



# **Alnwick & Denwick** NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**2014 - 2031**

**Your Town - Your Plan - Your Future**

**Post Examination Consultation Version**  
**November 2016**



# **Alnwick & Denwick**

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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## Foreword

*by the Mayor of Alnwick and Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*

The Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of plan for the local area which has been drawn up by a Steering Group of volunteers from the town and parish and in response to your input over the last three years. It is very much Your Plan for Your Town helping to shape Your Future.

It's a plan that looks forward optimistically and lays out policies and proposals for the future growth and development of Alnwick and Denwick whilst ensuring that our great heritage and fabulous environment continues to be protected.

The plan has now been examined by an Independent Examiner who recommended a large number of modifications to the plan to ensure the plan met the 'Basic Conditions' set out in legislation. The Examiner's report, which is non-binding, has been considered by Northumberland County Council as Local Planning Authority. The County Council whilst accepting the vast majority of the recommended modifications, consider that some of the modifications have an unnecessarily adverse impact on the plan and an alternative modification could still achieve compliance with the Basic Conditions. The County Council has now published its report and intended revised modifications. As advised in the National Planning Practice Guidance it wishes to offer all consultation bodies the opportunity to consider the proposed varied modifications before the plan goes forward to Local Referendum in the New Year.

The proposed varied modifications are available for inspection and comment until Noon on Friday 13th January. Any comments should be made in writing to Head of Planning, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Loansdene, Morpeth.

Alan Symmonds  
Mayor of Alnwick

## Table of Contents

CHAPTER	PAGE
Foreword	2
Table of Contents	3
1 Introduction to the Neighbourhood Plan	4
2 The Future for Alnwick and Denwick	7
3 Sustainable Development for Alnwick and Denwick	9
4 Housing	11
5 Economy and Employment	20
6 Town Centre & Retail	28
7 Community Facilities	35
8 Transport	42
9 Environment	50
10 Heritage, Design and Culture	64
11 Delivering the Plan	80
Appendix 1 - Community Action Plan	84
Appendix 2 - Glossary	106

The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by a Steering Group of volunteers managed by Alnwick Town Council as the 'Qualifying Body' in consultation with Denwick Parish Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as updated.

If you would like this document in a different format or larger print size please contact :

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Or visit the website: [www.alnwick-and-denwick-plan.org.uk](http://www.alnwick-and-denwick-plan.org.uk)

## INTRODUCTION TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### 1.1 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan (ADNP) is a new type of planning document. It is part of the Government's new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the 'Localism Act 2011', which for Neighbourhood Planning came into force in April 2012.

The ADNP provides a set of clear aims for the future of the town, and sets out planning policies and proposals to realise these aims.

The ADNP has been developed through extensive consultation with the people of Alnwick and Denwick and others with an interest in the town. Details of the consultation have been recorded in the consultation document that is available to download from the plan website [www.alnwick-and-denwick-plan.org.uk](http://www.alnwick-and-denwick-plan.org.uk)

### 1.2 How the Neighbourhood Plan fits into the Planning System

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their town, the Localism Act sets out some important laws. One of these is that all neighbourhood plans must meet the 'basic conditions'. That is, Neighbourhood Plans must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State in particular the National Planning Policy Framework (otherwise known as the NPPF);
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area, in our case the Alnwick District Core Strategy 2007 (ADCS). (The Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy (NLPCS) for the County which will replace the ADCS is still developing but the evidence base of the emerging plan has been considered in preparing the ADNP policies and proposals;
- not breach, and must be otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations;

- not have a significant effect on a European Site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The Localism Act allows the ADNP to provide more than the number of houses and amount of employment land set out in the Local Plan but it does not allow the Neighbourhood Plan to provide for less.

The Plan gives local people the power to decide for example where new housing and employment should go, and how the town centre should change. Without the ADNP, Northumberland County Council would make these decisions on behalf of the people of Alnwick and Denwick.

### 1.3 What is in the Neighbourhood Plan?

Although deciding where new development should go is an important part of the ADNP, it is about much more than this. The Plan is to guide the future of Alnwick and Denwick as a whole. It looks at a wide range of issues, including:

- What level of growth in Alnwick would be sustainable
- How we ensure we can develop the economy and services of the town

- How we provide housing that is affordable and helps young people to stay in the town
- How we future proof our housing, amenities, services, and public transport, to meet the needs of older people and disabled people
- What we need to do to retain the community facilities we have
- What we need to do to ensure the way we move around is more sustainable
- How we do all this and still protect the fabulous heritage and environment we all enjoy.

The ADNP responds to these issues by putting forward a set of policies that will be applied through the planning application process as well as proposals about what land will be allocated for various uses or protected for the future.

Neighbourhood plans will be used in making planning decisions. When a development or change is proposed in the Plan Area Northumberland County Council (as the Local Planning Authority) will be required to refer to the ADNP and check whether proposals are in keeping with policies the community has developed. In planning terms the policies set out in the ADNP are therefore the most important part of the plan. The policies in the plan will apply for the next 15 years up until 2031.

In approaching the issues which the community identified, it was evident early on that finding complete answers to some of them through the policies and proposals of the ADNP would not

be possible. In other words some actions could not be directly tackled through the statutory neighbourhood plan. The Alnwick and Denwick Community Partnership Plan Steering Group however felt it was important that all issues identified by the community were responded to. The ADNP therefore has been structured in a way that sets out a number of 'Community Action Proposals' (CAP) in each topic area alongside the statutory Neighbourhood Plan to make the area a more attractive place to live, work and visit. These will provide clear indicators for other agencies as to what the community wish to achieve in Alnwick and Denwick. The Community Action Plan setting out the Community Action Proposals is set out at Appendix 1.

## 1.4 How the Neighbourhood Plan is organised

After this Introduction the Plan is divided into the following sections:

- **Section 2: The Future for Alnwick and Denwick**, which sets out:
  - a brief description of the town and village today;
  - why Alnwick and Denwick need a neighbourhood plan;
  - the vision for Alnwick and Denwick and its communities; and
  - the overall plan aims.
- **Section 3: Sustainable Development Strategy**

- **Section 4-10: Neighbourhood Plan Policies and Community Action Proposals**, which set out by topic:

- a brief description of the topic summarising the key findings from evidence and from the issues consultation;
- the national and county level planning policy in relation to the topic;
- the objectives for the ADNP in each topic area;
- policies and proposals to support the overall aims in each topic area; and
- a set of community action proposals in each topic area.

- **Section 11: Delivering the Plan**, which sets out:

- the ways in which the ADNP and the community action proposals will be brought into life.
- To help you understand the ADNP there is a glossary at the back explaining the more technical terms the Plan refers to.

There is a large amount of background information that has helped in producing the ADNP. What is known as 'the evidence base' includes a large number of documents that the topic leaders used to prepare the Issues and Options Papers and also the sections of the draft plan. Key documentation is held on the Neighbourhood Plan website at:

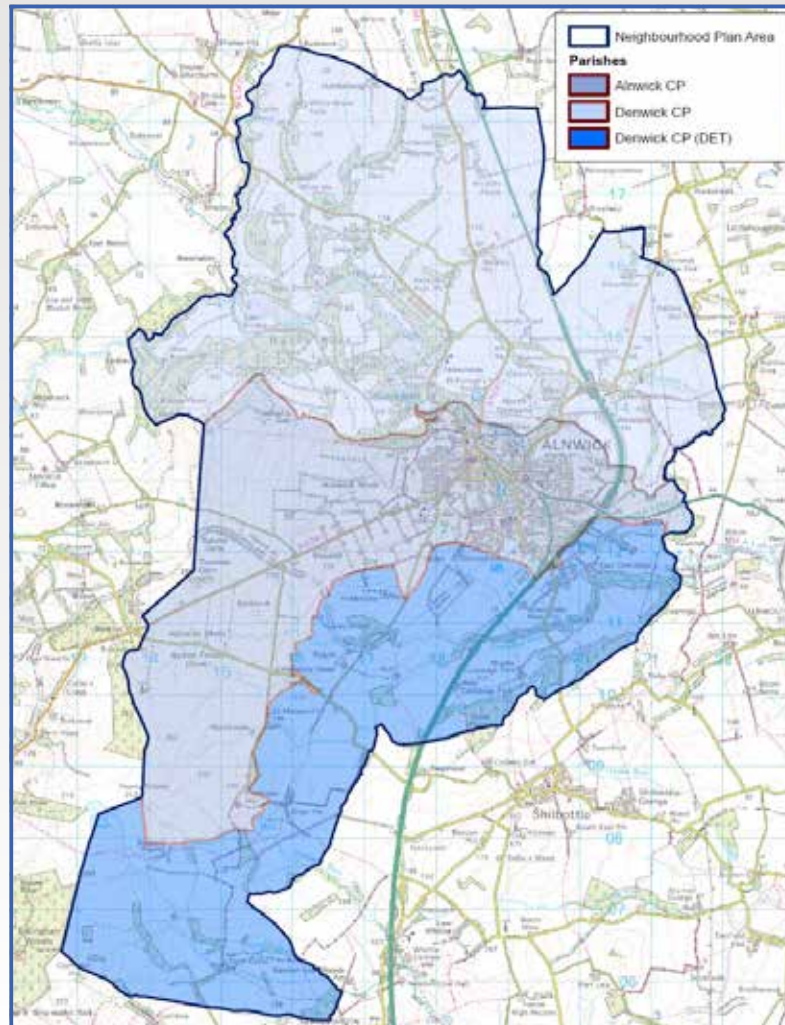
[www.alnwick-and-denwick-plan.org.uk](http://www.alnwick-and-denwick-plan.org.uk)

## 1.5 How the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared

The ADNP has been prepared for Alnwick Town Council (The 'Qualifying Body' under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations)

and Denwick Parish Council by the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, a group of local people brought together to work on the plan.

The Steering Group has been assisted throughout by Northumberland County Council officers. The plan preparation process involved a number of key steps.



The Town Council applied to be a Neighbourhood Planning Front Runner to gain funding from the government in summer 2011 and being successful with that decided in September 2011 to begin the preparation of the ADNP and embarked on an initial round of consultation with residents in the plan area about what the issues were facing the town and the surrounding area. This took place over the winter of 2011.

Alnwick Town Council and Denwick Parish Council jointly decided to prepare the ADNP for the full extent of both their areas for practical reasons because much of the current development on the south east side of the town as well as possible future areas for development actually falls within Denwick Parish (Detached) (See Map). An application was made to the County Council to officially designate the Neighbourhood Plan Area in summer 2012 and the area was subsequently designated on 11 April 2013.

Members of the Steering Group worked together in topic groups in 2012 to research the issues raised and identify possible options to solve them. A further round of consultation was held on these issues and options in winter 2012 and the feedback used to prepare the pre-submission draft ADNP in 2013/14.

The revised plan was submitted to the County Council in July 2015 and the Regulation 16 consultation was carried out in September 2015. The plan was examined by an independent examiner in winter 2015/16 and subject to modifications was recommended to proceed to referendum.

## 2.1 Why Alnwick and Denwick need a Neighbourhood Plan

Alnwick is identified as a main town in Northumberland and in large part because of its fabulous environment and quality of life, it is a location that continues to attract people to live, work and retire here. As such it also attracts developers to build homes and workplaces and for commerce generally to view the town as an attractive base, not least in catering for the visitor and tourist market. Whilst development is to be encouraged it needs to be managed in a way that can be sustained into the future and in a way that our superb heritage can continue to be enjoyed by future generations.

Alnwick Town Council and Denwick Parish Council wish to take the opportunity presented by Neighbourhood Plans to ensure their communities take ownership for managing this change to the benefit of the future of the town.

## 2.2 Vision

Our Vision for the plan area is that:

- 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.

## 2.3 Neighbourhood Plan Aims

To respond to the challenges facing Alnwick and Denwick and to achieve this vision by 2031 a number of plan aims have been developed. These fully reflect the principles of sustainability:

### 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 & 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 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 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.

## 3.1 Introduction

Trying to make sure that we live in a more sustainable way has become the challenge for us all and the way in which we plan development and change within Alnwick and Denwick is no exception. The National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) defines sustainable development as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The Newcastle Institute for Research on Sustainability puts this more simply as “Enough For All Forever.”

Alnwick and Denwick exhibit many of the characteristics of a sustainable place to live. Both sit within an unrivalled landscape; the environmental quality of its air and water resources is high; the town offers a broad range of housing; the level of supporting services is generally good with good schooling, shops and health services; the area has great heritage and cultural assets which makes it an attractive visitor destination; and the town offers many opportunities for employment.

In many respects therefore the balance of environmental quality, economic opportunity and social provision is reasonably good within the plan area contributing to a good quality of life.

However it is apparent that the town faces some key challenges - achieving a population, with a good balance of age groups, maintaining a vibrant economy and meeting the future service needs of north Northumberland. From the consultation work on the plan so far, it is clear that people see it as essential that future change in the plan area at least responds to these challenges and maintains and where possible, improves the quality of life.

## 3.2 Objective

The vision for the ADNP concludes with the following statement:

**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.**

Thus the overarching objective of the plan is :

**To contribute to the development of a sustainable future for the Plan area and an improving quality of life for all.**

## 3.3 The Strategic Policy Context

At the heart of the NPPF is the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ which is to be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. The Government believes that the three dimensions to planning for sustainable development - the economic role, the social role and the environmental role - should not be undertaken in isolation because they are mutually dependent. Economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The NPPF requires the ADNP to set out a positive vision for the future of the area and through its policies and proposals ensure local communities can deliver a shared vision for their neighbourhood, deliver the sustainable development they need and set planning policies to determine decisions on planning applications.

The Alnwick District Local Development Framework Core Strategy sets out in its Policies S1 - S3 the strategic principles that will apply to all development proposals in the plan area to ensure they can deliver sustainable outcomes. The policies although predating the NPPF, are consistent with it and can be taken as the basis on which

the presumption in favour of sustainable development will apply.

- Policy S1 requires new development to accord with the settlement hierarchy, in which Alnwick is a focus for development and reflect the level of services present, accessibility and the character of the settlement.
- Policy S2 prioritises previously developed land and buildings over other sites within the urban area and over sites outside but adjoining the urban area.
- Policy S3 of the Core Strategy sets out the criteria for ensuring sustainable development.

Some elements of policy S3 are covered by the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy but given that policy S3 is unlikely to be 'saved' after adoption of the NLPCS it is proposed to build those policy principles not covered by the NLPCS into the ADNP.

### 3.4 Building a Sustainable Future for Alnwick and Denwick

We cannot assume that retaining the status quo will necessarily maintain the present quality of life in Alnwick and Denwick. We have seen some services removed from Alnwick in recent years, employment opportunities changing, shops and other facilities closing, whilst others have opened.

Thus in implementing the Neighbourhood Plan we are trying to ensure that as far as possible Alnwick remains a sustainable market town and that a balance of economic, social and environmental improvements is maintained. To ensure this can be achieved the town needs to accommodate development and change but to do this in an integrated way. We should not simply accommodate new housing without encouraging employment growth and the development of services to support new and relocating residents.

The ADNP will be the principal means by which we ensure that development and change can be managed in a way that delivers a sustainable future for the residents and businesses of both the town and village.

Accordingly the following Alnwick and Denwick Sustainable Development Strategy will guide all development and change and sets out the basis on which the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF will apply to the plan area:

## Alnwick and Denwick Sustainable Development Strategy

- 1 The town of Alnwick will be the key location for development and regeneration where it can be supported by a range of services and facilities.
- 2 A range of land uses will be achieved within the plan area so that people can minimise the need to travel for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.
- 3 Growth and development will achieve a balance between homes, jobs, services and green space and will be sustainable in the long term.
- 4 There is adequate existing or planned capacity in the physical, community and environmental infrastructure serving the plan area or that it can be provided in time to accommodate the development.
- 5 The compact urban form of Alnwick will be maintained.
- 6 Priority will be given to the effective use of previously developed land.
- 7 Full and effective use will be made of empty buildings.
- 8 Linkages will be made between key areas of the town via green corridors allowing safe walking and cycling.
- 9 Any physical or environmental constraints on development or change of use as a result of flood risk, contamination, land instability or biodiversity have been assessed and can be accommodated by mitigation or adaptation.
- 10 Quality of heritage, ecological and environmental assets including water and air quality will be preserved and enhanced.

## 4.1 Context

### 4.1.1 Introduction

Alnwick is a popular and attractive place to live and retire to, accessible to Tyneside and with an enviable natural and built heritage which means there is a healthy demand for housing from outside the area as well as demand from an anticipated growth in the number of households locally. It also has a thriving tourism economy resulting in a significant demand for second and holiday homes.

The town and its surroundings have historically had a constrained housing supply for various reasons plus currently continuing recessionary effects in the housing market. These factors together mean housing needs generally are not all met and the price of housing is high relative to incomes.

The continuing gap between household income levels and house prices results in much of the local resident population being unable to purchase or rent property on the open market – a particular problem for young people. The area also is seeing an increase in the average age of the population which raises issues at the other end of the age spectrum in terms of older persons' housing needs and under-occupation of existing stock.

Alnwick is characterised by ongoing change

in the housing sector whereas Denwick is typified by very small incremental change to the existing housing stock and very little new build.

The ADNP will play a key role in ensuring that sufficient housing land is delivered to meet housing requirements identified in evidence supporting the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy in the period up to 2031, and local housing needs identified by housing needs surveys. It will seek to guide new housing development to sustainable locations in Alnwick. It will also seek to target the use of previously developed land where available whilst respecting the character and scale of the surroundings. A broad mix of housing types suitable for different households will contribute to the creation of a mixed and sustainable community.

### 4.1.2 Constraints for the Neighbourhood Plan

- Physical development constraints – the historic landscape constraints north of the town and the A1 corridor means that most development options for housing in Alnwick are to the south and east of the town.
- Marketability and deliverability – the limited strength of Alnwick as a housing market means that new housing may have to be phased in terms of its release onto the market.

### 4.1.3 Policy context

Key policy guidance is provided at National level by the NPPF and at a local level by the adopted Alnwick District LDF Core Strategy. The main points in relation to housing are set out below:

#### NPPF

Neighbourhood Plans in the context of the NPPF must at least provide for the level of housing set out in the development plan although it may provide for more.

The NPPF looks to boost the supply of homes and requires local planning authorities to ensure that plans meet the full need for market and affordable housing consistent with NPPF policies. The NPPF requires a 5 year supply of deliverable sites to be maintained and where possible, a supply of developable sites beyond 5 years for up to 15 years ahead. The NPPF requires that plans provide for a mix of housing catering for different groups, identify the size, type, and, tenure of housing required and where an affordable housing need has been identified, plans should provide for it. Plans should also make sure that empty vacant stock is brought back into use including through the use of Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers.

The Plan area includes open countryside and within these areas the NPPF supports the development of housing in limited circumstances, which includes meeting

the needs of rural workers, enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets or and where development would reuse redundant buildings, amongst other things.

The NPPF places significant importance on ensuring quality sustainable design in development and ensuring that housing reflects local distinctiveness and improves the character of the area including guidance where necessary on housing density.

#### **Northumberland Local Plan – Core Strategy – (NLPCS)**

The housing strategy for Northumberland in the NLPCS is to ensure housing development supports diverse and resilient communities and complements economic growth aspirations. In particular there is a need to boost significantly the supply of family housing to attract families into Northumberland increasing the economically active population.

The spatial approach of the NLPCS is to focus development in the main towns and service centres (including Alnwick) which are the key hubs for services. New housing development in the open countryside is to continue to be restricted.

The NLPCS sets the amount of housing for each delivery area and each main town and service centre, prioritises housing development on previously developed land and seeks a mix of housing at appropriate densities.

The NLPCS takes the view that extending choice in the housing market will assist economic development and accordingly seeks to ensure a mix of size and tenure type in housing to be provided, as well as encouraging specialist housing provision to meet the needs of the elderly and vulnerable groups in the population.

In view of the ongoing need for affordable housing, particularly in the north and west of the county, the NLPCS identifies an overall target need for 30% affordable housing in the county although given current provision in the pipeline only 15% affordable provision is to be required in the short term.

#### **Alnwick District Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007 (ADCS)**

For the present and until the NLPCS is adopted, the former Alnwick District Core Strategy (ADCS) remains the principal policy document with which the ADNP must conform. The ADCS is reflected in the emerging NLPCS in that it proposes to focus housing development in the main settlements of Alnwick and Amble (*Policy S1*) and sets out a tiered approach to development giving priority to previously developed land, then other sites within Alnwick before suitable sites adjoining the built up area (*Policy S2*).

The ADCS was required to restrict housing growth in response to restrictions in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). However the demise of the RSS and the greater flexibility proposed in the NLPCS means

that a higher housing requirement than that proposed in Policy S4 of the ADCS (30 per year in Alnwick up to 2016 and 17 units per year up to 2021) may be deliverable. In the spirit of guidance on Neighbourhood Planning, as the ADNP wishes to deliver a higher volume of new houses, supported by the NLPCS evidence base it is not considered that exceeding the control totals in Policy S4 raises an issue of conformity.

The ADCS put in place a strong affordable housing policy (*Policy S6*) requiring 35% provision on sites of 10 or more dwellings in Alnwick and over 0.33 hectares in area.

## **4.2 Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan**

In response to the research into housing issues and in pursuit of the overall housing aim for the plan, the following are the plan objectives:

- Provide sufficient land to meet Alnwick and Denwick's housing requirements to 2031 particularly the need for affordable housing;
- Provide a choice of sizes, types and tenure of quality housing particularly creating opportunities for young and older people.

## 4.3 Policies and Proposals

### 4.3.1 The Housing requirement

The evidence base for the NLPCS pulls together a number of evidence strands to inform the likely housing requirement for the North Northumberland delivery area and Alnwick. (See *ADNP Issues and Options – Housing Paper 2012 and NLPCS Evidence Base Documents*.)

It is clear from the evidence that the previous housing requirement set out in the RSS sought to suppress the supply significantly below the level of projected household growth in the north of the County. Although actual completion rates, particularly in Alnwick, have been closer to projected household growth than elsewhere in the North Northumberland delivery area, there are still clear signs in Alnwick of ‘overheating’ in the housing market where supply has not been able to fully meet needs.

The Housing Needs Study of 2012 identifies a housing market still squeezed by high demand from outside the plan area for both second/holiday homes and retirement homes, which with a constrained supply has led to unmet local housing needs.

In addition to meeting local housing needs to ensure the younger economically active population stay in Alnwick, we also need to provide some stock to meet open market

demand that will attract families and younger economically active in-migrants to the benefit of the town’s economy and services, helping to offset the ageing population.

The NLPCS strategy for Alnwick is therefore to provide for a level of housing growth slightly above the national population projection to support a diverse and resilient community and to complement economic growth aspirations.

This targeted increase in development based on population growth trends for the area, with Alnwick receiving slightly more than its pro-rata share, means a figure around 25% of the North Northumberland total and is justified in order to ensure more housing is delivered where there is access to services and to encourage employment growth in the same location. Based on the evidence from the NLPCS, this means a housing requirement of around 1000-1100 dwellings between 2011 and 2031.

We need to ensure that we get the housing supply right for a number of reasons – too little and the problems above of unmet needs arise – too much and the development of Alnwick is unlikely to be sustainable. Too much could simply result in Alnwick becoming a dormitory settlement for Tyneside, particularly with completion of A1 dualling. Housing growth needs to be supported by local jobs growth and by the right level of service provision. The Neighbourhood Plan can ensure this level of housing growth is sustainable and the

majority of those commenting at the issues and options stage considered the level of new homes proposed to be ‘about right’.

### 4.3.2 Providing the requirement

The figure of 1000 -1100 homes covers the period 2011-31. As at 30/9/14, 113 dwellings had been completed towards this supply leaving 987 dwellings to be provided of which 455 already have full planning permission and are either under construction or still to be started. The housing supply the plan must provide is therefore c530 units (See *Table HSG1*).

This supply can come from two sources – allocations in the plan and windfall sites (i.e. those coming forward outside of development plan allocations).

The NPPF states that LPAs “may make an allowance for windfall sites ... if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends, and should not include residential gardens”.

Although in the period since 2010 an average of 34 units a year came from windfall in Alnwick, discounting the 2 large brownfield sites at Lagny Street and New Row in 2010/11, the annual average from windfall is much lower at c3 units a year. Where a plan is being prepared, as in this

case, following a rigorous SHLAA process, the opportunity for hitherto unidentified sites to come forward as windfall is likely to be extremely small. For these reasons it is not proposed to count more than c50 units of windfall towards the overall Neighbourhood Plan housing supply over the plan period from 2015 to 2031.

The allocated sites therefore need to provide c482 dwellings. (See Table HSG1.)

**Table HSG1 Housing Supply position**

Total dwellings required 2011 - 31	<b>1100</b>
Dwellings completed 1/4/11 to 30/9/14	<b>113</b>
Remaining Requirement 2014-31	<b>987</b>
Dwellings under construction	<b>93</b>
Dwellings with planning permission not started as at 30/9/14 (including Greensfield Full permission)	<b>362</b>
Total known supply at 30/9/14 (including Greensfield)	<b>455</b>
Outstanding requirement	<b>532</b>
Expected windfall dwellings at c3 per year	<b>50</b>
Supply from allocated sites in the plan	<b>482</b>

### 4.3.3 Housing location

We want to be able to continue to give priority to remaining previously developed land and land which needs to be brought

## POLICY H1

### Quantity of Housing

**Housing sites will be brought forward over the plan period at a rate to provide around 1100 new dwellings between 2011 and 2031.**

forward on the current Duchess's High School main site in association with the development of the new High School site. As set out in the Community Facilities chapter, potential changes in schooling may result in the middle school sites becoming available in part for housing. If the sites were to come forward during the life of the Neighbourhood Plan they would be considered against policy CF5 and ENV3.

Because the majority of the available previously developed land is now on smaller sites and constitutes a probable supply of about 130 homes it has been necessary to allocate some greenfield land. Three such sites are proposed within those areas identified in the Alnwick Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document as being capable of accommodating development without undue impact on the landscape setting of the town and following a site assessment process to ensure sites are in line with sustainable development principles.

Land at Greensfield Farm accessed from the proposed new High School access road

was allocated in the ADNP but has now been granted full planning permission for 271 homes and 58 extra care apartments. There are only 2 other areas of any size that the site assessment identified as being available, developable and deliverable and those are land east of Allerburn Lea and land to the south of Ravensmount, both accessed off Alnmouth Road.

These two greenfield sites inevitably adjoin existing development on the town's fringes and as such it will be necessary to use structural landscaping and green corridors between the existing and new development to protect the amenities and living conditions of existing residents on the edge of the urban area. On both these sites a masterplan or development brief will be a key initial requirement.

## POLICY H2

### Location of Housing Development

**Housing provision will be made on the sites allocated on the Proposals Map and follow the guidelines in Table HSG2. In respect of the major greenfield allocations, (H2-1 and H2-2) planning applications should be accompanied by a master plan or development brief that demonstrates how the new development integrates with the town and respects the living conditions of existing residents on the urban edge.**

**Table HSG2 Housing Allocations**

REF	HOUSING SITE	AREA (HECTARES)	GUIDE CAPACITY	GUIDELINE REQUIREMENTS
<b>Large Sites over 1 hectare</b>				
<b>H2-1</b>	Land east of Allernburn Lea	15.52	270	Design for site needs to leave extensive green corridor down east side of Allernburn Lea /West Acres housing, account for Fisher Lane Public Right Of Way, hedgerow and landscape structure, provide structural landscaping on and off site and provide access improvements to Alnmouth Road. The design may also have to account for A1 road noise. Improvements to public transport services to serve the site will be required.
<b>H2-2</b>	Land south west of Ravensmount and Alnmouth Road	4.5	70	Design for site needs to leave green corridor down south-east side of Oaky Balks housing, account for Public Right Of Way through site towards former railway embankment, and provide access improvements to Alnmouth Road. The design will also have to account for A1 road noise and include acoustic fencing. The site adjoins a Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat which must be preserved.
<b>H2-3</b>	Duchess's High School, Howling Lane	1.9	60	Design for this site must take into account important inward views of the town from the north, the Wash Burn corridor on the east side of the site, specimen trees and the future of the greenfield part of the site for recreation.
<b>H2-4</b>	Allernburn House, Denwick Lane	1.32	20	Design for the site must account for mature specimen trees, the retention of the main section of Allernburn House given its importance as a local heritage asset and the elevated relationship of the site over Allernburn Lea. The site adjoins a Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat which must be preserved.
<b>H2-5</b>	Land at former Thomas Percy School, Blakelaw Road	1.00	15	Site had full permission for 15 self build plots. Infrastructure has been provided but development will now proceed via development as one site rather than as self build. Design needs to consider close elevated relationship over houses in Blakelaw Road and needs to protect greenspace to west as recreational land.
<b>Small Sites under 1 hectare</b>				
<b>H2-6</b>	Fire Station, South Road	0.67	15	Design needs to account for existing housing and its access and relationship to supermarket planned on adjoining site including delivery bay and service yard etc.
<b>H2-7</b>	Former bus garage, Lisburn Terrace	0.25	10	Site has permission on appeal for extra care elderly persons' accommodation but the ADNP preference is for the site to be developed for housing in a flatted or town house format. The site adjoins a Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat which must be preserved and may be affected by a former mine entrance. The site is on a gateway into the conservation area and design will be expected to reflect this..
<b>H2-8</b>	Land adjoining Old Vicarage, Ratten Row	0.25	6	Design needs to account for tree'd nature of site, setting of conservation area, listed buildings and adjacent Wash Burn.
<b>H2-9</b>	Roxburgh Place	0.14	10	Design brief for site needs to allow for elevated position over properties in Bondgate Within, Public Right Of Way through site, relationship to the listed Corn Exchange and retention of public car park. Given the location in the Conservation Area design to a high standard will be required.
<b>H2-10</b>	Bank Top, Rugley Road	0.7	6	Mix of family size and smaller dwellings. Vehicular access to be taken from Rugley Road. Design intention is that this will be a low density with modest houses located in large plots.
<b>Total Allocation</b>			<b>482</b>	<b>Balance of supply is made up by sites with planning permission or on windfall sites.</b>

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### H CAP 1

Develop projects to provide young, elderly & disabled populations with appropriate types of supported accommodation.

#### 4.3.4 Catering for specific needs

Existing housing models and market delivery are not responding to specific needs for example from young, old and disabled people. There is a need for the ADNP to really make its mark by innovative approaches to produce working housing models for these groups.

Homelessness is becoming a serious issue amongst young people particularly. For the first time in Alnwick, 2012 saw 7 cases of young people homeless and sleeping rough. 59 young people are registered as seeking housing related support.

At the other end of the age spectrum population projections in the 2012 Northumberland Housing Needs Survey indicate that between 2008 and 2031 there will be a 46.6% increase in the over 65's with the number of over 85 year olds doubling in the same period. The 2012 Northumberland Housing Needs Survey also identified that 25.7% of Northumberland households had someone in the property with a disability, of which half were over the age of 65 and only 11% of properties were suitably adapted, leaving 16.6% not adapted. This means that as well as additional extra care provision, housing developments will have to change to see higher levels of well-designed specialist housing for example lifetime homes, sheltered housing and other forms of assisted living. The David Coultie Study of Alnwick District in 2008 set a requirement of 491 units of sheltered accommodation and 123 units of extra care housing. The recent grant of permission for the extra care facility

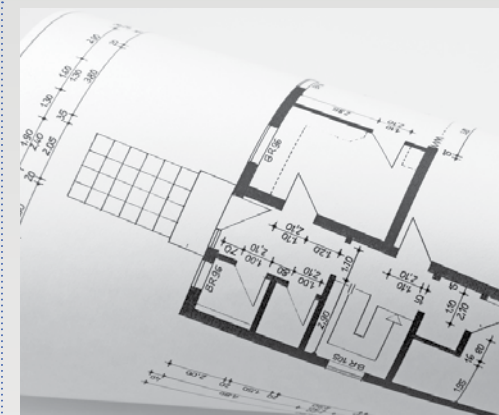
at Greensfield will go a long way to meeting need but to date in Alnwick, only c100 sheltered units at Bondgate Without and Park View have been provided.

In respect of both age groups and other specialist needs, housing partners in the plan area will work to develop innovative models of housing provision and new methods of delivery.

#### 4.3.5 Ensuring choice of housing – types, size and tenure

Providing an appropriate quantity of housing in sustainable locations is only part of the story. The NPPF makes it clear that there must be a choice of housing to ensure that people can occupy housing that is best suited to their needs.

For some time in Alnwick, in the years before and after the millennium, new build housing largely took the form of family housing for sale on larger estates such as Allerburn Lea and Fairfields. It is true to say however that, particularly with the development of some of the brownfield sites in the centre of the town, there has been a switch to the development of smaller units in apartment and townhouse formats. There are mixed views in the town as to whether the pendulum has swung too far in this direction with a large number of apartments coming on the market at the same time with the development of the Gentoo sites under the Homes and Communities Agency Kick Start Programme. However, the take-up of these smaller units indicates that their provision was needed. The reality is that the ADNP



needs to deliver choice and selection in the size, type and tenure of housing.

