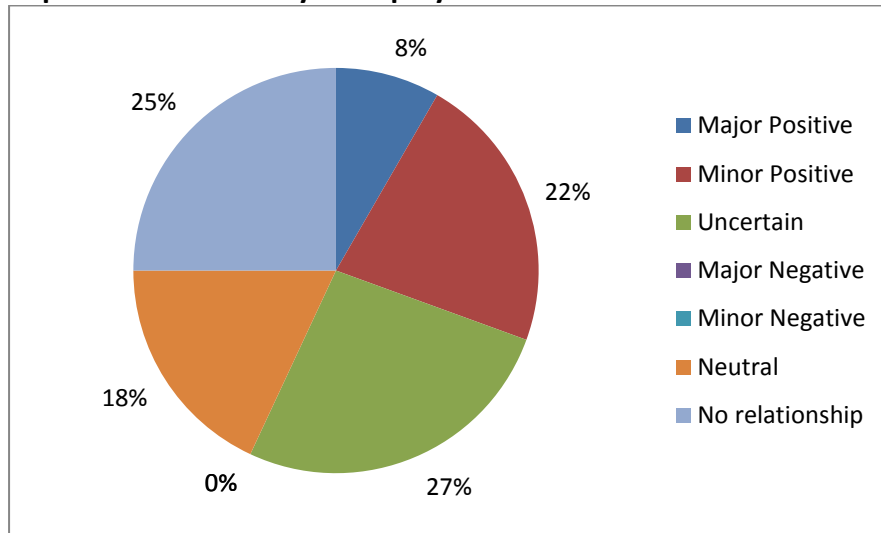
Topic Area 2: Housing



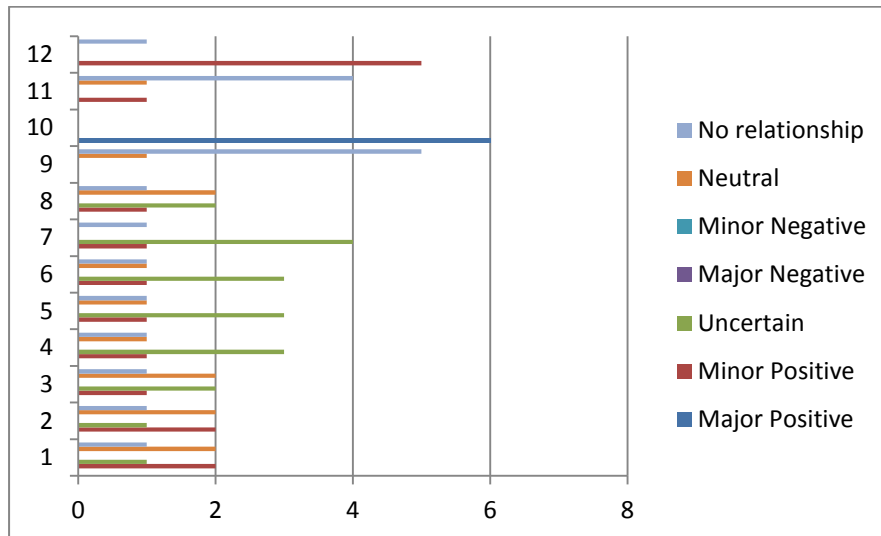
5.23 A large proportion (47%) of the policies within the Housing chapter perform positively against the SEA Objectives, performing particularly strongly against Objectives 1-3, 8, 9 and 12. A number of uncertain effects were recorded, mostly due to the uncertainty regarding the location of future development (in reference to general housing locations rather than those sites allocated through the Plan and shown on the proposals map). This was not considered to be a negative reflection on the Plan policies themselves. Therefore, no revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.



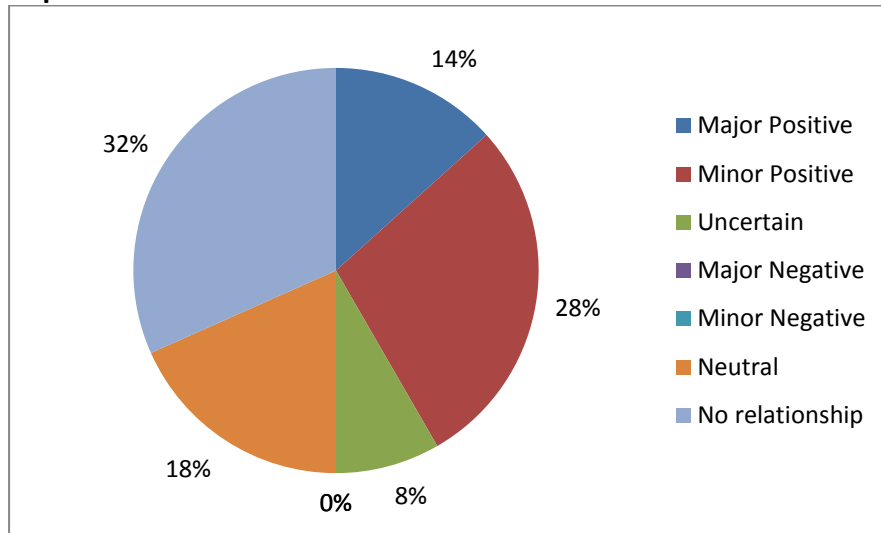
Topic Area 3: Economy & Employment



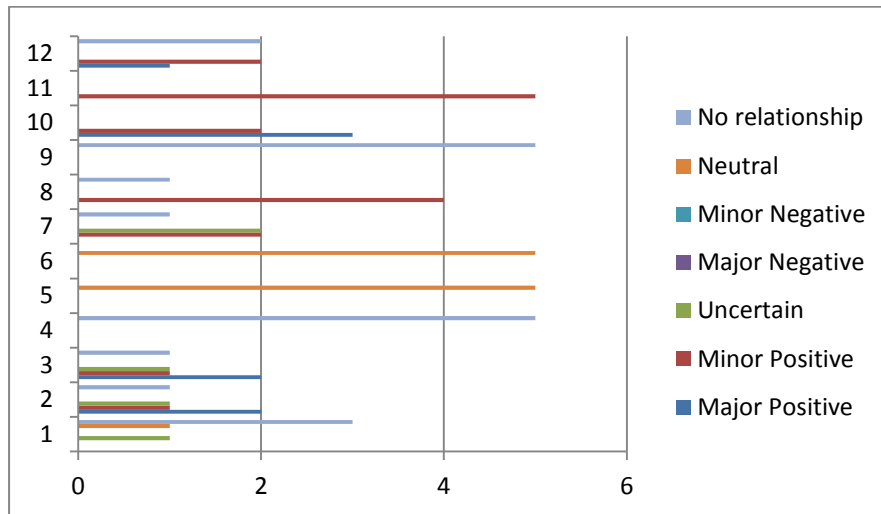
5.24 While the largest proportion of the Plan as a whole was assessed as having no relationship with the SEA Objectives, the overall effect is positive when major and minor positive effects are combined. All of the policies performed strongly against SEA Objective 10 relating to the local economy and employment opportunities. Policy E2 was assessed as being largely uncertain, mainly because the policy allows for a range of uses which can have different potential effects. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.



