

Embleton Parish Neighbourhood Plan



Background Evidence Paper No 7

Local Green Spaces

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1: Introduction

The purpose of this background paper is to provide supporting information/evidence regarding the value of green spaces in Embleton Parish, in order to support their designation as Local Green Spaces through the Embleton Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Paragraph 99 of the NPPF states:

The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable, of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

In order to qualify as Local Green Space, the land needs to meet certain criteria as defined in paragraph 100 of the NPPF:

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- b) 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*
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*

The areas proposed as Local Green Spaces in Embleton Parish are:

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| LGS1 | Embleton Village Playing Field and Play Park and adjoining field. |
| LGS2 | Embleton Village Green. |
| LGS3 | Embleton Village Quarry. |
| LGS4 | Embleton Village School Playing Field. |
| LGS5 | The Glebe Field adjacent to Embleton Village Church. |
| LGS6 | Christon Bank Village Green. |
| LGS7 | Greyfield Estate Play Area, Embleton Village. |

Each proposed Local Green Space is covered separately, with a short summary of the space, why it is important to the local community, and how it complies with paragraph 100 of the NPPF. Photographs are provided to help illustrate the value of the space.

2: Background

Embleton village and Christon Bank are the two main settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Within these, the proposed Local Green Spaces are mainly valued by the community for their recreational use or aesthetic and historical value.

The coastal area is also highly valued, specifically Embleton Bay, the dunes and the golf course. However, this land is within the Northumberland Coast AONB and the Northumberland Heritage Coast and is also under the ownership of the National Trust, and therefore is adequately protected.

3: Consultation

There has been significant consultation in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. All these proposed Local Green Spaces were cited as being important by both residents of and visitors to the Parish.

4: Summary Tables

Map Reference	NU23092 22723	NU23130 22588	NU23201 22881	NU23098 22729
Policies Map Reference	LGS 1	LGS 2	LGS 3	LGS 4
1.1 Name of Space	Embleton Village Playing Field, Play Park and adjoining field.	Embleton Village Green.	Embleton Village Quarry.	Embleton Village School Playing Field.
1.2 Space Description and Main Characteristics	Football and Cricket field with pavilion, play park and field.	Village green in the heart of the old village.	Site of the old quarry, now a designated wildlife site.	Playing field adjacent to Embleton Primary School.
1.3 Are there any other designations?	Yes - within Embleton Conservation Area. WW2 Pillbox has proposed NDHA status.	Yes - within Embleton Conservation Area and site of three Grade 2 listed buildings.	Yes - designated Local Wildlife and Geological Site (LWGS) and within AONB, Northumberland Heritage Coast and Embleton Conservation Areas.	Yes - within Embleton Conservation Area.
1.4 Have maps and photographs been provided?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.1 Does the site have an extant planning permission on it?	No	No	No	No
2.2 Is the space an extensive tract of land?	No	No	No	No
2.3 Does the space feel local in character and have a physical, visual and social connection with the area?	Yes - used by the local football and cricket teams. Play park is well used by residents and visitors alike. Adjoining field hosts the village fireworks display.	Yes - opens the view along Front St, the historical heart of the village. Used for events and the site of village Christmas tree and Parish Council noticeboard	Yes - well used by the local community and visitors. Local volunteers help maintain the site.	Yes - adjacent to the school which has proposed NDHA status.
2.4 Is the space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes	Yes - central within the old village	Yes	Yes
2.5 Is the space demonstrably special or hold particular significance for the local community?	Yes - the land was donated to the community for recreational use.	Yes - see 2.3 above.	Yes - now a wildlife site and used by the school as a teaching resource.	Yes - used by the school and other local community groups.
3.1 Is the space of particular local significance because of its beauty?	No - but softens the approach to the village from the South.	No	Yes - recognised as such by its LWGS status.	No