External factors can have major implications on the housing market in different and unexpected ways. For example the recession and difficult employment prospects, coupled with devalued pensions means that people both in their working lives and in retirement may not be able to afford owner-occupation. It is not difficult to foresee a scenario, as a result of these factors, where there is a steep increase in the need for both social rented property and quality privately rented stock as an alternative to owner-occupation. Another factor is the effect that changes to the benefit system will have on housing choice. In recent years single bedroom properties in the Alnwick area have dropped out of favour almost entirely with all households wherever possible opting for the flexibility offered by a second bedroom. However the benefit changes are forcing an end to this greater flexibility and a return to the construction of one bedroom units.

It is clear from these trends and the national policy in the NPPF that the ADNP must secure choice, particularly on all major development sites through a policy encouraging a range of house types, sizes and tenures, but without the policy being too prescriptive as to specifics to ensure the ADNP can respond to differing needs over time.

### **POLICY H3**

## **Ensuring a Choice of Housing**

**On sites over 0.25 hectares in size residential developments will be required to provide a mix of formats and sizes of dwellings to ensure a range of housing choice is available to meet housing need.**

**On larger sites over 1 hectare a mix of tenures will also be required to cater for different needs including market housing and affordable housing. An exception to these requirements will only be permitted where the intention is to meet a specific housing need which requires a particular type or tenure of housing and which is supported by clear and recent evidence.**

### **4.3.6 Delivering affordability**

Prior to the recession house prices nationwide, and in Alnwick District, rose sharply. Country Life magazine voted Alnwick town the best place to live in the UK in 2002. This contributed to a dramatic and

rapid increase in the demand for, and hence prices of, property in and around the town. Pressure arose in particular as a result of people looking to acquire second / holiday homes or homes for retirement. With people from further afield having a stronger purchasing power, the local house-buyer found it very hard to compete. Although the recession has resulted in a slowing of the market and a slight drop in prices it has also discouraged construction leading to a reduced supply of new stock. With employment uncertainties this has also made it harder for people to afford housing and the ratio of prices to household income – a ratio of about 8:1 – continues to cause a severe affordability problem for Alnwick and Denwick.

Providing for affordable housing is important in helping to retain younger population and in recruiting staff, particularly younger or lower skilled workers on whom the tourism and caring professions depend. Both sectors are significant employers in the Alnwick economy. The housing provided needs to increase the amount of affordable housing and seek to deliver smaller housing units appealing to the younger and first time buyers who wish to live and work in the district.

Northumberland County Council commissioned David Couttie Associates to carry out a Countywide Housing Needs Survey which reported in summer 2012. The study used 3 sub areas as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Alnwick forms part of the

North Northumberland sub-area. The key issues identified by the assessment were the declining affordability in the housing market and the role that housing can play in regeneration. The assessment confirmed that increased house prices and low wage levels were effectively pricing out the resident population from the housing market.

Recent affordable delivery in Alnwick was given a major boost as a result of the Gentoo developments at Ropery Court and Towergate under the Homes and Communities Agency Kickstart programme. However affordable housing need remains an issue and in Alnwick, the main means of delivering affordable housing will continue to be through cross subsidy in mixed developments of market housing such as Greensfield and Willoughby's Bank. That means that developers of new market housing schemes will have to provide some affordable housing as part of their scheme – thereby ensuring that the community benefits from an increase in the stock of affordable housing.

Draft versions of the ADNP included an affordable housing policy but for the following reason it is not necessary to retain it in the final plan.

Recent work on the Alnwick and Denwick Housing Needs Survey which was a Community Action Proposal of this plan has identified a lower level of need than previously expected and, given the committed supplies of affordable housing in the Alnwick area, the level of provision

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## H CAP 2

Use the findings of the 2016 Alnwick and Denwick Housing Needs Survey in negotiations between developers and the County Council on housing developments to determine the appropriate size, type and tenure mix of affordable housing to be provided through the development.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## H CAP 3

Introduce an annual award scheme that celebrates high quality new housing design.

sought in the original ADNP affordable housing policy was too high. The level required in the emerging NLPCS policy of 15% in the short term rising back to 30% in the longer term will be adequate to address affordability requirements in Alnwick and there is therefore no need for a locally specific policy in the neighbourhood plan.

Affordable housing delivery in Alnwick and Denwick will therefore depend on the adopted policy S6 of the ADCS until the NLPCS is adopted.

On all sites over 10 units therefore either a contribution of on-site affordable units or a financial contribution will be required. The preference is that direct provision should be made on site and this will apply to all allocated sites in the plan over 10 units. The findings of the Alnwick and Denwick Housing Needs Survey will provide the detailed information regarding the size, type and tenure mix of affordable housing that is required to best meet affordable needs as required in HCAP2 and the survey evidence will be used in negotiating the appropriate mix on individual sites.

### 4.3.7 Delivering quality in housing design and local distinctiveness

Given the landscape character and heritage quality of Alnwick, if new housing is going to be successfully incorporated into the town, particularly on its periphery, we have to address the quality of design and local distinctiveness. The town has not had a prestigious past in this respect, with the larger housing estates prior to the

millennium being constructed to developer standard styles and not considering what complements and enhances the Alnwick townscape nor considering how new housing integrates with the town and its community. Since 2000 and on smaller brownfield sites, development has been more successful in fitting with Alnwick's urban grain. Opportunities on previously developed sites however are decreasing and, in order to meet housing needs, the ADNP is allocating sites on the periphery of the town much of which will be in exposed locations. This means that the design and landscaping of new housing will be critical if it is to integrate with the existing fabric and develop a sense of place.

Policy HD1, 6, 7, and 9 set out the principles and criteria that must apply to the visual design of new housing and its aesthetics. The NPPF however stresses that good design is not just about the way housing looks or sits in the landscape - it is about design as a whole. We must secure housing that provides a quality of life and that is

sustainable for the future e.g. ensuring homes are energy efficient and affordable to heat and run.

The Government's decision to revise Building Regulations as the statutory basis for enforcing environmental sustainability in new housing design is welcomed but quality in design and the need to create fully sustainable residential developments goes beyond this. CABI at the Design Council and its partners have produced Building for Life 12 which provides a robust basis to assess the overall quality of housing design. This together with the Lifetime Homes Standard will give objective means to assess new housing and ensure that we can provide sustainable housing that will complement Alnwick and Denwick as a place to live, ensuring that new living environments integrate with the facilities and context of the town and contribute to its distinctiveness.

For the larger sites allocated in the plan it is also proposed that we will encourage developers to invite the North East Design

## POLICY H4

### Housing Design

New housing, including conversions and the development of individual plots in the plan area, will be required to demonstrate that a high standard of design will be achieved.

Design and Access Statements (to be submitted with planning applications for new housing in all cases) and master plans and development briefs where appropriate should demonstrate that they have given consideration to Building for Life 12 and the Lifetime Homes Standard (or their successor documents).

Review and Enabling Service to consider proposed designs at an early stage and provide comments on them.

#### 4.3.8 Making more effective use of existing stock

In addition to providing new build housing stock it is important that the ADNP ensures that the existing housing stock is used effectively to help meet housing needs.

Many households can meet their need for a new or larger house by extending the home they occupy. Permitted Development rights allow householders to extend their homes within certain limits. Additionally the ADNP will allow extensions beyond these limits that are in keeping with the scale and design of the original house, respect the street scene and respect the living conditions of neighbours.

In Alnwick, as elsewhere, there are cases where the existing stock is under-occupied as a result of the household reducing in size - for example elderly households continuing to occupy large family housing. However more seriously in Alnwick there is a problem of properties being deliberately left vacant. Stock that is held vacant is often in poorer condition and in need of refurbishment particularly in respect of its energy efficiency.

Encouraging owners to make underused or vacant property particularly in the town centre, available to a housing trust or association for refurbishment and subsequent rental, will have the multiple

benefits of helping to meet housing needs, regenerating the town centre and reducing the need for travel as people are co-located with shops and services.

It is also open to the County Council to use compulsory purchase powers as advocated in the NPPF to acquire vacant housing stock, refurbish it and bring it back into use.

In order to ensure the existing stock can assist in meeting needs more effectively the following policy will apply along with H CAP 4:

### **POLICY H5** Existing Stock

**Extensions to existing dwellings beyond permitted development limits will be supported where:**

- The scale and design of the extension complements and respects the scale and design of the original property;
- The extension respects the character of the street scene; and
- The privacy, daylight, sunlight and amenity of adjoining residents are safeguarded.

#### 4.3.9 Housing in the rural area

The expectation regarding housing in the ADNP area is that it will be provided essentially within and on the outskirts of

Alnwick in the most sustainable locations. However it is recognised that in drawing the Neighbourhood Plan area wider than the town, rural housing needs within Denwick Parish will arise periodically. Given the extent of the housing allocations proposed in the ADNP and the close relationship between Denwick and Alnwick it is not considered that a general housing allocation or indeed a rural exception site allocation in the village would be either appropriate or necessary.

The NPPF requires planning authorities to avoid new isolated homes in the open countryside other than in special circumstances.

It is accepted that from time to time the needs of rural businesses may result in housing for rural workers being necessary. In addition redundant rural buildings do offer the opportunity for the sustainable reuse of existing built form in the countryside to provide limited housing within the Plan area which is supported by national policy. Finally, there may be occasions where a dwelling which is still in use reaches the end of its useful life and cannot be repaired or refurbished and it may be reasonable to allow a replacement dwelling to be constructed.

Notwithstanding the normal restriction on new housing in the countryside, it is appropriate for development in these 3 circumstances to be allowed.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### **H CAP 4**

Identify vacant and disused accommodation within the town centre suitable for refurbishment / conversion for housing.

## ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

5.1  
Context

## 5.1.1 Introduction

This section considers the location, scale and type of employment land to meet the needs of the town in its capacity as a main rural service centre. The town needs to meet both its own needs and that of a wider rural hinterland which it serves. The Plan also considers how existing employment assets and the town centre might contribute towards future economic prosperity. Planning for sustainable development in Alnwick is critical to wider socio-economic objectives such as retaining an active working population, retaining young people and attracting new investment to the town.

Responses to the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan issues and options consultation stages provided the following key comments:

- The importance of supporting growth in the town generally;
- The need particularly to provide more employment opportunity for young people, including graduates and to counter an imbalanced ageing population;
- The need to support new and existing businesses and facilitate entrepreneurship;

- The potential of the town to capitalise on local food and local energy sectors;
- The importance of expanding the town's infrastructure including highways, parking and public transport to assist economic growth;
- The potential to bring back underused buildings in the town into economic use;
- The wish to see continued support for growth in the tourism sector by improving Alnwick as a tourist destination.

## 5.1.2 Historical context

Employment land has, in the post war years, been provided on a range of small scale industrial estates, generally comprising a variety of rural and service industries and suppliers. Like in many service centres, modern requirements for employment land now requires a much wider range of businesses to be provided for, from general industrial uses to sensitive office, service sector and tourism related uses. Other new uses, such as car showrooms and retail trade centres have also tended to gravitate towards employment locations. There is therefore a requirement to meet the needs of a much more diversified employment sector than in the past. Retail and service sector growth has also been an important component of recent economic and employment growth and this is likely to continue in the future. The plan considers how the potential growth in these sectors should be realised.

## 5.1.3 Policy context

Key policy guidance is provided at national level by the National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF) and at a local level by the adopted Alnwick District LDF Core Strategy, and the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy. The main points in relation to employment land are set out below:

## NPPF

Section 1 Building a strong competitive economy sets out the Government's commitment to growth and "ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth"... "Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system".

Of particular relevance to Alnwick, the plan should:

- "Set a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages economic growth."
- "Set criteria or identify strategic sites for local or inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period."
- "Support existing business sectors ... and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in

the plan and allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.”

#### **Alnwick Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007**

Key policies and objectives of the adopted Development Plan in respect of economy are to:

- Provide sufficient land to meet employment needs, facilitate economic diversification and achieve sustainable levels of economic growth.
- Encourage the regeneration of and enhance the role, vitality and viability of the district market towns as key service centres.
- Promote the development of sustainable tourism.

Alnwick is identified as a main rural centre which offers “the greatest range of housing, employment and service opportunities” and is identified as “a main focus for new development in the district”. In increasing the former district’s employment allocation the Inspector advised “it is appropriate for the majority to be in Alnwick where demand is keenest and a wide area served”.

The Core Strategy recognises important links with education, communications, the availability of housing to attract an active workforce and the provision of a wide range of job opportunities to reduce out-commuting and the loss of economically active people, and allocates land for employment development in the period 2004-21. It is important, mid-way through

the period that the Neighbourhood Plan reviews the effectiveness and adequacy of that strategy.

Tourism is recognised for its positive contribution to the economy accounting for some 13% of the former district’s economy. Tourism development such as hotels, health and fitness, restaurants and accommodation are generally directed to the main service centres, including Alnwick. This has the dual effect of protecting sensitive areas such as the coastal AONB, and facilitating sustainability benefits by reducing travel to facilities and supporting the town’s services and shops.

#### **Northumberland Local Plan – Core Strategy (NLPCS)**

The above document, issued for consultation in 2015 still does not carry the full weight of an adopted plan but indicates emerging policy direction at the County level.

With regard to economy the key points relate to the role of Alnwick as a service centre, and how it will meet future needs in respect of economic development, recognising that market towns will be key drivers of economic activity.

The NLPCS relies upon an Employment Land Review (ELR) to inform future needs across the County. 10 Hectares of new employment land for B-class uses is proposed for Alnwick. The ADNP has however reviewed the adequacy of supply, given developments which have taken place or been granted planning permission since the 2009 ELR was undertaken, amounting to around 5 ha. The

ELR also notes the preferred location to be areas adjacent to existing industrial/business parks east of the A1 on the south side of the town.

The NLPCS predicts high tourism growth over the plan period. Pertinent to Alnwick it notes:

- Tourism development: both attractions and accommodation should be encouraged, in the first instance, to be located within or adjacent to the county’s large settlements or service centres;
- Some tourism related developments such as those associated with outdoor pursuits may also be appropriate in countryside locations within the plan area;
- For tourist accommodation proposals on the edge of a settlement, the Council should assess these based on the benefits that would be delivered given the pressing need for more bed spaces, and the effect on the viability and vitality of any affected settlement.

In summary there is support for economic growth through the existing Alnwick LDF, and emerging NLPCS. However the guidance published by Government in the 2012 NPPF provides a much clearer economic growth agenda to which Alnwick as a main service centre must respond. The Plan should therefore create conditions to enable strong economic growth in the future.

## 5.2 Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan

### 5.2.1 The following have been identified as the economic objectives for Alnwick and the Plan

#### Economy

- To act as a main service centre to support the wider rural hinterland and economy
- To offer a range of employment opportunities to assist in retaining a young and vibrant population and to create wealth within the town
- To provide a positive framework for rural diversification
- To meet the needs of potential new investment and new and existing businesses within the town
- To assist and enable growth and diversification of the local economy
- To provide flexibility to meet potential changes in demand through the plan period
- To provide an integrated approach to economic development with other key topic areas of housing, retailing, infrastructure and education.

#### Tourism

- To establish Alnwick as a high quality

and accessible year-round tourism destination

- To improve the range and quality of accommodation and other visitor-related services
- To encourage investment that will enhance the appeal of visitor attractions and activities
- To encourage visitors to spend more time in Alnwick town centre
- To encourage more visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport
- To meet the above objectives in a sustainable and environmentally sensitive way.

## 5.3 Plan Policies and Proposals

### 5.3.1 The level of economic development

Historically Alnwick would have been similar in scale to other large market towns such as Hexham and Morpeth, but growth in Alnwick, particularly in the post war years has been slower, partly due to its location beyond the Tyneside commuter belt. In recent years there has been an increased level of activity, mainly driven by the tourism economy. The Plan to 2031 is to encourage a higher level of growth with the objective of attracting new investment and employment. That would create greater opportunity to attract and

retain young people and to retain a higher proportion of economically active people. For younger people, and a socially mobile population, reducing opportunities in employment, leisure, retailing and services could lead to a reduction in the population in those groups, at a time when rural areas, including Alnwick, are following a national trend of an ageing population. Creating the optimum level of economic growth is therefore seen as beneficial in creating a socially balanced and economically prosperous community. It will also reduce the need for out-commuting for work and maximise opportunity for employment across the community and is sustainable in that respect. The Plan also responds to the needs of business and delivery of diversity of employment in a way which is accessible to all residents and is also intended to be flexible enough to adapt, for example to new business opportunities which could arise through an ageing population profile.

The direction of economic policy at a national and county level is to promote growth, and this view is also reflected in the public consultation responses to the Alnwick & Denwick Plan.

An examination of actual physical development of employment land in Alnwick over the past ten years shows that around 11ha, or 1.1ha per year has been developed. The past 10 years has been a period of mixed economic fortunes and there is no reason to suppose that on average the rate of development will be significantly less over the neighbourhood plan period. Using this as a guide for

the plan period, 18.7ha of land would be required, a little in excess of the level proposed in the NLPCS.

Currently around 6ha of land remains available on the town's main employment sites east of the A1, (see Table EM1), along with some small scale and constrained sites elsewhere. In order to meet the identified needs for the period to 2031 the Neighbourhood Plan therefore allocates around 12ha of additional land. This will enable the town to offer a range of sites to suit different employment needs and flexibility in line with National Guidance and past trends.

**Table EM1 Employment Land Supply**

Site	Area in Hectares
Small scale sites	<b>0.25</b>
Lionheart Enterprise Park Phases 1 and 2	<b>1.75</b>
West Cawledge	<b>2.40</b>
Greensfield Moor	<b>1.60</b>
<b>Total Existing supply</b>	<b>6.00</b>
Proposed additional land at Greensfield/Cawledge	12.00
<b>Total Proposed Employment land</b>	<b>18.00</b>

The ADNP has also been informed by the NCC Employment Land and Premises Demand Study May 2015. An allocation

of 12 hectares is broadly consistent with that report's findings for Alnwick and the emerging draft NLPCS.

Policy E1 seeks to promote strong economic growth, at a sustainable level.

## POLICY E1

### Providing for Economic Growth

Development proposals which support provision of job opportunities and the sustainable development and economic growth of Alnwick as a major service centre will be supported where they can be achieved without significant impact on the environment.

#### 5.3.2 The location of economic development

One of Alnwick's key assets is the natural and historic environment within which it sits. Indeed this is important not just in tourism, but in attracting people to live and invest in the town. Yet North Northumberland continues to struggle to attract new investment – it does not benefit from the level of commercial returns experienced in regional centres or the south of England, and much of the recent activity to the south of the town has required some public funding to assist development and the provision of new infrastructure.

Commercial and employment activity inevitably requires land which is relatively

free from constraints to development. Land is therefore required in locations which are both easy and cost effective to develop and attractive to employers. Visibility and accessibility are important to some users, high levels of service infrastructure such as electricity supply to others. This, along with the sensitivity of the landscape, limits the choice of locations for new employment areas in Alnwick.

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.

Therefore with regard to location, the options of appropriate land allocations for employment use are limited to areas on the south side of the town.

The character of the towns' main employment areas to the east of the A1 is that more mainstream (B2, B8) industrial users have been directed to Lionheart, although other users are also found there. The Aln Valley Railway may also provide new job opportunities. In contrast (B1) office and service type users including tourism services have been built at Cawledge. The plan would encourage this pattern of development to continue in the future providing suitable land principally near to the A1 near to existing employment sites, on the south side of the town.

## **POLICY E2**

### **Location of Economic Growth**

Land to the east of the A1 at Cawledge Business Park and Lionheart Enterprise Park as shown on proposals map will be provided to meet employment needs in the period to 2031 and will be retained thereafter for employment-generating uses.

Land allocated for employment use at Lionheart shall be available for uses within Classes B1, B2 and B8, including trade warehouses. Land allocated for employment use at Cawledge shall be available for Business B1, services and associated employment generating uses.

#### **5.3.3 Existing employment sites**

Most employment sites, particularly more recent sites have been purposefully designed with traditional employment in mind. However the nature of employment has greatly diversified - there are fewer manufacturing uses and many businesses require sales or customer interface and showrooms. One challenge facing some existing employment areas is how they adapt to changing demands and trends, and the need to look not just to present, but future needs.

Generally, it is assumed that existing employment sites will remain in employment use in the plan period and should be supported as such. However the

quality of employment sites varies and there is a need to encourage new investment to maintain their long term future, requiring greater flexibility and adaptability in their use, providing this leads to the retention / creation of employment and reinvestment in the fabric and infrastructure of these areas.

South Road provides a key artery between the town centre and the Willowburn area and major employment sites east of the A1. As the south of the town has expanded economically, the importance of the road has increased, and it is necessary to ensure good connectivity between the two areas. One way of achieving this is to promote improvements to public transport, pavements and cycleways as well as ensuring free flow of traffic. There are also opportunities to attract new investment to sites along South Road some of which are already commercial in nature. Additional employment and commercial activity stimulating economic activity on South Road would strengthen the links between the town centre and the Willowburn area encouraging greater interaction and shared trips.

## **POLICY E3**

### **Future Use of Existing Employment Sites**

Proposals for the re-use or redevelopment of existing main industrial sites will be supported provided that they contribute to the creation and retention of employment and/or re-investment in the built fabric and infrastructure of these employment areas. Housing (C3) and retail (A1) will not be permitted on these sites.

## **POLICY E4**

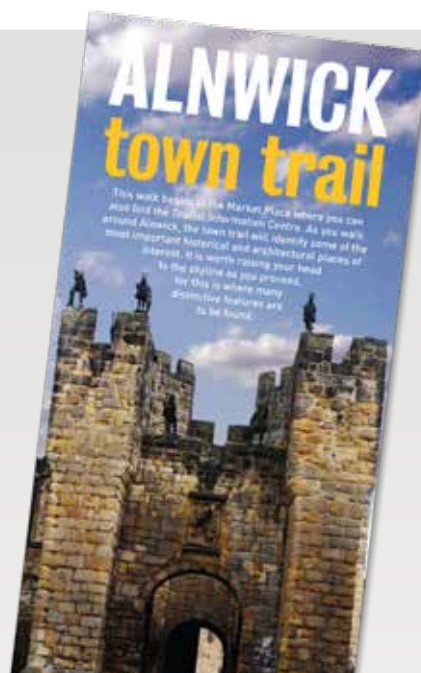
### **Development on South Road**

Development which provides new employment opportunities, commercial and business development (including under policy TC3) along South Road will be supported provided that proposals do not significantly impact upon the retail and commercial role of the town centre and do not have significant detrimental impact on established housing areas in South Road.

### 5.3.4 The role of the town centre in the economy

Alnwick town centre provides the focus for service, retail, catering and leisure employment, and its mix of traditional and modern businesses is critical to maintaining distinctiveness and viability. It is important that the town centre is able, where possible to continue to attract new businesses, not just in retailing. However the capacity for the centre to provide for new development opportunities is relatively limited, 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. Past policies have sought to protect the town centre from non-retail uses but the Plan at section 6 encourages a wider range of uses within the town centre. This would have benefits in stimulating a more vibrant economy and new services.

Given the town centre's physical constraints to expansion and the importance of the centre to the town's economy it is important to identify ways in which it will compete to attract new investment in the future. Competition will arise primarily from other town centres, but also from out of centre developments which the town is likely to attract in the plan period. Maintaining a vibrant and healthy centre can be assisted through both the land use policies, in section 6 and encouraging physical and social changes to the environment.



### 5.3.5 Tourism in the local economy

Alnwick, as well as being situated in an attractive environment has a number of major attractions that will continue to draw tourists for day trips and longer stays. This must be encouraged but also managed so as to achieve a balance that sustains local employment but does not endanger the very features that make the town and hinterland so attractive.

The facilities and infrastructure tourists require struggle to cope at peak times in summer, but visitor numbers fall away sharply from October until Easter. Attractions like the Alnwick Garden, and Barter Books still attract many thousands of off-peak visitors, but trading in the town centre is generally slower in the winter months. There is an increasing trend to

leisure niche shops, often with marginal profitability, and cafes, which, though offering a year round service to residents depend principally on summer tourism.

High street conditions reflect the changed shopping patterns that afflict high streets everywhere, but the benefit of tourism is that many businesses and services survive that would otherwise be unviable. The challenge facing the town is to improve the appeal of the town centre outside the peak tourist season. Efforts must continue to ensure that visitors to the major attractions are encouraged to visit the town centre, by adequate signposting and cooperative working, together with the promotion of the town via Northumberland Tourism and local initiatives such as the Alnwick International Music Festival, Alnwick Food Festival and other events.

The economic impact of tourism applies not only to businesses directly serving visitors, but also to the local supply chain, and secondary impacts (tourism earnings spent on all kinds of goods and services).

The thrust of national and county policy is to encourage tourism, and this is relevant for Alnwick as a key tourist destination in North Northumberland, and it is likely that such demands will continue to grow within the town. However it is equally important that tourism is not promoted to an extent that has negative effects due to over-reliance on one sector for economic growth, or that it drives out other sectors which contribute to the vitality of Alnwick as a market town and service sector. A balance

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## E CAP 1

Promote all year round and all-weather tourist attractions and facilities.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## E CAP 2

Investigate ways to improve tourism facilities.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## E CAP 3

Encourage businesses to maintain high standards of landscape, maintenance and design quality on major approaches into the town.

is therefore needed which protects the most sensitive environments, but allows growth within and adjacent to the town, in line with emerging Core Strategy policy. Initiatives to extend the length of the tourism season could be promoted with little environmental or land use impact upon the town. Encouraging investment in all year round and all weather visitor attractions and facilities should particularly be promoted.

The growth of tourism in Alnwick reflects demand from several key types of travel, including holiday makers requiring commercial accommodation, package travel by coach and tour operators, limited business travel and visits to friends and families. Increasingly there is an emphasis on quality of product and services, environment, and access to heritage and

countryside. Accessibility, particularly for an ageing tourism population is also an important consideration for the future. The plan therefore needs to consider how new accommodation and tourist amenities may be accommodated within the wider policy context including environmental and transportation considerations.

However the type of tourism offer that may materialise is difficult to predict. Rather than allocating specific sites for tourism use, the plan therefore takes a positive approach to tourism development supporting Alnwick as a centre for tourism development and as a year round visitor destination. It proposes a criteria-based policy which would allow tourism development subject to certain tests, such as environmental impact or effects upon the town centre.



## POLICY E5

## Tourism Development

New tourism development in or adjacent to the town, particularly that which will help grow Alnwick and Denwick as a year round tourism destination, will be supported subject to all of the following being met:

- i) Development is located where it will complement business and services in the town and will not adversely impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre;
- ii) Development will contribute positively to the weekend and evening economy of the town;
- iii) The scale and character of development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the natural and historic environment;
- iv) Development can be accommodated within the physical infrastructure of the town;
- v) Development will not have adverse impacts on living conditions in residential areas;
- vi) Development will not have a significantly detrimental impact on the transport network and travel patterns.

### 5.3.6 Planning to facilitate the employment of young people

The problem of attracting and retaining young people in Alnwick is common to other rural areas. Addressing this requires action across a number of areas including providing not only employment, but also further education, training and apprenticeship opportunities, and the range of housing, social, leisure and service facilities which young people aspire to have access to. Alnwick is better placed than many centres to do this, but has limited further education or dedicated training facilities beyond school leaving age. Although the plan can support this in a wider sense, it is not able to provide a funding mechanism to deliver for example youth training or apprenticeship schemes. The plan could encourage the use of local labour and contractors through developer agreements, but only to a limited degree as it is not the role of the planning system to unduly influence the labour market.

In a wider context the plan should support development projects which are particularly attractive and beneficial to retaining and attracting younger people.

A positive policy to facilitate the above objectives is therefore:

#### **POLICY E6**

### **Employment and Training for Young People**

Development proposals that provide opportunities for the training, employment and retention of young people within the plan area will be supported subject to local character and residential amenity being protected from significant harm.



#### **COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL**

### **E CAP 4**

Promote training for traditional skills alongside newly developing skills in a 'Skills Centre'.

## TOWN CENTRE AND RETAIL

## 6.1 Context

### 6.1.1 Introduction

This section considers how the Plan can and should support a locally distinctive retail offering and other town centre facilities, attractive both to residents and to visitors.

Responses to the Alnwick Neighbourhood Plan Consultation stages included some recurrent themes:

- There is an appetite for a wider choice of retail shops particularly those selling comparison goods to serve the needs both of local residents and visitors;
- There is sufficient choice of other services – eg banks/building societies, bars and restaurants;
- The independent retailers in Alnwick were seen to contribute to the town's distinctive character and the Plan should encourage this sector;
- Some out of town centre retail development may be necessary in order to widen choice and to support the role of Alnwick as a service centre in North Northumberland;
- Retail and commercial development towards the south of the town should favour trade outlets (eg building supplies, machinery) rather than consumer retail likely to compete with

the existing town centre offer;

- The relocation of the High School would be expected to have a noticeable impact on town centre retail trade and would change the 'centre of gravity' of Alnwick's local retail economy southwards;
- The fabric of the town centre, its heritage character, its public services (eg bus station, public toilets) and the use of public spaces (eg Market Place) all impact upon the attractiveness of Alnwick as a retail destination;
- Alnwick faces competition both from other Market Towns (eg Morpeth) and large out of town retail centres.

### 6.1.2 Commercial context

Alnwick has effectively two retail zones, the historic town centre (Bondgate, Market Street, Narrowgate, Fenkle Street and the shops around the Bus Station), and out of town retail at Willowburn and the Lionheart Industrial Estate.

Recent retail studies suggest that despite a challenging external environment:

- retailing in Alnwick is performing relatively well in a challenging economic environment and has a lower proportion of empty shops than many other centres;
- the retail mix in the town centre is fair

with a good proportion of independent retailers;

- Alnwick shops are estimated to benefit from just over 50% of the retail spend of local residents although ideally this level of retention could be higher;
- commercial rents reflect Alnwick's 7th position (by value of retail spend) amongst the market towns of Northumberland.

However, some town centre retailers have observed a loss of local trade since the opening of supermarkets (Sainsbury and Lidl) to the south of the town and an increased dependency on the tourist season to sustain town centre trade.

Shops to the north of the town centre (eg Fenkle Street, Narrowgate) historically see a lower footfall and struggle to achieve a viable turnover. The Chamber of Trade has drawn attention to the tendency for retail units falling vacant to be re-let as charity shops, reducing the appeal and diversity of the Town Centre offer.

In 2011, Alnwick town centre was recognised in awards from Google Earth and BBC Countryfile Magazine as a successful centre for independent traders.

The Northumberland County Council Town Centres Study (2011) suggested a need for some increased capacity both in terms of convenience and comparison retail space

(although with the recent approval of the Aldi store on South Road there is now unlikely to be any significant capacity left for convenience floorspace).

### 6.1.3 Spatial context

The town centre of Alnwick is very compact. There is very limited scope for new development and major opportunities would depend on redevelopment of existing buildings and underused areas to their rear. Many of the retail premises are small, with a limited shop-frontage.

The whole of the town centre is a designated conservation area and many of the retail units are located in listed buildings. This has two implications:

- Small units are unlikely to attract some of the larger retail chains to expand into the town centre. The 'independent' character of Alnwick's town centre shops may be a product of circumstance as much as of intention;
- any major expansion of retail and commercial capacity might need to be accommodated on the edge of the town centre, out of town to the south or as part of the further commercial development along the line of South Road.

The upper floors of some of the retail units in the town centre are under-occupied or unoccupied. This underutilised space may have attractions either for retail, commercial use or as housing.

### 6.1.4 Policy context

#### National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF sets great importance on the need to ensure the vitality of our town centres. It requires plans to:

- recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;
- define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations;
- promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer;
- retain and enhance existing markets ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive;
- allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres;
- set policies for the consideration of proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres;
- recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres.

#### Alnwick Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007

Key policies and objectives of the adopted Alnwick Core Strategy in respect of town centres are to:

- reinforce the vitality and viability of the town centres for retailing, leisure and business.
- to reduce the impact of traffic and improve accessibility and
- to enhance the quality of the environment and character of the centres.

Alnwick is identified as the location for major town centre type developments including up to 6000 square metres of comparison retail floorspace over the plan period.

The emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy also identifies Alnwick as a main town centre and as such one expected to be the focus of retail development.

The NLPCS defines a town centre which is synonymous with that proposed in the ADNP and a primary shopping area within which the ADNP's primary shopping frontages will operate. The definition of the town centre is important for the successful planning of its future.