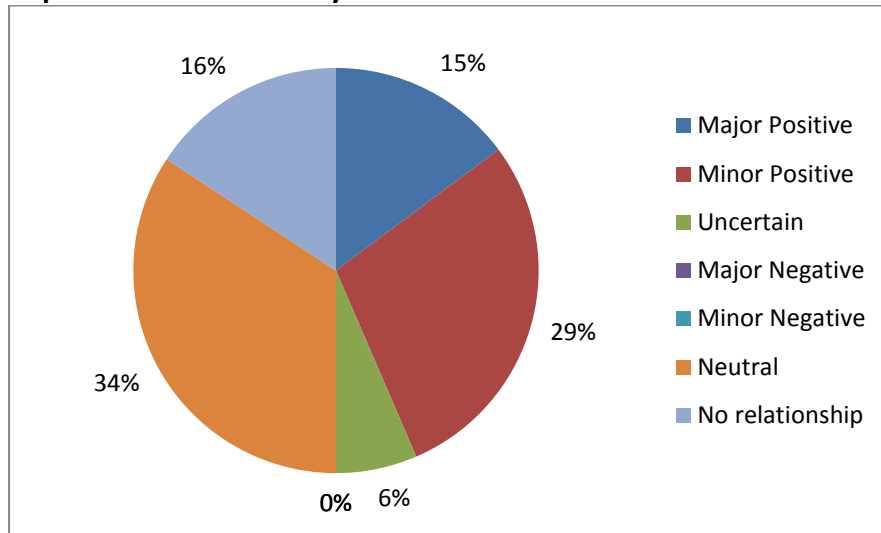
Topic Area 4: Town Centre & Retail



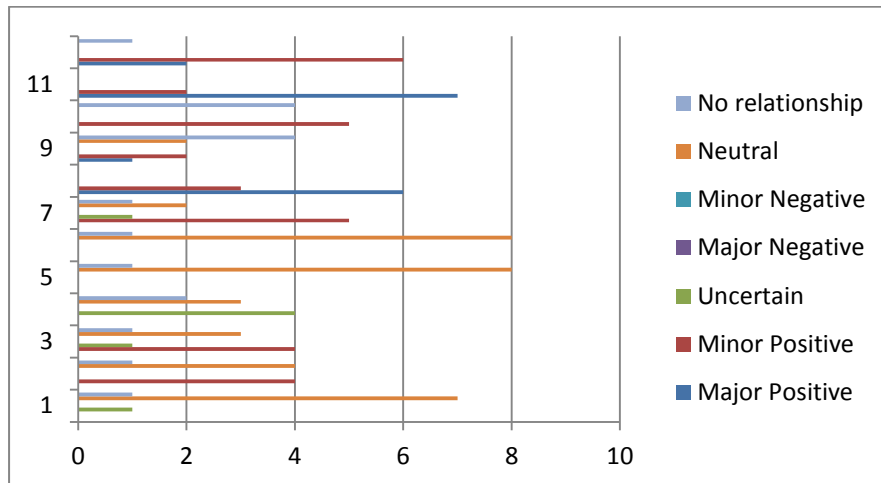
5.25 Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to the town centre and retail topic performed reasonably well against the SEA objectives. It was considered that all of the policies would have a neutral effect on water and air quality. Policy TCR3 was considered to have an uncertain effect in relation to SEA objectives 1-3 and 7, due to the nature of the policy being supportive of development in a particular location but not allocating land for such purposes; this introduced an element of uncertainty but this is not considered to highlight any particular problems with the policy itself. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.



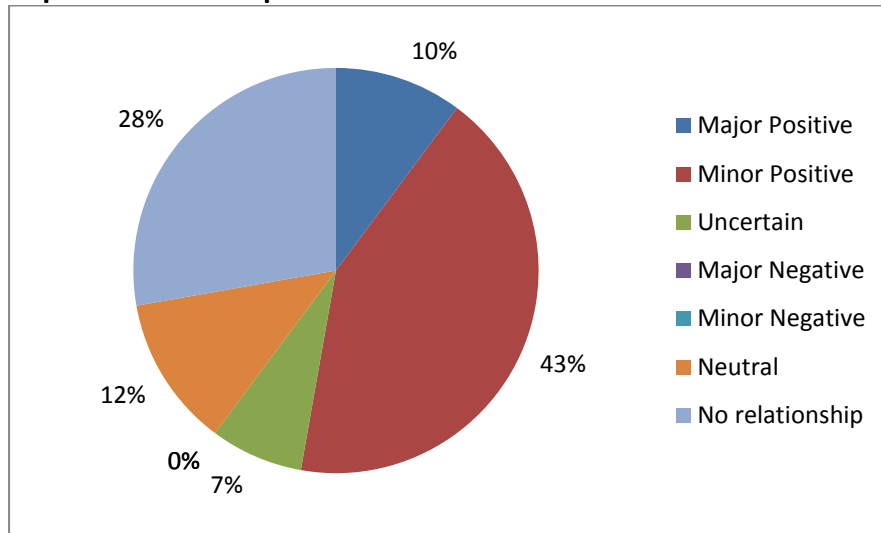
Topic Area 5: Community Facilities



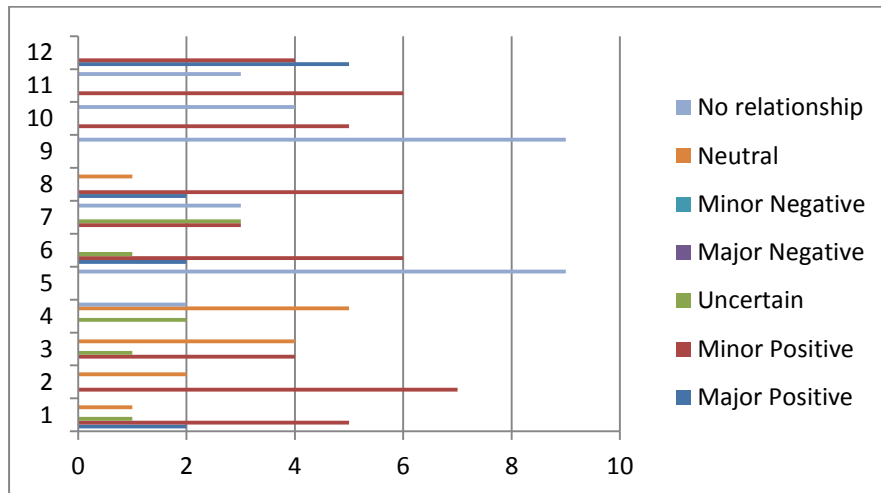
5.26 Due to the nature of many of the policies in this section, a large proportion were assessed as having neutral effects when assessed against a number of the SEA objectives, particularly in relation to water and air quality. Major and minor positive effects were seen across 44% of the policies/aims, particularly SEA Objectives 8 and 10 which relate to health, wellbeing and inclusiveness, as well as improving community facilities. Policies CF6-8 were largely neutral.



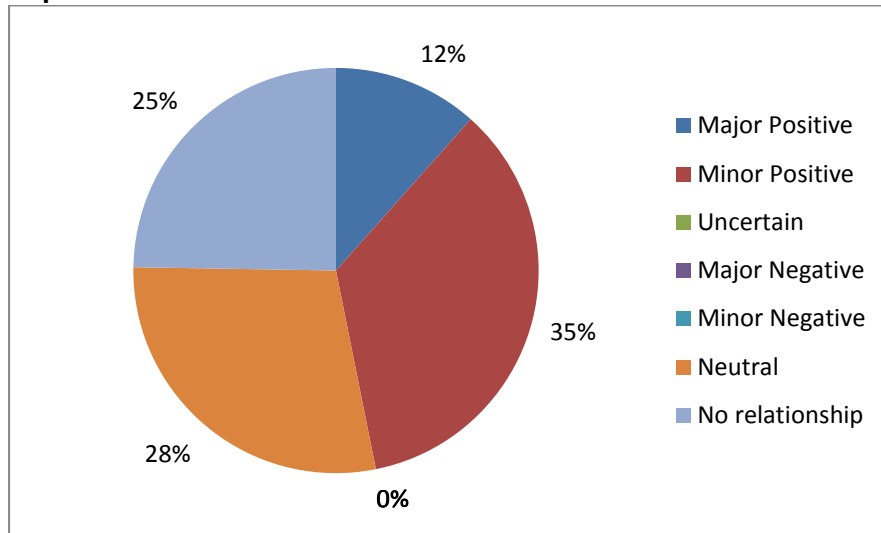
Topic Area 6: Transport



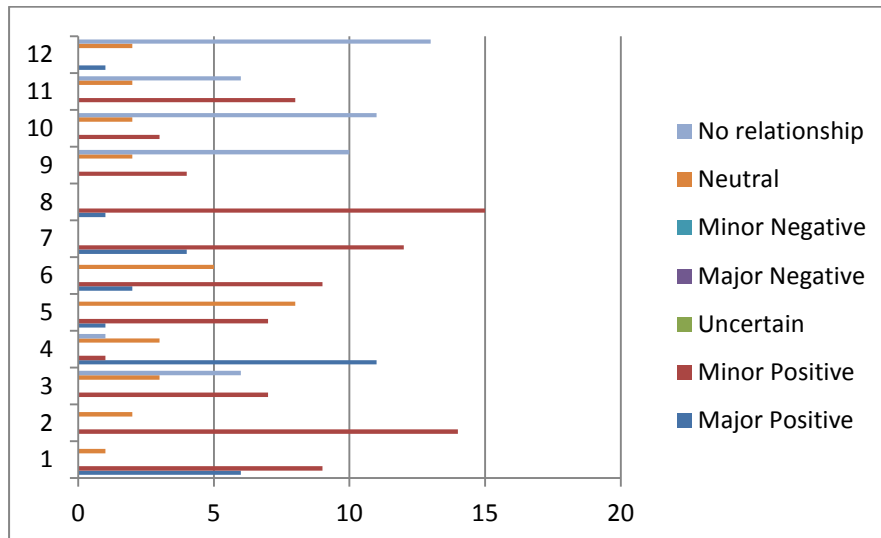
5.27 The majority of the transport policies, particularly Policies TRA1 and TRA2, were assessed as having a number of major positive effects when assessed against the SEA objectives due to their intention to promote and enhance active travel. Overall, the majority of the transport policies scored positively, with some neutral effects also seen. A small number of uncertain effects were observed but this is due to the uncertainty regarding specific locations and/or details of schemes that may come forward under these policies. These potentially uncertain effects are far outweighed by the positive effects against other SEA objectives. It is not considered that any revisions to the policies are required.



