

**Alnmouth Parish
Neighbourhood Development Plan**

2020-2036

Submission Version October 2020

Basic Conditions Statement

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Alnmouth Parish Council. It accompanies the Submission Draft Alnmouth Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (APNDP), which has been submitted to Northumberland County Council (NCC) under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) ('the Regulations').
- 1.2 The Parish Council is the qualifying body for the purposes of neighbourhood planning in the civil parish of Alnmouth. The civil parish was designated as Alnmouth Neighbourhood Area by Northumberland County Council on 15th October 2019. (A copy of the designation document is included at Appendix 1).
- 1.3 The APNDP relates to planning matters involving the use and development of land in the designated neighbourhood area and covers the period from adoption to 2036. It does not contain policies relating to excluded development as defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 1.4 This statement sets out how the APNDP has been prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and it describes how, in the opinion of the Parish Council, the Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The basic conditions for neighbourhood plans require the following:
 - a. having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
 - b. the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - c. the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
 - d. the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations;

- e. prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood development plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood development plan; and
- f. in relation to the examination of neighbourhood development plans, the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

1.5 Sections 2 to 5 of this statement provide information to demonstrate how the Submission Draft APNDP meets the basic conditions.

2. Conformity with National Planning Policy

- 2.1 The APNDP has been prepared having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, 2019 (NPPF) and guidance as set out in the National Planning Practice Framework (NPPG). The APNDP contains only one policy. Table 1 provides a summary of how it has had regard to national policy and guidance.

Table 1: Having Regard to Policy and Guidance

APNDP Policy	Comment on having regard to national policy and guidance
<p>Principal Residence Housing</p> <p><i>This policy seeks to restrict the provision of new housing in the Plan area for principal residence only.</i></p>	<p>NPPF, 2019</p> <p>Para 9 states that planning policies should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.</p> <p>Para 77 requires planning policies to be responsive to local circumstances in rural areas and support housing developments that reflect local needs.</p> <p>Para 78 states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.</p> <p>NPPG, 2019</p> <p>Para: 009 Reference ID: 67-009-20190722 (<i>How can planning policies support sustainable rural communities?</i>) states that people living in rural areas can face particular challenges in terms of housing supply and affordability. It explains that a wide range of settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas, therefore blanket policies restricting housing development need to be supported by robust evidence.</p> <p>This policy seeks to address a local issue which is fully evidenced: a summary of the evidence set out in the Principal Residence Background Paper (September 2020) shows:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Parish recorded a drop in population of 20% between 2001 and 2011.• There is a significantly higher percentage of people aged 65 and over (34.9%) and a much lower percentage of people aged 15 and under (10.3%) in the parish compared to the county as a whole (20.1% and 17%);• Of the 339 household spaces in the parish in 2011, 35.1% of dwellings had no usual residents, an increase of 75% on the value recorded in 2001 (20.1%);• Council tax records from 2016 identified 72 second homes in the Parish, which equates to 22.1% of the housing stock, and in 2019, 68 properties within the parish were registered as self-catering holiday units.• In the postcode area NE66, which includes the parish of Alnmouth, the house price to income affordability ratio in 2016 was 8.6, which means average house price was 8.6 times than average income in this area. <p>This evidence demonstrates that it is appropriate, having regard to national policy and guidance, to introduce a planning policy approach which will support the future vitality of the local community.</p>
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3. Contribution to achieving Sustainable Development

3.1 The NPPF defines the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for the planning system in England. Paragraph 8 explains that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

3.2 The most relevant dimension of sustainable development to the proposed vision and policy of the APNDP is the social dimension, which is defined as:

*'to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.'*¹

3.3 The single policy proposes to limit new housing to that which has a principal residence restriction. This has been introduced as a response to both the number, and the significant increase in the number of second and holiday homes in the Parish. At the same time the population of the Parish has decreased. The policy will therefore contribute towards the social element of sustainable development by seeking to resist any further loss of population thereby increasing the sense of community and supporting local services and facilities.

¹ Para 8b, NPPF 2019

4. Conformity with Strategic Policies in the Development Plan

- 4.1 This section considers the extent to which the policy contained within the APNDP is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the neighbourhood area, which comprises:
- Alnwick District Local Development Framework, Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2007); and
 - Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997).
- 4.2 NCC provided confirmation of the strategic policies in the development plan that covers the Neighbourhood Area; this is included at Appendix 2. Table 2 sets out how policy 1 of the APNDP is in general conformity with the relevant strategic development plan policies.
- 4.3 A new Northumberland Local Plan is set to supersede all existing Core Strategy and Local Plan documents currently extant in Northumberland. The new Local Plan is currently subject to public examination. Although a draft neighbourhood plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. Therefore, reference is made within Table 2 to relevant policies in the Plan.