## 6.2 Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan

The objectives for the Plan in respect of Town Centre and Retail are:

- to provide a context which supports variety and a distinctive retail choice encouraging both local residents and seasonal visitors to shop in Alnwick;

- to provide a context which supports the range of commercial and trade services necessary to ensure that Alnwick remains and grows as a service centre in the north of the county;
- to preserve and enhance the historic town centre and to ensure sympathetic development of the retail and service premises located there;
- to encourage the viability and growth of the independent retailers in the town;
- to meet the retail needs and aspirations of the town as its population grows and as new areas are designated for housing development or as employment land;
- to provide a context which supports the growth of the tourism industry locally and to respond to the retail needs of visitors.

The over-arching objective is to ensure the Plan's retail strategy supports and is appropriately integrated with the objectives of other key topic areas such as economy and employment, tourism, transport, community facilities and housing.

## 6.3 Plan Policies, Proposals and Actions

### 6.3.1 Town Centre

The town centre is shaped by the geography of the old medieval town. Using principal routes, levels of footfall and the patterns of land use that characterise a

town centre, the area of the centre has been defined on the Proposals Map and will form the basis for the operation of a number of policies. This area comprises some 180 retail units, mostly small and many occupied by independent retailers. There are some national chains occupying units in Bondgate Within. There are three supermarkets in the town centre.

The town centre also accommodates a number of service retail providers (banks, building societies, estate agents) and cafes, pubs, restaurants and bars. There are several community buildings serving the town centre including the Northumberland Hall, the Town Hall and the Fenkle Street Centre.

Respondents to the consultation expressed overall satisfaction with the mix of services and cafés, pubs and bars in the town centre. They expressed a wish to see more variety in the retail offering and to see continued encouragement for independent retailers trading in the Town.

Retailers themselves have expressed concerns about the number of empty shops in the town centre. Although the percentage of empty shop units (approximately 8% - January 2014 ) is lower than many other towns, it has risen by approximately 50% since the start of the retail recession, and there is a particularly high turnover in some retail locations such as Fenkle Street and Narrowgate.

Street parking, disabled access, the quality of pavement services and the 'legibility' of the town centre have all been issues raised during the consultation.

The town centre retail trade is susceptible to erosion by development and expansion of out of town centre retail outlets – especially large supermarkets. The town centre has therefore been defined so that the sequential approach to considering town centre type developments as set out in the NPPF and the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy can be implemented.

Within the town centre there is a core area in which retail use is the predominant activity at street level and which it is important to maintain if the vitality and viability of the town centre as a shopping area is not to be lost. Historically in previous plans a Primary Shopping Area within which the main focus is on retail use has been defined as an area bounded by the rear boundaries of the retail plots. However this can have the effect of limiting the scope for redevelopment of say the rear section of a unit (eg for office or residential use). Accordingly the Neighbourhood Plan proposes to instead identify Primary Shopping Frontages. These have been defined on the Proposals Map according to where there are concentrations of retail units which the Plan wishes to see retained.

Other historic town centres have successfully accommodated retail and commercial expansion by supporting development into the backland behind the Primary Shop Frontages. In Alnwick this may prove viable for instance between Bondgate Within and Greenwell Road, between Fenkle Street and Dispensary Street, or to the rear of other frontages facing Market Street or the Market Place. It is proposed that the

Plan should encourage such proposals as a strategy to make available more retail and commercial space within the town centre.

The town centre also encompasses a significant number of homes, usually situated above or to the rear of shop premises. In considering the mix of uses within the town centre and the economic viability of individual retail units, the

contribution of living space to the sustainability of the town centre should not be overlooked.

The plan will therefore preserve and enhance the quality, choice and vibrancy of Alnwick's Primary Shopping Frontages and support retail, commercial, leisure and residential development within the town centre where it can be justified.

## POLICY TCR1

### Primary Shopping Frontages

Within the area defined on the Proposals Map as Primary Shopping Frontages the predominant use at ground floor level will remain A1 use.

In order to maintain a viable balance between retail shops, service providers, and food and hospitality in the town centre, and to contribute to the weekend and evening economy beyond normal daytime opening hours, applications for change of use from retail within the Primary Shopping Frontages will be supported where the proposed use would:

- maintain or contribute to high pedestrian footfall;
- retain active frontages; and
- maintain the primacy of the area's shopping activity.

## POLICY TCR2

### Development Opportunities to Support Primary Shopping Frontages

In order to extend the opportunities to create a vibrant town centre, applications will be supported for the development or redevelopment of land and buildings to the rear of and above existing Primary Shopping Frontages for retail, commercial, leisure or residential use where the proposed development would:

- support the commercial viability of the frontage for retail use;
- respect the historic character of the town centre and its designation as a conservation area;
- follow the design principles in HD7.

### 6.3.2 Out of Town Centre retail

Alnwick already has two retail locations – the historic town centre and retail sites at Willowburn and Lionheart Industrial Estate.

If Alnwick is:

- to offer the wider choice of retail (especially comparison retail – clothing, household white goods) sought by respondents to the Issues and Options stage questionnaire
- to respond to a growing population and new housing in the Town
- to create jobs and develop the economy of the Town as a service centre

it may need to accommodate some further retail development out of the town centre if no further town centre development opportunities are forthcoming due to space considerations.

It will be important for the health of the local economy that such development



#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### TC CAP 1

To foster an integrated approach to the stewardship and development of Town Centre assets

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

TC CAP 2

Mitigate the impact of the proposed High School relocation on the town centre economy and retail trade.

genuinely represents a net gain in choice, jobs and trade, and does not simply displace trading activity, vitality and employment currently provided for in the town centre.

As noted in the Economy section of this Plan there is already a natural 'commercial corridor' along South Road linking the town centre with the retail outlets adjacent to the A1. That corridor, and the adjacent industrial estates already accommodate a number of trade retail and trade service outlets (building supplies, car and machinery showrooms, etc).

A number of respondents to the consultation expressed the view that further expansion of trade retail rather than consumer retail would be preferred along this corridor.

It has also been suggested that some of the land – eg on the Willowburn Industrial Estate – is relatively under-developed and that redevelopment and in-fill should be preferred to designated green field land for retail development.

Development that adds choice and capacity to Alnwick's retail offer where this cannot fully be satisfied within the town centre is controlled by policy TCR3 as follows:

**POLICY**  
**TCR3** **Out of Centre Retail**

**Comparison A1 retail development outside the town centre along a corridor following South Road and linking the town centre and Willowburn will be supported provided that :**

- there are no suitable town centre or edge of centre sites;
- the projected economic benefits of the scheme can be achieved without negative impact on town centre vitality and the viability of town centre trade;
- the scheme will enhance retail choice and quality within the town as a whole.

**All out of town centre A1 retail development proposals will be required to make proposals about how they will incorporate provision for appropriate signage, information and/or transport improvements between the out of centre site and the town centre.**

**Trade retail development outside the town centre will be supported on industrial estates and business parks linking to South Road where it is consistent with the Plan's designation of land for employment purposes, where there is good access and parking available and where the nature of the retailing is the sale of bulky goods only.**

**Proposals for more than 1000m2 net retail floorspace will be subject to sequential and retail impact testing.**

**6.3.3 Convenience retail and new housing/school developments**

As noted above when plans for the relocation of the High School come to fruition, this will have a material impact upon term-time retail trade in the town centre. As new land is developed for housing, consideration will need to be given to those new residents' access to convenience retail outlets.

Thus the retail implications of proposed developments need to be planned for and appropriate provision made in proposals.

In relation to the new school site, consideration needs to be given as to whether there are suitable adjacent retail outlets to meet the needs of both pupils and staff.

In relation to the new housing development consideration should be given as to whether plans should include provision of local convenience retail units as part of the development.

#### 6.3.4 Alnwick Market Place

Alnwick is fortunate to have a historic Market Place situated at the heart of the town but whilst most of Alnwick's streets, when busy with vehicles and pedestrians, have an innate vitality, this vitality is missing in the Market Place. Certainly the Market Place is used for regular street markets and seasonal festivals (Music Festival, Food Festival, Christmas Lights). However, it is only in use in this formal way for less than a third of the year. In the winter time its formal use is very limited. It is rarely in use on Sundays, even during the tourism season.

The Market Place encompasses two historic public buildings: the Northumberland Hall and Town Hall which could be vibrant buildings but which lie unused for much of the week. On non-market days, therefore the square lacks life and bustle during the day and in the evening it has few lighted shop fronts to add excitement and interest.

The recent uncontrolled use of the Market Place as a temporary car park has reduced the possibility of the facility being enjoyed by residents or visitors. The Market Place is designated as a highway and in order to control the worst impacts of this uncontrolled parking it is now regulated to provide 12 parking bays.

Notwithstanding these current issues the Market Place offers the potential to become a natural focal point for commerce, for entertainment, for festivals and as a place to meet. Achieving this would be fully in accordance with the NPPF which requires

planning policy to : *"Retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive"*. It would also be in line with the Mary Portas report on town centres, which sees vibrant markets as part of the solution to the decline of our town centres.

#### The way ahead

Responses to the Plan's various consultations have made frequent reference to the Market Place and its public buildings as under-used assets of the Town. It was felt by many that the car parking in the Market Place detracted from the character of the Town. The wish was expressed for more markets, more variety of produce on sale and more festivals and events to be staged in the Market Place.

The Plan suggests that the future use of the Market Place should not be viewed in isolation, but should be considered within the context of aspirations for the development of the Town's community spaces and community buildings, the conservation of its heritage assets, the development of its tourism industry, the economic sustainability of town centre businesses and the creation of areas of pedestrian priority within the town. There is also a continuing need for controlled vehicular access to service the needs of the neighbouring businesses and homes and allow a controlled level of parking at times when the Market Place is not in use.

Refreshing the Market Place's traditional role, preserving the intended character and



#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### TC CAP 3

To develop a whole year strategy for the formal and informal use of the Market Place and its surrounding assets in line with the findings of this Plan, including as appropriate parking arrangements.

regaining the space for pedestrian, market and entertainment use would support the concept of a community hub, benefiting Alnwick, Denwick and surrounding village residents and visitors alike.

As an open space, the Market Place has much to offer in the summer months as:

- a 'play space' - where visitors and townsfolk can enjoy festivals, events, street musicians etc;
- a 'heritage' site – the chance to admire the Market Cross, historic buildings and Clock Tower;
- a characterful 'retail' destination - with regular markets selling local produce; and
- a place to meet, eat and drink with friends in pavement cafes.

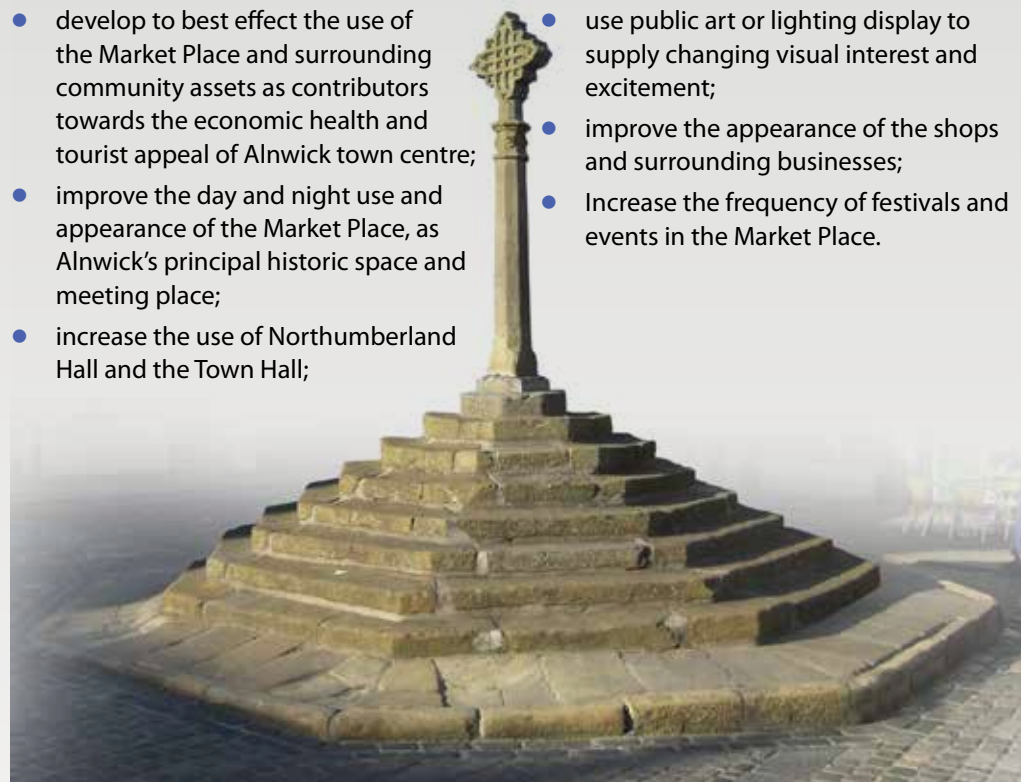
It must also be recognised however that as an uncovered open space, in the winter months:

- there is insufficient footfall to attract many market traders;
- it is too cold to browse, to 'dwell' or to spectate.

At these times the need is for the surrounding buildings including the Town Hall, Northumberland Hall and Market Place shops and cafes to offer the activity, vitality and shelter.

The Plan therefore concludes that the Town needs a strategy for the formal and informal use of the Market Place and its surrounding assets which reflects its changing potential across the seasons of the year which will:

- develop to best effect the use of the Market Place and surrounding community assets as contributors towards the economic health and tourist appeal of Alnwick town centre;
- improve the day and night use and appearance of the Market Place, as Alnwick's principal historic space and meeting place;
- increase the use of Northumberland Hall and the Town Hall;
- use public art or lighting display to supply changing visual interest and excitement;
- improve the appearance of the shops and surrounding businesses;
- Increase the frequency of festivals and events in the Market Place.



### POLICY TCR4

## Market Place

Proposals which improve the functionality, viability and vitality of Alnwick Market Place and its frontage buildings throughout the year, including new uses, renovation and refurbishment and associated lighting schemes and signage will be supported where they are designed to further the following principles:

- the primary uses of the Market Place for shops and markets, food and drink outlets, entertainment, community events, informal meeting and commercial business is developed and strengthened; and
- the historic character and significance of the Market Place, Northumberland Hall and Town Hall and other frontage buildings is respected and is preserved and enhanced.

## 7.1 Context

### 7.1.1 Introduction

Alnwick and Denwick play an important role as a centre for community facilities and services to a large hinterland population of around 30,000 people. Achieving a sustainable Alnwick and Denwick for the future means it is important that existing service levels are maintained and new services are encouraged for the expected growth of population.

### 7.1.2 The strategic policy context

The NPPF attaches high importance to plans promoting interaction within communities through mixed use development, in safe and accessible environments and positive planning of

community facilities as an integrated part of development, as well as protecting against loss of services.

To this end the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy protects against loss of key services – supports new services and facilities and encourages development to contribute to the provision of community facilities through developer contributions.

Alnwick District LDF Core Strategy seeks to secure the provision of new and improved social and community services and the infrastructure to facilitate them. The release of land for development will be dependent on there being sufficient capacity in existing services to meet the additional requirements of the development.

At policy S18 it seeks to secure the provision of new and improved social and community services to facilitate the development strategy and meet the needs of all groups within the community.

In relation to school sites redevelopment is permissible under policy S19 where replacement sites exist and where the redevelopment meets community needs. New or restructured school sites should allow for dual use of facilities.

## 7.2 Objective

The key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan in respect of community facilities is that:

**By 2031, the people of Alnwick and Denwick will have access to high quality education provision and community facilities that meet their expectations and needs.**

## 7.3 Policies and Proposals

### 7.3.1 Community buildings

There are a wide variety of community buildings in Alnwick & Denwick available for use by the community, which are owned, managed and run by different organisations, including local churches. The quality of some community buildings is poor in terms of physical accessibility, energy efficiency, comfort and general repair and maintenance. In particular, the Northumberland Hall, established for public benefit, is underused and in need of substantial investment. This building is the key to successful regeneration of the Market Place.

*(See also policy TCR4)*



#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### CF CAP 1

Establish a register of Assets of Community Value including those in Policy CF1.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### CF CAP 2

Carry out an audit of existing play areas and identify new requirements.

Despite their mixed condition a number of key buildings have been selected for protection under policy CF1 due to their location and accessibility to all sections of the community and the valuable role they play within Alnwick and Denwick.

## POLICY CF1

### Protecting Key Community Facilities

The following community buildings will be protected and developed as key community facilities and their redevelopment for other uses will be refused unless appropriate alternative provision is made or it can be demonstrated, further to 12 months proactive marketing, that the use is no longer viable:

- Alnwick Community Centre
- Willowburn Sport and Leisure Centre
- Lindisfarne Adult Education Centre and Lindisfarne Sports Centre
- Alnwick Library
- The Centre, Fenkle Street
- Northumberland Hall
- Alnwick Town Hall
- Denwick Village Hall
- Alnwick Playhouse
- Bailiffgate Museum
- Mechanics' Institute

### 7.3.2 Sports and recreation facilities

Alnwick is the centre for a wide range of sporting and recreation facilities which serve the town and the wider area. Many of these sports have club facilities based to the south of Alnwick. These include Alnwick Rugby Football Club, Alnwick Cricket Club, Alnwick Castle Golf Club and Alnwick Town Football Club, all these clubs are thriving and have strong adult and junior sections.

The major provider of indoor sports in the area is the Willowburn Sports and Leisure Centre, which was built in 2003. This is a quality venue with high levels of user satisfaction. The centre is the base for the local swimming clubs and also the Alnwick Harriers as they have no other permanent base. The indoor facilities at Willowburn are supplemented by the Lindisfarne Sports Centre which is part of the Lindisfarne Middle School complex. In other parts of the town there are a number of sports clubs including Boxing, Bowls, Squash and Tennis.

Whilst there is a good range of outdoor sports on offer for residents and visitors, many of the town's existing outdoor sports pitches or courts are of poor quality and some have inadequate changing facilities. There are no playing facilities for hockey in Alnwick.

The principal means by which this issue is to be addressed in the plan area is by the provision of improved sports facilities at Greensfield through a partnership of sports clubs. The area proposed for these facilities which has had the benefit of a previous planning permission (ref 11/03237/FUL)

is within an area of change for the town adjoining new housing and new school site and in order to safeguard the provision the site is designated on the Proposals Map.

There are seven existing children's play areas in the town, the most modern of which is at Swansfield Park. Some of the older play areas particularly to the south of Alnwick, consist of only one or two pieces of equipment and need to be replaced or upgraded. The process of future housing development and developer contributions from these will be the principal means by which these are upgraded and new sites provided. To facilitate this, the Town Council will carry out an audit of current and expected needs.

## POLICY CF2

### Outdoor Sports and Leisure

Existing sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and children's play areas will be protected from loss to development unless the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision, in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location; or the development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

## POLICY CF3

### Greensfield Playing Pitches

The site for the proposed improvement of outdoor playing pitch and changing facilities at Greensfield is allocated on the Proposals Map for outdoor sports use. Where the development of the school site may require the alteration or relocation of the allocated site, equivalent alternative land at Greensfield will be required to be safeguarded as part of any school development.



#### 7.3.3 Education

Access to first class educational facilities is an aspiration of every community. Although some of this chapter necessarily focuses on statutory provision for youngsters between the ages of five to sixteen or eighteen it will also consider the broader philosophy of education from cradle to grave.

When we look at education in its widest sense there are a multiplicity of agencies throughout the town providing educational opportunities and resources from pre – school children to adults of all ages.

Provision of education in the future in Alnwick will, to an extent, depend on Central Government and Local Authority policies.

Notwithstanding the above, the scope of this plan should include choices available in relation to educational change in the town and the implications arising from specific proposals. The future use and development of vacated school sites, should any arise, must be addressed.

#### Provision of Quality Statutory Education Facilities.

Quality educational provision is vital for residents of the town. It is an important factor for employers wishing to relocate to the town and wanting to attract an appropriate workforce. If the population of the town is to grow, adequate educational provision is essential and schools must have the capacity to accept increased numbers and meet rising parental expectations.

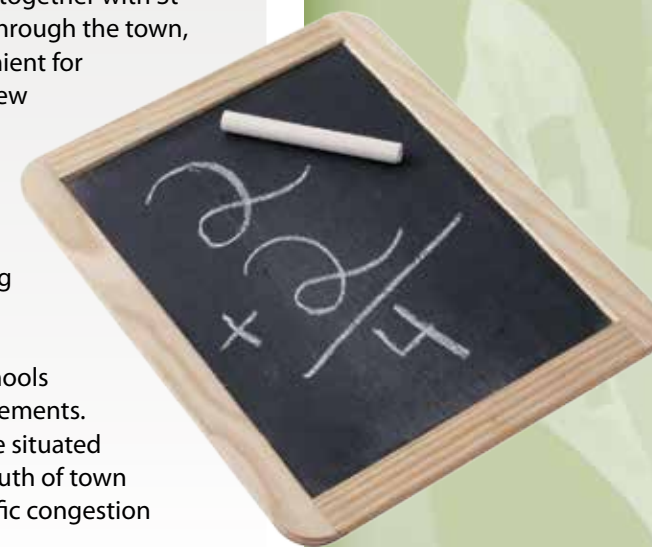
In September 2016, the Duchess's

Community High School will relocate to a new site at Greensfield, on the southern edge of the town adjoining the area proposed for outdoor sports pitches. The construction started on site in February 2015. The school's existing Bailiffgate building is in Northumberland Estates' ownership and the Howling Lane site is owned by Northumberland County Council. Decisions about the development of these sites once the High School relocates are important aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan.

In 2016, a decision was taken to move from a three-tier education system to a two-tier system. The Neighbourhood Plan must be sufficiently flexible to reflect any future decisions taken on school sites.

A two-tier education structure will result in Swansfield Park and St. Michael's C of E. First Schools becoming 5-11 Primary Schools. These schools, together with St Paul's, are well spaced through the town, an arrangement convenient for school travel and with few disadvantages save some local traffic congestion.

With the Primary Schools accommodating Year 5 and Year 6 pupils from 2017 onwards, the two Alnwick Middle Schools will be surplus to requirements. Both Middle Schools are situated close together in the south of town in residential areas. Traffic congestion



caused by large numbers of school coaches on narrow approach roads is a constant problem, together with associated road safety concerns for pupils.

The Lindisfarne site is owned by the County Council. Part of the building forms the centre and base for Community Education and adult education services and should remain the central hub for that activity within the town. If some of the facilities currently used by the Middle School were of value to enhance Community Education provision then they should be retained and made available for that purpose. The remainder of the built area and some of the playing field area would be available for housing redevelopment to fund expansion of Greensfield into a multi-age learning campus but some of the green space should be retained for recreational purposes.

The site of the Duke's Middle School is the property of Northumberland Estates. The building is listed and the redevelopment of it would be restricted although there is some scope for sensitive new development on the east side of the site. The playing field area, or at least a large part of it, should however remain an open greenfield recreational space and as it adjoins Swansfield Park there is the opportunity for it to become part of an extended park.

Accordingly the following policies will apply:



#### **POLICY CF4**

### **Developing Greensfield for Education and Recreation**

The site of the new high school at Greensfield, its access and the land for outdoor playing fields will be allocated for educational and community use.

The site should be designed in a way that does not preclude the provision of a full 11-18 education facility in the future.

#### **POLICY CF5**

### **Future Development of the Middle Schools**

When Lindisfarne and Duke's Middle Schools vacate their present sites, the land is allocated for a mix of residential use, community education, open space and recreational uses.

Any proposals for the conversion, extension or alteration of the Duke's School shall respect the architectural and historic character of the listed building and its setting.

On the Lindisfarne site the facilities for community education and community sports should be retained and upgraded for ongoing community use or alternative equivalent or greater provision made within the site. Applications for the development of each of the sites should be accompanied by a master plan and/or a development brief that has emerged further to community engagement and consultation. Neither site will be exclusively developed for residential use. (See also policy ENV3.)

### Sporting and recreational facilities.

The building of a new High School brings with it the provision of playing fields and other sporting amenities and it is essential that they are made available for community as well as school use. Had the former policy of the Local Authority still existed then indoor school facilities could have had a shared use but that will no longer be the case. The Willowburn Sports and Leisure Centre will make some provision to address this shortfall.

## POLICY CF6

### Dual Use of Greensfield Facilities

Dual use of facilities at the new school campus and adjoining fields by the school and the community will be supported.

### Community education

Under this umbrella term, all other aspects of educational provision in the widest sense of the word will be considered. Besides adult education and recreation and provision for pre-school children, all other forms of participation in a wide range of activities have to be accommodated. Very little of this will take place in the new High School at the south end of the town as the former County Council policy of basing adult education on High School sites has been abandoned and as a consequence

a myriad of centres have developed in numerous locations throughout the town.

#### Pre-School education.

Nursery education is provided at a number of locations including the Apple Blossom Day Nursery in Bailiffgate. There is a Surestart Children's Centre next to St. Michael's C of E First School. The Castle Club provides 24 places for children up to the age of eleven at the end of school day from 3.00 to 6.00pm. These facilities are vital in enabling the parents of young children to remain in employment and it is likely that there will be an increasing demand for such provision at the southern end of the town, whether private or state run.

#### Adult education.

Provision for adults to continue Further Education is essential whether it comes immediately following statutory education, at various stages through working life or in retirement.

It is organised by N.C.C. Adult Learning Service and is based at the Lindisfarne Centre. Irrespective of the future of Lindisfarne Middle School it is desirable that it is retained at this centrally located venue and the service could be enhanced if some current Middle School facilities became available through reorganisation.

Provision includes courses leading to examination qualifications, structured courses without an examination and informal self-determined classes.

#### Other education.

In addition to the above there is an Adult Learning Centre on Howling Lane which provides a day service for adults with learning disabilities, Barndale House School, a Special School for pupils between the ages of 3 and 19, and the University of the 3rd Age. These are essential facilities for the town and should be preserved and protected in their current locations.

### 7.3.4 Youth facilities

Responses to the questionnaire raised the issue of a lack of facilities for young people in Alnwick leading to problems at hotspots such as the bus station.

In the Alnwick area there are various clubs and activities aimed at young people operating from different venues, some of which are run by volunteers and others with paid staff. The main venues are the Duchess's Community High School, Gallery Youth, Alnwick Playhouse and the Alnwick Community Centre. The latter serves a valuable purpose to young people in a variety of ways. For youngsters living out of the town but attending the Duchess's High School it offers a safe haven for times between the end of the school day and the departure of buses to the wider catchment area. It provides a place in which homework can be done when a suitable facility is not available in the pupil's home.

The removal of the High School will obviously make some difficulties for the Centre in continuing these provisions. However, it is important that Gallery Youth

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### CF CAP 3

Maintain and improve facilities for all age learning and special needs.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## CF CAP 4

Encourage improved facilities for young people.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## CF CAP 5

Encourage improved facilities for the elderly.

continues in its central location to enable it to fulfil one of its principal functions. It offers housing support for homeless young people up to the age of 25 and for those vulnerable young people who are at risk of becoming homeless. It is a centre of advice for young people and plays an important part in welfare support.

There is substantial organised activity at sports clubs running football, cricket and rugby, and recently a boxing club has become successfully established. Additionally, well supported military cadets have a long history in Alnwick and have good facilities. Conversely other uniformed organisations in the shape of Scouts / Guides etc are not well provided for in terms of facilities and accommodation. Long standing proposals for an outdoor cycle



cross track need to be moved forward, given the availability of dedicated land and the site north of Alnmouth Road is allocated on the Proposals Map.

### 7.3.5 Facilities for older people

Services for older people in Alnwick and Denwick will be put under considerable pressure during the plan period with Alnwick continuing to attract elderly people to retire here and the natural ageing of the population. Those over 80 are predicted to increase by over 100% in the period up to 2031 and those over 65 by 50%. Accordingly:

Responses to the consultation and discussion with Age UK Northumberland show that a wide range of services are provided for older people in Alnwick & Denwick. If the objective at 7.2 above is to be met the following services will have to be developed in Alnwick:

- Alnwick to become a Dementia Friendly Community;
- Shopmobility: free hire of wheelchairs and motorised wheelchairs;
- Digital inclusion including faster broadband for older members of the community;
- A greater focus on social prescribing via GP referrals into community services to improve the preventative agenda for older people;
- Increased support in commissioning of community services supporting older people;

- Effective pathways for discharge from hospital;
- Access to good quality advice & advocacy particularly for welfare benefits, housing, social & community care, debt, financial management, energy efficiency;
- Continued access to food banks;
- Continuing free handyperson service for older people for small tasks at home;
- Free gardening service for older people;
- Landshare type scheme for older people to find younger people to tend their gardens;
- Homeshare type schemes.

## POLICY CF7

### Facilities for Older People

Favourable consideration will be given to the development of residential accommodation or facilities for vulnerable older people provided the following principles are met:

- development is well designed to meet the needs of older people;
- accommodation and facilities are located in areas with good accessibility to services and public transport.

### 7.3.6 Health facilities

Alnwick plays an important role in providing health facilities over a wide area including outpatients, a small minor injuries unit and maternity unit as well as 2 major general practices and related services.

Although health services are in transition in Northumberland with the development of the new Accident and Emergency Hospital at Cramlington, the services in Alnwick have the advantage that they are co-located and centrally placed and should be retained.

### 7.3.7 Public toilets

Public toilets not only provide a facility for residents of Alnwick but are also an important facility for tourism.

The public toilets in both The Shambles and Greenwell Road have been highlighted in responses to the consultation as being of very poor quality. Some basic upgrade works were undertaken to the facilities at the Shambles in 2014.

The lack of public toilets near to the bus station is an issue for people arriving / departing Alnwick by bus.

## POLICY CF8

### Public Toilet Facilities

The development of new public toilet facilities and/or the improvement of existing facilities, provided in partnership with the Town Council and developers will be supported.

### 7.3.8 Community communication and awareness

A key concern in the community during the issues and options consultation was the need to establish better means of communication and raising awareness amongst the community. The Community Action Proposal CF CAP 7 (right) is proposed to address this.

### 7.3.9 Further land provision for Alnwick Cemetery

The proportion of people choosing to be buried rather than cremated in Northumberland appears to be around 40-50%, higher than in other more densely-

populated parts of the United Kingdom.

50-60 burials take place in Alnwick each year. Alnwick's town cemetery is owned and administered by Alnwick Town Council, with input and financial support from Denwick Parish Council. A new cemetery area adjoining the existing cemetery is in the process of development, and is likely to begin use during 2016. This area is likely to reach full capacity before 2031.

The scope to re-use existing plots for which the lease has expired is legally very restricted. Remains of Alnwick and Denwick residents usually cannot be interred in neighbouring parish and town council cemeteries without payment of a significant surcharge, typically doubling the cost. There are no County Council-managed cemeteries in the plan area – the nearest is in South Broomhill, more than 12 miles away. Other county, town and parish cemeteries are likely to become full before 2031, which could limit burial opportunities further. The closest crematorium serving the plan area is at Cowpen near Blyth, 26 miles away.

There is therefore likely to be a demonstrable need for more burial space serving the plan area before 2031.

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### CF CAP 6

Improve the standards of public toilet provision.

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### CF CAP 7

Improve community consultation and provision of information.

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### CF CAP 8

Identify and develop new burial grounds and associated facilities in the plan area.



## TRANSPORT

8.1  
Context

## 8.1.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the transport policies and associated proposals that have been developed to reflect the needs and aspirations of the people in the community when set within the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The policies and proposals have been derived from the community engagement work carried out to date, together with published information and informal discussion.

Further proposals for action are included in the associated Community Action Plan, to help ensure that transport can fulfil its role of facilitating the cohesion, health and well-being of the community of Alnwick and Denwick.

Overall the developments and changes of use proposed are expected to deliver a significant improvement in the efficacy and sustainability of transport provision in the plan area and its links to the world beyond.



## 8.1.2 The role of transport in the Plan area

In Alnwick and Denwick, as in many other areas, we use travel and transport in a wide variety of ways. Moreover, we don't always associate the services from which we benefit or the activities in which we engage with the transport provision that makes them possible. Our use of transport is often indirect, which serves to underline the fact that travel and transport more often facilitate other activities and services than form an activity justified in its own right. Some of the more obvious ways we use travel and transport are to:

Go Shopping  
Make visits away  
Access work  
Move goods & post  
Pursue trades & services  
Dispose of waste  
Provide visitor access  
Do business  
Expand horizons  
Pursue leisure  
Respond to emergencies  
Promote social cohesion  
activities  
Reduce rural isolation

However there is no one mode of travel that can deliver all our objectives. Moreover, the disadvantages of a given mode may be greater than the advantages in some respects and so we have to make judgements about the overall provision that will achieve the greatest benefit for

the community whilst at the same time protecting the interests and needs of minorities. Indeed, information technology has already begun to reduce the need to travel and good planning can reduce the need further whilst at the same time increasing the overall quality of life for the community and its members.