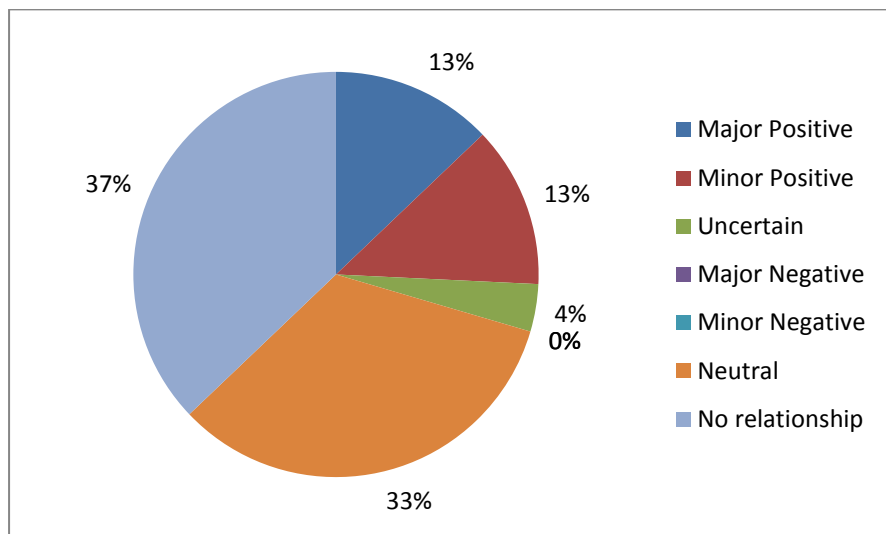
Topic Area 7: Environment



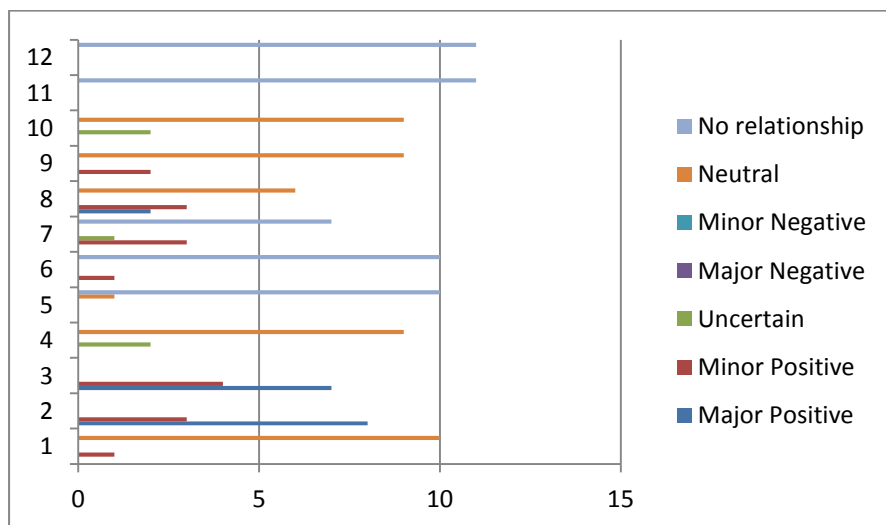
5.28 Overall, the policies set out within the environment chapter performed positively when assessed against the SEA objectives, with 47% showing overall positive effects. They were considered to have a largely neutral effect (28% overall) in relation to SEA objectives 1, 5 and 6 and there was no obvious relationship with objectives 9, 10 and 12 for Policies ENV1-10. No amendments to the policies are considered necessary as a result of the SEA process.



Topic Area 8: Heritage, Design & Culture



5.29 All of the policies in this section performed positively when assessed against SEA objectives 2 and 3 which relate to local distinctiveness and built and cultural heritage. Other than this, the results were largely neutral, but this is as a result of the policies relating specifically to heritage, design and culture. The specific nature of the policies meant that, while there is a relationship between them and some of the SEA objectives, the effect of the policies is likely to be neutral in many cases. No revisions to the policies are suggested as a result of the SEA process.



Chapter 6: Monitoring arrangements

6.01 Under the SEA Directive, there is a statutory requirement to monitor the environmental impacts of the implementation of the Plan.

6.02 The purpose of monitoring is to measure the environmental effects of a plan, as well as to measure success against the plan's objectives. A series of monitoring indicators in relation to the SEA objectives have been proposed. These are set out in the first table below. The table also includes the guiding questions which were used in helping to guide the assessment of the Plan against the SEA objectives, as these help to provide clarity and justification of the potential monitoring indicators suggested.

6.03 The second table reproduces those baseline monitoring recommendations set out in Chapter 3 as part of the Review of Baseline Information. These are ordered according to their relevant 'SEA Directive Required Considerations'.

6.04 The monitoring recommendations contained within both tables should be read in conjunction.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives, guiding questions and potential monitoring indicators

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan			
Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives, guiding questions and potential monitoring indicators			
SEA objectives		Guiding questions	Potential monitoring indicators
1	To minimise greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change through effective adaptation to and mitigation against its possible effects	Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gas? Will it reduce flood risk? Will it help mitigate existing level of flood risk? Will it increase 'Green Contributions' (SUDS, trees etc.)? Will it encourage new energy efficiency measures?	Number of consented schemes incorporating SUDs. Map all existing development at fluvial risk or near to fluvial risk and monitor any proposals to protect them or mitigate against the increased risk. Monitor the standard of new drainage networks to ascertain the level of protection they provide. Number of consented schemes which include energy efficiency measures or renewables. Number of schemes introducing electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Monitoring of air quality at sensitive receptors within the plan area.
2	To protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes	Will it keep the distinctive character of the townscape? Will it retain / enhance landscape character including that of the historic park and garden and historic landscape character?	Number of designated heritage assets lost following implementation of the Plan. Number of non-designated heritage assets lost following implementation of the Plan. Number of new heritage-led tourism enterprises. Monitoring of visitor numbers relating to tourism.
3	To protect and enhance built and cultural heritage	Will it preserve and enhance local heritage and buildings and their settings? Will it allow the cultural heritage to be enjoyed by residents and visitors while retaining its integrity? Will it reduce the 'risk of decline' to the conservation area?	Number of designated heritage assets lost following implementation of the Plan. Number of non-designated heritage assets lost following implementation of the Plan. Number of new heritage-led tourism enterprises. Monitoring of visitor numbers relating to tourism.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan			
Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives, guiding questions and potential monitoring indicators			
SEA objectives		Guiding questions	Potential monitoring indicators
4	To protect and enhance biodiversity, taking account of the wider ecological network	<p>Will it ensure that the wider ecological network of international, national and local sites, priority habitats and wildlife corridors are not adversely affected?</p> <p>Will it adversely affect the wider ecological network of international, national and local sites, priority habitats and wildlife corridors?</p> <p>Will it meet specified targets in line with the Local BAP?</p> <p>Will it protect and increase the amount of tree cover?</p> <p>Will it protect statutory designated sites within or beyond the area?</p> <p>Will it protect non-statutory sites of local importance?</p> <p>Will there be a net positive effect on ecosystems – e.g. through ecosystem services?</p> <p>Will it protect and enhance the quality of rivers and inland waters?</p> <p>Does it comply with integrated catchment management plans?</p> <p>Will it impact on soil quality?</p>	<p>Monitor the condition and continued relevance of local habitats.</p> <p>Monitor river quality.</p> <p>Monitor the number of schemes to reduce soil and water pollution.</p> <p>Monitor the results of continuous air quality monitoring in the Plan area.</p> <p>Monitoring of Northumberland BAP targets.</p>
5	To protect and enhance water quality	<p>Does it comply with integrated catchment management plans?</p> <p>Will it impact on groundwater quality?</p>	<p>Monitor river quality.</p> <p>Monitor water quality.</p>
6	To improve air quality	<p>Will it impact on air quality?</p> <p>Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases?</p>	<p>Monitor the results of continuous air quality monitoring in the Plan area.</p>