Map Reference	NU23092 22723	NU23130 22588	NU23201 22881	NU23098 22729
Policies Map Reference	LGS 1	LGS 2	LGS 3	LGS 4
1.1 Name of Space	Embleton Village Playing Field, Play Park and adjoining field.	Embleton Village Green.	Embleton Village Quarry.	Embleton Village School Playing Field.
3.2 Is the space of particular historic significance?	No	Yes - provides the setting for three Grade 2 listed buildings.	Yes - site of the old quarry which had a significant historical impact on the village.	No - although it was gifted to the school for educational use.
3.3 Is the space of particular local significance because of its recreational value?	Yes - home of local sports clubs and play park well used by families.	Yes - see 2.3 above. Provides a resting place for cyclists using the Sustrans1 route.	Yes - used by residents and visitors alike to walk their dogs and provides an outdoor play area for all ages.	Yes - used by the school and local groups for outdoor activities.
3.4 Is the space of particular local significance because of its tranquillity?	Yes - when not in sporting use.	No	Yes	No
3.5 Is the space of particular local significance because of richness of wildlife?	No	No	Yes	No
4.1 Have the criteria in section 2 been assessed?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.2 Is the space suitable as Local Green Space?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3 What are the landowner's details?	Embleton Parish Council	Embleton Parish Council	Embleton Parish Council	Northumberland County Council
4.4 Has the landowner been informed about the proposal to designate any part of their land?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Map Reference	NU23064 22563	NU21404 23108	NU22942 22797
Policies Map Reference	LGS 5	LGS 6	LGS 7
1.1 Name of Space	Glebe Field adjacent to Embleton Church	Christon Bank Village Green	Greyfield Estate Play Area - Embleton Village
1.2 Space Description and Main Characteristics	Meadow on the northern edge of the 12 th Century Holy Trinity Church.	Small grassy area at the junction of the 2 major roads in the village.	Irregular shaped grassy area in the Greyfield Estate.
1.3 Are there any other designations?	Yes - within Embleton Conservation Area and adjoining 3 major listed buildings. WW2 pillbox has proposed NDHA status.	No	No
1.4 Have maps and photographs been provided?	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.1 Does the site have an extent planning permission on it?	No	No	No
2.2 Is the space an extensive tract of land?	No	No	No
2.3 Does the space feel local in character and have a physical, visual and social connection with the area?	Yes - Crucial to the character of the conservation area. Provides historic setting and context to the nearby listed buildings.	Yes - site of village Christmas tree and Parish Council noticeboard.	Yes - at the heart of the estate.
2.4 Is the space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes	Yes – central within the old village.	Yes
2.5 Is the space demonstrably special or hold particular significance for the local community?	Yes - it enhances the historic character of Embleton. Provides the only view of the oldest part of the church.	Yes - see 2.3 above.	Yes - meeting point for children who live on the estate.
3.1 Is the space of particular local significance because of its beauty?	No - but it has been neglected in recent years.	No	No
3.2 Is the space of particular historic significance?	Yes - the site of medieval Embleton.	No	No

Map Reference	NU23064 22563	NU21404 23108	NU22942 22797
Policies Map Reference	LGS 5	LGS 6	LGS 7
1.1 Name of Space	Glebe Field adjacent to Embleton Church	Christon Bank Village Green	Greyfield Estate Play Area - Embleton Village
3.3 Is the space of particular local significance because of its recreational value?	No - although it was once used for the village fete.	No	Yes - used by the children on the estate for games.
3.4 Is the space of particular local significance because of its tranquillity?	Yes - last remaining tranquil location within the proposed settlement boundary.	No	No
3.5 Is the space of particular local significance because of richness of wildlife?	Yes – the SEA states that the site is recognised for its biodiversity. Populations of barn owls, bats and hares are known to visit the site	No	No
4.1 Have the criteria in section 2 been assessed?	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.2 Is the space suitable as Local Green Space?	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.3 What are the landowner's details?	Diocese of Newcastle	Northumberland County Council	Northumberland County Council
4.4 Has the landowner been informed about the proposal to designate any part of their land?	Yes	Yes	Yes

5: Detailed Description of Each Proposed Local Green Space

5.1 LGS 1 - Embleton Village Playing Field, Play Park and Adjoining Field

5.1.1 Embleton Village Playing Field

The playing field softens the approach to the village from the South, both from the B1339 and the road in from Craster. It has matured trees to the Western and Eastern boundaries, and the Creighton Hall (which has proposed Non-Designated Heritage Asset status) is situated on the northern boundary. There is a WW2 pillbox situated at the north Eastern gate which also has proposed Non-Designated Heritage Asset status. A path connects the field to the adjoining play park.



The field is the home to Whinstone Rovers football club (the local team) and to Embleton Cricket Club and has a changing pavilion to support these clubs. It is also used by the village primary school and for other sporting and fund-raising events. Spectators can take advantage of 2 seats and a picnic table as well as being able to stand on the touchlines/boundaries during matches.

It is also linked to events at the adjacent Creighton Hall for example fitness classes and wedding parties. It has also hosted camps for visiting Scouts and Guides.

The land was donated by a local landowner for community recreational use and is leased by the football and cricket clubs from Embleton Parish Council. The field and surrounding area is maintained by community volunteers.

When not in use as a sporting venue the field provides a tranquil area for both residents of and visitors to the Parish.

5.1.2 Embleton Play Park and Adjoining Field

The play park and the undeveloped field to the South provide a soft approach to the village from the road in



from Craster. At the Southern end of the village and close to social outlets the play park provides a safe, enclosed area for children to enjoy the outdoors. The play park contains both traditional and more adventurous play equipment to encourage play. It has an off-road parking area to the West and is surrounded by a stone wall and hedges. As well as play equipment the area has 3 picnic tables and a grass area for other games. The play park is well used by community groups and both local and visiting families contributing positively to the local economy. A footpath links the play park to the sports field. The undeveloped field to the South is proposed to be

developed as further community space for sport and leisure and is the site of the annual village fireworks display. The land was donated to Embleton Parish Council at the same time as the playing field and is managed by a local group of volunteers who hold various fund-raising events to support the on-going maintenance and further development of the site.

Together with the Creighton Hall these sites are situated within the Embleton Conservation Area and provide a recreational and community hub for the village.