Different modes of transport often present conflicts with each other, leading to accidents causing death and injury, inefficiency, ill health through polluting emissions, accelerated climate change through exhaust emissions, inappropriate use of green spaces and damage to the townscape, all of which means that compromises have to be reached to deliver the appropriate transport and travel network for the Plan area.

In reaching the best possible compromise, extensive consideration of the current and potential infrastructure networks and constructive interaction between them is essential.

The relevant infrastructure for this purpose consists primarily of:

Cycle lanes Bus station  
Bus stops Car parks  
Bridleways Taxi rank Footpaths  
Broadband Railway  
Cycle tracks station Roads  
Pipes & cables

Pipes and cables are included, not only because they deliver many commodities to many places but also because they often are routed along existing roads and pavements. Any need for maintenance, repair, replacement or enhancement consequently disrupts the normal use. Similarly, in their respective ways all the infrastructure networks require cleaning, maintenance, enhancement and often, special treatment to manage winter weather and increasingly, local flash flooding.

### 8.1.3 Policy context

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The overarching planning policy context for Transport is the NPPF. Specific requirements with direct relevance to Transport include:

- Support the transition to a low carbon future, contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution, make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable;
- Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel;

- Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.

The following clause in the Framework is of particular relevance to this Transport chapter:

*“Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to:*

- *accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies;*
- *give priority to pedestrians and cyclists, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;*
- *create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between motor vehicles and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones;*
- *incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles; and*
- *consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport”.*

The need for transport is often an indirect consequence of other actions and developments. Further NPPF clauses of relevance to the provision and improvement of transport facilities in the Plan area consequently include:

- All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment;
- Planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities;
- Local planning authorities should identify and protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice.

The requirements of the NPPF give rise to general planning principles relevant to travel and transport that have been adopted for the Neighbourhood Plan in policy SD1.

#### Alnwick District Local Development Framework Core Strategy

The adopted Core Strategy sets out a series of sustainable accessibility principles and policy S11 requires all development to be located in accordance with these principles to maximise accessibility and minimise impacts from travel.

#### Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy (NLPCS)

Nationally and across the North East Region, road traffic levels have remained essentially constant or reduced somewhat over the last decade. Urban road traffic remains below the level a decade ago whilst rural road traffic remains less than in 2007.

It is in this context that the NLPCS and Neighbourhood Plan are being developed to be mutually supportive within the requirements of the NPPF. Currently, the emerging NLPCS:

- Supports the minimising of the overall need for journeys whilst promoting investment in infrastructure for sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport;
- Requires all major development proposals to be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan;
- Safeguards the route and alignment of disused railway lines, together with land for associated stations, whilst supporting proposals for the use of such routes for walking and cycling in the meantime;
- Defines various mitigation measures and positive sustainable transport contributions to be accommodated by developments that impact on the road network;
- Supports the improvement of the County's strategic highway routes.

## 8.2 Objectives

The overall aim for transport in Alnwick and Denwick is:

To improve the facilities for the movement of people, goods and services within Alnwick and Denwick. To enhance the

pedestrian experience and to improve the management of motor vehicle access throughout the Plan area.

The objectives for transport in Alnwick and Denwick are:

- To improve access to homes, work and facilities for people and goods;
- To contribute to the enhancement of the viability and vitality of Alnwick town centre for residents and visitors;
- To link residential, commercial, recreational and functional parts of the Plan area;
- To improve conditions for walking, cycling, wheelchair and buggy users;
- To improve the provision of public transport and supporting facilities;
- To increase the priority given to pedestrians and cyclists and reduce car dependence;
- To contribute to the development of a sustainable future for the Plan area.



## 8.3 Policies and Proposals

### 8.3.1 Walking

#### Approach

Whilst the health benefits of simple daily exercise are well recognised, the provision for walking is often of inadequate quality in Alnwick and Denwick. Priority for pedestrians is insufficient, crossing places too often dangerous and motor vehicles move too fast in the residential areas for the streets to be considered safe, shared space. Traffic noise, pollution and intrusive signage all reduce the quality of the public realm. Pavement surfaces are too often damaged and hazardous, pavements are too often blocked and dropped kerb facilities too often obstructed by illegally or insensitively parked motor vehicles. The close proximity of moving vehicles to shoppers makes the shopping and recreational experience in the centre of Alnwick uncomfortable and puts at risk, the enjoyment of the historic environment of the town centre and its associated conservation area.

Doing nothing would inevitably lead to a progressive decline in the quality of facilities available in Alnwick and Denwick and from that to a degradation of the Plan area as a place to live, work and visit.

Within the more general guidance, the National Planning Policy Framework requires that:

- Where practical, particularly within



large-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties;

- Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users.

Developing safe and attractive opportunities to walk within the Plan area will fit the Framework, will help to improve the vitality of the town, to enhance the ability to appreciate the fine historic environment and to benefit the health & quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

## POLICY TRA1

### Walking

Proposals for development will be required to have safe and convenient pedestrian access. The enhancement of provision for walking including public rights of way will be supported.

### 8.3.2 Cycling

#### Approach

As with walking the provision for cycling is often of inadequate quality in Alnwick and Denwick. Provision for cycle training and testing is of limited availability and priority for cyclists on existing roads is insufficient. Suitable routes linking the main facilities are inadequately developed and signed.

Doing nothing would continue the effective exclusion of cycling as a useful way of getting around in the Plan area, increasing unnecessarily the reliance on car travel for many journeys.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### TRA CAP 1 Walking

Conflicting movements between pedestrians and vehicles throughout the town will be reduced.

Pedestrian priority will be enhanced.

Convenient walking routes and corridors will be protected and new routes developed.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## TRA CAP 2 Cycling

Develop a local cycle route network.

Develop and promote longer distance cycling routes.

Signpost the cycling network effectively, clearly but unobtrusively.

Promote safe cycling schemes.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## TRA CAP 3 Bus, coach and related services

Improve Alnwick Bus Station and its management.

Provide well-signed access to visitor information and facilities.

Investigate the potential of other bus station sites in or near the town centre to provide more space and reduce operating constraints.

Improve the provision of bus and coach facilities and services throughout the Plan area.

Within the more general guidance, the NPPF states that:

- [To] support the transition to a low carbon future, contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution, [the Plan must] make the fullest possible use of .... cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable;

Progressively developing safe and attractive opportunities to cycle to and within Alnwick and Denwick, will fit with the NPPF and contribute to an improvement in the vitality of the plan area for residents and to a useful increase in the access options for visitors.

### POLICY TRA2

#### Cycling

Proposals for major development will be required to have safe and convenient cycle access. The enhancement of provision for cycling including existing cycle routes will be supported.

### 8.3.3 Bus, coach and related services

#### Approach

The provision of regular service buses has been in decline in recent years, and an improvement in the service has become essential in order to provide a meaningful alternative to car travel and to provide for the many who do not have access to a car for the school, business, service and leisure journeys they have to make. Moreover, the visitor economy is much dependent on private hire coaches, for which scant provision is made in the Plan area. The facilities currently offered for passengers to access the services are inadequate, providing little encouragement to use the bus or for coach tour operators to put Alnwick into their itineraries.

Doing nothing would contribute to the reduction of the bus services available, to a decline in the visitor economy and to an increase in car dependence.

Within the more general guidance, the NPPF notes that:

- [We are to] make the fullest possible use of public transport, .... and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

Developing the Alnwick Bus Station into a vibrant transport hub equipped for passengers in all weathers and for buses from rural communities, town services and longer distance links would present a modern gateway to the town, attractive to residents and visitors alike.

A review of passenger needs to assist the development of matching commercial and county supported bus services would help make the bus the mode of choice for many. Similarly, progressively enhancing the provision for tour buses and coaches would help ensure that Alnwick remains firmly located in tour operators' plans.

### POLICY TRA3

#### Alnwick Bus Station

Proposals for the development of Alnwick Bus Station to provide a transport hub that improves access to and services for passengers using public buses, private hire coaches and other public service vehicles will be supported, subject to the achievement of high quality design.

The development of the site, as part of a wider comprehensive redevelopment scheme, which involves the incorporation of an enhanced transport hub, including improved facilities for passengers will also be supported, subject to the achievement of high quality design.

### 8.3.4 Goods and services

#### Approach

Much of the movement of goods and services takes place in the background of daily life and continued provision for these services is essential. Service vehicles need access at inconvenient places and times and large vehicles cause disruption when delivering during the day. Longer distance vehicles have to stay overnight somewhere. Modern farm vehicles, increasingly large in all dimensions, are a key part of the rural economy. Blending together all these demands on the transport facilities is set to become increasingly difficult as the vitality of the Plan area is restored and the envisaged growth is realised.

Recognising the needs of such traffic and making appropriate provision offers the opportunity to accommodate an increased prosperity in the Plan area without disrupting the normal daytime business of residents and visitors.

### 8.3.5 Transport links & accessibility

#### Approach

The Plan area does not exist in isolation but in part relies for its prosperity on its links to the world around it. Just as within the area, it is important for such links beyond the area to be made by more sustainable modes of travel. Hence it is necessary to recognise a hierarchy of preferred transport options appropriate to the distance to be travelled.

Doing nothing would simply increase

car dependence for residents for longer distance trips.

Seeking continually to improve longer-range transport links by sustainable modes not only benefits residents in their need to travel but also helps to improve the inbound visitor gateway and economy.

Although the Aln Valley Railway is primarily planned as a heritage railway it potentially offers the opportunity of a sustainable transport route to the East Coast Mainline at Alnmouth for Alnmouth Station. Policy TRA 4 therefore safeguards the route..

#### **POLICY** **TRA4** **Transport Links**

Where the original alignment exists, the former rail route towards Alnmouth Station within the plan area will be protected for potential re-use by the Aln Valley Railway and compatible walking and cycling use.



### 8.3.6 Environmental impact of transport

#### Approach

Transport is one of the many factors that influence the quality of the environment in which we live. Good, sustainable travel and transport links can help improve the environment. However, negative aspects of current transport provision and use, not only include unsightly impacts on the urban streetscape, but also excessive emissions of greenhouse gases from motor vehicles that accelerate climate change, emission of motor vehicle pollutants that cause respiratory disease, traffic incidents and crashes that cause injury and death.

Doing nothing would mean continuing to accept these health and safety risks.

Whilst the resolution of many of the problems is outwith the scope of the Alnmouth and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan, local changes particularly in facilitating informed choices of travel mode, can improve the travel environment for residents and visitors alike.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### TRA CAP 4 Goods and Services

Opportunities will be sought to develop appropriate overnight parking facilities for lorries.

Provision for loading and unloading trade vehicles will be reviewed.

Provision will be made for maintenance access when establishing traffic management regulations.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### TRA CAP 5 Transport Links & Accessibility

Improve the main line rail links at Alnmouth for Alnmouth Railway Station.

Support the completion of the Aln Valley Railway (AVR).

Consider park and ride facilities as a means of improving sustainable access to Alnmouth town centre from the wider area.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## TRA CAP 6

### Environmental Impact of Transport

Promote and support transport provision that generally enhances the health, wellbeing and quality of life for all.

Support proposals for transport provision that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## TRA CAP 7

### Maintenance & Upkeep

A five-year strategic plan for the repair and maintenance of footpaths and pedestrian areas will be prepared and implemented.

Pedestrian routes will be kept clean year round and suitably treated to provide ready and safe access for pedestrians in the winter.



### 8.3.7 Maintenance and upkeep

#### Approach

Like all facilities, transport infrastructure has to be serviced and maintained to keep it clean, safe and fit for purpose. Hitherto, much of the maintenance undertaken has been concentrated on the roadways for motor vehicles at the expense of much lower standards of maintenance for pavements and pedestrian facilities generally. The Neighbourhood Plan presents an opportunity to change this emphasis and put pedestrians and cyclists first, thus encouraging a greater uptake of walking and cycling.

Ensuring that the pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure is serviced and maintained to a standard that makes walking and cycling

safe and convenient will contribute towards making the town centre an attractive place to visit for business, shopping and recreation.

### 8.3.8 Traffic management

#### Approach

Effective traffic management holds the key to several of the traffic and transport related concerns in Alnwick and Denwick. In many cases, junction management is dominant but there is a need to establish the rights of pedestrians and cyclists to cross as well as to determine the optimum motor vehicle flows. Much of the need for traffic management could be prevented by better control at the planning stage with development concentrated at locations that reduce the need to travel and travel

planning offering clear benefits in this respect. Excessive speed continues to be a hazard with the safety benefit of a 20mph limit being inadequately understood. Drivers seem not to understand the inconvenience and danger of vehicles parked illegally or inconsiderately by other drivers, often to avoid walking a few yards.

Various cost effective options for improvement have been suggested during the workshops, discussions and surveys carried out as the Plan has evolved. These are reflected in the policies and community action proposals set out.

### 8.3.9 Public parking

#### Approach

The provision of public parking spaces in Alnwick appears to be adequate other than at peak times such as during occasional major events, although alternative parking areas are not well signed from the most central sites. The County now has a parking strategy and its policy is to provide time-managed free parking. This will need to be monitored and kept under review. With the adoption of civic responsibility for parking, the County Council has begun to re-establish order into the system but much remains to be done to redress the scourge of pavement parking particularly and illegal parking generally.

Doing nothing is possible as always but the increasing lawlessness and obstruction caused

by parking in Alnwick indicate the direction to which such an approach would lead.

The NPPF requires that:

- If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, local planning authorities should take into account the availability of and opportunities for public transport and an overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles;
- Local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure. They should set appropriate parking charges that do not undermine the vitality of town centres. Parking enforcement should be proportionate.

During the workshops, discussions and surveys carried out as the Plan has

evolved, it has been noted that if the town centre offers what people want, they will walk from the available car parks to the centre. Nevertheless, various options for improvement have been suggested and these are reflected in the policies and community action proposals set out.

#### **POLICY** **TRA5** Parking

The development of improved provision of public parking facilities in Alnwick and Denwick that are sympathetic to the townscape character will be promoted and supported.



#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### TRA CAP 8 Traffic management

Guidance on the requirement for travel plans for major developments will be produced.

Traffic speed will be managed to prioritise road user safety.

The traffic systems and signing that bring people into the town will be improved.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### TRA CAP 9 Parking management

The provision for parking within and around Alnwick town centre will be reviewed.

Parking management and related arrangements will be improved.

Parking regulations and associated traffic legislation will be enforced.

## 9.1 Context

### 9.1.1 Introduction

**As an historic market town in a high quality landscape situated in a sparsely populated part of England's least densely-populated county, Alnwick and its neighbour Denwick present a paradox in terms of how the plan should approach environmental issues.**

- We are surrounded by green space and reasonably good levels of biodiversity – but only limited amounts of it are publicly accessible, and we have no local areas of nature conservation.
- Alnwick hosts popular restaurants and a celebrated food festival each year, and yet there remains unmet demand for allotments.
- Several areas of Alnwick are characterised by attractive mature trees – yet some of these are at risk.
- Most of Alnwick is on higher ground well-removed from the risk of river flooding – but the flash floods of June 2012 and numerous lower-level incidents show that we are at risk of surface water flooding.
- The visual amenity of the plan area is a major source of appeal - but this can cause opposition to some changes, for example small-scale renewables (such as solar photovoltaics and solar thermal)

which help to make households and businesses more self-reliant and sustainable.

- Like much of Northumberland, the area boasts dark skies which are the envy of visitors from more densely-populated areas – but these skies are threatened by poorly designed street lighting and inappropriate floodlighting.
- Most people in Alnwick and Denwick would say that, as residents and visitors, we have a commitment to conserving our environment and its natural beauty – and yet remain a problem.

### 9.1.2 Constraints

Some of the factors likely to limit the ability of the plan to act are:

- decreasing availability of public finance and staff resources;
- weakness of incentives and other measures to support installation of low-carbon energy solutions and energy efficiency measures;
- undervaluing of environmental assets when judged against economic objectives;
- concentration of land ownership in a small number of hands can make it difficult to ensure community environmental needs are met.

### 9.1.3 Strategic planning approach

Key policy guidance is provided at national level by the National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF) and at a local level by the Alnwick District Core Strategy and the emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy. The main points in relation to the environment are set out below:

#### NPPF

The overall thrust of the NPPF to deliver sustainable development and in particular **Sections 7** (Requiring good design), **8** (Promoting healthy communities), **10** (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change) and **11** (conserving and enhancing the natural environment) have relevance for this chapter.

**Section 7** seeks high quality design in all development and that it should be a key objective of the planning system, although it does state that: *“Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape...unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact... is not outweighed by the proposal's economic, social and environmental benefits.”*

**Section 8** requires that assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, and sports and recreational facilities

in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required."

**Section 10** proposes: *"To support the move to a low carbon future, local planning authorities should ... actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings; ... recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources.... [and] take account of climate change over the longer term, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape."*

Finally, **section 11** states that *"the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services and minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible."*



### **Alnwick District Local Development Framework Core Strategy**

The ADCS includes policies to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity – **policy S12** and to protect and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the district in **policy S13**. In addition the general design principles in **policy S16** are relevant to the topic content of this Environment chapter, as is **policy S20** on open space, sport and recreation. **Policy S21** sets out the requirements for renewable energy to be supported, whilst **policy S22** seeks energy efficiency in new residential and commercial developments throughout the district.

### **Northumberland Local Plan – Core Strategy**

This emerging document proposes new policy direction at the County level. With regard to the environment, the Core Strategy seeks the following:

- High quality **sustainable design** – criteria for high energy efficiency and low or zero carbon energy generation, for new and existing properties;
- **Principles for the environment** – conserving, protecting and enhancing the character and significance of Northumberland's distinctive and valued environment;
- **Biodiversity and geodiversity** – avoiding unacceptable harm, adequate mitigation; securing net biodiversity gains and applying the ecosystem approach;
- **Flooding and Sustainable drainage systems** – requiring proposals to demonstrate how they will minimise flood risk to people, property and infrastructure from all potential sources and incorporating Sustainable drainage systems;
- **Open space and facilities for sport and recreation** – seeking provision of recreational space for the development
- **Green infrastructure** – protecting, improving and extending Northumberland's green infrastructure network;
- **Renewable and low carbon energy development** – to support such developments subject to evaluation of impacts on landscape, conservation etc.

## 9.2 Objectives

### 9.2.1 Environment objectives

The overall environmental aim for the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan is:

**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 resource prices and climate change.**

The strategic objectives are:

- To improve the resilience of Alnwick to rising commodity prices by increasing the amount of food and energy produced locally, and by improving energy efficiency of buildings in the plan area;
- To increase the amount of publicly-accessible green space and increase the biodiversity of Alnwick and Denwick through a range of designations;
- To reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from housing and commercial premises by encouraging energy efficiency and appropriate on-site renewables;
- To increase the percentage of Alnwick and Denwick waste that is recycled;

- To reduce vulnerability to extreme rainfall events;
- To reduce the environmental impact of lighting;
- To reduce the quantity of littering and dog fouling.

## 9.3 Policies and Proposals

### 9.3.1 Green space

Natural England, the government's advisor on the natural environment, states that accessible natural green space can be seen to provide a range of social, economic and environmental benefits:

***Environmental appreciation – with opportunities to learn about nature and to help protect it in practical ways; Securing biodiversity – naturally vegetated areas help to ensure that urban and rural areas continue to function ecologically; Health – with opportunities for activities to improve health through physical activity and play; ... Well-being – being in a natural environment outdoors can reduce stress and mild depression, and frequent exposure to the natural environment reduces the incidence of depression;... Climate regulation – green spaces are often some of the few areas of shade, of particular value to children and the elderly. They are vital in reducing the health impacts of increasing***

***temperatures and sunlight in urban environments. They also contribute to sustainable urban drainage and water storage, particularly important as we increasingly experience extremes in our climate; Economy – high quality greenspace is an important and widely recognised element in successful regeneration programmes, improving the desirability of an area.***<sup>1</sup>

However, Alnwick and Denwick fall far short of the national standards recommended by Natural England - Accessible Natural Green Space Standard. They also fall far short of the levels recommended by Northumberland County Council in its Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities PPG17 assessment, based on the current population of 8,500. Given expected levels of housebuilding, we would do better to aspire towards the target based on an 11,000 population.

There is also a danger that existing green spaces will become even more fragmented as development occurs. Although Hulne Park is a 1620 hectare site, access is only permitted for part of the year to four trails, and dogs and cycles are banned. A much wider range of fully accessible natural and semi-natural green space is required within the plan area.

In the Issues and Options Community Consultation which took place in Winter 2012/13, 83% of respondents (93% of those who expressed an opinion) supported the plan increasing the amount of publicly accessible green space to achieve the

<sup>1</sup> NE265: Nature Nearby - <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/40004?category=47004>

standards set by the County Council for the rest of Northumberland.

The current and target levels of the different types of green space are shown below in Table ENV1, based on both the current and projected population from proposed levels of housebuilding in Chapter 4.

- **Policy ENV1** ensures that future developments continue to make provision for all types of green space.
- **Policy ENV2** makes provision for the replacement of green space in case existing space is lost to development.

Finally the **community action proposal ENV CAP1** outlines improvements which the town and parish councils working with Northumberland Estates will look to introduce to maximise access to natural and semi-natural green space.



**POLICY**  
**ENV1**

**Providing New Green Space Through Development**

Plans for major developments will:

- incorporate proposals for the provision of amenity green space and natural and semi-natural green space in the site, or
- alternatively, include proposals for the improvement of existing parks and gardens where they are in the vicinity of the development site and immediately accessible to it.

In both instances proposals should meet the standards recommended by Northumberland County Council in its 2011 Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities assessment or any successor replacement documents.

**POLICY**  
**ENV2**

**Protecting Green Space**

Development that results in the loss of existing valued and valuable parks and gardens, or amenity green space will only be permitted when the development makes provision for alternative green space in the vicinity, which is equivalent or larger in size, and with an equivalent or greater level of accessibility and quality.

**Table ENV1**

Type	Current level (Hectares)	Target based on current 8,500 population (Hectares)	Target based on possible future 11,000 population (Hectares)
Parks and Gardens	5.72	18.19	23.54
Amenity Greenspace	5.58	9.27	11.55
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	1.64	64.18	83.05

**COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL**

**ENV CAP 1**

The Town and Parish Councils in consultation with Northumberland Estates and Northumberland County Council as landowners will seek to create and establish areas of publicly accessible natural and semi natural greenspace.

### 9.3.2 Designated local green space

Paragraphs 76 to 78 of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) create a new Local Green Space Designation.

*Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. .... The designation should only be used:*

- *where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- *where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*

The following areas are proposed for designation as Local Green Space (Table ENV2).

**Table ENV2**

Source of specialness	Sites
Beauty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Duke's School Playing Field – southern section, for its mature trees [see proposals map].</li><li>• Pottergate Garden.</li></ul>
Historic significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Column Field</li><li>• Gardens adjacent to The Pinfold</li></ul>
Recreational value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swansfield Park</li><li>• St Thomas Open Space near Alnwick Community Centre</li><li>• Bullfield Community Orchard</li><li>• The Recreation Ground Lower Barresdale (Designated as common land)</li></ul>
Tranquillity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Woodland and adjoining grassland to the West of the former Thomas Percy School on Blakelaw Road</li><li>• Green Batt Garden</li></ul>

## POLICY ENV3

### Local Green Space

The following areas are proposed to be designated as Local Green Space, and are shown on the proposals map:

- Duke's School Playing Field – southern section
- Pottergate Garden
- Column Field
- Gardens adjacent to The Pinfold
- Swansfield Park
- St Thomas Open Space near Alnwick Community Centre
- Recreation Ground Lower Barresdale
- Bullfield Community Orchard
- Woodland to the West of the former Thomas Percy School on Blakelaw Road
- Green Batt Garden.

Within these areas development will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances.

### 9.3.3 Nature reserves

Alnwick and Denwick are poorly served by nature reserves. Natural England recommends 1 hectare of reserves per 1,000 population, but there are no nature reserves whatsoever in the plan area.

The expected housing increase outlined in the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan would result in a population increase to approximately 11,000. In order to meet the ANGst green space standard, 11 hectares of areas for nature conservation need to be established on the periphery of Alnwick and Denwick. Such areas should be prioritised where there is already ecological interest, for example along river and stream corridors which are often marginal land which has no development value, due to flooding, or poor transport connections. These areas offer the prospect of protecting and increasing biodiversity whilst allowing some public access along defined public rights of way and permissive paths.

In the issues and options consultation which took place in Winter 2012/13, 82% of respondents (92% of respondents who expressed an interest) believed that the plan should identify areas for nature conservation. Designating the following

areas will ensure that the plan area reaches the 11 hectare target:

- Cawledge Burn between North Cawledge Bridge, East Cawledge Farm and the River Aln;
- Woodland to the west of the former Thomas Percy School on Blakelaw Road.
- Hay meadow west of the Dunterns on Summer Seats

### 9.3.4 Biodiversity

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment in 2005 concluded that virtually all of Earth's ecosystems have been significantly transformed through human actions. In the second half of the 20th century ecosystems changed more rapidly than at any other time in recorded human history. Within many species groups, the majority of species have faced a decline in the size of their population, in their geographical spread, or both. Certain species may not decline, for instance if they are protected in natural reserves, if particular threats to them are eliminated, or if they thrive in human-modified landscapes. Within well-studied groups, 10 to 50% of species are currently threatened with extinction. Species

extinction is a natural part of Earth's history. However, over the past centuries humans have increased the extinction rate by 50 to 1,000 times compared to the natural rate.

Much of Northumberland, including Alnwick and Denwick, has a very special natural environment and we want to ensure that any proposed development takes this into account to preserve and enhance our beautiful county.

Biodiversity boosts ecosystem productivity where each species, no matter how small, all have an important role to play. Greater species diversity ensures natural sustainability for all life forms and healthy ecosystems can better withstand and recover from shock events. We therefore have an urgent need to preserve the diversity in wildlife.

Although the plan area is poorly served by publicly-accessible nature reserves, Alnwick and Denwick are better served by areas of wildlife interest more generally. Many of the areas outlined below are privately-owned, with no public right of access, but irrespective of access, the plan should in accordance with paragraph 117 of the NPPF, encourage the preservation, enhancement and creation of priority habitats wherever these opportunities exist.

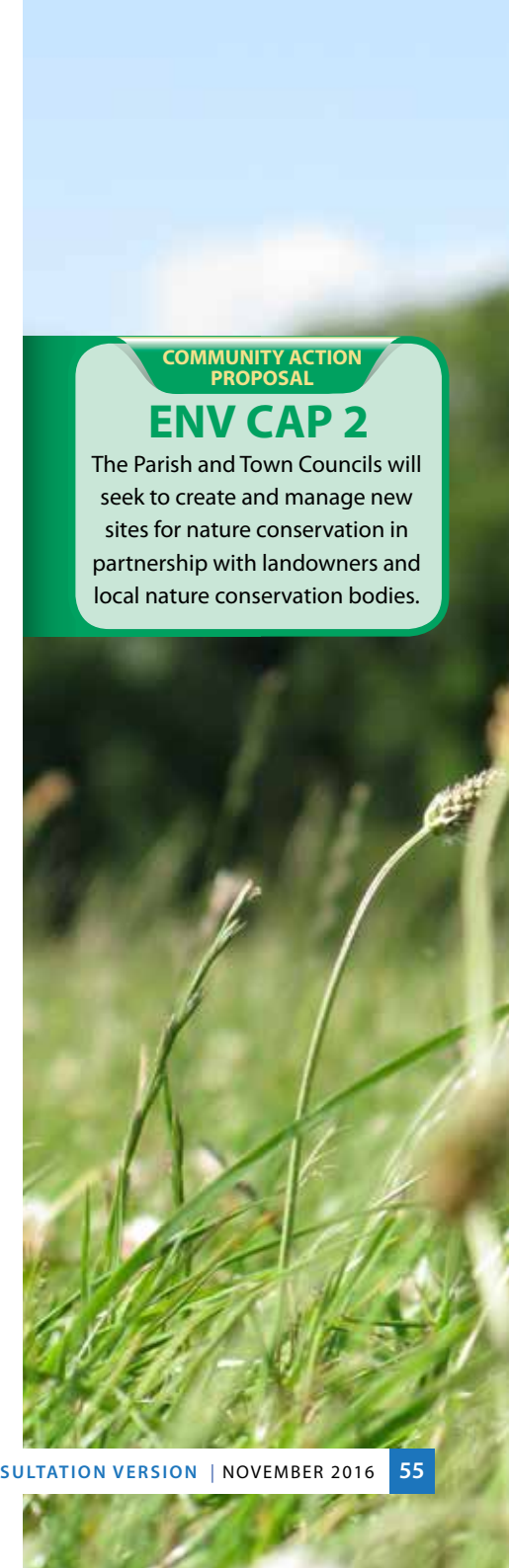
The plan area contains four areas which are Local Wildlife and Geological Sites (*formerly known as Sites of Nature Conservation Area Interest*). The areas are highlighted in blue overleaf.



#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 2

The Parish and Town Councils will seek to create and manage new sites for nature conservation in partnership with landowners and local nature conservation bodies.



The semi-natural woodland and grassland of **Hulne Park** hosts a variety of habitats, leading to a diverse bird and insect fauna. The river is also of interest here, with crayfish and otter recorded.

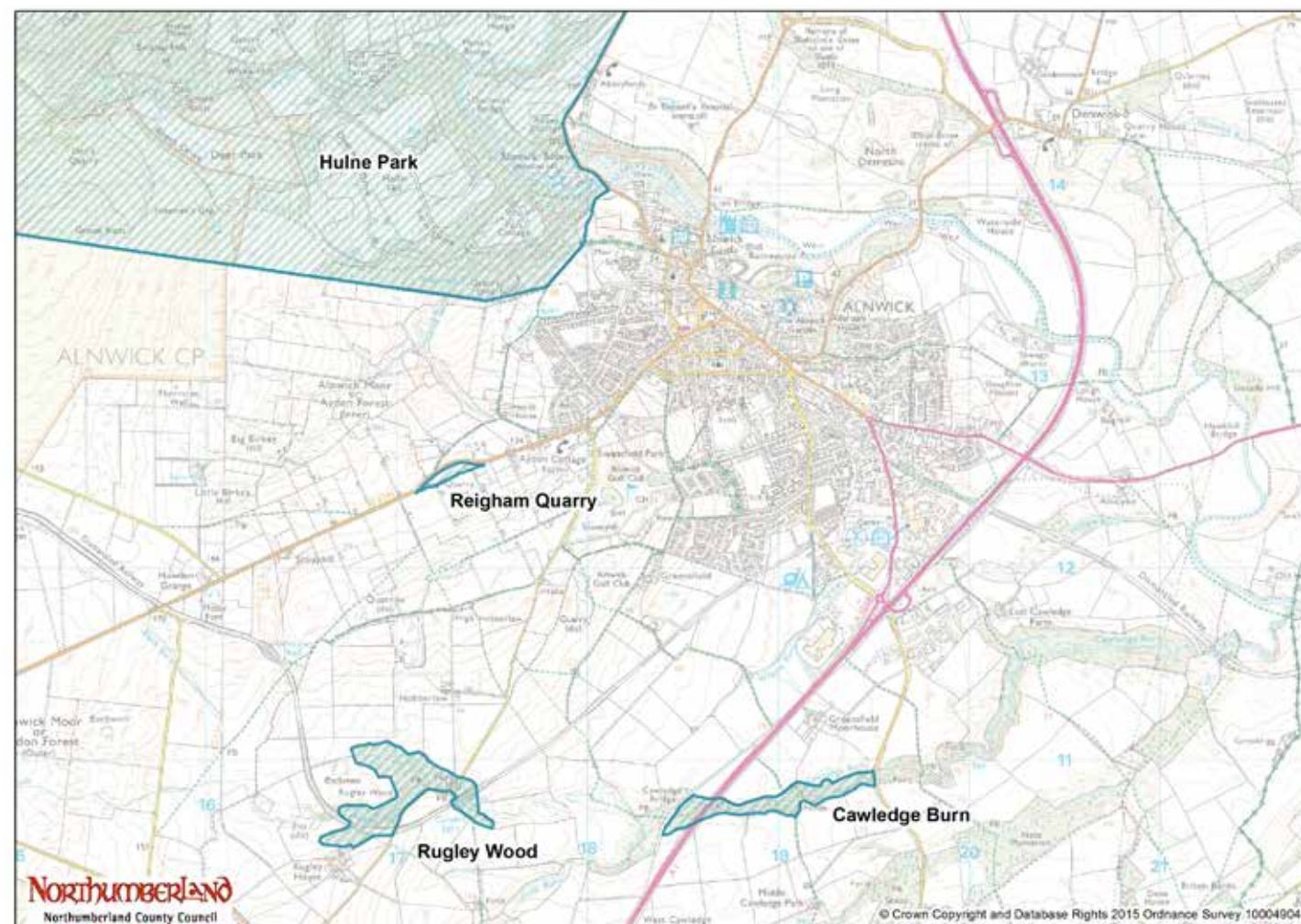
**Rugley Wood** is noteworthy for the ancient species-rich hedgerow community. Mixed woodland predominates in the north, and

beech in the east, each with a variety of species in the field layer. Water shrews have been recorded here, and there are historical records of water vole.