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives, guiding questions and potential monitoring indicators			
SEA objectives		Guiding questions	Potential monitoring indicators
7	To use natural resources prudently and reduce waste.	Will it reduce waste production? Will it help maintain or increase the reuse of previously developed land and buildings in proportional terms? Will it increase the use of recycled / reclaimed materials in construction? Will it encourage recycling, reuse and the use of renewable resources? Will it increase water conservation?	Number of developments incorporating adequate onsite storage for waste and recycling bins. Number of completions on previously developed land. Number of renewable energy developments consented. Number of consented schemes which include energy efficiency measures. Number of schemes introducing electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
8	To move towards greater health, wellbeing, safety, equality and inclusiveness within the community and for those visiting the area	Will it promote a safe lifestyle? Will it promote a healthy lifestyle? Will it reduce accidents? Will it add to opportunities for exercise, fresh air etc.? Will it reduce social isolation? Will it reduce crime? Will its implementation produce outcomes acceptable to all sections of the community?	Number of people walking, cycling and using public transport instead of the car. Figures for those killed or seriously injured. Crime statistics following implementation of the Plan. Monitoring of air quality at sensitive receptors within the Plan area.
9	To maximise opportunities for people to live in suitable, decent and affordable homes	Will it provide a wide range of housing types and tenure across the area? Will it encourage housing that is affordable for sale or rent? Will it provide sufficient homes within the community? Will it ensure housing is of a decent standard across all tenures? Will it reduce homelessness? Will it reduce the number of vacant properties?	Figures for housing completions across the Plan area following the implementation of the Plan. Figures for housing completions on sites allocated for housing within the plan, following its implementation. Affordable housing completions. Information from Homefinder.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan			
Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives, guiding questions and potential monitoring indicators			
SEA objectives		Guiding questions	Potential monitoring indicators
10	To strengthen and maintain a resilient local economy and the diversity and quality of education, training and employment opportunities for all sections of society.	Will it attract new inward investment? Will it increase business start-ups and continuity? Will it generate new employment? Will it protect existing jobs and business? Will it strengthen the local economy? Will this reduce unemployment? Will it help stem the relative growth in out-commuting? Will ensure that people have access to learning opportunities? Will it increase the use of ICT? Will it help retain younger people within the area? Will it reduce the outward migration of higher level skills? Will it increase the inward migration of higher level skills? Will it broaden the appeal of the town centre and help to revitalise and re-invent its role?	Number of new businesses in the Plan area. Number of new tourism enterprises. Roll out of superfast broadband across the Plan area and subsequent take-up of broadband services following roll out. Working people with access to employment by a range of modes of transport.
11	To improve the quality and range of accessible community services and facilities.	Will improve learning opportunities? Will it reduce isolation from services? Will it increase the amount of recreational facilities and open space? Will it develop and sustain community identity? Will it strengthen the links between communities within and beyond the plan area?	Access to key services and facilities by means other than the private car. Accessibility to GP surgeries. Number of people killed or seriously injured.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan			
Strategic Environmental Assessment Objectives, guiding questions and potential monitoring indicators			
SEA objectives		Guiding questions	Potential monitoring indicators
12	To improve sustainable access across the area to homes, jobs and services	<p>Will it improve the integration of transport mode provision?</p> <p>Will it improve transport infrastructure?</p> <p>Will it link residential and employment developments with services?</p> <p>Will it reduce road congestion?</p> <p>Will it encourage use of alternative transport modes such as walking and cycling?</p> <p>Will it reduce trip generation by car and/or contribute to the increased use of non-car modes?</p> <p>Will it reduce conflicts between different modes of transport?</p> <p>Will it reduce the incidence of accidents relating to any mode of transport?</p> <p>Will it include measures to promote road safety?</p> <p>Will it include measures to reduce casualties resulting from any mode of transport?</p>	<p>Access to employment, key services and facilities by means other than the private car.</p> <p>Accessibility to GP surgeries.</p> <p>Number of people killed or seriously injured.</p>

Baseline Monitoring Recommendations covering SEA Directive Required Considerations

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

Baseline Monitoring Recommendations covering SEA Directive Required Considerations¹⁶

Baseline information topic	Baseline Monitoring Recommendations
Land and Soil	In view of the overall aims set out in the plan and the land-take likely as a result of some proposals therein, it may be advisable to monitor the take-up of Grade 3 agricultural land.
Wildlife and Habitats	<p>The baseline would be the present known state of the protected habitats and species. The above analysis, based on the Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan, could form a starting point whereby any additional development or other measures set out in the plan could aim to avoid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative effects that development may have on the species most likely to occur in the plan area; • Negative impacts on any example of key protected habitats. <p>The plan could also aim to add to some habitats such as garden areas and native woodlands.</p> <p>The results of the forthcoming detailed Water Cycle Study should be taken into account and there may be the opportunity to monitor progress in terms of water quality in the river, bearing in mind possible effects downstream, of insufficient dilution of any additional toxins.</p> <p>In terms of the plan, a particular baseline is that of zero nature reserves. The implementation of those proposed could be monitored.</p> <p>Sustainability monitoring could pick out themes from the relevant BAPs which could be adversely affected or otherwise influenced by planning decisions and actions taken as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan, and assess the degree to which these could actually be affected.</p>

¹⁶ These recommendations relate to the 'Review of Baseline Information' section beginning on Page 51 of this report.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

Baseline Monitoring Recommendations covering SEA Directive Required Considerations¹⁷

Baseline information topic	Baseline Monitoring Recommendations
Landscape	<p>The contents of these documents confirm that that most of the landscapes within which Alnwick sits require a certain degree of management, in order to maintain their key qualities and combat any negative forces for change. The aim could be to achieve development that helps the overall guidelines of <u>managing</u> or (in one case) <u>protecting</u> the landscape, taking into account the detailed forces for change and the detailed guidelines set out in the Part B document, the SPD and any more detailed landscape studies that may have been carried out in the overall area.</p> <p>It is clear from looking at the plan above that expansions of Alnwick into the surrounding countryside would almost certainly encroach on areas shown as being of “Higher Landscape Sensitivity”. However the guidelines in the LCA and the Alnwick SPD make allowances for management of the landscape beyond Hulne Park itself. The aim therefore could be, wherever possible to avoid the incursion of built development into areas shown as being of higher sensitivity but where this is unavoidable, ensure that management measures along the lines of those suggested in the “Part B” LCA document, and/or the SPD, are incorporated.</p> <p>It is of significance that the plan includes a number of additions and enhancements to the network of green infrastructure in the town. In managing the impacts of new development on landscapes surrounding the town, any associated additions or enhancements to related green infrastructure could be included within the assessment.</p>

¹⁷ These recommendations relate to the ‘Review of Baseline Information’ section beginning on Page 51 of this report.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

Baseline Monitoring Recommendations covering SEA Directive Required Considerations¹⁸

Baseline information topic	Baseline Monitoring Recommendations
Water Resources and Flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There will be a need to ensure that proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan tie in with more detailed recommendations in the forthcoming Level 2 Water Cycle Study, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and forthcoming Flood Risk Management Strategy.• It may be possible to monitor the amount of land / number of dwellings / square metres of floorspace that the plan may propose in the higher flood zones (2 and 3).• The level of SuDs etc. actually implemented in association with development could be monitored, possibly also taking account of the information on past fluvial, surface water, sewer or flash flooding;• It may be possible to monitor all new development in relation to predicted 100 year plus climate change fluvial water levels.
Heritage	The three lists of assets at risk could be taken as the baseline with future monitoring of net changes to their contents – possibly against a target of reducing the length of the three lists.
Population	Based on the matters covered in the “Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick” chapter of the plan, the type of sustainability factors that can be drawn from the Census, which the plan may wish to monitor, could include: baselines on economic activity levels, proportions of certain younger age groups and numbers of people regarded as not in good health. These items are only updated at a small area level when the Census is carried out every ten years. Items that could be monitored more regularly, (although possibly not based exactly on the plan boundary), would come from other sources and could include things like unemployment rates and benefits claimants.