Table 2: General Conformity with Strategic Policies in Development Plan

ANDP Policy	Comment on conformity with Strategic Policies in the Development Plan for the Area
<p>Principal Residence Housing</p> <p><i>This policy seeks to restrict the provision of new housing in the Plan area for principal residence only.</i></p>	<p>Alnwick District Local Development Framework, Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2007):</p> <p>Policies S1 and S3</p> <p>Whilst the Core Strategy acknowledged (paragraphs 2.3.5, 5.1.1 and 5.4.1) the growing demand and impact of second and holiday homes across the former Alnwick District, it did not include a specific policy to seek to manage future development; instead it sought to increase the provision of affordable housing.</p> <p>Policy S1 identifies Alnmouth (with Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton) as a ‘sustainable village centre’, which is defined as a settlement with public transport and a</p>

ANDP Policy	Comment on conformity with Strategic Policies in the Development Plan for the Area
	<p>strong service base usually comprising school, shop, post office, pub, church, community hall, sports and recreation facilities and where development will be well-related to the scale and function of the settlement.</p> <p>Policy S3 supports new development in settlements that would help to build communities by sustaining or providing community services and facilities.</p> <p>The approach to limit new build housing to that which would be restricted to occupation as a principal residence is considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Alnwick District Core Strategy.</p> <p>Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997)</p> <p>This plan does not refer to the pressures created by second and holiday homes and its saved policies are not relevant to this matter.</p> <p>Emerging Northumberland Local Plan: Policy HOU10</p> <p>The Plan highlights the issue of the impact of increasing numbers of second and holiday homes in the county (paragraphs 7.6 and 7.50-7.53), particularly along the north Northumberland Coast. The Plan acknowledges that while second and holiday homes provide some economic benefits, the lack of permanent occupation of properties is having an adverse impact on the social fabric of affected communities, resulting in diminished support and demand for local facilities and schools. As a result, a number of settlements have begun to lose their sense of community with some services only operating at certain times of year. In addition, during peak holiday</p>

ANDP Policy	Comment on conformity with Strategic Policies in the Development Plan for the Area
	<p>seasons, these services struggle to meet the needs of visitors as well as the permanent population. The emerging Local Plan explains that the demand for holiday accommodation, coupled with rising house prices and a limited supply and turnover of homes, has made many smaller properties unaffordable to the local population.</p> <p>As a result, policy HOU10, which is a non-strategic policy, supports new market homes only where they will be occupied as principal residence homes in areas identified in the most recent census as having 20% or more household spaces with no usual (i.e. permanent) residents.</p> <p>Policy STP1 is a proposed strategic policy which identifies a settlement hierarchy for the county. Alnmouth (along with Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton) is identified collectively as a 'service village', which is a settlement that will provide for a proportionate level of housing and be the focus for investment in rural areas, to support the provision and retention of local retail, services and facilities.</p> <p>The approach to limit new build housing to that which would be restricted to occupation as a principal residence is considered to be in general conformity with Policy STP1 as it would support the social and economic vitality of the area.</p>

5. Compatibility with EU Obligations and the Habitats Regulations

European Convention on Human Rights

- 5.1 Throughout the preparation of the APNDP, particularly in relation to the formal consultations, efforts have been made to ensure that no sections of the community have been isolated or excluded. The APNDP is fully compliant with the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights. There is no discrimination stated or implied, nor any threat to the fundamental rights guaranteed under the convention.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 5.2 European Directive (2001/42/EC) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment is known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. SEA is required for all plans that may have a significant effect on the environment.
- 5.3 SEA is a way of ensuring that the environmental implications of policies are taken into account before plans are brought into force. Northumberland County Council provided a screening opinion, which is available on the County Council website², to establish whether a SEA was required for the plan. This concluded that:

“In the opinion of Northumberland County Council, Strategic Environment Assessment of the Alnmouth Neighbourhood Plan is NOT required for the following reason:

- The Plan covers a relatively small rural area and does not allocate sites for development or expressly support further development in the Alnmouth Neighbourhood Area. Accordingly, significant positive or negative effects on the environment are considered unlikely to arise as a result of the introduction and implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.*

This opinion is supported by the statutory consultation bodies, that is: The Environment Agency; Historic England; and Natural England.”

² <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Planning/Neighbourhood.aspx>

Habitats Regulations

- 5.4 The European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna protects habitats and species of European nature conservation importance. It is a requirement that a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is undertaken in line with the provisions set by the amended Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) to assess the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan on European Sites. The stages involved in an HRA are:
- i. Screening - to ascertain whether plans or proposals would give rise likely significant effects on European Sites;
 - ii. Appropriate Assessment - to identify whether there will be an adverse effect on European Site integrity; and
 - iii. Subsequent procedures where significant effect on integrity of European Sites remains.
- 5.5 A Habitats Regulations Assessment screening opinion was undertaken by the County Council. This concluded that no significant effect on European sites would arise from the introduction of the proposed planning policy. The screening opinion is available on their website.

6. Conclusion

6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the APNDP meets the basic conditions in that it:

- has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area which for the time being remains the Alnwick District Core Strategy and Alnwick District Local Plan; and
- does not breach, and is compatible with European Union obligations.