**Cawledge Burn** is of both ornithological and botanical interest. There is a wide range of birds with warblers particularly well represented. Other typical woodland

species are present, along with grey wagtail on the burn, and, again, historical records of water vole. The main botanical area of interest is the mature deciduous woodland east of the A1 bridge, where there are many woodland species in the field layer.

**Reigham Quarry** is of purely geological interest and no special protection is proposed.



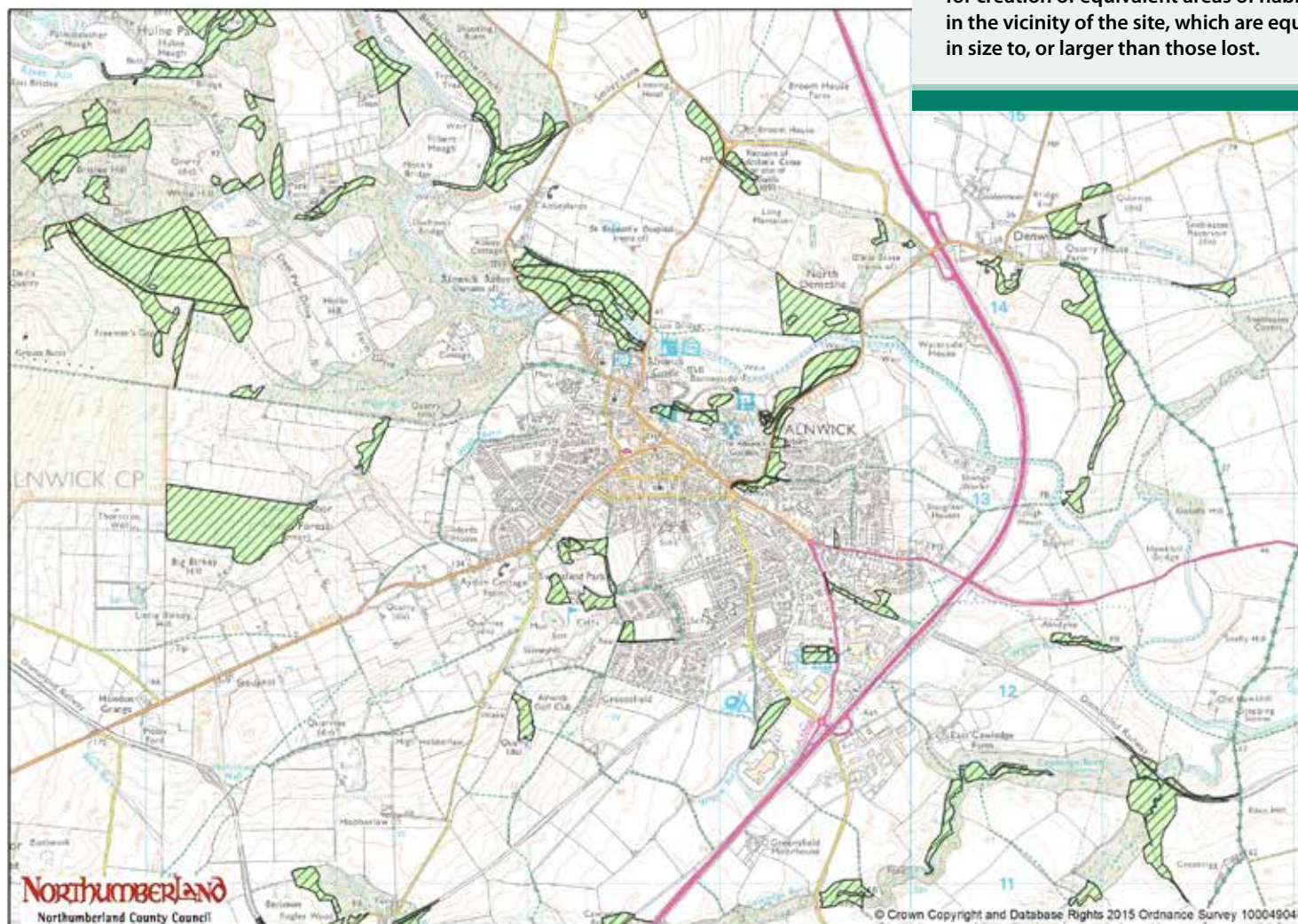
The plan also hosts a number of areas of Habitats of Principal Importance in England, as set out in section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. These are principally areas of deciduous woodland, although there are also areas of lowland acid grassland and

upland heath further west on Alnwick Moor. Some of these are shown shaded in green in the map below.

## POLICY ENV4

### Protecting Biodiversity

In considering development proposals where exceptionally loss of biodiversity is unavoidable, provision should be made for creation of equivalent areas of habitat in the vicinity of the site, which are equal in size to, or larger than those lost.



COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## ENV CAP 3

Consolidate waiting list and management arrangements for allotments.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## ENV CAP 4

Deliver improvements to existing allotments.

### 9.3.5 Allotments

Alnwick has a total of approximately 6.5 hectares of allotments. Of this, around two-thirds are on land held freehold by the Town Council; the other one-third are let directly by Northumberland Estates, or, in the case of Ratten Row, on a short lease from Northumberland Estates to Alnwick Town Council. Denwick has no allotments.

Although this area is above the minimum level recommended by Northumberland County Council, there are still waiting lists for allotments in Alnwick. When residents of a municipal authority request allotments, the authority is required under section 23 of the Smallholdings and Allotments Act to actively seek land to satisfy that request.

Demand for allotments is expected to steadily increase between now and 2031, with increased house-building and an increasing resident population. 68% of respondents to the Issues and Options consultation favoured an increase in the space allocated to allotments, at least in line with the increasing population in Alnwick or

at a higher rate. The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan proposes 1100 new dwellings between 2011 and 2031, which may lead to an increase in population of around 25%.

This suggests that whilst retaining existing allotment sites, an increase in allotment provision of 3.5 hectares is required to meet the expectations of respondents and new residents. As the focus of new housing development will be the south and north-east of the town and neither of these areas are currently well-served with allotments, the proposal is to focus development there. This proposal was supported by Allern Lea and Fairfields residents who attended a plan engagement event in summer 2013.

The division of responsibility for allotments between Northumberland Estates and Alnwick Town Council is inconvenient for people seeking an allotment, who have to sign up to two lists and are unsure whether to take the first offer of an allotment or hold out for a preferred site. It discourages economies of scale, by requiring two separate bodies to collect rents and improve sites, and it can create distortions when the two providers' pricing policies differ. Therefore community

action proposal **ENV CAP3** suggests that Alnwick Town Council take responsibility for letting all allotments, and **ENV CAP4** proposes a schedule of improvements.

### 9.3.6 Trees

Trees are a wide-spread and characteristic feature of Alnwick as well as its urban edges where the town and countryside meet. They play an important role in contributing to the character and appearance of the town and its surroundings, soften the landscape, offer a relief of green seasonal foliage amongst houses and industry, screen unattractive views and modify noise penetration. At the edges of the town they can gently mark the boundary between town and country as well as positively help the town to merge comfortably into the surrounding landscape. In groups, screens and in field boundaries, they are an essential building block of well-balanced and sustainable townscapes and landscapes.

Furthermore, the limited green space which is open to the public in Alnwick and

## POLICY ENV5

### Future Allotment Provision

Existing allotment sites will be retained and protected. Where development affecting existing allotment sites is unavoidable, alternative sites in the vicinity, which are equivalent or larger in size, with an equivalent or greater level of accessibility and quality (including fertility and soil quality), and equivalent or superior facilities must be provided before the development can commence.

Land for the provision of a total of 3.5 hectares of additional allotments, located in the south and east of the town, will be provided close to proposed housing developments as identified on the proposals map.

Denwick benefits from a variety of attractive and sometimes historic trees. Although rare within the public green spaces in Alnwick a further role of trees is to provide edible fruit. There is no reason why fruit and nut trees should be constrained to private gardens. Provision of fruit and nut trees in public spaces would have some effect in mitigating increasing food prices. It would also support biodiversity, increasing the attractiveness of trees, and encouraging wider use of green spaces.

Protection of existing trees within the town, particularly ancient trees or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value, is essential in maintaining the distinctiveness of the townscape and its setting. Many trees also possess heritage value, and are protected by legislation where they lie in conservation areas. The future of these trees should therefore be a key consideration in planning new development. On private land this can be maximised for the public benefit through Tree Preservation Orders, site development briefs for new-build development, as well

as the creative use of tree management agreements. Existing trees and landscapes in the public realm are managed and protected in most cases by the County Council although Alnwick Town Council has responsibility for care, maintenance and replacement of trees in the Cemetery.

Tree cover can be strategically extended to the benefit of the appearance of the town by increasing the landscaping expectations on developers in new developments and by adding more street-trees in residential streets and along the major entrance roads into the town. This not only increases local distinctiveness but also enhances the main roads as gateways into the town. Where the countryside meets the town, a strategy of increasing the tree-cover should be developed to make any proposed new developments merge both with the immediate and wider townscape and landscape. Tree cover can be used as a thread visually binding the town together but also as a way of softening the harshness of any new outward growth proposed for the town on its fringes.



## POLICY ENV6

### Protecting Trees

Development that damages or results in the loss of ancient trees will not be permitted. Development that damages or results in the loss of trees of good arboricultural and amenity value and which does not replace them with equivalent trees will not be permitted.

Proposals affecting ancient trees or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value should be accompanied by a tree survey that establishes the health and longevity of any affected trees and proposals should be designed to retain ancient trees or retain or replace trees of arboricultural and amenity value with equivalent trees.

## POLICY ENV7

### Landscaping of New Developments

Major development should include as part of planning applications full landscaping and tree planting proposals to add to the distinctive character of the plan area, including off site structural landscaping where the development is on the urban edge and where a common owner makes this possible.

Proposals should consider micro climate and specify a diverse range of species, flowering and fruiting at different periods, which enhance wildlife habitats and contribute to national and local biodiversity targets.

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 5

Complete tree identification and mapping survey.

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 6

Manage and replace street trees.

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 7

Explore opportunities for diverse structural planting in the town/ country edges of Alnwick and Denwick.

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 8

Plant fruit and nut bearing species in off-street publicly accessible green spaces.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## ENV CAP 9

Implement and maintain cost-effective street drainage measures.

### 9.3.7 Green corridors

Maintaining the local green infrastructure that sits alongside the strategic assets makes sense in relation to the health and well-being of local people but to enhance the network, by creating new assets and links or creating new functions for existing assets, will significantly improve the area as a place to live, work, visit and invest in.

Connectivity across the town to encourage improved pedestrian and cycle access, particularly in relation to the new school site, but also for residents of all ages, can be served by securing local green infrastructure corridors that join up existing open spaces. These include the old railway lines and routes across playing fields and parks but also include the burns feeding into the River Aln, which add connectivity between the designated nature conservation sites and proposed local nature reserves. Such local green infrastructure can add wildlife and biodiversity value as well as visual amenity for example the watercourse that flows through Sainsbury's car park. Water is important in strengthening wildlife habitat networks and for the enjoyment of local people. Therefore the policy below seeks also to encourage the formation and connectivity of ponds and wetland areas, such as those to be created in Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for new development.



## POLICY ENV8

### Protecting Green

#### Infrastructure

**Local green infrastructure including rivers and streams, former rail trackbeds, greenways, and woodland belts which provide corridors and habitats for wildlife will be protected and new provision supported.**

**The enhancement of public rights of way in the plan area will be supported.**

### 9.3.8 Water

On the evidence of Environment Agency flood risk maps, only two small areas of the built environment in Alnwick and Denwick are at significant risk of river flooding. These are the northern tip of Canongate and Golden Moor in Denwick.

A number of other areas are at risk of surface water flooding, due to rising groundwater, or more often run-off caused by periods of heavy rain. Environment Agency maps suggest that areas of high risk include parts of Bondgate Without, Denwick Lane, Wagonway Road, Bondgate Within, Clayport Street, Howling Lane and Swansfield Park Road.

Proposed housing land is located in areas currently deemed to be at some risk of surface water flooding – in the south-west and north-east of Alnwick. The emerging Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy proposes that development

proposals will need to demonstrate how they will minimise flood risk by avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding. They will also be required to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) unless it is clearly demonstrated that these are not appropriate.

The flash floods which struck Alnwick in June 2012 and uncertainty over the future likelihood of similar events suggests that we should also consider how to minimise their impact. In several parts of the town, blocked and partially-blocked drains have contributed to localised flooding in the past. **Community Action Proposal ENV CAP9** seeks to address this issue.

## POLICY ENV9

### Sustainable Drainage Systems

**All proposals for major development should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), unless it is clearly demonstrated the SuDS are not appropriate.**

**Where SuDS are provided, arrangements must be put in place for their whole lifetime management and maintenance.**

### 9.3.9 Energy

#### On-site renewables

Alnwick and Denwick have around 30KW of installed hydro capacity, 45KW of installed wind energy capacity and approximately 150KW of installed solar photovoltaic

capacity. Combined, these renewable technologies deliver approximately 400MWh of electricity per year. Solar thermal installations deliver approximately 20MWh of heat per year, and there is an unquantified amount of biomass used as a heat source.

Air source and ground source heat pumps (AS/GSHPs) will start to deliver an increased share of domestic and commercial heat over the lifetime of the plan. Construction of a biomass generating plant on the outskirts of Alnwick is also proposed.

However, currently only around 1-3% of Alnwick and Denwick's total energy consumption comes from on-site renewables.

Outside conservation areas, solar technologies and AS/GSHPs can be installed as permitted development, subject to some national requirements. In conservation areas, solar photovoltaic and solar thermal panels currently require planning permission whenever they are mounted on the principal or side elevation of a house and visible from a highway. Air source heat pumps require planning permission if they are to be installed on a wall or roof which fronts a highway or will be nearer to any highway which bounds the property than any part of the building. Alnwick already has a sizeable conservation area, and elsewhere in this draft plan there is a proposal to review it.

Planning applications are time-consuming, and there is anecdotal evidence that the risk of refusal creates significant

barriers to proceeding with installations of renewables which would help reduce the neighbourhood's total environmental impact.

71% of respondents to the Winter 2012/13 consultation, (83% of respondents who expressed an opinion), agreed that the plan should encourage local homes and businesses to generate their own energy from renewable sources.

Whilst the plan cannot itself change the current national policy in respect of permitted development rights in conservation areas, it can give a more positive message to encourage small-scale renewables in the plan area including in conservation areas where there are no significant adverse impacts to these and other important assets.

## **POLICY** **ENV10** **Small Scale Renewable Energy**

**Small-scale renewables (up to 50kw for electricity and 300kw for heat) will be supported as long as the proposal's economic, social and environmental benefits outweigh any material harm to landscape character and sensitivity, designated nature conservation sites, protected habitats and species and designated heritage assets and their settings.**

## **Energy efficiency**

Domestic greenhouse gas emissions statistics are not available for Alnwick and Denwick, but emissions for Northumberland as a whole in 2012 were 2.6 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per capita. This represents an 11% fall per household on 2005 levels.

However, domestic greenhouse gas emissions for Northumberland remain 15% higher than for England as a whole. Whilst the cooler climate accounts for a small part of the difference our emissions are still higher than those of Scotland so this cannot account for the whole difference. A substantial factor is due to the higher percentage of hard-to-treat properties – especially pre-1930 solid wall properties. The UK government has agreed a 50% target reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, with domestic properties achieving an even larger saving.

An assessment of Building Research Establishment data carried out in 2009 by Northumberland County Council suggested that 18% of Alnwick households lived in fuel poverty (on the traditional definition of needing to spend more than 10% of their income to maintain an adequate heating regime). With above-inflation rises in fuel prices and below-inflation rises in income, this figure will have risen significantly in the last 5 years. No disaggregated figures are available for Denwick, but figures for comparable areas such as Whittingham and Hedgeley (off the gas main, with older housing stock) suggest 45% of households might live in fuel poverty.

### **COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL**

## **ENV CAP 10**

In responding to planning applications the Town and Parish Councils will advise that all proposals for residential development should be encouraged to incorporate energy conservation schemes for the dwellings, including effective energy efficiency measures and proposals to source a proportion of their energy from renewable sources, either on-site or from guaranteed renewable sources within the Plan area.

### 9.3.10 Lighting

Artificial light is an important part of modern life. It has many uses including: illumination of streets, roads and hazardous areas; for security; to increase the hours of usage for outdoor sports and recreation facilities; and to enhance the appearance of buildings at night. The increased use of lighting, however, can cause problems. Light in the wrong place at the wrong time can be intrusive. The Campaign to Protect Rural England has described *“the night sky as the ultimate Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Site of Special Scientific Interest.”*<sup>2</sup>

Much of rural Northumberland is characterised by dark skies. Given that the plan area’s commercial and residential extent is set to grow further under proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan, it is right that we ought to seek protection of night skies wherever possible. This is reflected in the number of comments on this point in response to the plan consultation.

As summarised by the [British Astronomical Association in its campaign for dark skies](#), the arguments for minimising light pollution are not purely aesthetic. There is now significant evidence showing that light at night can disrupt the body’s production of the brain hormone melatonin and lead to restless nights and psychological stresses.

Inefficient outdoor lighting is estimated to waste over £1bn per year in the UK, cause unnecessary carbon emissions, and have a detrimental effect on nocturnal wildlife.

Although statutory powers are available to local authorities under The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005, which amended the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to bring artificial light from premises under the statutory nuisance regime, this legislation sets a high bar. For light at a premises to be a statutory nuisance it must unduly illuminate another premises so as to cause nuisance or be prejudicial to health. It does not take account of impacts on the enjoyment of shared areas, longer term health impacts or on wildlife. There are also certain premises where lighting is exempt from statutory nuisance, including bus stations and military installations.

**Policy ENV11** seeks to ensure that street lighting in new developments meets high standards which do not further contribute to light pollution in the plan area. It also seeks to restrict floodlighting wherever this

is subject to planning permission, and to confer additional protection on the rural part of the plan area.

## **POLICY** **ENV11** Reducing Light Pollution

All street lighting in new developments should be designed to be dimmable, capable of part-night operation and to minimise upward light.

Where floodlighting is subject to planning permission it will only be permitted where the developer can robustly justify why it is necessary.

In rural parts of the plan area, all new street lighting and lighting within new developments should be set at the lowest intensity compatible with community safety in order to preserve dark skies.



<sup>2</sup> CPRE Night Blight Report - [click here for a link to the document](#)

### 9.3.11 Litter and dog fouling

Alnwick and Denwick have a widely-perceived issue with dog fouling and littering. Dog fouling has attracted considerable local media attention and along with littering, was the most frequently cited environmental issue in the Alnwick and Denwick community consultation which ran in Winter 2011. 95% of respondents to the Neighbourhood Plan options consultation in Winter 2012/13 said that they would support the provision of appropriately designed bins in areas where there is a problem with dog fouling and litter.

Research by Keep Britain Tidy suggests that increased provision of bins reduces littering, although the location of facilities is a significant factor.

A number of other options exist to help reduce dog fouling and littering, such as increased use of law enforcement, local campaigns, use of positive publicity about people who clean up after their dogs and negative publicity about those who don't.

**Community Action Proposal ENV CAP11** seeks to ensure increased provision of dog and litter bins, whilst **ENV CAP12** will develop a strategy to deal with dog fouling, chewing gum, littering and fly-tipping.

### 9.3.12 Recycling

Recycling rates for Northumberland have increased from approximately 30% to 40% in the past 5 years, but it is unlikely that rates will increase much further without increased doorstep collection which is currently confined to paper, card, cans and plastic bottles, with garden waste collected for an added charge. Doorstep collection recycling policies are governed by a contract between Northumberland County Council and Sita UK, the Council's waste management partners.

Recycling sites in Alnwick are limited. The 'bring site' at Greenwell Road accommodates bins for glass bottles and jars, shoes, textiles and beverage cartons (tetrapaks). Similar sites for glass bottles and jars and textiles only are located behind Willowburn Sports Centre, in a corner of the Co-op petrol station and in the lay-by on Denwick Lane but no supermarkets or other car parks have recycling centres.

Main walking routes in and around Alnwick have no recycling facilities, which means paper, cans and bottles may only be disposed of in waste bins.

Providing more town recycling facilities for materials which are not collected on doorsteps and allowing limited recycling of materials 'on the go' are practical and proportionate measures to improve recycling rates in the town. These facilities were proposed by attendees at the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation event in Summer 2013. In the Winter

2012/13 Community Consultation, 72% of respondents (77% who expressed an opinion) agreed that the plan should provide more town centre sites for recycling glass, textiles and cartons to help improve recycling rates.

**Community Action Proposal ENV CAP13** supports greater provision of recycling facilities as a condition of major developments and seeks to reach a similar standard for existing developments. While **Community Action Proposal ENV CAP14** requires that consideration is given to combined waste/recycling bins when street bins are replaced or added.



#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 11

Improve management of litter and dog fouling.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 12

Develop a strategy to deal with dog fouling, chewing gum, littering and fly-tipping.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 13

Improve provision for recycling.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### ENV CAP 14

Consider the installation of combined waste and recycling bins.

## HERITAGE, DESIGN AND CULTURE

10.1  
Introduction

From any point of view, Alnwick with Denwick is undoubtedly a heritage and cultural hot spot. It is also a place of robust northern beauty – in both its townscapes and landscapes. As the only ducal town in the region and, traditionally, the County town of Northumberland, the area is of huge heritage importance in both the County and Region. A unique combination of heritage features and architectural designs still remain from the area's Saxon, medieval, post-medieval, Victorian and 20th century past. Such significant historic features and designs include the Castle, Market Place, Town Gates, Town Hall, several historic places of worship, public water fountains ('pans') and the historic layout and ambiance of both Alnwick town and Denwick village. Significant cultural attractions include Alnwick Playhouse, the Alnwick Garden, the Bailiffgate Museum, Aln Valley Railway, Barter Books and the Northumberland Hall, as well as annual cultural events (Shrove Tuesday Football at Alnwick Castle, Alnwick International Music Festival, Alnwick Food and Beer Festivals, Heritage Open Days, Bonfire Fireworks display and Northumbrian Gathering) and a dedicated Town Crier.



## Part A - Heritage and Design

10.2  
Context

## 10.2.1 Existing heritage assets

Key heritage evidence collected during the Neighbourhood Planning process includes the following existing designated and undesignated heritage assets of Alnwick and Denwick:

- **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, some of which are in the conservation area and others which could be included in a Local List for Alnwick and Denwick (see HD CAP5)
- **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
- **Industrial Archaeology** – combines grand listed buildings like Alnwick Railway Station (former), the upstanding remains of previous railway buildings and the developing Aln Valley Railway with historic industrial landscape features including track beds, bridges and embankments that remain from previous rail routes.

### 10.2.2 Factors constraining the proper management of Heritage and Design

- Lack of available public finance and staff
- Fragmentation of responsibilities between public and private agencies
- Limitation of existing conservation controls
- Heritage skills shortage
- Undervaluing of heritage assets as economic assets, leading all too often to 'development v heritage' conflict
- Unresolved conflicts between regulation and historic quality
- Our unique heritage of town and village is too often taken for granted by those for whom it has become the familiar backdrop to their lives.

### 10.2.3 Overall approach taken to Heritage and Design

The consultation identified the need for a heritage-positive attitude in the Neighbourhood Plan. Because the considerable heritage and design quality of Alnwick and Denwick adds much to the quality of life and economic well-being of residents as well as greatly to the enjoyment of the many visitors to the town and village, the approach here will be to cherish and add value to the historic environment of both town and village. So in this section policies and proposals for this historic environment are formulated which will:

- protect and sustain the use and fabric of the built heritage;

- enhance and regenerate the settings of this built heritage;
- inform the design of new development so that it is appropriate and adds value to its townscape and landscape context;
- monitor the condition of historic fabric for timely action;
- promote the attraction of the historic environment of Alnwick and Denwick.

### 10.2.4 Policy context

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

In Section 12 of the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities are required to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations. Plans should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should take into account:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- Opportunities to draw on the

contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Section 7, headed 'Requiring Good Design', also indicates that The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

In particular, local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.

#### Alnwick District Council Core Strategy, October 2007

Key Heritage and Design policies are:

##### Policy S13

Need to protect and enhance landscape character

##### Policy S14

Development in the open countryside supports conservation and enhancement

##### Policy S15

Need to protect the built and historic environment

##### Policy S16

Sets out strategic principles of good design to be applied to all developments

*Alnwick Core Strategy (2007) policy S15 on the built and historic environment and S13 on Landscape, although still valid currently, are likely to be superseded entirely by the Northumberland Core Strategy policies which are also more detailed.*

### Northumberland Local Plan – Core Strategy

One of the seven Objectives which are fundamental to the NLPCS is 'Protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valued natural, historic and built environment'. This quality environment is regarded as a significant asset to both people who live in the County and the wider region.

It makes a significant contribution to the character, quality of life and sense of place and the economy of Northumberland. Finally, it is regarded as a valuable resource for commuters, businesses and visitors.

The NLPCS seeks to secure sustainable development and high quality sustainable design. It sets out principles for the environment and assessing landscape impact and seeks to support the historic environment and heritage assets.

## 10.3 Heritage and Design Objectives

Heritage adds value, directly and indirectly, to the quality of people's lives in the UK. It is not only the backdrop against which lives are played out but it is through regularly experiencing the enduring beauties of local historic architecture, townscapes and landscapes that residents are reassured of the continuity and stability of their town and village and develop a pride in their home place. The sense of well-being is always high in historically significant environments.

Visitors in increasing numbers come to share these quality experiences and sense of well-being which contributes to the local economy. Consequently, the growth of visitor attractions and facilities in response to the growing visitor numbers, adds further value to the daily lives of residents in a virtuous circle of mutual benefit. However, if the heritage is not protected, enhanced and

cherished through local action, effective protection and planning, this circle may be broken and irreplaceable assets lost for ever.

### Heritage and Design objectives are:

- To optimise the potential of heritage in Alnwick and Denwick to contribute to place-shaping and supporting and sustaining the visitor economy, as well as encouraging local people to have a sense of pride, involvement and ownership;
- To protect, conserve and enhance the setting, layout and character of the historic town and village through the integration of high quality development and refurbishment that reflects local, historic design qualities and makes them more people friendly places for living, working and visiting;
- To ensure that the area's historic and architectural design quality is celebrated and promoted to proactively raise the unique heritage profile of Alnwick and Denwick.



## 10.4 Heritage and Design Policies and Proposals Across the Plan Area

### 10.4.1 Achieving a visually coherent town and village in the landscape

Past land use change has paid too little attention to composing the appearance of the town and village as visually cohesive settlements in the landscape and has resulted in blurred edges and lack of environmental assessment of growth direction and landscape capacity. This affects all views into the town from the outside landscape except from the North and North/East where the views inside and outside Alnwick Castle Historic Park and Garden are more coherent, being composed of a huge medieval castle dominating an unspoiled historic landscape.

Challenges to the setting of the town and village that have emerged as the Neighbourhood Plan has developed include the impact of proposed developments – particularly the significant housing and employment sites proposed to the south and east of Alnwick and public awareness of the impact of Onshore Wind Farms on the wider landscape views. A key finding in the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation was that the outward growth of the town and village should sit well within the Alnwick/Denwick landscape.

The landscape setting has the greatest

impact when viewed from the main routes into and past Alnwick. These are therefore the priority for shaping visual coherence of

town and village. Views from these main routes are included in Table HD1.

Table HD1

Direction	Route	Views
South	A1 approach from the south.	Town largely hidden by tree cover on A1 embankment, with gaps revealing trees and fields along river banks with a large modern housing estate appearing in the background to the north. Cawledge Business Park and filling station/hotel are prominent, but Lionheart Enterprise Park only glimpsed through trees.
East	B1340 approach from Denwick. A1068 approach from Alnmouth. Shilbottle Road approach from Shilbottle Ridge.	Undulating landscape with intermittent views of parkland and tree-covered town as backdrop particularly on approach from Denwick. Lionheart Enterprise Park is prominent on the final approach from Shilbottle.
North	B6341 (Old A1 – Great North Road) approach from the north.  A1 approach from the north.	Iconic view of medieval castle dominating an unspoiled historic landscape and high quality parkland.  With the exception of some newer housing the buildings of the town are largely mixed with intensive tree cover.
West	B6341 approach from Rothbury entering Alnwick at Clayport Bank.	Transition from upland sandstone ridge on Alnwick Moor to coastal plain, with periodic views of the North Sea, and uninterrupted views along the Aln valley across open landscape before plunging down into the town.
North-west	B6346 approach from Eglington entering Alnwick at Canongate.	Road enclosed by long estate wall, with few distant views. Glimpses of Alnwick Abbey followed by direct views of St Michael's iconic Church tower above before entering the urban enclosure of Canongate.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 1

Carry out a visual appraisal of key approaches listed in Table HD1.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 2

Develop design guidelines for new development on the key approaches in Table HD1.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 3

Prepare a strategy to protect heritage assets.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 4

Set up a joint County and voluntary local monitoring system of the condition and use of heritage assets.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 5

Develop a list of locally valued historic assets to provide them with protection.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 6

Prepare an owners' information campaign aimed at raising understanding of designated and undesignated heritage assets.

## POLICY HD1

### Protecting Landscape Setting

Development proposed in the Parishes of Alnwick and Denwick will be expected to be designed to avoid:

- visual harm to the landscape character and setting of town and village;
- the loss of landscape features that contribute to local distinctiveness or historic elements that contribute to landscape character and quality and to the health and well-being of residents and visitors.

Development proposals that would have an effect on the important views identified in Table HD1 should demonstrate that they do not harm the distinctive landscape or historic character of Alnwick.



### 10.4.2 Heritage assets – rescue and increased protection

As recorded in the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation, some Listed Buildings (LBs) and Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) are under threat from neglect, decay and under-use. Also, the consultation recorded that other historic structures of local value lack any kind of protection and that this should be remedied with the development of a list of locally valued undesignated historic assets.

At present, two high grade LBs and one SAM are on English Heritage's official list of Heritage at Risk and thus require urgent attention. There are also a further 9 Grade II LBs known to be decaying and/or seriously underused and three other publicly used Grade I and II\* LBs are threatened by under-use and decay. In addition, there are a number of vacant upper floors throughout the town centre that may be threatening the fabric and future of other historic buildings too.

The general level of building care and maintenance throughout the conservation area can only be described as patchy and too often stone repairs and maintenance have been carried out in such unskilled ways that the repairs themselves may threaten the future well-being of the premises. Any threats to other undesignated heritage assets in the area registered in the official County Historic Environment Record (HERs), are currently unknown.

## POLICY HD2

### Heritage Assets at Risk

Where a development proposal helps to secure a sustainable future for a heritage asset at risk, or threatened by decay and under use, this will be a factor in its favour. Such proposals are encouraged.

## POLICY HD3

### Protecting Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Development affecting non-designated heritage assets, whether locally listed, identified in the Historic Environment Record, through characterisation studies or research, or identified as part of the application process, should have particular regard to the conservation of the heritage asset, its features and its setting.

### 10.4.3 Planning and traffic enforcement

Much effort goes into refining planning decisions to show sensitivity to the historic setting of new development. However, if the care of such decisions is not matched by equal and regular care in enforcing them on the ground, then a great deal is lost in the process, leaving mediocrity to damage our townscapes and erode their economic and visitor value.

## Table HD2

### Heritage at Risk identified by English Heritage:

- Bondgate Tower, Bondgate Without (*Listed Building Grade I*)
- General Lambert's House, 31 and 33 Narrowgate (*Listed Building Grade II\**)
- Camp on Alnwick Moor (*Scheduled Ancient Monument*)

### Threatened Grade II Listed Buildings:

- No 20 and Mill at rear, Dispensary Lane
- Former Malthouse to north of No 20 Dispensary Lane
- Glebelands Lodge, Green Batt
- The Corn Exchange, 47 Bondgate Within
- High Pant, Clayport Bank
- Eye Catcher, Swansfield Park wall
- Camphill Column, Swansfield Park
- 5 Walkergate
- 18 Narrowgate
- Syon Meeting Hall, St Michael's Lane

### Other publicly used Listed Buildings threatened by underuse and/or decay:

- Former Council Chambers/Old Post Office, Clayport Street (*Grade II\**)
- Northumberland Hall/Assembly Rooms, Market Place (*Grade I*)
- Town Hall, Market Place (*Grade I*)

Alnwick and Denwick have suffered no more than their fair share of planning enforcement difficulties but improved performance will help safeguard the townscape quality of the town and village. The most outstanding traffic enforcement problem at present in the Green Batt area, is vehicles parked partly or fully on pavements. Although such abuses may not be dangerous in all cases, they do inconvenience pedestrians and, in particular, damage the historic fabric of the public realm, adding to the general erosion of the townscape. Other planning enforcement such as serving Urgent Works Notices or Building Repairs Notices on building owners who are neglecting the repair and upkeep of their own designated heritage assets, should also be pursued more vigorously as the stock of such heritage assets is finite.