¹⁸ These recommendations relate to the ‘Review of Baseline Information’ section beginning on Page 51 of this report.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

Baseline Monitoring Recommendations covering SEA Directive Required Considerations¹⁹

Baseline information topic	Baseline Monitoring Recommendations
Housing	<p>(a) quantity of housing</p> <p>As it is likely that some of the housing targets, as set out in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy are likely to be amended following revised national population and household projections, it would be advisable for the emerging Neighbourhood Plan take this into account if possible.</p> <p>Based on the quite legitimate aspiration of achieving, within the Alnwick Neighbourhood area, housing development that is fully sustainable, the monitoring, if possible of net additions to the town's employment base, over and above a baseline, may be seen as desirable. Setting a baseline and measuring the changes may be more difficult out with census years.</p> <p>In terms of the relationship between the need for various infrastructure provision and the building out of certain housing areas, targets could certainly be set and the actual provision of these assets, as against houses built within the related schemes, could be monitored – although, again, these triggers could not be imposed through policy if legitimate planning reasons for departing from them were put forward by developers.</p> <p>(b) Location of housing development</p> <p>As a sustainable aim of the plan, the take-up of brownfield land within the plan area should certainly be monitored and evidence based targets could be set, based on the known proportion of the eventual allocations falling on that type of land, plus assumptions on windfalls. (Clearly this could not be used on its own to prevent development on greenfield land). The progress of masterplans should be monitored as this will ensure a sustainable, orderly sequencing of infrastructure provision and land release throughout the period of the NP.</p> <p>Above all, it is important to take account of all evidence already available on the sustainability of</p>

¹⁹ These recommendations relate to the 'Review of Baseline Information' section beginning on Page 51 of this report.

allocated sites – through the SHLAA 2014 Interim Report (<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=a061f7c2-82ec-431d-b00e-ae44258a291f&version=-1>) and the further update being carried out, as well as other available evidence on wildlife, heritage, landscape, flooding and other constraints, as set out in the County Council's evidence base (see <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3458>) or available from other sources.

(c) Specific housing needs

It may be that the Town Council would wish to set some targets on different types of housing that could then be monitored across the Neighbourhood Area

(d) Affordable housing

A future needs survey is likely to be based on lower quartile income and housing costs and could set a baseline for the plan area that could then be monitored alongside the actual provision of affordable housing units.

(e) Quality design and local distinctiveness

Any increase in the percentage of new homes built in line with the Building for Life 12, and the Lifetime Homes Standard (or successor documents) being applied could be monitored.

(f) Other sustainability issues on housing

The 'Community Action Proposal' (numbered H CAP4) could provide one avenue for monitoring. Once vacant and disused accommodation within the town centre, suitable for refurbishment /conversion for housing, has been identified, its take-up for this purpose could be monitored.

The proposed housing needs survey could also survey second homes and set the estimated proportion as a baseline against which the results of future surveys could be measured.

Departures from the proposed restrictions on housing on isolated sites in the open countryside could also be measured.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

Baseline Monitoring Recommendations covering SEA Directive Required Considerations²⁰

Baseline information topic	Baseline Monitoring Recommendations
Economy and Employment	<p>There are a number of employment statistics that could be monitored. Some are published on a regular basis, others less often. However, such figures will normally cover a wider area than Alnwick alone.</p> <p>As the key issue in terms of sustainability is the take-up of land for employment, through the two proposed allocations and the proposed retention of all existing sites in that use, it is important to assess the proposals against what has already been assessed in the employment land review – see http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=3bcd8f8e-6220-4c5e-a92d-99da14c65af3&version=-1 – as well as in terms of the evidence on constraints that is available via the County Council’s evidence base (see http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3458) or from other sources.</p>

²⁰ These recommendations relate to the ‘Review of Baseline Information’ section beginning on Page 51 of this report.

Chapter 7: Next Steps

- 7.01 The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Environmental Report was consulted on during 2015. This allowed statutory consultees, the public and others the opportunity to comment on the contents of the Environmental Report. The results of this consultation were used to refine the Environmental Report and to guide the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.02 The next step is for Alnwick Town Council to submit the Neighbourhood Plan and its accompanying documents, including the SEA Environmental Report, to Northumberland County Council who will publicise the Plan. A further opportunity for consultation bodies and others to make written representations will arise through that publicity.
- 7.03 Further review of the Environmental Report may be required as a result of any modifications recommended following independent examination of the Plan.

Appendix A: Northumberland County Council Screening Opinion

Does the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan require Strategic Environmental Assessment?

Introduction

European Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of all government local plans and programmes likely to have significant environmental effects, (see [EUR-Lex Website](#)). The objective of the 'SEA Directive' is: *'To provide for a high level of protection to the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of the plans...with a view to promoting sustainable development'*

This document is a Screening Opinion offered by Northumberland County Council, as to whether the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Development Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment in accordance with the requirements of the European Directive.

Background

Government guidance states that not every neighbourhood plan will need an environmental assessment of the type produced for local plans. It entirely depends on whether what is proposed in the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.

Consideration

A request for a screening opinion to establish whether Strategic Environmental Assessment is required has been submitted to the County Council by Alnwick Town Council who are the qualifying body for neighbourhood planning purposes in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Area which was designated on 11 April 2013.

Annex A provides an assessment of the intended content of a neighbourhood development plan for the designated neighbourhood area against criteria set out in Annex II of European Directive 2001/42/EC. This provides the County Council's opinion as to whether any of the matters intended to be covered in the plan might give rise to significant environmental effects. In a separate column of Annex A, we consider whether the possibility of such effects occurring could be satisfactorily addressed through a light touch sustainability review and/or an Appropriate Assessment under the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.

Conclusion

In conclusion it is the opinion of the County Council that **it is necessary to undertake a separate Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Development Plan**, prior to publication of the submission version of the document

Date: 24 July 2014

Approved by: Karen Ledger

Head of Development Services

Annex A to Screening Opinion

Determination of the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of European Directive 2001/42/EC, applying criteria set out in Annex II of that Directive

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?		If “yes” whether addressed in the Appropriate Assessment or elsewhere
	yes / no	Justification	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:			
(a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	YES	The main framework will continue to be at the Core Strategy level which is itself subject to SEA as a matter of course. However the plan contains allocations of a resource – i.e. land and the local environmental effects of doing so could be significant.	UNLIKELY: Habitats Regulations Assessment would only look at the effect on internationally important sites and not the wider and/or localised environmental impacts.
(b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	NO	It is possible that the neighbourhood plan could inform future supplementary guidance in the Alnwick area. However, this does not seem likely in the foreseeable future. The present draft document makes reference to and seeks to adhere to existing conservation policies in the development plan. The neighbourhood plan could lead to additional green space designation and could influence future programmes of environmental enhancement but the degree of environmental impact of this is likely to be slight.	N/A

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?		If “yes” whether addressed in the Appropriate Assessment or elsewhere
	yes / no	Justification	
(continued) The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:			
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	YES	The neighbourhood plan seeks to promote sustainable development overall and does not seem to be seeking any relaxations to sustainable development principles in higher order plans. The net effect should be to be neutral but would require monitoring over time.	COULD BE ADDRESSED THROUGH A SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW A light touch sustainability review, applying a methodology similar to a local plan sustainability appraisal could give some overall reassurance that sustainable principles were being adhered to.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	NO	The neighbourhood plan does not seek to address any existing significant environmental problems in the area, nor are there significant environmental problems that it may exacerbate.	N/A
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection)	NO	The neighbourhood plan should not affect any of these types of plan or programme. The water environment policies (e.g. on SuDs) repeat emerging policy in the Core Strategy and may be dropped. In the unlikely event that a proposal was to come forward that was in accordance with the neighbourhood plan but would not have been in accordance with the Local Plan, and it would adversely affect a Schedule 2 Development such as a large scale agricultural drainage scheme, then it could be refused on those grounds.	N/A

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?		If “yes” whether addressed in the Appropriate Assessment or elsewhere
	yes / no	Justification	
Characteristics of the effects of ‘a’ and ‘c’ above and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:			
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	YES	In the unlikely event that certain allocations or other provisions in the plan were to lead to significant environmental effects in terms of the sustainability of planning in the area, the land use elements may be irreversible or at least difficult to reverse. Hence the need for the SEA to be carried out. The reversibility would depend on a review of the neighbourhood plan. This means that the plan will require monitoring over time.	COULD ONLY BE PARTIALLY ADDRESSED WITHOUT SEA A light touch sustainability review at the draft plan stage could determine whether there could be scope to redraft a policy to lower the probability that it would need to be reversed at a later date and/or redrafted to reduce the likelihood of frequent or long term adverse occurrences. However, where land allocations were being made, it would be difficult to address.
Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?		If “yes” whether addressed in the Appropriate Assessment or elsewhere
	yes / no	Justification	
(continued) Characteristics of the effects of ‘c’ above and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:			
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	YES	In the unlikely event that certain allocations or other provisions in the plan were to lead to significant environmental effects in terms of the sustainability of planning in the area, more than one land allocation and/or a number of decisions based on a policy could lead to cumulative adverse effects. Hence the need for the SEA to be carried out. The reversibility would depend on a review of the plan. This means that the plan will require monitoring over time.	COULD ONLY BE PARTIALLY ADDRESSED WITHOUT SEA A light touch sustainability review at the draft plan stage could determine whether there could be scope to redraft a policy to lower the probability that it would have a cumulative effect that over time would be significantly adverse for the environment. However, where land allocations were being made, it would be difficult to address.
	Significant Environmental Effect likely?		If “yes” whether addressed in the Appropriate Assessment or elsewhere
	yes / no	Justification	
(continued) Characteristics of the effects of ‘c’ above and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:			
(c) the trans-boundary nature of the effects	NO	At this point it is thought unlikely that there would be trans- boundary effects arising from the neighbourhood plan.	N/A