6.2 The Parish Council considers that the APNDP complies with the legal requirements set out in Paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Appendix 1. Neighbourhood Area Designation Document



Neighbourhood Area Designation Application Decision Document

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (Regulation 7)

DECISION REGARDING APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION OF ALNMOUTH PARISH AS A NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

In accordance with Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (Regulation 7) Northumberland County Council hereby gives notice on the designation of the Civil Parish of Alnmouth as the 'Alnmouth Neighbourhood Area' for the purposes of neighbourhood planning under Section 61G(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended. The designated area is shown on the attached map.

Under Section 61H(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended, the area has not been designated as a business area because it is not wholly or primarily business in nature. The relevant designation information is set out below:

Name of Neighbourhood	Alnmouth
Relevant qualifying body	Alnmouth Parish Council
Decision published	15 October 2019

1. Determination

Is the organisation making the area application under Section 61G of the 1990 Act?	Yes
Is the neighbourhood area considered appropriate?	Yes
Does the area overlap another designated area?	No
For joint area applications, have all relevant parish councils given their consent for inclusion of all or part of their area?	Not applicable
Are any modifications required to this or any adjoining neighbourhood area?	No

2.

a) Parish/Parishes comprising the neighbourhood area: Alnmouth

b) Map of the neighbourhood area: See below





Northumberland County Council

Neighbourhood Plans: Basic Conditions Statements

Strategic Policies in the Development Plan

Introduction

1. This note is intended to support neighbourhood planning groups in the preparation of their 'basic conditions statement', specifically in relation to the need to demonstrate general conformity with current development plan policies. It briefly sets out the background to this requirement then defines the strategic policies set out in the development plan covering the neighbourhood area.

2. Regulation 15 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, as amended, requires that certain specified information is provided alongside a draft neighbourhood development plan when it is submitted to the local planning authority. In summary, this information is:
 - (a) a map or statement which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates;
 - (b) a consultation statement;
 - (c) the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
 - (d) a '**basic conditions statement**'; and
 - (e)
 - (i) an environmental report, or
 - (ii) a screening opinion indicating that an environmental report is not required.

3. The '**basic conditions statement**' is a requirement of the Regulations. Its purpose is to allow the parish council submitting the neighbourhood plan to demonstrate how their plan has met a set of 'basic conditions' which are prescribed in legislation. The basic conditions statement must demonstrate that the policies in the plan:
 - are in general conformity with the **strategic policies** in the development plan for the area

- have been prepared having regard to national policies and guidance;
 - contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; and
 - are not in conflict with European Union obligations on human rights and the environment
4. A definition of **strategic policies** is given in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) at paragraph 156. It is expected that Local Plans should include strategic policies to deliver the following:
- *homes and jobs needed in the area;*
 - *retail, leisure and other commercial development;*
 - *infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);*
 - *health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities; and*
 - *climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.*
5. The strategic policies in the current development plan covering the neighbourhood plan area have been identified by the County Council as local planning authority. These are set out in Appendix A to this note.

Appendix A

The Alnmouth Neighbourhood Plan

The current statutory development plan for the Alnmouth Neighbourhood Plan Area is the Alnwick District Core Strategy (2007) and the "Saved" strategic policies from the Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997). The policies in the Alnmouth Neighbourhood Plan must be assessed for general conformity with the strategic policies listed below. The findings of this assessment should be presented in the basic conditions statement. The strategic policies for the Alnmouth Neighbourhood Plan Area are as follows:

Alnwick District Local Development Framework, Core Strategy Development Plan Document, Adopted October 2007.

- Policy S1: Location and scale of new development
- Policy S2: The sequential approach to development
- Policy S3: Sustainability criteria
- Policy S4: The phased release of housing land
- Policy S6: Provision of affordable housing
- Policy S8: Economic Regeneration
- Policy S9: Employment land allocation
- Policy S10: Tourism development
- Policy S11: Locating development to maximise accessibility and minimise impact from travel
- Policy S12: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity
- Policy S13: Landscape character
- Policy S14: Development in the open countryside
- Policy S15: Protecting the built and historic environment
- Policy S17: Town centres
- Policy S18: Provision of social and community facilities
- Policy S20: Providing for open space, sport and recreation
- Policy S21: Renewable energy
- Policy S22: Energy efficiency
- Policy S23: Planning obligations

Alnwick District Wide Local Plan, 1997

- Policy RE6: Protection of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance
- Policy RE7: Protection of Local Nature Reserves
- Policy RE16: Protection of the AONB
- Policy RE20: Rural diversification proposals
- Policy RE21: Control of new agricultural buildings
- Policy BE2: Regional and local archaeological significance

- Policy H1 Housing in the minor settlements to meet exceptional local needs
- Policy TT1 Controlling the redevelopment of public transport facilities
- Policy TT2 Protection of route of A1 dualling from development
- Policy ED4 Providing a broader base of job opportunities on designated commercial site
- Policy CD32 Controlling development that is detrimental to the environment and residential amenity