## 10.5 Alnwick suburbs and urban edges Policies and Proposals

### 10.5.1 Creating a 'Sense of Arrival' on routes into Alnwick

The significant development and growth on the southern and eastern edges of Alnwick has meant that no major roads as they enter the edges of the built up area of the town have any particular feel of 'entrance'. From the south and east, the traveller is faced with the general air of arbitrary space, buildings and land uses which characterise

the twenty-first century urban edges of almost every English town. Alnwick deserves better.

With more development proposed by the Neighbourhood Plan, much of which – residential and employment – will be located on the southern and eastern edges too, the plan must direct some of this investment into increasing the feeling of 'entrance' on the main roads from the south and east as they enter the edges of the town. Building in a recognisable sense of 'entrance' would reinforce the distinctiveness of Alnwick as a visually coherent town in the landscape.

Within the suburbs, the most heavily used route through the built-up area to the town's historic core is along South Road which is a mixed residential/commercial corridor. This links the town with the national transport infrastructure, and as once part of the Great North Road, has long played an important role in the economic development of the town. It provides most visitors from the south with their first impression of the town of Alnwick.

A set of design guidelines will be developed for commercial and industrial developments along the South Road commercial corridor to ensure that they maintain high standards, and enhance, rather than erode the quality of the streetscape. The guidelines should cover aspects of scale, site layout, design, materials, landscaping and tree cover. The aims will be to:

- use this corridor to showcase the town;
- maintain an ability to adapt to

## COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 7

Improve Planning and Traffic Enforcement to protect the quality of heritage assets and public realm.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 8

Carry out a visual appraisal of  
recognisable gateways listed in  
Table HD2.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 9

Identify attractive and distinctive  
suburban townscapes and areas  
for improvement.



changing needs over the long-term  
by encouraging a variety of innovative  
proposals within a coherent framework;

- shape a gradual transition from  
sustainable commercial and industrial  
development along the edge of the  
built-up area, to conservation of the  
townscape at the historic core.

## POLICY HD4

### The Approaches to the Town

In considering development proposals  
visible from the suburban routes to the  
historic core of Alnwick listed in Table  
HD3, design that is in keeping with  
local character and the use of structural  
landscaping to reinforce attractive  
entrances and routes into the town and to  
improve unattractive entrances and routes  
will be supported.

#### 10.5.2 Improvement and new build in the suburbs

New development is essential to the  
continuing economic health and well-being  
of Alnwick and Denwick but this must be of  
quality and be sustainable.

Development may be a threat to the  
character of a settlement, even outside  
its designated conserved areas. Problems  
with inappropriate scale, materials, etc.  
may obviously damage established historic  
environments but may also be damaging  
to environments with a relatively attractive  
but fragile quality elsewhere in the  
suburbs too. The character of any attractive

**Table HD3 Main suburban routes to the historic core of Alnwick**

Route to the historic core	Approach through suburbs
B6341 (West) approach from Rothbury and Edlingham to Clayport Bank	Varied residential buildings on Clayport, wide treed borders along road.
B6346 approach from Wooler and Eglingham to Bailiffgate	Historic views of 19th century Estate Village of Canongate, with 15th C. St Michael's Church.
B6341 (old Great North Road) approach from the north to Bailiffgate	Lion Bridge, and medieval castle
B1340 approaching Denwick from the north and coast, entering Alnwick along Denwick Lane to Bondgate	Historic village of Denwick, followed by open agricultural land, and Alnwick Garden walls
A1068 approaching Alnwick from Alnmouth to Bondgate	Varied residential development along treed Alnmouth Road and running into South Road
A1068 approach north from the A1/ Alnwick by-pass	Varied commercial light industrial development along South Road
Willowburn Avenue / Wagonway Road to Bondgate	Modern commercial development followed by varied residential area. Expectation of increased traffic as a result of proposed developments to the south



suburban townscape outside the Alnwick  
Conservation Area where a less demanding  
regime for new build quality prevails, is in  
many ways more vulnerable.

In addition, there are areas in the  
suburbs that are unattractive and require

improvements. For example, some of the  
urban developments experienced from the  
A1 and from main roads into the town and  
village also need identifying for possible  
attention in the interests of presenting a  
well-cared for urban settlement.

## POLICY HD5

### Design in the Wider Town

Outside the historic core of the town new development (including extensions, alterations and changes of use to existing buildings) is encouraged to take the following design principles into account:

- a) **Footprint:** expected to respect the density and grain of the surrounding distinctive suburban townscape;
- b) **Design:** expected to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness whilst not discouraging appropriate innovation;
- c) **Quality:** expected to respect and enhance the quality of the surrounding suburban townscape and any historic content, in design, materials, detailing and finishes;
- d) **Use:** expected to be appropriate to the surrounding urban area and to function well not just in the short term but over the life-time of the development;
- e) **Size and scale:** expected to respond positively to local character;
- f) **Materials:** expected to be sympathetic to the local materials that are traditional in the surrounding suburban townscape;
- g) **Landscape and open space:** expected to enhance local character and distinctiveness and create attractive places to live, work or pass through;
- h) **Access and safety:** expected to create a safe and accessible environment where crime and disorder does not undermine local quality of life and community.

## 10.6 Alnwick Town Centre and Conservation Area *Policies and Proposals*

### 10.6.1 Boundary of the Conservation Area

The Alnwick Conservation Area makes a significant and important contribution to the unique character of the town and gives it a strong sense of place. As well as being important to the quality of life of residents, the historic environment is important to the town's role as a visitor destination (as confirmed by the Northumberland Town Welcome Study undertaken in 2008).

Government legislation (section 69 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) requires that conservation areas are kept under review. The Alnwick Conservation Area was designated over 40 years ago (in 1972). The Alnwick Conservation Area Character Appraisal (June 2006) confirms that whilst the Conservation Area retains much of its character and interest for which it was originally designated, it includes areas which now make no positive contribution to the Conservation Area and also excludes a number of areas of architectural and historic importance which merit the special protection afforded by conservation area designation.

The results of consultation on the NLPCS confirm support for a review of the

boundaries of the Alnwick Conservation Area, as did the Neighbourhood Plan Issues and Options consultation. Consequent upon this review, the opportunity should be taken to prepare an Area Appraisal and a Management Plan of the conservation area.

### 10.6.2 'Gateways'

Although the main approaches into the southern and eastern fringes of Alnwick lack much feeling of being a 'gateway' into the urban area, within the town, the main approaches into the historic core of Alnwick provide just the opposite. There is a strong sense of arrival/gateway on the following approaches into the historic core:

To maintain and improve these 'gateway streets', an audit should be carried out of the quality of the streetscape along them into the historic core. This will include an inventory of landscape features, and historic views at these most sensitive historic entrances.

This audit should be used to produce a set of guidelines to ensure their gateway qualities are not lost and are suitably enhanced.

## POLICY HD6

### Protecting Town Gateways

The protection and enhancement of the gateways to the historic core identified in table HD4 will be sought when considering development proposals in their vicinity.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 10

Review Alnwick Conservation Area boundaries and prepare a new appraisal and management plan.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 11

Establish a county wide Conservation Area Advisory Group.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 12

Carry out a gateway street audit and production of design guidelines.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 13

Carry out research into the possible conflicts between conservation and renewable energy generation in the conservation area.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 14

Investigate additional Article 4 planning powers for parts of the Alnwick Conservation Area.

**Table HD4 'Gateways' into Alnwick's historic core**

Street	Gateway to historic core
Clayport Street	Drops steeply down into the 'bowl' of Alnwick and gateway experience is enhanced by the modern development of shops and flats at the corner of Lagny Street
Pottergate (now pedestrian only)	Pottergate Tower provides the complete gateway experience
Canongate	A very distinct rural/urban edge with the streetscape and tower of St Michael's Church marking the open gateway into the town
The Peth	The south end of the Lion Bridge and into The Peth makes for a strong gateway feeling from 'outside' to 'inside' the town. This is a significant part of Alnwick's unique outstanding historic urban approach from the north
Bondgate Without	Bondgate Tower provides another complete gateway experience



### 10.6.3 Protection and enhancement of historic townscape

#### Erosion of Townscape Character by incremental change

Although it is obvious that major new buildings may damage the character and appearance of conservation areas, it is less recognised that such character can also be severely eroded by small incremental changes to buildings which collectively may reduce the quality of the general townscape.

This erosion is at its most severe in areas of uniformity of period and features. In Alnwick, such incremental problems as modernised windows and solar roof panels are already affecting the historic character of Alnwick's Green Batt area.

Additional planning control to prevent such erosion of character in the conservation area was supported in principle in the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation.

#### New Build in Historic areas

The historic character of the town is one of the most important assets of the plan area. The Alnwick Conservation Area Character Appraisal provides a thorough account

of the town's historic, architectural and townscape character.

New development can be a threat to the character of the centre, particularly the conservation area and listed buildings. It is vital that new buildings of quality modern design contribute positively to the historic environment and that developers ensure their designs respond to the historic context and local distinctiveness.

The use of design guides, which were supported in principle in the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation, can ensure that new buildings are correctly proportioned and detailed and that appropriate materials and methods are used. Alnwick Civic Society in association with the former Alnwick District Council produced a Design Guide for Shop Fronts in 1995 and a Design Guide for Stonework Repairs in 1997, as well as window and colour guides.

## POLICY HD7

### Design in the Historic Centre

New development in the historic centre of Alnwick (including extensions, alterations and changes of use to existing buildings) will be supported if it adheres to the following design principles:

1. **Footprint:** expected to respect the grain of Alnwick's historic layout and to enhance the connectivity of the town's historic pattern of pedestrian lanes and alleyways;
2. **Design:** expected to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and help to reinforce a strong sense of place whilst not discouraging appropriate innovation;
3. **Quality:** expected to match the quality of Alnwick's historic townscape in design, materials, detailing and finishes;
4. **Use:** expected to be appropriate to the historic area and to function well not just in the short term but over the life-time of the development;
5. **Size and scale:** expected to respond to local character and history;
6. **Materials:** expected to be sympathetic to the local materials that are traditional in the historic core;
7. **Landscape and open space:** expected to enhance local character and distinctiveness and create attractive places to live, work or visit;
8. **Access and safety:** expected to create a safe and accessible environment where crime and disorder does not undermine local quality of life and community;
9. **Existing guidelines:** development expected to be in accordance with guidelines on shop fronts, stonework, windows and colours produced by Alnwick Civic Society in association with the former Alnwick District Council.

### Vital Historic Spaces

One thing that particularly attracts people into towns is their feeling of vitality – their festival atmosphere which makes a visit to them special. When this buzz is missing, as is currently happening in a number of High Streets in England with the closure of retail outlets and other services, the place loses its special feel and thus its attraction. Maintaining this feeling of vitality is not just a matter of economic viability but also of how a town works to create and maintain

its own special character. Essentially, the challenge should be to re-establish vitality where it has deteriorated and to strengthen vitality where it exists.

Although most of Alnwick's streets when busy with vehicles and pedestrians have an innate vitality, this vitality may be missing in spaces off them such as the Market Place. The intention is to develop a strategy and action plan to revitalise the town's important historic spaces. See policy TCR4.

### Enhancement of unattractive areas of the town centre

Regular maintenance and upgrading of the fabric and appearance of the environment is essential to the maintenance of the unique historic character of Alnwick. A well cared for townscape is important both to the quality of life of residents and to maintaining the local visitor economy.

However, there are a number of unattractive or rundown areas that require positive enhancement in Alnwick town centre. The Greenwell Road parking area, for example, is not pedestrian friendly and gives a poor first impression to visitors to the town. Similarly the bus station area is unattractive and gives a poor impression to bus-borne visitors. It is necessary that improvement schemes for such areas are prepared in advance and then implemented as resources become available.

Maintenance of individual private properties is also important and should be encouraged by the statutory authorities through publicity, education, awards and grant aid.

The emerging NLPCS indicates public support for better enhancement as well as maintenance of Alnwick's public spaces and floorscapes and for improvements to the pedestrian environment, as did the Neighbourhood Plan consultation. In particular, the latter consultation identified Alnwick's many surviving medieval lanes and alleyways for special enhancement to encourage more use and enjoyment of them.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 15

Establish an action programme for revitalising Alnwick's vital historic spaces.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 16

Develop a programme of projects to enhance the historic townscape.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 17

Prepare a strategy and management plan for improving the overall appearance and quality of the conservation area.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 18

Survey and develop a programme of maintenance and replacement of trees in the conservation area.

COMMUNITY ACTION  
PROPOSAL

## HD CAP 19

Develop and implement an identity and interpretation strategy for the town centre incorporating a review of signposting and information in the centre.

### Tidying up the townscape by removing street clutter and improving poor floorscape

Street clutter, such as redundant street signs, obtrusive traffic markings, flyposting, illegal banners, and the clutter of street objects and advertising, are common in too many of our historic commercial areas in the UK. Floorscape design and condition also plays a surprisingly significant role in the appreciation of historic townscapes too. However, where clutter has been removed and/or rationalised and floorscape repaired, improved or redesigned, it is startling how the historic character almost magically re-emerges.

Although Alnwick has a uniform scheme of traditionally designed black and gold street furniture, it is now looking in need of renewal or refurbishment. In addition, the commercial area has the usual rash of redundant objects and signage as well as frequent flyposting on lamp-posts. Although the flooring of the Market Place has been well laid and maintained, many sections of the public footways in other areas – especially those surrounding the Market Place – have been damaged by heavy vehicles and inappropriate usage, and now require repair and possibly upgrading while the extensive areas of whinstone sets and cobbles in Market Street, Bondgate Within and Fenkle Street could benefit from a fresh assessment and re-laying.

Removal of unnecessary street clutter and better management and maintenance of floorscapes and the public realm were

supported in the Neighbourhood Plan consultation.

### Trees in the conservation area

Although there are splendid sets of mature woodland trees in church yards and in some gardens in the conservation area, there are few trees in the historic core of the town, especially in its well-used commercial centre. Consequently, these trees make a significant contribution to the street scene so they should be valued, maintained in life and replaced when too old. Being in the conservation area they already have some statutory protection but some could benefit from the additional protection of Tree Protection Orders (TPO's). Trees and planters should be of species and appearance appropriate to urban areas and to the townscape setting.

### 10.6.4 Increasing the legibility of the townscape

Being able to use a town conveniently, comfortably and enjoyably is a function of not just its street information but also the way it is possible to assist users to understand and 'read' the spaces and the links between them.

Alnwick has a relatively small town centre, but spatially it is surprisingly complex and satisfyingly intricate for its size. Combined with the variety of its rich building heritage, this makes it attractive to both residents and visitors. However, improving and rationalising street information requires clear thinking to remove the ambiguity of

the plethora of signs which have grown up over the years. The need to remove ambiguity and increase legibility is a problem across the whole of the town centre but should ideally begin at the edges of the centre first. The townscape can be made more meaningful by the addition of locational and historic interpretive street material such as display banners, window badges and street-based or virtual maps that define functional and historic districts.

Encouraging the 'reading', understanding and appreciation of spaces, corners, landmarks, links and thoroughfares through a sophisticated integration of information and street interpretation can bring great improvements for the legibility and thus enjoyment of the town by locals and visitors alike. A consequence of this could also be an increase in the vitality and economic health of Alnwick's town centre.

## 10.7 Overall vision

The downside of the issue-based approach used in this section is that it can lead to a fragmented view of how to improve the historic townscape of the centre of Alnwick, thus making it more difficult to get a balanced approach to the proper management of the various environmental positives and negatives that operate here. Branding and promotion of the area's townscape qualities, attractions and unique identity must also be included as an

essential element of the action package to achieve this overall vision.

Such a balanced and comprehensive approach offers an opportunity for better management in the interests of maximising efficiency and convenience without sacrificing the historic quality and appearance we are so proud of. Although on the surface, taking a visionary overview of the conservation area may seem inappropriate in times of austerity, in reality it is the best time to do this. It prepares 'bottom drawer' ideas and projects ready for better times as well as giving all involved something to work towards together.

The means of enhancing and better composing the townscape of the Alnwick conservation area is via seeking permission to designate the centre of the town an Historic Core Zone. This is an official designation supported by government, English Heritage and the Historic Towns Forum, which enables a comprehensive approach to all the design, enhancement, regeneration and funding issues identified above and enables all agencies involved to deliver a coherent long term vision for the town. In particular, this should also involve revisiting the Alnwick Civic Society's improvement plan for the centre of Alnwick, published in 2007 and investigating the comprehensive opportunities for Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Townscape Heritage' funding programme which can offer up to £2m in grant.

Such creative visioning can be done at both whole town/village scale or just within the conservation area initially. As Alnwick's

Conservation Area contains the historic and commercial core of the town which is used by all locals and visitors, it seems the best place to begin the preparation of such comprehensive action.

The Neighbourhood Plan consultation supported this vision by identifying the need not only for Alnwick/Denwick to be promoted as strongly as the Castle and Garden but also promoted as a single Resort Town studded with special attractions like the Castle, Garden and its Christian heritage of churches, abbey and priory.

## 10.8 Denwick Village Policies and Proposals

### 10.8.1 Proposed Conservation Area

None of the village of Denwick is currently protected by conservation area designation. The majority of buildings date from the early 19th Century and the village has an unspoilt character which derives mainly from its historical development as an estate village. It is appropriate that an appraisal to consider the need for conservation area designation is carried out. The area of appraisal should include the surviving medieval field patterns surrounding the village and its overall landscape setting.

Consultation for the NLPCS confirmed support for the consideration of the need for a conservation area in Denwick and the Neighbourhood Plan consultation also indicated support for this too.

### 10.8.2 Protection and enhancement of village townscape and landscape

Whether the historic village of Denwick is designated or not as a conservation area, it does deserve to be assessed for other protection too. The Neighbourhood Plan offers the opportunity for Denwick village and its landscape to be properly assessed for the future.

Improvement tasks mentioned above for the enhancement of Alnwick's Conservation Area would be relevant here but as Denwick is smaller and less intricate, not all would be appropriate. Assessing environmental impact and mitigation of through-traffic would be relevant and it would also be important to consider such factors as street clutter, quality and condition of floorscape, enhancement of the townscape and quality and condition of trees and landscape setting.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 20

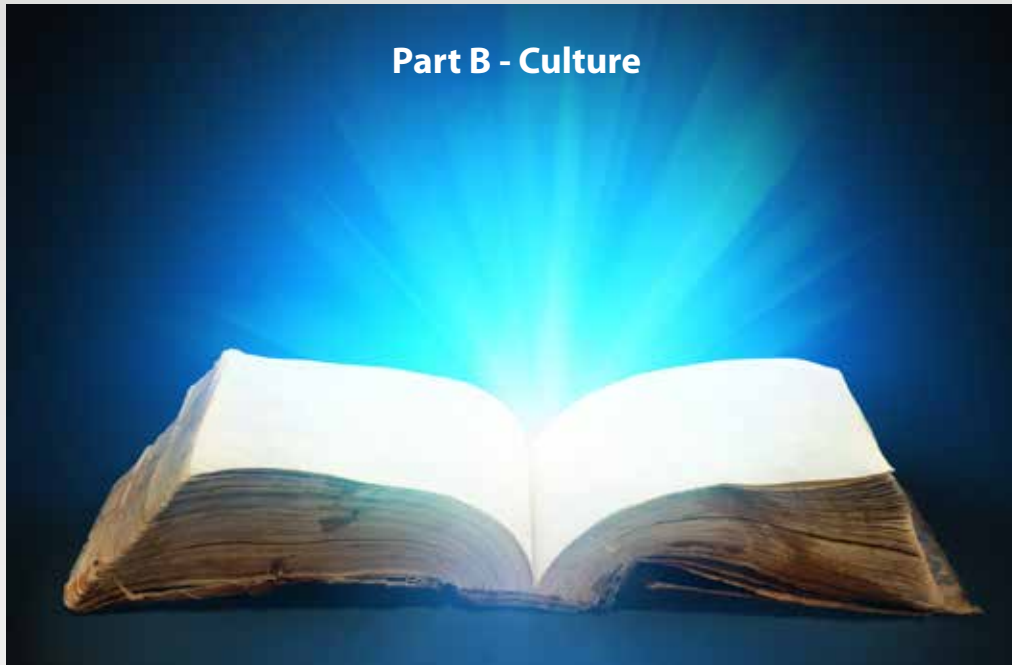
Investigate the designation of a conservation area for Denwick.

#### COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL

### HD CAP 21

Carry out a comprehensive appraisal of the village townscape and its landscape setting.

## Part B - Culture



### 10.9 Context

#### 10.9.1 Introduction

##### **Definition of culture used in the Neighbourhood Plan:**

For the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Culture Section of this topic includes creativity, film, arts, events, festivals, local clubs and traditional food and community pastimes ranging from leisure entertainment to personal inspiration and betterment. In addition, because all topics of the Neighbourhood Plan are 'spatially based' this section concentrates

on cultural infrastructure, both physical and organisational.

##### **Cultural significance of Alnwick and Denwick:**

Although Newcastle provides the wide cultural offer of a regional capital, Alnwick offers the next level of cultural offer to the people of north Northumberland and its visitors. In addition to a multiple-arts hub at the Playhouse, a grand Town Hall used for cultural events and a local museum, Alnwick has a Castle/Garden and Assembly Rooms (Northumberland Hall) of cultural quality appropriate to a ducal town. It also has a heritage railway in the shape of the Aln Valley Line.

##### **Factors constraining the sustainability and development of Culture:**

- Lack of available public and private finance;
- Lack of information on the cultural situation and future needs in Northumberland and specifically in the Alnwick/Denwick area;
- Undervaluing of cultural assets as economic assets.

#### 10.9.2 Policy context

##### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):**

Cultural well-being has a place in the social role, the second of three basic roles the planning system needs to perform and both cultural well-being and cultural facilities are fundamental to the 12 'Core Planning Principles' which underpin the achievement of sustainable development. Finally, the provision of cultural facilities that communities wish to see is also presented as an integral part of Planning's role in Section 8, 'Promoting Healthy Communities'.

##### **Northumberland County Council Draft Cultural Strategy and Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy (NLPCS):**

'Stronger Together Through Inspirational Culture' was a draft Cultural Strategy for Northumberland that the County Council produced in 2010 for open consultation. The NLPCS generally supports and mentions cultural facilities as a necessary element of the package of facilities that are essential to

**Table HD5 Existing Cultural Assets to be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan**

Cultural buildings	Specialised buildings	Bailiffgate Museum, Alnwick Playhouse, Barter Books, Alnwick Castle, Alnwick Library
	Non-Specialised buildings	Mechanics' Institute, Northumberland Hall, Town Hall, churches and halls, Costello Centre, live music and community pubs, etc.
Cultural spaces		Market Place, the Pastures, Alnwick Garden, Hulne Park, etc.
Cultural assets		Aln Valley Railway
Cultural events	Major events	Alnwick International Music Festival (August) Alnwick Food Festival (September) Heritage Open Days (September)
	Minor events	Local concerts and entertainments
Local broadcasting		Lionheart Radio
Cultural learning		Public talks, learned societies, cultural classes and creative skills training
Performance groups		Northumberland Theatre Company, etc
High Street		Tourist shops and Information Centres
Cultural volunteers		A tradition of local people helping to make things happen

any sustainable community and indicates that the Council will strongly resist the loss of such facilities and is also similarly committed to their provision where this would address deficiencies.

## 10.10 Objectives of the Culture Section

The Neighbourhood Plan consultation (December 2011) demonstrated the local importance of Culture to the quality of

life of the area's residents and visitors so it deserves its place here in the Neighbourhood Plan. As recorded above, this is also supported by national legislation and Northumberland County Strategies. Little information in the way of surveys and statistics is yet available that describes or analyses either the current cultural provision or the future cultural needs in Alnwick and north Northumberland. As the content of this Section relies mainly on what limited cultural information the general Neighbourhood Plan process itself has generated, policy making in this area



would be premature but the opportunity to formulate Community Action Proposals will be taken. So the overall approach is to:

- describe the range and variety of cultural facilities in Alnwick and Denwick;
- record some of the current challenges that could affect their future well-being;
- lay the foundations for an audit of existing facilities for future proofing and of the nature and extent of cultural needs not yet provided for.



## 10.11 Cultural Challenges and Community Action Proposals

Cultural facilities that exclude sports and leisure do not generally call for much additional allocation of land. Certainly none of the major attraction managers interviewed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process indicated that they had any foreseeable needs for additional land for expansion or consolidation. Also, none of the other evidence collected demonstrated that Alnwick currently needs the allocation of further dedicated cultural space. The only particular spatial reference related to the designated boundary of the town centre commercial area which could have implications is the conflict of loud music in a cultural building with other surrounding uses, particularly residential uses.

### 10.11.1 Specialised cultural buildings challenges

#### **Need to promote the cultural offer of the town in its entirety**

Promoting individual cultural assets is positive but promoting Alnwick as a single 'resort town' would do more for the cultural common good. 'Show me a town in the North East that has as much to offer as Alnwick!' was an enthusiastic comment from the consultation. To achieve this seamless cultural entity requires a strengthening of partnership working between all parties

involved in maintaining and delivering cultural infrastructure.

#### **Need to maintain steady and continuous funding**

The pressure to maintain funding creates uneven delivery of services and soaks up much effort in seeking funds from a multiplicity of sources. At present, this is more demanding for those organisations which have some dependence on public funds.

#### **Broadening and increasing the audience**

The current demographic means that the audience for some attractions is predominantly 'concessionary'. A greater diversity of audience would help support the attraction. This is less concerning for those attractions with a capacity to provide a broader offer to suit a wider audience.

#### **Better accessibility to the attractions**

Although none of the attractions interviewed during the Neighbourhood Plan preparation identified any problems with access ON their sites, some identified challenges of access TO their sites because of poor signposting in the town or limited availability of public parking and transport. This was mainly those without their own dedicated car park and a need to rely upon public transport to bring a proportion of their audience in.

### 10.11.2 Non-specialised Cultural buildings challenges

#### **Rental charges and choice of rooms**

Concern was expressed about costs of bookable rooms and a lack of variety in sizes to choose from being deterrents to users. The voluntary establishment of common standards of charges according to room size could be a stimulus to local cultural development.

#### **Poor condition and limited facilities**

The interiors and facilities, as well as the general building condition of publicly bookable venues are below standard. This does not apply to every venue but mainly to two of the major ones in the centre of Alnwick.

#### **Conflicts with surrounding uses**

Venues which include loud performances as part of their cultural offer and involve numbers of patrons arriving and leaving, can provide problems to other users nearby. Although the main problems arise with live music venues associated with residential areas, this may be a more wide-spread problem of land use allocation.

### 10.11.3 Cultural spaces and major cultural events challenges

#### **Managing demand for more events using our limited cultural space**

To date, the competing demands from markets and cultural events and activities for the use of Alnwick's premier open air



Events and festivals bring more people and vehicles into the centre of Alnwick, all of which need to be accommodated within its pattern of medieval roads and spaces, which in the summer, are already carrying the additional load of visitors and their vehicles. These peaks of intensive use need to be managed, not just for safety or convenience, but also to ensure that the value of the cultural experience of Alnwick on these occasions is not damaged or severely reduced.

#### **Weather management of Alnwick's cultural spaces**

The effect of our northern weather on our outdoor activities continues to be of concern, particularly as the country's weather pattern now contains more extreme conditions.

Weather-proofing the Market Place would be the priority. Regular events/markets and long festivals may be more at risk from the weather than individual one-off events or activities.

#### **10.11.4 Other general cultural challenges**

##### **Development of creative industries in Alnwick**

Other towns have taken the initiative to develop any local creative flair and experience they have to add creative value to their unique selling point as well as new employment for residents and newcomers alike. At present the town has no dedicated municipal gallery although Bailiffgate Museum's upstairs space and The Playhouse's foyer space fulfil this role. As a cultural attraction, archive and educational centre, the Bailiffgate Museum is rapidly developing and it is proving to be a strong stimulus to the development of research into local genealogy and history, of local artistic and musical culture as well as of Alnwick's growing visitor offer.

##### **Developing and promoting the opportunities presented by Aln Valley Railway (AVR)**

The developing AVR is already proving to be an important heritage and visitor attraction for the Alnwick and Denwick area. Its growing role in encouraging research, education and volunteer development needs to be further supported locally and regionally so that it can become the all-round heritage railway for North Northumberland celebrating community railway history.

##### **Make use of the gaps in the events Calendar**

Although Alnwick has several major festivals, there is still space in the calendar for more. Other Northumberland towns have more seasonal festivals which Alnwick could emulate.

##### **Creative learning could be better developed**

There is only a limited offer for formal creative learning in Alnwick. Too little is known about the demand for such learning but local learning has recently suffered from cuts in public funding.

##### **Our 'Way of Life' could be better explained and promoted**

Heritage and culture is about people and families and not just the built environment. More opportunities to celebrate the distinctiveness of life in North Northumberland should be developed.

##### **Shortage of cultural facilities**

As no study of cultural needs has been compiled before, there is only anecdotal evidence for what may be missing.

More 'bottom up' information is needed.

#### **10.11.5 Future cultural infrastructure planning**

The Community Action Proposal C CAP 1 will begin by gathering information and improving the present situation. This needs to be backed up by a future programme of action designed to secure the long term development and success of cultural interests and opportunities in Alnwick and Denwick (C CAP 2).

#### **COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL**

### **C CAP 1**

Carry out an initial programme of limited information gathering and implementation in Alnwick and Denwick to mitigate the challenges to cultural development identified in 10.10.1 - 4.

#### **COMMUNITY ACTION PROPOSAL**

### **C CAP 2**

Develop a future programme for what provision should be made in the future to accommodate identified cultural needs.

## DELIVERING THE PLAN

## 11.1 Introduction

### 11.1.1

The Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented in the period up to 2031 through a combination of the Local Planning Authority's consideration and determination of planning applications for development and through steering public and private resources and investment in the plan area into the Community Action Proposals set out in the plan.

## 11.2 Development Management

### 11.2.1

The vision and policies contained in the ADNP for the Alnwick and Denwick area will be delivered through landowners and developers responding to its allocation of land and buildings for development and through the plans and proposals of the County Council, utility companies and other public and private agencies.

### 11.2.2

In preparing the Plan, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the allocations are achievable. All the allocated

sites are considered viable to develop using conventional development assessment techniques based on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment criteria and the Employment Land Review criteria.

### 11.2.3

In addition to National Planning Policy in the NPPF and the Northumberland Local Plan policies (once adopted), the Localism Act allows the ADNP policies, (if they are based on sound evidence and reflect the strategic policies, community input and proper principles of planning), to have statutory weight in determining planning and development outcomes in the Plan Area.

### 11.2.4

When development is proposed within the Alnwick and Denwick Plan area either by developers, private individuals or other organisations, the ADNP policies will be used by the County Council and by Planning Inspectors at appeal when the planning decision is made.

### 11.2.5

Whilst the Local Planning Authority will be responsible for development management, the Town and Parish Councils will also use the ADNP to frame their own views on submitted planning applications. The

Councils will work together to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

### 11.2.6

Some of the development proposals which will come forward over time will raise complex issues which will require detailed guidance and control to ensure that sustainable development is achieved.

- **Major development sites (both allocated and coming forward over the life of the plan)** - guidance on proposed development will be necessary particularly on larger or complex sites and will take the form of master plans, development briefs or design and access statements to give clear direction at an early stage on the expected form of development.
- **Environmental statements and other impact assessments** – the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999 requires Local Planning Authorities to request environmental statements on a wide range of developments such as windfarms, major road construction, intensive livestock rearing etc. if it appears that significant impacts are likely. In addition, even where a full environmental statement is not required there is frequently a

need for detailed assessments to look at the specific impacts of development and the need for their mitigation e.g. transport assessments, retail impact assessments, biodiversity and ecological assessments etc.

- **Legal agreements and planning obligations** – precise and enforceable conditions which are reasonable, relevant and necessary will continue to be the most common form of control applied to planning permissions to control development at the implementation stage but in some cases closer control is required through a legal agreement or obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

#### 11.2.7

Although proposals are under consideration for the County Council to prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and charging schedule for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), this remains some way off and S106 agreements will remain the main delivery mechanism for the time being for any matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. These will be indispensable in securing the provision of highways and transport infrastructure, recreation facilities, education, health, affordable housing, environmental improvement, etc. in the plan area.

#### 11.2.8

A planning obligation may only be sought

in certain circumstances which are fully set out in the Planning Practice Guidance but all S106 agreements should be:

- relevant to planning;
- necessary to make the proposed development acceptable;
- directly related to the proposed development;
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind;
- reasonable in all other respects.