(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	NO	At this point it is thought unlikely that there would be risks to human health or the environment arising from the Neighbourhood Plan.	N/A
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	NO	The type of effects on sustainable development of any additional development resulting from the plan will be localised and should not have significant environmental effects on large numbers of people.	N/A
(f (i)) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to special natural characteristics or cultural heritage	YES	In the unlikely event that certain provisions in the plan were to lead to significant environmental effects in terms of the sustainability of planning in the area, the fact that the plan area includes built and natural heritage designations will mean that careful monitoring of any net negative effects (individually or cumulatively over time) against the area's special environmental qualities and other relevant impacts will be needed.	MAY NOT BE FULLY ADDRESSED WITHOUT SEA Any effects on internationally important habitats addressed in an Appropriate Assessment. Criteria-based policy aspects could be addressed through a light touch sustainability review in terms of foreseeable impacts. It would be hoped that all effects of developing on land on heritage could be predicted but there may be effects which are difficult to foresee and these may not be fully addressed without an SEA.

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Significant Environmental Effect likely?		If “yes” whether addressed in the sustainability review or Appropriate Assessment
	yes / no	Justification	
(continued) Characteristics of the effects of ‘c’ above and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:			
(f (ii)) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values	NO	This would not be likely to result from the proposals	N/A
(f (iii)) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to intensive land use	NO	This would not be likely to result from the proposals	N/A
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	YES	In the unlikely event that certain provisions in the plan were to lead to significant environmental effects in terms of the sustainability of planning in the area, the fact that the plan area includes landscapes that are worthy of protecting or even designated (as in the case of Hulme Park), will mean that careful monitoring of any net negative effects (individually or cumulatively over time) against these special environmental qualities and other relevant impacts will be needed.	PROBABLY ADDRESSED WITHOUT SEA Any effects on internationally important habitats addressed in an Appropriate Assessment. Other aspects could be assessed through a separate landscape assessment and/or via a light touch sustainability review in terms of foreseeable impacts.

Appendix B: Residential site assessment template

The following site assessment form was completed for all potential housing sites that were considered for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. The form sets out the criteria against which the sites were assessed.

The completion of these forms followed on from a workshop which was held on 26th October 2012 and facilitated by Planning Aid England. This workshop was designed to introduce the group to the concept of site assessment, reinforcing the importance of a consistent approach across each of the assessment carried out, and showing how to carry out the assessment itself. As part of the workshop, a practical site visit was carried out, which included the completing a site assessment as an example.

The following blank site assessment form was completed for each of the sites considered for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Site Assessment 1.		The availability of the site
Site Reference		
Site Name and Address		
1.1 Is the land owner willing for their site to be made available for development?		
1.2 If yes, do you have any written evidence to back this up?		
1.3 Are there any factors which might prevent or delay development, e.g. tenancies, leases, covenants etc.?		
1.4 Would any existing use on the site need to be re-located?		
1.5 Are you aware of any previous planning permissions (or refusals) affecting the site? What about any current planning applications?		
1.6 Any further comments on how available the land is?		

Site Assessment 2.

What does the Development Plan and other documents say about your site?

Site Reference			
Site Name and Address			
2.1 What is the size of the site in hectares?			
			Comments
2.2 Is the site allocated in a development plan for any purpose?	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> If yes – specify		
2.3 Is the site within a Conservation Area? This would not necessarily preclude development but may have implications for design, materials, cost	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	See also Heritage Significance Tabulations	
2.4 Are there any historic environment designations affecting the site?	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	See also Heritage Significance Tabulations	
2.5 Are there any other Local Plan designations affecting the site or close by?	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
2.6 Is there a nature conservation designation on the land that could be affected?	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
2.7 Is the land agricultural land? If so what grade of agricultural land is it?	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
2.8 Is site in a floodzone - Flood Zone1/Flood Zone2 / or Flood Zone3 ?	FZ 1 FZ2 FZ3 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		
2.9 Is the site in a minerals safeguarding area?	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		



Site Assessment 3. Looking at the general location and land use of your site

Date Completed		Completed By									
Site Reference											
Site Name and Address											
3.1 Site Description											
3.2 Surrounding Land Uses and any impacts from them e.g. noise, air quality, light pollution											
3.3 Is the site: (select one option)	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Greenfield</th> <th>Brownfield</th> <th>Mixture % of types?</th> <th>Unknown</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Greenfield	Brownfield	Mixture % of types?	Unknown				
Greenfield	Brownfield	Mixture % of types?	Unknown								
3.4 Existing Use and its context. How many units of housing or buildings of a particular use are on the site for example?											
3.5 What was the last known use for the land?											
3.6 What could be the potential uses for the site?											

Site Assessment 4.		How suitable and sustainable is your site?	
Site Reference			
Site Name and Address			
4.1 Where is the site located in relation to the built up area of the town or village?	<div> <div>Within the settlement</div> <div>On the Edge</div> <div>Outside</div> </div> <div> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> </div>	Comments	
	Comments		
4.2 How would any development of the site relate to the existing built up area?			
4.3 How is the site currently accessed?	By Car		
	Public Transport		
	On Foot Grass, Path, Tarmac		
	Bicycle		
4.4 How is the site accessible from the highway?			
4.5 How close (in metres) is the site to local services such as shops, schools, health centre?			
4.6 Is the site within easy walking distance of a bus stop? (Ideally within approx. 800m)			
4.7 Is the site affected by any of the following?		Comments	
Flooding of the site?	<div>Yes No</div> <div> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> </div>		
Flooding in the general area?	<div>Yes No</div> <div> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> </div>		
Water Courses?	<div>Yes No</div> <div> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> </div>		
What % of the site is			

hard surfaced		
4.8 Is the last known use of the site likely to have caused contamination?	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div> <div>Don't Know</div> <div></div>	
4.9 Topography – is there steep ground that may affect how the site could be developed?	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div>	
4.10 Are there power lines, pipelines, manhole covers or other infrastructure crossing or affecting the site?	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div>	
4.11 Could development result in conflict with surrounding uses?	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div>	
4.12 Are there mature trees (which could be protected by a Tree Preservation Order) that would need retaining?	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div>	
4.13 Does the site have a heritage value attached to it? e.g. contains buildings that contribute to the heritage of the area or has a view onto a heritage site?	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div>	See also Heritage Significance Tabulations
4.14 Are there any other known or potential heritage features on the site?	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div>	See also Heritage Significance Tabulations
4.15 Would the site need to be checked for archaeological remains?	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div>	
4.16 Does the site have ecological value? (known or potential) e.g.	<div>Yes No</div> <div></div>	

hedgerows etc						
4.17 Could the site be home to protected species such as bats, great crested newts, badgers etc.? (a further detailed study may need to be done if this is the case)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Yes	No					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
4.18 Are there sporting or playing fields on the site?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Yes	No					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
4.19 Are there public footpaths or rights of way on the site?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Yes	No					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
4.20 Does the site contain any green infrastructure?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Yes	No					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
4.21 Has the site potential to be connected by green corridors to other areas of the town?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Yes	No					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
4.22 Are there key viewpoints from the site looking out?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Yes	No					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
4.23 Is the site part of a key view of the town - looking in?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>No</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="text"/></td> <td><input type="text"/></td> </tr> </table>	Yes	No	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Yes	No					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
4.24 Are there any other factors which could affect development?						

Site Assessment 5.		The deliverability of your site	
Site Reference			
Site Name and Address			
5.1 Estimate the developable area of the site (in hectares) Not all of the site may be able to be developed. If you work out the overall size of the site then if there are parts of the site which could not be developed, e.g. steep ground, mature trees to be retained etc. If these areas are subtracted this will leave the developable area.			
5.2 Estimate how much development could be accommodated on the developable area of the site			
5.3 Infrastructure Requirements Is there capacity within the existing infrastructure to support new development, or would development of the site require additional infrastructure to be provided?			
Highways			
Water Supply			
Sewerage			
5.4 What effect is development likely to have on local services eg schools?			