5.2 LGS 2 - Embleton Village Green

This triangle of grass is situated at the junction of Front Street and the B1339 it is the heart of the old village and in the Embleton Conservation Area. It has matured trees and in the spring a display of daffodils. It provides context and setting to several listed heritage assets, namely the Pant and Old Village Pump, both of which are situated on the green. Another listed heritage asset, the Old United Reformed Church is situated on the opposite side of the southern road along the green. The proposed Non-Designated Heritage Assets of the Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel and the Village Shop are located on the opposite side of the Northern road along the green and the Eastern end of the green respectively. The green also has seating and is a well-used resting place for cyclists using the Sustrans1 route which passes through the village. The Parish Council noticeboard is sited on the green and it is also the venue for several fund-raising events. It is the site of the village Christmas tree and a small Remembrance Day service is held here before moving to the local cemetery.



5.3 LGS 3 - Embleton Village Quarry

A former quarry from which Whinstone was extracted until it closed in 1961, it was then a landfill site until the 1990's when the landfill was dug into the ground and nature allowed to take over. It is now designated as a Local Wildlife and Geological Site (LWGS) and is within the AONB, Heritage Coast and Embleton Conservation areas. The site was transferred from Northumberland County Council to the Parish Council in 2017 it is now managed by a working party reporting to the Parish Council with input from the AONB using a management plan created by Northumberland Wildlife Trust. The site contains areas of endangered Whin grassland, a lake and some of the original quarry faces. It is also home to various species of flora and fauna (some rare e.g. Bee Orchids). The site excludes the relatively new development of Whinstone view to the West and the old quarry buildings to the North.



The site has significant value to the local community in historical, environmental and recreational terms. It is well used by residents and visitors including bird and wildlife enthusiasts, dog walkers and conservation volunteers. Embleton primary school also use the site as a teaching resource for outdoor projects.

5.4 LGS 4 – Embleton Village School Playing Field

The school playing field sits adjacent to Vincent Edwards Primary School to the North and is owned by Northumberland County Council. It was gifted to the school and community by a local landowner for educational and recreational use. The playing field is a visually important space forming a buffer between housing on the scenic coastal road through the village and is in the Embleton Conservation Area. The space provides a visual and historical setting for the school building which is proposed as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset. It is well used by not only the school children but other local groups who meet at the school including a local parent/toddler group and the local Guides. The NPPF, Sport England and the Playing Field Association strongly support the retention of school playing



fields, especially where community use is evident.

5.5 LGS 5 - Glebe Field adjacent to Embleton Village Church

A meadow adjacent to the Northern boundary of the Grade 1 listed 12th Century Holy Trinity Church, it is in the old heart of the village and is the site of medieval Embleton. The Glebe field is within the Embleton Conservation Area which states that “Embleton’s medieval atmosphere is carried by its ancient church and vicarage”



which are set against the backdrop of the Glebe field. As well as the church it is near three other listed buildings, the Old Vicarage (Grade 1), Moot Hall (Grade 2) and a Dovecote (Grade 2) and therefore provides an historic setting for this group of listed buildings. In the North East corner of the field is a WW2 pillbox which is proposed for Non-Designated Heritage Asset status. The field is owned by the Diocese of Newcastle and has been associated with the church since

medieval times. The Embleton Conservation Area Assessment describes the church tower, as viewed from the Glebe field as the ‘visual and cultural focal point’ of the village. Views from Station Road across the Glebe field afford the only views of the original 12th Century church, the building was extended to the East in the 18th Century. In the past the annual church fete was held on the field and a recent Health and Safety risk assessment was undertaken to see if it could be used again by church groups. The field, which has been neglected in recent years consists of scrubland (with some evidence of ridge and furrow) and matured trees. Bats, Barn Owls and Hares have been observed visiting the site. The Strategic Environmental Assessment report says the site is recognised for its biodiversity.

It is the last tranquil green space within the proposed settlement boundary for Embleton village.

5.5 LGS 6 - Christon Bank Village Green

A small triangular grassy area on the western side of the junction of the B1340 and B6347 in the heart of Christon Bank and just to the East of the railway line. It is owned and managed by Northumberland County Council. The green is opposite the Blink Bonny Public House, which has proposed Non-Designated Heritage Asset status. The green contains the Parish Council noticeboard, a bench commemorating the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 2002 and a tree planted in 2012 to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. It is also the site for an old public weighbridge which was donated by a local family and used to be part of the machinery in the old quarry at Embleton. The village Christmas tree is located on the green each year. Albeit small, the green itself is special to the residents being the only green space inside the proposed settlement boundary for Christon Bank.



5.7 LGS 7 - Greyfield Estate Play Area, Embleton

A small, irregular shaped area of grass with mature trees at the centre of the Greyfield Estate in Embleton village, which is owned and maintained by Northumberland County Council. The Greyfield Estate, which has a distinct community feel to it, was built after the second world war and is now a mixture of social housing, privately owned properties and holiday homes. The estate has a higher proportion of permanent resident families than the rest of Embleton village. The grassy area is well used by children who live on the estate or locally as a place to meet, play games and generally socialise. The children provide their own equipment to facilitate their games for e.g. pop up goalposts and cricket stumps. It is highly valued by the estate community as it provides as space to meet and play without the need to travel far beyond their own front door.