#### 11.2.9

S106 Agreements help to:

- offset any immediate negative impacts of the development on the Plan Area;
- increase the capacity of infrastructure and services in the Plan Area to cope with the additional demand from new development;
- contribute to local improvement projects such as the Community Action Proposals that address local needs which are a direct result of the development;
- secure the provision of affordable housing in the Plan Area.

### 11.3

#### The Use of the ADNP in Other Decision Making

##### 11.3.1

It is recognised that Northumberland County Council as Local Highways Authority has considerable powers to implement

changes to traffic infrastructure and transport systems independent of the planning system, as is the case with a number of other statutory bodies providing services. However it is the intention that these agencies will apply the policies set out in this plan when preparing and implementing their plans and programmes.

##### 11.3.2

In terms of public agencies – utility bodies and service providers are numerous. Some provide services such as gas, electricity, water and sewerage which are essential for development whilst others provide services to people and businesses such as health, education, transport etc. The ADNP will play an important role in providing an agreed spatial strategy to manage development and change.

### 11.4

#### Community Action Proposals

##### 11.4.1

The community has demonstrated real enthusiasm to see projects brought forward to implement the ADNP. Through the process of preparing the Plan many helpful ideas have been proposed. These have been listed in the Community Action Plan (CAP) and will be the focus of community action to implement the Plan.

#### 11.4.2

The CAP at Appendix 1 presents an ambitious list of projects but it is not the expectation that work will start on all of them in the early years of the plan. Thus the plan indicates the expected timescale and who will be the partners involved in delivering each project. The speed of progress will depend to a large extent on available funding. Some of the proposals within the CAP will in due course be funded through the CIL.

### 11.5 Funding Sources

#### 11.5.1

To deliver the Plan the County Council, Town and Parish Councils and their partners will seek funding for, and bring forward, projects which will make a real difference to Alnwick and Denwick.

#### 11.5.2

Major development proposals on the edge of Alnwick in the future offer the prospect of S106 and CIL funding to address major issues such as public realm enhancements and transport and other infrastructure improvements. Once the Neighbourhood Plan is completed and 'made' and the CIL is in place in Northumberland, 25% of CIL funding raised in the Plan Area on all qualifying residential and commercial development will be made available to the community itself to decide how the money

is spent. Parish and town councils will receive the money directly and the Localism Act sets out that neighbourhood CIL can be spent on:

**the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure or anything else that is concerned with addressing demands that development places on an area.**

#### 11.5.3

In the meantime, it is important that the existing S106 Planning Obligation mechanism is used to capture financial contributions to contribute to the physical and social infrastructure requirements of development proposals set out in the Plan.

#### Other sources of funds

#### 11.5.4

Other sources of funds include the capital programmes of the County Council. However, the availability of this funding will be limited and uncertain in the coming years. It may however be possible to obtain a proportion of the New Homes Bonus for homes built in the plan area up to 2016.

#### 11.5.5

It may also be possible to align the Community Action Proposals with planned investments through the Local Transport Plan or other programmes of the Council.

#### 11.5.6

The Homes and Communities Agency also

has funding through its Community Led Project Support Funding for Community Led Housing and Community Right to Build Order projects.

#### 11.5.7

Finally some of the community led projects will be eligible for funding through lottery programmes such as the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund etc.

### 11.6 Monitoring and Review

#### 11.6.1

The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2014 to 2031. Development will take place during this time in the Plan Area and will have an impact on the community as well as on the physical fabric of the town and village. Each new development will influence what happens next and where.

#### 11.6.2

It is, therefore, essential to the long-term success of the Plan that developments in the Plan Area are monitored and reviewed against the Plan's objectives and against the policies designed to implement them. Northumberland County Council will determine planning applications in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and is responsible for monitoring delivery of the policies and proposals. The Town and Parish Councils will also make arrangements to monitor developments and report progress

against policies and proposals to their annual meetings. Assistance in this process will be sought from community partners.

#### 11.6.3

A suite of monitoring indicators is proposed in the ADNP Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment and will be used to monitor the plan.

#### 11.6.4

The need to review the ADNP periodically, especially in association with the publication of future stages of the Northumberland Local Plan, to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan continue to work effectively together will be kept under consideration by the County, Town and Parish Councils. The process of review will follow whatever process is set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and the Planning Practice Guidance at that time.

# Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

## Community Action Proposals

The Neighbourhood Plan process has raised a number of issues from the community consultations which, while not capable of being part of the statutory plan, the Town and Parish Council want to try and address. As such, throughout the Plan, a number of Community

Action Proposals have been identified. The purpose of this section is to put those proposals into a Community Action Plan which sets out how the proposals will be put in place, who will be responsible for delivery and an indication of the timescale

within which projects might come forward. Within this action plan the following delivery timescale bands are used – Year 1 (2015-16), Years 2-5, and Years 6-10 – it is accepted that some of these items will be reviewed over time and extend into Years 11-15.

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>HOUSING</b>						
<b>H CAP 1</b>	Develop projects to provide young, elderly & disabled populations with appropriate types of supported accommodation.	Develop specific sites in appropriate and accessible locations for independent assisted living, sheltered housing and extra care for the elderly and supported housing through a registered provider for young people.	County Council Housing	Registered Providers/ Housing Trusts/ Gallery Youth	Ongoing through plan period	Homes and Communities Agency/ Development finance
<b>H CAP 2</b>	Use the findings of the 2016 Alnwick and Denwick Housing Needs Survey in negotiations between developers and the County Council on housing developments to determine the appropriate size, type and tenure mix of affordable housing to be provided through the development.		North'land County Council	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	Ongoing through plan period	

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>H CAP 3</b>	Introduce an annual award scheme that celebrates high quality new housing design.	The County Council, developers and architects will be invited to nominate schemes for the award that accord with the highest levels of Building for Life 12 and the Lifetime Homes Standard.	Alnwick Civic Society	Alnwick Town Council County Council	Year 1 and ongoing	Alnwick Civic Society and Sponsorship
<b>H CAP 4</b>	Identify vacant and disused accommodation within the town centre suitable for refurbishment /conversion for housing.	Priority will be given to identifying and acquiring vacant and unused property in the town centre and renovating it for priority housing needs thus reducing the need to travel. Compulsory Purchase and other powers will be used where necessary.	County Council Housing	Alnwick Town Council	Years 2-5 and ongoing through plan period	NCC Finance

## ECONOMY, EMPLOYMENT & TOURISM

<b>E CAP 1</b>	Promote all year round and all-weather tourist attractions and facilities.	Northumberland Tourism and accommodation and facilities providers will promote investment in all year round and all- weather visitor attractions and facilities.	Northumberland Tourism	Alnwick Tourism Association Tourism Facilities and Accommodation providers	Years 2-5	
<b>E CAP 2</b>	Investigate ways to improve tourism facilities.	The County Council will investigate the potential to fund any improvements found necessary in tourism facilities, from a local tourist tax and from council tax revenue on second homes.	County Council	Alnwick Tourism Association	Years 2-5	Council Tax on Second Homes
<b>E CAP 3</b>	Encourage businesses to maintain high standards of landscape, maintenance and design quality on major approaches into the town.	Alnwick Town Council to monitor	Alnwick Town Council	Local businesses	Year 1 and ongoing	
<b>E CAP 4</b>	Promote training for traditional skills alongside newly developing skills in a 'Skills Centre'.	The County Council will consider opportunities to maintain and co-ordinate training	County Council	Education and Training providers	Year 2 and ongoing	

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>RETAIL &amp; TOWN CENTRE</b>						
<b>TC CAP 1</b>	To foster an integrated approach to the stewardship and development of Town Centre assets	<p>The Town Council will delegate to the Town Team or a similar action partner responsibility to research, cost and propose a three year rolling plan with specific proposals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve accessibility and pedestrian flows around the town;</li> <li>• develop public facilities and use of public spaces;</li> <li>• encourage independent retail outlets;</li> <li>• actively promote the Town Centre (and any vacant retail units) to retail businesses expected to enhance the appeal and diversity of the Town Centre.</li> </ul> <p>The Town Team will lead/support the implementation of an overall plan to stimulate/increase use of public facilities and public space.</p>	Town Team (or other body designated by Town Council)	Town Team Partners Civic Society Chamber of Trade Local Businesses Festival Groups	Years 2-5	National Government County/Community Chest Town Council Local Business Heritage Funding Sponsorship Event income
<b>TC CAP 2</b>	Mitigate the impact of the proposed High School relocation on the town centre economy and retail trade.	When The High School plans have been approved the Town Council will take a leadership role with interested parties.	Town Council	Town Team	Year 1 and onwards	
<b>TC CAP 3</b>	To develop a whole year strategy for the formal and informal use of the Market Place and its surrounding assets in line with the findings of this Plan, including as appropriate parking arrangements.	The Town Council will work through the Town Team, town centre businesses and other representative community organisations to develop the strategy.	Town Council	Town Team	Year 1 and onwards	

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b>						
<b>CF CAP 1</b>	Establish a register of Assets of Community Value including those in Policy CF1.	Alnwick Town Council and Denwick Parish Council will facilitate the process of identifying and registering buildings listed in policy CF1.  If any of these building are being disposed of Alnwick Town Council and Denwick Parish Council will ensure information is widely circulated and, where appropriate invoke the Community Right to Bid and facilitate the development of partnership working to secure these buildings for the future.	Alnwick Town Council & Denwick Parish Council	Representative Community Bodies. NCC Alnwick Civic Society	Year 1 and ongoing through plan period	N/A
<b>CF CAP 2</b>	Carry out an audit of existing play areas and identify new requirements.	Undertake an audit of need for improvements and new provision of children's play areas which will be used as the basis for securing new provision through housing development in the town or other funding.	Town Council	Local Residents	Year 1	Developer contributions  Alnwick Town Council
<b>CF CAP 3</b>	Maintain and improve facilities for all age learning and special needs.	Adequate facilities for all age learning and special needs facilities must be maintained at least to the current standard, with potential for growth, on the Lindisfarne site	County Council	Alnwick Adult Education Association	Ongoing through the plan period	County Education Budget
<b>CF CAP 4</b>	Encourage improved facilities for young people.	Encourage the provision of facilities for young people to meet – facilities to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Seating, shelter, lighting and open wifi access;</li> <li>● Continued provision of advice and support in a central location;</li> <li>● Provision of youth work in association with the new school campus;</li> <li>● Provision of outdoor cycle cross track north of Alnmouth Road;</li> <li>● Negotiation of pub schemes to allow access for young people to socialise for soft drinks.</li> </ul>	Gallery Youth	NCC  Other organisations that involve or support young people	Year 1 and ongoing through plan period	Big Lottery Fund  EU including LEADER  Grant making trusts  Central and local Government  Potential for enterprising activities

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
CF CAP 5	Encourage improved facilities for the elderly.	<p>Encourage the provision of facilities for the elderly to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development and sustainability of services to reduce loneliness and isolation in Alnwick and Denwick, and ensure referrals to these schemes.</li> <li>● Development of community sharing/inter-generational activities, such as Landshare schemes.</li> <li>● Ensuring access to good quality advice, advocacy and support</li> </ul>	NCC	<p>NCC Clinical Commissioning Group</p> <p>Age UK and other organisations that involve or support older people</p>	Year 1 and ongoing through plan period	<p>Big Lottery Fund</p> <p>EU including LEADER</p> <p>Grant making trusts</p> <p>Central and local Government</p> <p>Potential for enterprising activities</p>
CF CAP 6	Improve the standards of public toilet provision.	<p>Improve standards of public toilet provision and signage to toilets over the plan period and to explore with retail outlets and food and drink establishments wider public access to toilet facilities.</p>	NCC	<p>Alnwick Town Council</p> <p>Chamber of Trade</p> <p>Local businesses</p>	Year 1 and ongoing	<p>Sponsorship</p> <p>Chamber of Trade</p> <p>Alnwick Town Council</p>
CF CAP 7	Improve community consultation and provision of information.	<p>Develop a Community website for Alnwick &amp; Denwick</p> <p>Establish community notice boards and use empty retail space to promote community activity and services.</p> <p>Explore the preparation of welcome packs for new residents – matching interests of people with activities/volunteering opportunities/organisations.</p> <p>Explore the use of the Community Stall during market days for campaigns and consultation</p> <p>Explore the potential to use new technology to provide information- e.g. via QR codes on buildings, a virtual town trail, augmented reality etc.</p>	<p>Alnwick Town Council &amp; Denwick Parish Council</p>	<p>Local Living NE Town Team</p> <p>NCC</p> <p>Chamber of Trade</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Developers</p> <p>Voluntary Organisations</p>	Year 1 and ongoing through plan period	<p>Alnwick Town Council &amp; Denwick Parish Council</p> <p>Sponsorship</p> <p>Big Lottery Fund</p> <p>EU including LEADER</p> <p>Grant making trusts</p> <p>Central and local Government</p> <p>Potential for enterprising activities</p>
CF CAP 8	Identify and develop new burial grounds and associated facilities in the plan area.		Alnwick Town Council & Denwick Parish Council	NCC	Years 6 - 10	Alnwick Town Council / Denwick Parish Council / NCC

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>TRANSPORT</b>						
<b>TR CAP 1</b>	<b>WALKING</b>	<p>This to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review of the current use of the Cobbles in Market Street, the parking area in Fenkle Street and the footways on the Lion Bridge and implement measures to favour pedestrian use;</li> <li>● Introduction of a 20mph speed limit, wider footways and central refuges to simplify pedestrian crossing arrangements along the route through the town from the South Road/Alnmouth Road (A1068) roundabout to and along Bondgate Without, Bondgate Within, Market Street and Clayport Bank;</li> <li>● Provide additional signal controlled pedestrian crossings over the through routes approaching and in the town centre;</li> <li>● Review the potential impact of increasing numbers of mobility scooters on footway provision.</li> </ul>	NCC	<p>Alnwick Town Council Alnwick Civic Society English Heritage</p>	<p>Years 2 to 5</p> <p>Years 2 to 5</p> <p>Years 6 to 10</p> <p>Years 11 to 15</p>	<p>Alnwick Civic Society NCC</p> <p>NCC LTP and NCC Highways maintenance</p> <p>NCC LTP/ NCC Highways maintenance/ Developer Contributions</p>
	Pedestrian priority will be enhanced.	<p>This to be achieved through the introduction of traffic calming measures where speed limits are abused and the introduction of consistent type and operation of pedestrian crossings which will enhance pedestrian priority.</p> <p>A pedestrian priority shared space scheme for the town centre will be developed including a review of Narrowgate and the use of differential surfaces in parts of Bondgate Within.</p>	NCC	<p>Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council Alnwick Chamber of Trade</p>	<p>Years 2 to 5</p> <p>Years 2 to 10</p>	<p>NCC LTP and NCC Highways maintenance</p>

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	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 1 CONTD	<b>WALKING contd</b>  Convenient walking routes and corridors will be protected and new routes developed.	Provide safe and pleasant access from all residential areas to the town centre, and the trading estates and between areas.  Upgrade to continuous hard surface, the strategic foot- way link between the Leisure Centre/Sainsburys area and the town centre on the western side of South Road.  Develop longer distance walking routes between Alnwick and Denwick, and the surrounding countryside for leisure use.  Sign the individual and whole network of walking routes tastefully, unobtrusively but comprehensively.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	Rolling programme  Year 1  Years 6 to 10  Years 6 to 10	NCC LTP NCC highways maintenance Developer contributions
	<b>CYCLING</b>  Develop a local cycle route network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progressively develop safe and continuous cycle routes suitable for functional use between the residential areas of Alnwick and Denwick, the town centre and the educational, industrial, business and commercial locations in and around the town.</li> <li>In developing the safe cycle routes, use residential and town centre restricted speed-limit streets, to reduce the need for cycle tracks and cycle lanes.</li> <li>Provide appropriate facilities for cycle parking, particularly in Alnwick town centre.</li> <li>Progressively develop safe and continuous cycle routes suitable for functional use between the residential areas of Alnwick and Denwick, the town centre and the educational, industrial, business and commercial locations in and around the town.</li> <li>In developing the safe cycle routes, use residential and town centre restricted speed-limit streets, to reduce the need for cycle tracks and cycle lanes.</li> <li>Provide appropriate facilities for cycle parking, particularly in Alnwick town centre.</li> </ul>	NCC	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council Sustrans CTC	Years 2 to 5 and ongoing	NCC LTP NCC Highways maintenance Developer contributions

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 2 CONTD	Develop and promote longer distance cycling routes.	Develop a safe and continuous network of cycle routes for longer daily and leisure journeys between Alnwick, Denwick, Shilbottle, Alnmouth and the nearby coastal villages.	Sustrans	NCC Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council, CTC, Northumberland Tourism Aln Valley Railway	Years 5 to 10	NCC LTP, NCC Highways maintenance, Sustrans Northumberland Tourism
	Signpost the cycling network effectively, clearly but unobtrusively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and signpost the current cycling network.</li> <li>Keep signposting up-to-date as the network evolves.</li> </ul>	NCC	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council Sustrans CTC	Years 1 to 5 and ongoing	NCC LTP NCC Highways maintenance Developer contributions
	Promote safe cycling schemes.	Promote local cycle training, testing and safety compliance schemes to reduce road safety risk	NCC Road safety	Sustrans, CTC	Years 2 to 5	NCC LTP, CTC Sustrans
TR CAP 3	<b>BUS, COACH AND RELATED SERVICES</b>  Improve Alnwick Bus Station and its management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an improved management plan for Alnwick bus station to deliver a clean environment, free from litter and vandal misuse, which will ensure enhanced safety and security for staff and users.</li> </ul>	NCC Public Transport	Alnwick Town Council Bus Operators Site Owner Police User focus group	Years 2 to 5	NCC Bus Operators Site owner

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	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 3 CONTD	<b>BUS, COACH AND RELATED SERVICES</b> <i>CONTINUED</i>	Ensure that the available toilet facilities are well signed from the bus station, coach drop-off/pick-up, lay-over and parking places.	Alnwick Town Council	NCC, Site owner, Northumberland Tourism, User focus group	Years 2 to 5	Alnwick Town Council, Northumberland Tourism
	Provide well-signed access to visitor information and facilities.	In a weather protected area at the bus station, provide information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the available bus services;</li> <li>the location of town centre facilities and tourist attractions.</li> </ul>	Alnwick Town Council	Northumberland Tourism, TIC, NCC, Denwick Parish Council, Alnwick Chamber of Trade, Bus operators User Focus group	Years 2 to 5	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council Northumberland Tourism, NCC, Alnwick Chamber of Trade, Bus operators
		Provide a marked-up display version of the town map at the bus station and coach drop-off/pick-up, layover and parking places.	Alnwick Town Council	Northumberland Tourism, TIC, NCC, Alnwick Chamber of Trade, Bus operators	Years 0 to 5	Northumberland Tourism, Alnwick Chamber of Trade, Sponsors
	Investigate the potential of other bus station sites in or near the town centre to provide more space and reduce operating constraints.	Consider any other potentially suitable sites for the bus station within or close to the town centre and tourist facilities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Greenwell Road car parking areas, (decked over) as potentially offering more space for a new, improved bus station that will also avoid the constraint of operating regular service buses through Green Batt.</li> </ul>	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Landowners, Bus Operators	Years 6 to 10	NCC LTP, Section 106, CIL
	Improve the provision of bus and coach facilities throughout the Plan area.	<b>Facilities</b> to include:				
		reviewing coach and tour bus drop off/pick up sites with weather protection for passengers;	NCC	CPT	Years 6 to 10	NCC LTP, Alnwick Chamber of Trade, CPT
		reviewing layover/parking provision for coaches and tour buses, separate from the drop-off point if necessary;	NCC	CPT	Years 6 to 10	NCC LTP, Alnwick Chamber of Trade, CPT
		reviewing bus shelter provision within the Plan area;	Alnwick Town Council	Bus operators	Ongoing	ATC Budget

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 3 CONTD	<b>BUS, COACH AND RELATED SERVICES</b> <i>CONTINUED</i>					
	Improve the provision of bus and coach facilities throughout the Plan area.	evaluating a potential park and ride collection and drop-off stop in the Willowburn area for Newcastle buses;	NCC	Bus operators	Years 2 to 5	NCC LTP, Bus operators Developer Contributions
		developing school bus stops and lay-over provision to improve safety for all and reduce traffic conflicts;	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Bus operators	Years 2 to 5	NCC LTP, NCC Highways maintenance
		continuing to press for improved provision until all scheduled bus services are operated by vehicles that are fully compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	Years 2 to 5	Developer Contributions
	Improve the provision of bus and coach services throughout the Plan area.	<p><b>Services to include:</b></p> <p>Review with the County Council and service providers the existing commercial, supported, school, community and on-demand bus and taxi services serving the town and Denwick with a view to developing an optimised plan for access to work, leisure and visitor provision.</p> <p>In reviewing services, take into account weekday, evening, Saturday and Sunday provision, service frequency and seasonal variations together with early and late services for shift workers and leisure journeys.</p>	NCC	<p>Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, Bus service providers</p> <p>Alnwick Chamber of Trade,</p> <p>Northumberland Tourism</p>	Year 1 and Ongoing	NCC LTP, Bus operators

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 4	<b>GOODS &amp; SERVICES</b>					
	Opportunities will be sought to develop appropriate overnight parking facilities for lorries.	Promote the provision of formal lorry parking facilities in a trading or similar estate in or near Alnwick to reduce the abuse of road-side waiting areas provided at public expense but without hygiene or accommodation facilities.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, Road Haulage Association, Freight Transport Association	Years 5 to 10	Commercial Venture, NCC LTP, RHA, FTA
	Provision for loading and unloading trade vehicles will be reviewed.	This to include review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Royal Mail collections;</li> <li>● The management of delivery times; and</li> <li>● Trade waste collections.</li> </ul>	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, Royal Mail, Alnwick Chamber of Trade	Years 2 to 5	NCC LTP, NCC Highways maintenance
	Provision will be made for maintenance access when establishing traffic management regulations.	In planning walking, traffic and parking schemes, due recognition will be given to the need for maintenance, service and trade vehicles to have direct access to pavements, streets and adjacent premises, commonly by parking equipment vans at the site.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council Alnwick Chamber of Trade	Year 1 and Ongoing	NCC, Sustrans
TR CAP 5	<b>TRANSPORT LINKS &amp; ACCESSIBILITY</b>					
	Improve the main line rail links at Alnmouth for Alnwick Railway Station.	<p>Work to continue the improvement of main line rail links and facilities at Alnmouth for Alnwick Railway Station, to encourage more sustainable longer distance journeys by rail.</p> <p>Work with the railway, other towns and the County Council to develop the calling patterns of the trains along the East Coast Main Line to provide a service between Morpeth, Alnmouth for Alnwick and Berwick upon Tweed.</p>	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, ARUG, Rail operators, Network Rail	Ongoing	NCC LTP, Self funding

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 5 CONTD	Support the completion of the Aln Valley Railway (AVR).	Work with the AVR to support its completion as a railway, together with an associated footpath and cycle track, from its current Lionheart terminal station to the northbound platform at Alnmouth for Alnwick Station.	AVR	Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, NCC	Years 2 to 5	NCC LTP, AVR grant support
	Consider park and ride facilities as a means of improving sustainable access to Alnwick town centre from the wider area.	Evaluate the potential for park and ride sites at key locations to provide improved access to and enhanced pedestrian priority in, Alnwick town centre.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, Bus operators, User focus group, Alnwick Chamber of Trade	Years 2 to 5	NCC LTP, Bus operators.
TR CAP 6	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF TRANSPORT</b>					
	Promote and support transport provision that generally enhances the health, wellbeing and quality of life for all.	Recognise the impact of low exercise (obesity) and air quality (respiratory disease) on general health; promote and support active travel (walking, cycling, jogging etc) options accordingly.	NCC Public health, NHS Trust	Alnwick Town Council/Denwick Parish Council	Ongoing	NCC Public Health' NHS Trust Budgets
		Improve the policing of Alnwick, in the centre in particular, making better use of Community Support Officers to combat litter, vandalism, dog fouling and anti-social behaviour thus encouraging active travel.	Northumbria Police	Alnwick Town Council/Denwick Parish Council	Ongoing	Police budgets
	Support proposals for transport provision that reduce greenhouse gas emissions .	<p>Promote and support the provision of electric charging points in all main car parks in Alnwick to encourage and reflect the uptake of electrically powered vehicles.</p> <p>Promote and support the provision of electric and gas re-fuelling provision for freight and public service vehicles at vehicle fuelling stations.</p>	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, RAC Foundation Private Car Park Operators	Years 1 and ongoing	NCC LTP, Government Grant support, RAC Foundation

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 7	<b>MAINTENANCE &amp; UPKEEP</b>					
	A five-year strategic plan for the repair and maintenance of pavements and pedestrian areas will be prepared and implemented.	This plan to include: eliminating the many safety hazards that currently exist for pedestrians and cyclists; bringing the quality of pavement surfaces up to an acceptable, safe standard; keeping areas of motor vehicle carriageway in good repair, where they are most used by pedestrians to cross and by cyclists; repairing soft verge damage caused throughout the Plan area; consider installing physical barriers at frequently abused locations.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council User focus group, CTC, Living Streets, Sustrans	Year 1 and ongoing	NCC LTP, NCC Highways maintenance Developer contributions
	Pedestrian routes will be kept clean year round and suitably treated to provide ready and safe access for pedestrians in the winter.	Give priority to the convenience and safety of pedestrians when carrying out maintenance on or near pavements and roads. Continue to improve the winter treatment of pedestrian routes and roads throughout the Plan area.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council	Year 1 and Ongoing	NCC LTP, NCC Highways maintenance
TR CAP 8	<b>TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT</b>					
	Guidance on the requirement for travel plans for major developments will be produced.	This to include: requiring travel plans for the proposed housing areas, new employment sites and any other major development; reviewing the provision of roundabouts and traffic signs at the War Memorial junctions as part of the travel plans for any proposed new housing, employment or other major development areas to the south of Alnwick.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	Year 1 and ongoing	NCC Highway budgets Developer contributions
	Traffic speed will be managed to prioritise road user safety.	This to include: introducing 20mph speed restriction throughout the residential areas and town centre of Alnwick, providing 30mph through routes where essential;	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, User focus group, Police, Developers	Years 2 to 5 then ongoing	NCC LTP, NCC Highways maintenance, Developer Contributions

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	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 8 CONTD		using traffic calming measures where necessary, preferably in combination with measures to facilitate pedestrian crossing opportunities; aiding the observance of the 20mph speed restriction through publicity and at critical points by speed indicators; managing road junctions and crossings in favour of pedestrians.; locating or relocating 30mph signs such that they better protect all road users.				
	The traffic systems and signing that bring people into the town will be	Consider the impact of illegally and inconsiderately parked vehicles on traffic movement when establishing parking regulation enforcement policies.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Police	Year 1 and ongoing	NCC LTP and Parking policy unit
		Explore the potential for one way streets and 'access only' restriction for the town centre.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council Alnwick User focus group	Years 2 to 5	NCC LTP
		Consider the possibility of sensitively relocating the war memorial to a more appropriate site.	NCC	Alnwick Civic Society, NCC	Years 6 to 10	
		Introduce unobtrusive signing systems that will give real meaning to the 'shared space' concept throughout Alnwick and its approaches.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, NCC, Alnwick Civic Society	Years 6 to 10	NCC, English Heritage
		Enforce existing speed, parking and movement regulations, using speed indicators and cameras where appropriate.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, Police	Year 1 and ongoing	NCC LTP
TR CAP 9	<b>PUBLIC PARKING</b>  The provision for parking within and around Alnwick town centre will be reviewed.	Assess the need for further parking space and alternatively the scope for management of demand.  Consider proposals for the commercial provision of aesthetically acceptable decked public car park(s) where the terrain is suitable.  Make provision elsewhere for mobility impaired drivers or passengers for whom the parking spaces on the cobbles in Alnwick (Bondgate Within, Market Street and Fenkle Street) are unsuitable.	NCC	Alnwick Town Council, User focus group, Alnwick Chamber of Trade	Years 6 to 10	NCC LTP, NCC Parking, Developer Contributions

*Provision for cycle parking is covered at TRA CAP 2: Item 1: Bullet 3*

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
TR CAP 9 CONTD		Work with Network Rail, Northern Rail, the County Council, and adjacent Parish Councils to extend the parking provision at Alnmouth for Alnmouth Railway Station.	NCC	Alnmouth Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, Other relevant Parish Councils, Network Rail, Northern Rail, ARUG	Years 2 to 5	NCC LTP, Network Rail
	Parking management and related arrangements will be improved.	Work with the County Council to manage the permitted use of car parks more selectively, to vary the availability and length of stay appropriately across the day and across the week.	Alnmouth Town Council	Denwick Parish Council, NCC, User focus group, Alnmouth Civic Society, Alnmouth Chamber of Trade	Years 1 and ongoing	NCC Highways and Parking Services budgets
		Extend resident-only permit parking schemes to the whole of the town centre and adjacent residential area.				
		Improve the signs to car parks and parking areas, including on street parking not reserved for residents.	NCC	Alnmouth Town Council, User focus group	Years 2 to 5	
		Provide signs between the town centre car parks, to help visiting drivers in particular find alternative, possibly more suitable provision.	NCC	ATC, Denwick Parish Council, User focus group, Northumbria Tourism	Years 2 to 5	
		Improve the walking routes and signs to the town centre from the more peripheral car parks; use longer permitted parking times as a device to encourage their use by visitors.	NCC	Alnmouth Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, User focus group, Northumbria Tourism	Years 2 to 5	
	Parking regulations and associated traffic legislation will be enforced.	Enforce on- and off-street parking and related regulations and eradicate parking abuse throughout the Plan area.	NCC	Alnmouth Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, Police	Years 1 and ongoing	Current NCC and Police task
		Encourage considerate parking to protect green verges, keep access to premises clear and drop kerbs free.	NCC	Alnmouth Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, User focus group, Alnmouth Civic Society	Ongoing	Alnmouth Town Council
		Work to eliminate illegal parking, especially on pavements, at drop kerbs, at corners, at junctions and in the Market Place.	NCC	Alnmouth Town Council, Denwick Parish Council, Police	Ongoing	Current NCC and Police task

Community Action Proposal		Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
ENVIRONMENT						
ENV CAP 1	The Town and Parish Councils in consultation with Northumberland Estates and Northumberland County Council as landowners will seek to create and establish areas of publicly accessible natural and semi natural greenspace.	Make improvements to the following designated areas of natural and semi-natural green space: Cawledge Burn between North Cawledge Bridge, East Cawledge Farm and the River Aln: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● extend existing permissive path to reach railway viaduct over Cawledge Burn;</li> <li>● create new permissive path from public footpath along the north bank of burn to eastern edge of site;</li> <li>● create permissive path from centre of proposed space to south-western edge, linking up to existing public rights of way;</li> <li>● investigate feasibility of bridge at eastern edge crossing burn to create loop.</li> </ul>	Northumberland Estates	Denwick Parish Council Alnwick Town Council Alnwick Wildlife Group Northumberland Wildlife Trust Northumberland County Council.	Years 2-5 Bridge feasibility (and, if appropriate, construction) within years 6-10	Northumberland Estates / Grant funding
		The Willow Burn from the Aln Valley Rail Terminal to the River Aln <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● remove fences where possible;</li> <li>● provide railway crossing point at embankment;</li> <li>● create new permissive path from railway embankment down to Willow Burn, running alongside to join up with existing public footpaths;</li> <li>● investigate feasibility of a footpath through westernmost wooded area to allow easier access.</li> </ul>	Northumberland Estates	Denwick Parish Council Alnwick Town Council Aln Valley Railway Society local tenant farmers Northumberland County Council.	Years 2-5 Western footpath feasibility (and, if appropriate, construction) within years 6-10.	Northumberland Estates / Grant funding
		South side of the River Aln from the A1 underpass to Denwick Bridge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● create new permissive path to link to existing permissive paths;</li> <li>● create exit point from northern end of site to Denwick Lane;</li> <li>● investigate feasibility of additional footbridge to connect to existing paths, and provide variety of walks of different distances.</li> </ul>	Northumberland Estates	Alnwick Town Council local tenant farmers Northumberland County Council.	Years 2-5 Bridge feasibility (and, if appropriate, construction) within years 6-10	Northumberland Estates / Grant funding

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
ENV CAP 2	The Parish and Town Councils will seek to create and manage new sites for nature conservation in partnership with landowners and local nature conservation bodies	Alnwick Town Council in partnership with landowners, wildlife groups and Denwick Parish Council will explore the management of these areas of nature conservation.	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	Alnwick Wildlife Group Northumberland Wildlife Trust Alnwick Town Council Northumberland Estates Northumberland County Council	Years 2-5	Big Lottery Fund Awards for All Alnwick Town Council grants.
ENV CAP 3	Consolidate waiting list and management arrangements for allotments	Work towards a management agreement under which Alnwick Town Council will manage all allotments in the plan area on a long lease in order to maximise the benefit of a single public waiting list. Alnwick Town Council will set allotment rents and reinvest any surplus in improving allotments.	Alnwick Town Council	Northumberland Estates	Years 2-5	None required – covered by existing Alnwick Town Council funding and allotment rents.
ENV CAP 4	Deliver improvements to existing allotments.	Possible improvements include security and anti-dumping measures, and extending provision of water to all plots at Ratten Row; collective or individual water provision at St George's allotments and establishment of allotment associations if there is a desire amongst allotment holders.	Alnwick Town Council	Local allotment holders allotment associations where these are in place Northumberland Estates, where they are the freeholders.	Year 1 and ongoing through plan period	None required - already budgeted for in Alnwick Town Council precept.
ENV CAP 5	Complete tree identification and mapping survey.	Undertake an exploratory tree identification and mapping exercise, gathering evidence about tree locations, species, the significance of their contribution to Alnwick's setting and how they can be best protected – whether through Tree Preservation Orders, management agreements or other means.	Alnwick Town Council and Northumberland County Council	Local environmental groups;	Years 2-5	No funding required.
ENV CAP 6	Manage and replace street trees.	Replace highly significant street trees which are dead, dying or dangerous in an annual planting programme using appropriately engineered planting pits.	Northumberland County Council Neighbourhood Services	Alnwick Town Council; local environmental groups	Years 2-5 and ongoing	Existing county council funding.