<p>5.5 Is the site viable for development? Taking into account the issues you have identified above, are there likely to be any major financial costs associated with preparing the site for development?</p> <p>Could these costs be offset by the type of development coming forward?</p>							
<p>5.6 What would be the potential timescale for development on the site?</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>0-5 years</th> <th>6-10 years</th> <th>11-15 years</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years			
0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years					
<p>5.7 What use should the site be put to</p>							

Appendix C: Employment site assessment template

The following site assessment form was completed for all potential employment sites that were considered for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. The form sets out the criteria against which the sites were assessed.

Site details			
Site ref		Settlement area	
Address		Site area	
Type of site			
Current primary use		Neighbouring land uses	
Local Plan reference			

Constraints			
Access		Site condition/description	
Slope		Bad neighbours?	
Trees		Comments	
Development history			

Initial availability analysis	Within 5 years	5-9 years	10-18 years
Comments			
Dwelling type Potential			
Family	Elderly	Students	Apartments
Other			
Comments			

Appendix D: Responses to SEA Environmental Report Consultation, July 2015

The following responses were received in relation to the consultation on the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan SEA Environmental Report. The representations received were taken into account through the Neighbourhood Plan and Environmental Report.

Consultation Response: Natural England

Date: 24 July 2015
Our ref: 158290

Bill Batey
Alnwick Town Council
The Centre
27 Fenkle Street
Alnwick NE66 1HW

BY EMAIL ONLY



Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Bill

Planning consultation: Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031 - Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report Consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 30 June 2015 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Environmental Report

Natural England agree with the conclusions of the SEA & SA Environmental Report that the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan would be unlikely to have an effect on issues within our remit.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Alastair Welch on 0300 0601148. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely

Alastair Welch
Northumbria Area Team

Page 1 of 1



Natural England is accredited to the Cabinet Office Service Excellence Standard

Consultation Response: Environment Agency

Alnwick Town Council
The Centre
27 Fenkle Street
Alnwick
NE66 1HW

Our ref: NA/2009/103757/OT-
06/SB1-L01
Your ref:
Date: 03 August 2015

Dear Sir/Madame

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report Consultation.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the above consultation document. Having reviewed the documents submitted, we have the following comments and advice to offer:

Flood Risk

We recognise that Flood risk is not a significant concern in terms of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan. The SEA correctly refers to fluvial and surface water flood risks affecting the Plan area. The fluvial risk is a relatively small with most of the floodplain being confined and there is only a minimal impact on properties.

On page 135 under the Water Resources and Flooding section it is recommended to monitor the amount of land / number of dwellings the plan proposes in flood zones 2 and 3, and to monitor the inclusion of SUDS in development.

However we are not sure how useful this baseline recommendation will be. A suggestive alternative the baseline recommendation could be to monitor all new development in relation to predicted 100 year plus climate change fluvial water levels.

That of course only relates to new development. If you want to monitor the effects of climate change on existing development then as part of the monitoring you will need to map all existing development at fluvial risk or near to fluvial risk and monitor any proposals to protect them or mitigate against the increased risk.

Further to this in terms of resilience to the effects of climate change, I think it would be beneficial to differentiate between fluvial and pluvial risk and add the following:

Monitoring the standard of new drainage networks to ascertain the level of protection they provide from climate change and monitor current property predicted to be at risk from surface water flooding and retrospective measures to increase their resilience.

Finally, proposals in the Plan should not only tie in with the Water Cycle Study, but also the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the forthcoming Flood Risk Management Strategy.

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
Cont/d..

Water Quality

We welcome the incorporation of the Northumbria River Basement Management Plan which should be taken into consideration when preparing the neighbourhood plan and its impacts on local waterbodies Water Framework Directive (WFD) status.

We support objective 5 on page 26 to protect and enhance water quality and the baseline monitoring recommendations on page 133 'Wildlife and Habitats' However we would suggest the inclusion of the River Basement Management Plan as part of this evidence base which sets out which actions and measures are needed to achieve the objectives of the WFD.

If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me on the details provided below.

Yours Sincerely

James Hudson
Senior Planning Advisor

Direct dial 0191 203 4173
Direct fax 0191 203 4004
Direct e-mail james.hudson@environment-agency.gov.uk

Consultation Response: Historic England

Naples, Rob

From: Peter Biggers <peter@argyleplanning.co.uk>
Sent: 06 August 2015 10:39
To: Naples, Rob
Cc: English, David
Subject: FW: Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report Consultation

From: Hunter, Alan [mailto:Alan.Hunter@HistoricEngland.org.uk]
Sent: 31 July 2015 10:43
To: peter@argyleplanning.co.uk
Cc: clerk@alnwick-tc.gov.uk
Subject: RE: Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report Consultation

Dear Peter

Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report Consultation

Thank you for sending me through the series of emails regarding the above. I apologise for the delay in replying.

1

From the evidence base it is clear that the potential impacts of the development of allocated sites on the historic environment of the Neighbourhood Plan area (and in particular its designated heritage assets) has been considered in the selection process. To this extent the Plan and its SEA is consistent with national planning policy and is to be welcomed.

What I was looking for, however, and what I am still unable to find, is the *process* underpinning the assumptions in respect of each allocation. The NPPF, in its consideration of heritage matters, focuses on the extent to which development proposals and site allocations might affect the *significance* of both designated and non-designated heritage assets. Development which would cause a level of harm to the significance of a heritage asset not outweighed by public benefits is not sustainable (NPPF paragraph 7) and should therefore be resisted.

In order that the requirements of the NPPF might be met in relation to site allocations, it requires:

1. The identification of any heritage assets that might be impacted upon by that allocation;
2. An assessment of what is significant about those assets and the extent to which the site contributes to that significance (be it negative, positive, or neutral);
3. An assessment of any harm or loss of significance (or improvement) development of the site allocation might bring about. If what is significant about a heritage asset is not established it makes it difficult to understand the extent to which the asset might be affected;
4. Consideration of the steps necessary to avoid or mitigate any harm to any heritage assets or the steps necessary to enhance their significance. This exercise might conclude that the harm to the historic environment would be such that it cannot be outweighed by public benefits which cannot be met in any other way and should not be taken forward. It might also require consideration of other ways of meeting that public benefit which would not cause harm to the historic environment.

If you would like to discuss this matter I shall be more than happy to.

Whilst writing, might I draw to your attention the draft advice note recently issued by Historic England entitled ***The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans***. This note is intended to provide help in the Local Plan (and Neighbourhood Plan) site allocation process. It covers the various stages in the process, including evidence gathering, site selection and site allocation policies. It also includes a methodology to help with individual site selection. The aim is that the note will help ensure that conservation of the historic environment is appropriately integrated within the Local Plan site allocation process as required by the National Planning Policy Framework.

The draft note can be viewed here:

<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/guidance/site-allocations-local-plans-consultation-draft.pdf>

Best wishes

Alan

Consultation Response: Highways England

Naples, Rob

From: Peter Biggers <peter@argyleplanning.co.uk>
Sent: 06 August 2015 10:20
To: Naples, Rob
Subject: FW: Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report - Consultation

From: Mclean, Russell [<mailto:Russell.Mclean@highwaysengland.co.uk>]
Sent: 23 July 2015 11:40
To: peter@argyleplanning.co.uk
Subject: RE: Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan - Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report - Consultation

Peter,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the SAE Report for the draft Alnwick neighbourhood plan. Highways England support the vision of the plan and in particular its view to improving NMU and non-car modes of transport.

Highways England is continuing to work with Northumberland County Council to agree the most suitable and sustainable Local plan for both Alnwick and Northumberland assessing employment and housing sites access and impact on the strategic road network.

In this report the section of particular interest to Highways England would be the Transport section of which I would agree with the effects assessment given.

I trust this is helpful however if you require any further information or wish to discuss further please contact me.

I would welcome further notification from yourself if possible when the Regulation 16 stage starts should you wish to discuss any aspects of the draft plan.

Kind regards
Russell

Russell Mclean

Highways England | Lateral | 8 City Walk | Leeds | LS11 9AT

Tel: +44 (0) 113 2836480 | **Mobile:** + 44 (0) 7785740686

Web: <http://www.highways.gov.uk>

GTN: 5173 6480

Consultation Response: Northumbrian Water



T: 0845 604 7468
nwl.co.uk

Northumbrian Water
Abbey Road
Pity Me
Durham
DH1 5FJ

Alnwick Town Council,
The Centre,
27 Fenkle Street,
Alnwick,
NE66 1HW

23rd July 2015

Dear Sirs

Consultation Response to the Alnwick and Denwick Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a consultation response to the Alnwick and Denwick Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report, hereafter referred to as the Environmental Report.

We have reviewed the above document in detail, and we set out comments below on a range of topics which we feel are of relevance or have an impact on us, as the statutory water and sewerage undertaker. As appropriate, comments are divided into respective chapters of the Environmental Report.

Non-technical summary

We acknowledge the detail contained within the Environmental Report, and recognise that the aims of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan (ADNP) broadly correlate with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) objectives. Having said this, we believe that there are opportunities within the ADNP to emphasise the content of certain SEA objectives to a greater degree.

For example, whilst we are pleased to note the inclusion of an aim specifically relating to the environment within the Plan Aims that are presented in Section 0.09, we believe that the positive contribution of this aim could be further emphasised through the inclusion of explicit reference to sustainable water management, which would seek to protect and enhance water quality, whilst also effectively managing flood risk.

For this reason, we support the recommendation to expand the 'Sustainable Development' policy to refer to water quality (Section 0.20), following the identification of a lack of express reference to water quality within the policy. It is our opinion that a holistic approach to sustainable water management would be a beneficial addition to the ADNP, providing valuable

Northumbrian Water Limited
Registered in England and Wales No 2386703
Registered office: Northumbria House,
Abbey Road, Pity Me, Durham, DH1 5FJ

guidance to developers and residents whilst increasing resilience to climate change and protecting environmental assets.

Moving on to Section 0.26 – ‘Environment’, we recognise that the Environment Report identifies an overall positive performance against SEA objectives. Having said this, in line with the aforementioned recommendation relating to water quality, we also suggest that the subsequent analysis presented within this section indicates that the ADNP could seek to perform more strongly within the ‘Environment’ section, with the majority of Environment policies within the ADNP being illustrated to exhibit neutral effects upon water quality, air quality and resilience to climate change – all of which are significant factors within the environmental facet of sustainable development. We would suggest the recommendation made in Section 0.20 is equally applicable at a number of points throughout the Environmental Report, particularly within the ‘Environment’ section.

Chapter 3: Summary of SEA context and objectives

In response to the comments contained within Section 3.13, we can confirm that Alnwick Sewage Treatment Works (STW) discharges treated effluent to the freshwater River Aln, which is several miles from the coast and further from the designations quoted. This distance offers significant dilution and buffering to protect the interest features of these designations. When the Habitats and Birds Directives came into force in England and Wales, an exercise was undertaken to assess the relevance of Northumbrian Water assets upon these designations. Based on performance and permit levels at the time, it was concluded by the Environment Agency that it was not necessary to impose any tighter condition than already existed upon the Discharge Consent for Alnwick STW. Alnwick STW is currently fully compliant with these consent conditions. If development was planned which would take the consent out of compliance, a permit application from Northumbrian Water would be required to change settings and conditions to reflect this increase in population. When determining this application, the Environment Agency would impose new tighter effluent standards, following the principle of not allowing any downstream deterioration in water quality as a consequence of the population increase. It is anticipated that the Water Framework Directive standards applicable to the immediate receiving water, the River Aln, would be tighter than those required to protect the coastal designations and would be the primary control of effluent quality for this STW.

Within Section 3.41, we note that the Environmental Report states that the previously included policy on Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) has been removed from the ADNP due to the inclusion of a policy within the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy. Whilst we recognise that the policies contained within the Local Plan Core Strategy will be applicable alongside those contained in the ADNP, as the Core Strategy has not been adopted and is unlikely to be adopted prior to Autumn 2016 at the earliest, we would consider it prudent to include a comprehensive policy relating to sustainable surface water management within the

ADNP. Such an inclusion would serve to provide a policy with legal weight in the event that the ADNP is adopted prior to the Core Strategy, whilst mirroring policy contained at the strategic level otherwise. As consultation on the revised ADNP is forthcoming, we have not yet been able to make this comment directly, but we recommend that this advice is transferred across to the ADNP also.

Moving on, we support reference to the Northumberland Water Cycle Study in the subsequent paragraphs of the Water Resources and Flooding section, and agree with the baseline monitoring recommendations presented in the Environmental Report. In particular, we would support the need to ensure proposals are in line with the forthcoming Detailed Water Cycle Study. We would further recommend, in response to the points raised in Sections 3.48 to 3.52, that consultation regarding development proposals in the neighbourhood plan area should take place as early as possible with Northumbrian Water to ensure that appropriate connection points and discharge rates to the public sewerage network can be ascertained.

Chapter 5: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policies

Within Chapter 5, we note with interest the assessment of policies in the Environment chapter of the ADNP against SEA objectives. As a general comment, we suggest that the neutral impact score that all of the environmental policies have against Sustainability Objective 5 for water quality indicates a failure to give more direct assessment and consideration of the opportunities which are forthcoming from sustainable water management and drainage. It is our opinion that the ADNP seeks to include more specific reference to sustainable water management in both plan aims and policies, and that this should form a recommendation as a result of the SEA process.

Our concerns regarding the lack of specific policy addressing water management are further emphasised on p. 115, where it is evident that very little positive impact upon the protection and enhancement of water quality is made throughout the ADNP. We note that the supporting text considers that the lack of positive impact is due to the specific nature of the objective; however we would suggest that its inclusion within the SEA objectives serves to indicate the importance of water quality, irrespective of its scope. It is our opinion that the ADNP presents the opportunity to be proactive – promoting positive effects rather than merely avoiding negative ones.

As a topic that can be seen to relate to a very wide range of subjects and policies we would further suggest that a more holistic interpretation of water quality could prove beneficial to the Environment Report in general. It is our opinion that this policy assessment would benefit from revisions that consider the wider implications of sustainable drainage and flood management, and that recommendations could be drawn from this assessment to address the limited positive effects identified for certain SEA objectives.

Conclusions

In summary, we encourage a more holistic consideration of sustainable water management within both the Environmental Report and the ADNP, which may address the number of neutral effects recorded. We further recommend that the Environmental Report is revisited to identify the need for specific reference to water quality within the policies of the Plan. We hope that our response will prove useful in progressing the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan, and would welcome further opportunities for consultation as they arise.

Yours faithfully,

Laura Kennedy

New Development

Appendix E: Summary of amendments to the SEA Environmental Report

This Appendix sets out the amendments made to the SEA Environmental Report following revisions made to the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan, as well as following representations made during the consultation on the Environmental Report.

Neighbourhood Plan Aims

The submission draft Neighbourhood Plan has undergone a number of amendments from the previous version of the Plan. As a result, the Neighbourhood Plan Aim relating to the Environment was revised following representations made during the Environmental Report consultation; the Aim was reassessed for SEA purposes and is included in its revised format in this Environmental Report.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

In addition to the amendment made to the 'Environment' Neighbourhood Plan Aim, an additional policy was included within the Neighbourhood Plan in order to address concerns raised during consultation. This amendment has resulted in the re-inclusion of a policy relating to Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS). This policy had previously been included within the Neighbourhood Plan at an earlier stage and has simply been re-inserted.

Cumulative impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan

Following on from the assessment of the individual Neighbourhood Plan policies, the cumulative impacts of the Plan were also reassessed. This resulted from the reassessment of some individual policies within the Environment section, following representations made during the Environmental Report consultation with particular reference to the water environment. Having revised the individual policy assessment to take account of these representations, it was necessary to revise the cumulative impact section of the Environmental Report. This cumulative impact was carried out firstly looking at the cumulative effects of the plan against each objective, and then also assessing each of the neighbourhood plan topic areas against the suite of SEA Objectives.

The assessment of the cumulative effects of the Neighbourhood Plan was carried out following the assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan policies and involved totalling the effects recorded for each policy against each individual SEA Objective. The graphs showing the results of the cumulative assessment were also updated to take account of the revisions to the policies and their subsequent reassessment.

Conclusion

While a number of the Neighbourhood Plan policies have been reassessed as part of this revised SEA Environmental Report, it is important to note that, as a result of this assessment, it is clear that there has been no significant change in the way that the Neighbourhood Plan performs in sustainability terms, with the exception that Sustainable Urban Drainage is now covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. Of those policies which were reassessed, improvements in overall sustainability were recorded as a result. Crucially, no adverse impacts were observed in relation to any of the proposals taken forward through the Neighbourhood Plan. Additionally, the Sustainable Urban Drainage policy, which was not included in the previous

version of the Neighbourhood Plan, performed strongly against the SEA objectives and, as a result, adds further weight to the sustainability of the Neighbourhood Plan.