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
ENV CAP 7	Explore opportunities for diverse structural planting in the town/country edges of Alnwick and Denwick.	Explore opportunities for diverse structural planting which enhances wildlife habitats in the town/country edges of Alnwick, particularly where new development may be proposed.	Northumberland Estates	NCC Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	Years 2-5 and ongoing	Funding in association with development proposals
ENV CAP 8	Plant fruit and nut bearing species in off-street publicly accessible green spaces.	Areas for planting will be decided in consultation with owners/ leaseholders and could include Swansfield Park, Column Field, Green Batt Gardens, and privately owned, but publicly accessible, land and or in public areas on allotments.	Local environmental groups	Alnwick Town Council	Years 2-5 and ongoing	Limited funding required. Trees to be provided by Big Lottery Fund, Awards for All, Alnwick Town Council, other grant applications.  Planting to be carried out by volunteers.
ENV CAP 9	Implement and maintain cost-effective street drainage measures.	This will include ensuring drainage systems are maintained, cleared regularly (bi-annually), and considering measures to increase drain numbers at hotspots – e.g. foot of Wagonway Road, dip on South Road, intersection of Swansfield Park Rd and Lindisfarne Road; the foot of Ratten Row; Denwick Lane beside the Alnwick Garden entrance; and the road between nos. 70 and 75 Chapel Lands. to allow surface water run-off at all times.	Northumberland County Council (Highways and Neighbourhood Services)	Alnwick Town Council Local residents.	Year 1 and ongoing.	Existing county council funding.
ENV CAP 10	In responding to planning applications the Town and Parish Councils will advise that all proposals for residential development should be encouraged to incorporate energy conservation schemes for the dwellings, including effective energy efficiency measures and proposals to source a proportion of their energy from renewable sources, either on-site or from guaranteed renewable sources within the Plan area.		Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	NCC Developers	Ongoing through plan period	Funding in association with development proposals

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
ENV CAP 11	Improve management of litter and dog fouling.	Identify litter/dog fouling hotspots and, in partnership with NCC, Alnwick Town Council will provide dog/litter bins, taking account of the proximity of other existing bins and any access issues.	Alnwick Town Council	Northumberland County Council Neighbourhood Services	First audit Year 1 and on a biennial basis thereafter.	No funding required for surveys; dog/litter bins are already the responsibility of, and funded by, Alnwick Town Council.
ENV CAP 12	Develop a strategy to deal with dog fouling, chewing gum, littering and fly-tipping.	Strategy will, amongst other things: encourage the public and businesses to report offences for enforcement action; work with NCC dog wardens and enforcement teams to monitor progress; use other imaginative measures to reinforce positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour; organise and encourage clean-up events; partner with businesses and takeaways to keep shop fronts clear and promote safe disposal of food and packaging waste.	Alnwick Town Council	Northumberland County Council Neighbourhood Services and Waste Management  Alnwick Chamber of Trade  local environmental groups	Years 2-5	No funding required.
ENV CAP 13	Improve provision for recycling.	Install recycling facilities for domestic packaging and textiles which are not covered by kerbside collections but may be recycled at local authority sites at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>existing car parks of more than 30 spaces;</li> <li>existing petrol stations, supermarkets and business/retail parks.</li> </ul> <p>These sites will also provide recycling facilities for glass bottles and jars, unless these cannot be located on site in agreement with NCC Waste Management without subjecting adjacent dwellings to unacceptable noise levels.</p>	Northumberland County Council Waste Management and Parking Services	Alnwick Town Council  Private car park owners  Local petrol stations, supermarkets and business/retail parks  Local environmental groups	Years 2-5	Bin installation to be funded by sponsorship  business donations/ Corporate Social Responsibility  Collections to be funded from existing Northumberland County Council budget.
ENV CAP 14	Considering the installation of combined waste and recycling bins.	Each time a bin is due to be installed or replaced, consideration will be given to existing success stories and issues with on-street recycling bin provision, to identify the viability and cost-effectiveness of the proposal.	Alnwick Town Council	Northumberland County Council Waste Management	Year 1 and ongoing	None required - bins are already funded and budgeted for by Alnwick Town Council.

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>HERITAGE &amp; DESIGN</b>						
<b>HD CAP 1</b>	Carry out a visual appraisal of key approaches listed in Table HD1.	Prepare a comprehensive visual appraisal of key approaches listed in Table HD1 where there are felt to be opportunities to improve the appearance of the town & village in the landscape.	Alnwick Civic Society	County Council Design Team	Year 1	Locality Grant Funding
<b>HD CAP 2</b>	Develop design guidelines for new development on the key approaches in Table HD1.	Develop design guidelines for new commercial and residential developments particularly on the southern and eastern edges of Alnwick, with the aim of mitigating the impact of developments in this area on views in Table HD1. These guidelines would cover aspects of scale, site layout, height, design, materials, roofing, colour, landscaping and tree-cover as appropriate.	Alnwick Civic Society	County Council Design Team Alnwick Town Council	Year 1	
<b>HD CAP 3</b>	Prepare a strategy to protect heritage assets.	Prepare a strategy to encourage the rescue, repair, regeneration or re-use of threatened designated & undesignated heritage assets and to secure the necessary resources of expertise and finance to deliver the strategy. This would draw on the recent EH funded Grade II HAR Assessment in Northumberland	County Council Conservation Team	Alnwick Civic Society	Year 1	Heritage Lottery Fund grants programme
<b>HD CAP 4</b>	Set up a joint County and voluntary local monitoring system of the condition and use of heritage assets.	Monitor the condition and use of currently unthreatened designated heritage assets with a view to identifying properties and land for early action and also as the basis for regular monitoring of the stock of designated heritage assets into the future using a shared guardianship approach.	County Council Conservation Team	Alnwick Civic Society	Years 2-5	NCC Conservation Budget
<b>HD CAP 5</b>	Develop a list of locally valued historic assets to provide them with protection.	A local list will be prepared by inviting suggestions from the public and heritage agencies and setting up a review panel of historians and architects, etc.	County Council Conservation Team	Alnwick Town Council Alnwick Civic Society Northd Estates	Years 6-10	NCC Conservation Budget
<b>HD CAP 6</b>	Prepare an owners' information campaign aimed at raising understanding of designated and undesignated heritage assets.	Preparation of a guidance and awareness raising campaign to assist heritage owners care for their properties better.  Review of current available guidance including guidance already prepared by Alnwick Civic Society.	County Council Conservation Team	Alnwick Civic Society	Years 2-5	Heritage Lottery Funding Programmes / sponsorship

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>HD CAP 7</b>	Improve Planning and Traffic Enforcement to protect the quality of heritage assets and public realm.	Prepare a system of improving Planning and Traffic Enforcement, combined with an improved surveillance of heritage assets by conservation staff.	County Council Conservation Team	Alnwick Civic Society	Years 2-5	NCC conservation budget
<b>HD CAP 8</b>	Carry out a visual appraisal of recognisable gateways listed in Table HD2, including encouraging improved maintenance and upgrading.	Explore ideas and methodologies for achieving recognisable gateways into Alnwick from the approaches listed in Table HD2. This could link with HD CAP1 and HD CAP2, and could lead to design guidelines and improved maintenance to achieve the 'gateway' objectives.	Alnwick Civic Society	County Council Design Team Alnwick Town Council	Years 2-5	
<b>HD CAP 9</b>	Identify attractive and distinctive suburban townscapes and areas for improvement.	This includes: Identification and evaluation of distinctive urban townscapes and unattractive areas for improvement; Establish an understanding and evaluation of the defining characteristics of each townscape to provide guidance which assists the application of the principles required for new development in Policy HD 7; Preparation of programmes of support for Policy HD7 and improvement of unattractive areas.	Alnwick Civic Society	County Council Design Team Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	Years 6-10	
<b>HD CAP 10</b>	Review Alnwick Conservation Area boundaries and prepare a new appraisal and management plan.	Review of areas to be removed or added to conservation area. Commission conservation consultants to prepare an Appraisal and a Management Plan.	County Council Conservation Team	Alnwick Town Council Alnwick Civic Society	Years 2-5	NCC Conservation Budget
<b>HD CAP 11</b>	Establish a county wide Conservation Area Advisory Group.	Promote the setting up of a County-wide Conservation Area Advisory Group (CAAG) to assist the County Council in their ongoing management and improvement of conservation areas in Alnwick and throughout Northumberland.	County Council Conservation Team	Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council Alnwick Civic Society	Years 2-5	NCC conservation budget ACS voluntary in kind resource
<b>HD CAP 12</b>	Carry out a gateway street audit and production of design guidelines.	Audit the qualities and features of 'gateway streets' to be used to produce a set of guidelines for development to ensure the distinctiveness of these gateways is protected and enhanced.	Alnwick Civic Society	County Council Design Team Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council	Years 6-10	Heritage Lottery funding Programmes

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>HD CAP 13</b>	Carry out research into the possible conflicts between conservation and renewable energy generation in the conservation area.	Explore recent research and practices by EH and others to establish ways of satisfactorily reconciling energy efficiency and historic integrity.	Alnwick Civic Society	NCC Conservation Team	Years 2-5	NCC Conservation budget
<b>HD CAP 14</b>	Investigate additional Article 4 planning powers for parts of the Alnwick Conservation Area.	Article 4 designation will be considered to halt the incremental erosion of Alnwick's historic character. Local voluntary agencies will assist the statutory agencies in identifying the appropriate parts of the conservation area as well as advising on the building operations to be included in the additional powers. Preparation of documentation to be presented to the National Government.	County Council Conservation Team	Alnwick Town Council Alnwick Civic Society	Years 2-5	NCC Conservation budget  ACS voluntary in kind resource
<b>HD CAP 15</b>	Establish an action programme for revitalising Alnwick's vital historic spaces.	Alnwick Town Team or other local agency to: Identify suitable areas for treatment; Develop options for action; Programme and implement actions.	Alnwick Town Team	Alnwick Town Council Alnwick Civic Society Northumberland Estates	Years 2-5	Heritage Lottery Funding Programmes
<b>HD CAP 16</b>	Develop a programme of projects to enhance the historic townscape.	Identify areas of the historic townscape of Alnwick conservation area for enhancement. Develop options for action; Programme and implement actions.	Alnwick Civic Society	Alnwick Town Council	Years 2-5	Heritage Lottery Funding Programmes
<b>HD CAP 17</b>	Prepare a strategy and management plan for improving the overall appearance and quality of the conservation area.	Identifying unnecessary clutter and preparing a programme for its removal. Reviewing the condition and future of Alnwick's current street furniture. Assessing the condition of the floorscape in the historic core and retaining or repairing where appropriate.	Alnwick Civic Society	Alnwick Town Council Alnwick Town Team (ATT)	Years 2-5	Heritage Lottery Funding Programmes CIVIC VOICE funding sources NCC Neighbourhood Services Budget ATC Budget
<b>HD CAP 18</b>	Survey and develop a programme of maintenance and replacement of trees in the conservation area.	Commission a survey of Conservation Area trees to assess their condition, health, expected life span and management requirements and identify where felling and replacement is the only option. Establish a programme of maintenance and replacement based on the survey.	NCC Conservation Team and Neighbourhood Services	Alnwick Civic Society Alnwick Town Council	Years 2-5	NCC Neighbourhood Services Budget/ Developer Contributions/ Land and property owners

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>HD CAP 19</b>	Develop and implement an identity and interpretation strategy for the town centre incorporating a review of signposting and information in the centre.	Commission an urban design/ consultant to survey the centre and make recommendations on identity and interpretation, integrating signage, maps, designation of 'town quarters', etc. to remove ambiguity and make the town more legible and easier to use and understand. In detail this will include: Preparing an outline proposal for a Historic Core Zone in Alnwick centre based on the Civic Society's Streetscape Study; An audit of all signage to seek improvements and reduce visual clutter; Celebrating and demonstrating examples of good practice in townscape design; Developing a promotional 'branding' of the historic area that treats it as a single resort town with a new image of quality and vitality.	Alnwick Civic Society	Alnwick Town Team/ Alnwick Town Council NCC Conservation and Highways Historic Towns Forum	Years 2-5	Heritage Lottery Funding Programmes Heritage Townscape Initiative Programme
<b>HD CAP 20</b>	Investigate the designation of a conservation area for Denwick.	Audit the quality and vulnerability of Denwick and its landscape setting to see if Conservation Area protection is justified.	County Council Conservation Team	Denwick Parish Council Alnwick Civic Society	Years 2-5	NCC Conservation Budget ACS voluntary in kind resource
<b>HD CAP 21</b>	Carry out a comprehensive appraisal of the village townscape and its landscape setting.	This includes: Comprehensive appraisal of the village townscape and landscape; Review of need for more protection of individual features; Identification of areas for improvement/enhancement; Development and implementation of a programme of protection and improvement.	County Council Design Team	Northumberland Estates Denwick Parish Council Alnwick Civic Society	Years 6-10	NCC Conservation Budget Heritage Lottery Funding Programmes

	Community Action Proposal	Detailed Project	Lead Body	Project Partners	Delivery Timescale	Potential Sources of Funding
<b>CULTURE</b>						
<b>C CAP 1</b>	Carry out an initial programme of limited information gathering and implementation in Alnwick and Denwick to mitigate the challenges to cultural development identified in 10.10.1 - 4.	This to include : Ensuring that the existing cultural infrastructure in Alnwick and Denwick has a viable future; Identifying any cultural facility and supporting infrastructure needs not served by the current provision; Adopting a more effective approach through partnership.	NCC unless stated	County Council Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council Cultural Services	Years 2- 10 and ongoing through plan period	County and Regional arts/ cultural funding
<b>C CAP 2</b>	Develop a future programme for what provision should be made in the future to accommodate identified cultural needs.	Identifying what provision should be made in the future to accommodate these cultural needs; Building on our cultural strengths – musical heritage, literature heritage, allotment culture, traditional pub heritage, warrior heritage, local food and produce heritage; Maximising the cultural use potential of the Market Place e.g. increasing the use of the Market Place for more evening music events and with the surrounding Halls, for more specialist markets for food, antiques, books, crafts, etc.; Investigating Alnwick as a festival town and explore more seasonal events such as an Alnwick Christmas Market and a Halloween celebration, accompanied by associated and appropriate cultural events; Developing better branding and increased promotion of Alnwick/Denwick; Developing more collaboration and joint programmes between the major attractions; Seeking agencies and investment to upgrade the facilities and condition of the two major public halls in the Market Place; Reviewing the need for dedicated studio space to encourage artists and designers to stay and work here, as the beginnings of an Alnwick creative industry; Considering a stronger focus on training and promoting local artistic skills; Investigating and developing programmes of funding support.	Alnwick Town Council  Local Living  Alnwick Town Council  Attraction Providers	County Council Alnwick Town Council Denwick Parish Council Cultural Services Local cultural and attraction providers Alnwick Civic Society Local Living	Years 2- 10 and ongoing through plan period	County and Regional arts/ cultural funding

# GLOSSARY

## A1, A2, B1, B2 and B8 Uses

These refer to land use classifications under the Use Classes Order for retail, industrial and commercial activity.

A1 – relates to retail use

A2 – relates to financial and professional services

B1 – relates to office and light industrial uses

B2 – relates to general industrial uses

B8 – relates to warehousing and storage uses

## Affordable housing

Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the housing market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

## Affordable rented housing

One aspect of affordable housing, this is housing let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80 per cent of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

## Amenity

A positive element or elements that

contribute to the positive character of an area, such as lack of noise and disturbance, openness, landscape, townscape, opportunities for recreation etc.

## Ancient trees

The Woodland Trust defines 'Ancient trees' as those that are:

- of biological, aesthetic or cultural interest because of their great age
- in the ancient or third and final stage of their life or
- old relative to others of the same species

## Biodiversity

The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.

## Coalescence

The situation where the built-up areas of two or more towns or villages spread out and merge with each other.

## Community Action Proposal

Proposals to be carried out in tandem with the Neighbourhood Plan to resolve issues raised in community consultation but which relate to matters that cannot be part of the statutory Neighbourhood Plan.

## Community Infrastructure Levy

A tariff charged on development to secure funding towards infrastructure that is essential to meet the needs of the development. The CIL will be set by the County Council once it has an Infrastructure Delivery

Plan and Charging Schedule in place. Once the CIL is in place and the Neighbourhood Plan is made, 25% of CIL funds raised in the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be made available to be spent on infrastructure projects in the plan area.

## Comparison retail

means clothing, footwear, giftware, electrical and white goods, furnishings, etc.

## Convenience retail

means food & drink, newspapers & periodicals, household and personal consumables.

## Conservation Area

Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

## Core Strategy

A Development Plan Document setting out the spatial vision, objectives and key strategic policies for an area. 'Preferred Options' is the second stage in the production of the Core Strategy.

## Countryside

For the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan countryside is everything within the Plan Area beyond the limits of the Alnwick built up area. This includes the village of Denwick.

## Delivery Area

Any of four areas defined for planning purposes for the Core Strategy,

based on those in the Sustainable Community Strategy and on housing market areas. In the case of the ADNP, North Northumberland is the delivery area.

## Demographic patterns / changes

The make-up of the population of a particular area in terms of birth-rates, the age profile, new migrants etc. and how this changes over time.

## Density (of development)

The amount of building within an area of land. For housing it is expressed as the number of dwellings per hectare.

## Designated area

An area defined by a line on a map which, by virtue of statute, enjoys a degree of protection from development that would impact adversely on the wildlife, landscape or other natural asset within its boundary. There are also built heritage designations such as Conservation Areas.

## Development

Defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Most forms of development require planning permission (see also "permitted development").

## Development Management

The process through which a local planning authority considers a

planning application and whether it should be given permission

#### **Development Plan**

This includes adopted council development plan documents such as core strategies and any future adopted neighbourhood plans setting out the authority's policies for the development and use of land.

#### **Development Plan Documents (DPDs)**

DPDs are adopted plans and documents that form part of the development plan. Once adopted, planning decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise. DPDs can include core strategy, land allocation and delivery plans, area action plans, and neighbourhood plans.

#### **Employment land**

Land allocated / reserved for industrial and business use.

#### **Employment Land Review (ELR)**

Study identifying the level of employment land required, considering past levels of employment land take up and other factors. It also identifies parts of the County with an over- or under-supply of employment land.

#### **Evidence base**

The information and data gathered by local authorities and used to inform policy development. It includes a wide range of numerical data and other information, including, surveys, studies, discussions and consultations.

#### **Five Year Housing Land Supply**

An identified supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to meet

housing requirements over a specified five year period, collated annually.

#### **Floorspace**

The floor area (on all floors) of a building or set of buildings. Gross floorspace includes areas ancillary to the main use. Net floorspace excludes ancillary areas.

#### **Front Runner**

The government established the Neighbourhood Planning Front Runner Project in 2011 to provide resources to assist communities prepare Neighbourhood Plans. Alnwick and Denwick's bid was successful in July 2011 and has provided funds principally to the County Council to provide staff to support the project.

#### **Geo-diversity**

The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

#### **Grain:**

Some parts of a town have streets, walkways as well as the buildings between them that are parallel and point in a similar direction, giving a distinctive appearance to the resulting townscape. This common axis of routes, buildings and resulting townscape is known as the 'grain' of this area of development and is usually one of its defining design features to be recognized and valued.

#### **Green Infrastructure (GI)**

Green spaces in towns, villages or elsewhere, serving different purposes, which together form a network that can provide local communities with a better environment and quality of life and help wildlife.

#### **Greenfield Land or Site**

Land (or a defined site) which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

#### **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities (for planning purposes)**

Communities consisting of persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

#### **Habitat**

An area or natural environment in which an organism, species or population normally lives. Habitats take many forms and should not be considered in isolation as they are linked and overlap with each other.

#### **Habitats Regulations**

A set of government regulations (currently the Habitats and Species Regulations 2010), which sets out requirements within England regarding the protection and enhancement of important natural assets, giving expression to various European Directives, international Conventions and national statutes.

#### **Hinterland**

A term used to describe the area which falls within the influence of a town – especially the area from which the town draws most of the people who work there or use its services.

#### **Household**

A person living alone or a group of people living together at the same address and with common housekeeping.

#### **Housing Needs Survey**

A survey of households which assesses affordable housing needs across a defined area, looking at criteria such as housing conditions, overcrowding and household incomes and comparing these with housing costs and availability.

#### **Housing requirement**

The amount of housing that has to be built in a given period to meet needs and demands. This is now calculated separately for Northumberland, based on evidence, although the Council must cooperate with neighbouring authorities and other relevant bodies in arriving at the final requirement figure(s).

#### **Independent Examination**

The process by which an Independent Examiner examines a Neighbourhood Plan to ensure it meets the basic conditions.

#### **Infill development**

Building on a relatively small site between existing buildings.

#### **Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

Telecommunications networks such as telephone lines, mobile phone masts and broadband infrastructure.

#### **Infrastructure**

The physical entities (for example roads, railways, sewers, pipes, telecommunications lines) that are necessary for communities to function and move around.

### **Intermediate housing**

One aspect of affordable housing, this comprises homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to certain criteria. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as 'low cost market housing', may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

### **Knowledge-based industries**

Defined by the OECD/Work Foundation as high to medium tech manufacturing, finance, telecommunications, business services, education and health. However the knowledge-based economy may spread over into other sectors such as energy supply, retail and the cultural / creative industries.

### **Landscape sensitivity**

Based on the Landscape Character Assessment for the County as a whole, the Key Land Use Impact Study, (part of the evidence base for the NLPCS), assessed the edges of main towns and service centres to ascertain which parts would be likely to be more sensitive than others to additional built development.

### **Legible townscape:**

This is a townscape that is, first, easy and convenient to use because it has been made more navigable for pedestrians by the creation of safe, vehicle-free areas, the marking of significant 'entrances' and 'arrival' places, as well as the addition of relevant and appropriately integrated street signage and other

street information. Second, the townscape has also been made more understandable and meaningful by the addition of such locational and historic interpretive street material as display banners and window badges that define distinctive functional and historic districts and easy-to-read street-based or virtual maps capable of continually orientating and inspiring the user.

### **Limited infilling**

Infill development which is particularly small in scale, occupying a small gap between buildings – on the scale of one or two, (rather than several) dwellings.

### **Local Green Space**

Areas of green space of particular importance to the community which are special and locally significant because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquility or richness of wildlife. The NPPF allows the ADNP to rule out development of these areas other than in very special circumstances.

### **Local Housing Need**

A need for housing from the population resident in the parish areas of Alnwick and Denwick. In other words this would not include housing need generated from other areas. The usual way in which local housing need is identified is through a local housing needs survey and it is intended to carry out a survey for the Neighbourhood Plan Area under HCAP 2.

### **Local Plan**

The documents and maps that make up the plan for the future development of a local area such as Northumberland. The term

also describes older planning documents prepared by the former Northumberland authorities. Many policies in these plans continue to be 'saved' and form part of the Development Plan for decision-making purposes.

### **Local Planning Authority**

The council which is charged with plan making and determining planning applications for an area. In the case of the Neighbourhood Plan it is Northumberland County Council.

### **Low Carbon Economy**

The development within an area or local economy of processes and technologies, which can assist in reducing the release of carbon dioxide into the environment.

### **Low Cost Market Housing**

Usually refers to new build dwellings that are sold for 100% owner occupation but at a price that is discounted from the price that they could be sold for on the open market. These are not part of the definition of affordable housing.

### **Main Towns**

The most important settlements in Northumberland with a key housing, employment and service role across often wide areas. They include Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Blyth, Cramlington, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Morpeth, and Prudhoe.

### **Major Development**

Major residential development is defined as 10 or more dwellings and Major commercial development is defined as 1000m<sup>2</sup> or more of commercial floorspace.

### **Masterplan**

A detailed plan setting out how a particular area is developed, mapping the phasing of the development, (i.e. the order in which different parts of the development are to be built) and setting out an action plan explaining how, when and by whom different requirements are triggered / funded.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

A Government document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

### **Natural and semi-natural greenspace**

Places where human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate. Natural and semi-natural greenspace exists as a distinct typology but also as discrete areas within the majority of other greenspace typologies. (Natural England)

In the Neighbourhood Plan it is intended that these areas should also be publicly accessible.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

A plan prepared for a defined area by a Parish or Town Council – the "qualifying body". Once it has been accepted by the local community through a Referendum, the neighbourhood plan will form part of the Development Plan.

### **North East Design Review & Enabling Service**

The service offers to review the design of major development proposals at an early stage. The review is carried out by a panel of

architects and others from the design professions.

#### **North East Independent Economic Review**

A critical review of the North East economy carried out by the North East Local Economic Partnership (LEP), in order to identify opportunities for and barriers to the boosting of employment and productivity.

#### **North East LEP(Local Economic Partnership)**

A business-led strategic organisation, spanning the North East, apart from the Tees valley area, responsible for promoting and developing economic growth and funded by the seven local authorities and Central Government.

#### **Open market residential development**

Housing for sale or rent on the open market, without any restrictions regarding occupation or price.

#### **Open Space**

Usually used in relation to built-up areas. Refers to all open areas of public value, which can offer opportunities for sport, and recreation, as well as a visual amenity and haven for wildlife. Public open space is where public access may or may not be formally established.

#### **Overage Clause**

A clause inserted in an affordable housing planning obligation allowing the Council to clawback an affordable housing benefit where affordable provision had previously been agreed at a level below that sought by policy H4 on the grounds that the policy level would render the development non-viable. The clause is invoked where the estimated sale value of units is exceeded when they are

actually sold.

#### **Permitted Development**

Certain limited or minor forms of development that may proceed without the need to make an application for planning permission.

#### **Phasing (housing)**

How the building of housing is spread over time within a defined area or on a large housing site. The orderly development of housing can be achieved through a phasing plan – hence 'Phase 1' or 'Phase 2' of a development.

#### **Planning Obligation**

A planning obligation is a binding legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It binds one or more parties to an agreement to deliver either actions or financial contributions required in association with development.

#### **Planning Practice Guidance**

The PPG was published as an online guide to the planning system in 2014 and is regularly updated. It replaces most of the guidance previously given in circulars.

#### **Previously Developed Land (PDL) or 'Brownfield' Land**

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development

control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

#### **Qualifying Body**

The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 require a Qualifying Body to be appointed to be responsible for preparing the neighbourhood plan and taking decisions relating to it. Alnwick Town Council is the Qualifying Body for the ADNP in consultation with Denwick Parish Council.

#### **Regeneration**

The economic, social and environmental renewal and improvement of rural and urban areas.

#### **Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)**

The former regional tier of the development plan (the RSS for the North-East) was abolished in 2013, using powers in the Localism Act 2011. The RSS set the overall scale and distribution of new development across the North-East, as well as many other strategic aspects of planning – matters which must now be dealt with in the Core Strategies of the various Councils across the region, who now have a duty to cooperate on strategic planning issues.

#### **Renewable energy**

Energy produced using renewable sources such as wind, water or biomass.

#### **Resilient communities**

This term is sometimes applied to communities' ability to help

themselves in the face of an emergency. However in this document it refers more to the degree to which communities can be self-sustaining through the retention of a working population, workplaces, services etc.

#### **Rural exception sites**

Small sites where housing use would not normally be granted permission, which are nevertheless released for affordable housing in order to meet the local community's housing needs.

#### **Safeguarding**

The protection of valuable areas of land from disturbance and/or development, due to the presence of natural assets, mineral resource or possible future proposals (such as a bypass line).

#### **Saved policies**

Policies of a previous development plan can be 'saved' by the Local Planning Authority in order that they will continue to apply, usually for a short period of time pending the preparation of a replacement planning document.

#### **Scenarios**

Different possible outcomes – in this case regarding the growth and health of communities – depending on different 'inputs' – in this case the amount of land allocated for housing and employment and the ability for those houses and workplaces to be delivered on the ground.

#### **Sequential approach**

A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before the consideration of others. For example, town centre type uses (Retail, Leisure, Commercial) being accommodated

in the town centre before considering edge of centre or out of centre locations or housing locations in relation to various levels of flood risk.

**Site thresholds (affordable housing)**

The minimum size that a market housing site must be (in terms of its area or the number of dwellings proposed) in order to trigger a requirement for affordable housing to be provided as part of / in association with the development, (assuming that a local need for affordable housing has been identified in an up-to-date assessment). The provision is secured through a legal agreement following negotiation between the Council and the developer, which must take account of viability.

**Social rented housing**

One aspect of affordable housing, this is housing owned by local authorities or other registered providers for which guideline target rents are determined nationally or locally.

**Stalled sites (housing)**

Sites that have planning permission for housing but where building has not started or has ceased. This may reflect the changing economic climate, whereby obligations previously secured, or certain planning conditions add to the cost of implementing the development to the point where it becomes unviable and is 'stalled'.

**Statement of Consultation**

The Town Council's approach to involving the community in the neighbourhood planning process.

**Statutory Weight**

Policies and plans prepared under the Town and Country Planning Acts

once adopted have statutory weight under Section 38. In other words planning decisions must be made in accordance with these plans once they have been adopted.

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)**

Identifies sites with potential for housing, and assesses their housing potential and when they are likely to be developed, with a view to achieving a five year supply of deliverable housing land.

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)**

An assessment of the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that an area (in this case Northumberland) is likely to need over the plan period in order to meet household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change.

**Superfast Broadband**

Superfast broadband infrastructure is infrastructure capable of delivering speeds higher than 24Mbps. Superfast broadband speeds are headline download speeds of greater than 24Mbps.

**Supply chain**

The sequence or network (across space and time) of people, businesses or other organisations involved in moving products or services from suppliers to customers. The customers may themselves be manufacturers or service industries supplying consumers with products or services.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**

The process of weighing and assessing policies for their global, national and local sustainability

implications in relation to the environment, the economy and society, incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to comply with EU Directive 2001/42/EC.

**Sustainable development**

Defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The Government makes clear that sustainable development has economic, social and environmental dimensions which are further explained in the NPPF.

**Tenure (housing)**

The ownership or rental status of dwellings – i.e. whether they are owner-occupied (owned outright / being bought with a mortgage), privately rented, rented from housing associations or rented from local authorities.

**Town centre**

An area defined in a main town or a service centre that includes the key shopping area and adjacent areas where other town centre uses, such as leisure uses, cafés, restaurants and professional services are located.

**Urban edge:**

This is the outer margins of a town where the suburban areas and countryside meet. It could also be thought of as the 'countryside edge' too. In essence, it is the town boundary where town meets country.

**Viability Assessment**

Compares the likely broad value of planned development likely to come forward over the plan period with the

likely costs and constraints, in order to understand the deliverability of the plan and provide certainty and sustainability.

**Visually coherent town or village:**

A visually coherent place is one that has been thoughtfully developed and composed to give a sense of meaningful urban order and visual delight. This is the opposite of a sprawling settlement which covers the landscape in a visually unplanned and unconsidered way like the southern approaches to Alnwick. Although it has been functionally planned, it is without any visual unity, recognizable shape or composed skyline. Surprisingly, this southern view is totally unlike that of Alnwick when viewed from the north on the old North Road route. Here the visual coherence of grand castle, planned landscape and historically walled town from a moving view-point, is nothing less than outstanding.

**Windfall Housing Sites**

So called windfall sites are those housing sites that come forward during the life of the plan and have not been allocated through the plan process. Typically these are very small sites such as a subdivision of a larger plot or on occasion a larger site arising from a change of use of a larger area of land which could not have been identified in advance. The NPPF allows an element of windfall to be factored into housing supply calculations where there is evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply.