



Northumberland
County Council

Belford
Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental
Assessment (SEA)

Environmental Report
Addendum Report
April 2022

Prepared by the Neighbourhood Planning Team,
Northumberland County Council for Belford Parish Council

Quality Control

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Non-Technical Summary

Introduction

- i. Belford Parish Council is currently preparing a neighbourhood plan for Belford civil parish area. Once in force, the Belford Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) will form part of the statutory development plan for Northumberland and its policies must then be used when making decisions on planning applications.
- ii. An Environmental Report of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was undertaken on a draft Plan. That Report provided two recommendations for modifications to the Plan as follows:

Recommendation 1

To ensure that water quality in the Lindisfarne SPA is not adversely affected by further development, it is recommended that a suitably worded policy is included in the Plan, which says that any development in the plan area which is not connected to the mains sewerage network will be required to include the best available foul water package treatment and tertiary/quaternary treatment. The details of this will be provided as part of the planning application process.

Recommendation 2

Policy 6 and the supporting text should be modified to reflect advice provided by the Environment Agency in their response to consultation on the SEA Scoping Report as set out in their letter dated 11 June 2021 in order to secure alignment of the Plan with SEA Objective 3 by seeking to protect existing flood defences, taking into account the likely future effects of climate change.

- iii. In addition, Belford Parish Council made minor modifications to two other policies concerning overnight holiday accommodation (Policy 11), and development in the Belford Conservation Area (Policy 13).
- iv. The modifications and the additional policy require further consideration through the SEA process. This Addendum Report provides the conclusions on that further assessment in regard to the likely effects these proposed policy changes may have on the environment.

What is the purpose of Strategic Environmental Assessment?

- v. The aim of undertaking a SEA is to identify and assess the potentially significant environmental effects of a plan; and to suggest measures to avoid, reduce or manage damaging environmental impacts, and enhance positive effects. The SEA process enables engagement with the community, stakeholders, and certain specified

consultees to allow them to comment on and shape the approach taken to assessment and on the outcomes.

- vi. The need for SEA was triggered by the need for ‘appropriate assessment’ of the Plan under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (HRA). The HRA screening process, undertaken by the County Council, determined that appropriate assessment was necessary because the Plan would be likely to have significant effects on European sites. This conclusion automatically triggered the need for SEA. Changes to national advice in March 2022 in regard to development impacts on water quality in protected environments has triggered the need for further changes to draft policies to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations and Regulation 15(1)(e) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- vii. This Addendum Report describes the assessed impact on the environment of the modified Pre-Submission Draft Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan (November 2022). It should be read alongside the original Environmental Report (19 November 2021). Both Reports will be made available alongside the Draft Plan for the purposes of consultation required under the SEA Regulations.
- viii. The process of conducting SEA is described in detail in the Environmental Report (19 November 2021). It is not necessary to repeat the detail of the process in this Addendum Report. The Addendum Report focusses on the likely effects the modified and additional policies may have on the environment.

SEA Scope and Limitations

- ix. Taking a proportionate approach is a key principle in undertaking SEA. The process should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects of a plan. The scope of the SEA of the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been influenced by the relatively small geographic area covered by the Plan and the overall strategy, vision, and objectives.
- x. SEA is not an exact science and there are certain difficulties commonly encountered in undertaking any SEA. For example, the baseline analysis which describes the current situation of various factors is dependent upon the availability of information. Projecting what might happen with or without the Plan or considering the relative effects of implementing alternatives is also inherently difficult and requires a degree of judgement.

What does the Strategic Environmental Assessment tell us?

- xi. The area covered by the Belford Neighbourhood Plan is environmentally sensitive, hosting several important nature conservation sites. Some of the key environmental

issues based on the current state of the environment and how it is likely to evolve without the Neighbourhood Plan include:

- The area is rich in biodiversity. There may be opportunities for enhancement but there are also potential pressures which could lead to disturbance or depletion of habitats and species. It will be important to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to prevent any deterioration, or ensure improvement in the status of the current condition of Lindisfarne SSSI, Spindlestone Heugh SSSI and Holburn Lake and Moss SSSI, along with any other relevant geological sites, including through appropriate improvements in land management measures.
- Some areas of the Neighbourhood Area are at a greater risk of flooding from fluvial flooding as well as surface water flooding. While the areas at greater risk of flooding from these sources avoid the built form of Belford more severe weather could result in properties in the Neighbourhood Area becoming more at risk of flooding from these sources.
- Reliance upon private vehicles is high reflecting the rural nature of the area. This is the main cause of rising carbon emissions in the County. There are significant barriers to reducing carbon emissions. The changing climate variables (temperature / rainfall) have the potential to affect the area.
- The health and well-being of those in the Neighbourhood Area is generally good. However, this could change relatively over time as a result of there being an increasingly ageing population. The quality and availability of existing community facilities is limited which could affect health and wellbeing.
- There are currently 2 designated heritage assets in the Neighbourhood Area which appear in Historic England's 'Heritage At Risk Register'. The Neighbourhood Area does include a number of Grade II listed buildings. Since Grade II listed buildings outside London (other than places of worship) are excluded from the Register, it is therefore possible that the Neighbourhood Area may also contain heritage assets at risk but which fall outside the remit of the 'Heritage At Risk Register'. There is a designated Conservation Area in Belford, but no Conservation Area Character Appraisal. This may create difficulties in determining the effect development may have on the Conservation Area, other heritage assets within the Conservation Area and their settings.
- The landscape within and surrounding the Neighbourhood Area contains a number of receptors which are sensitive to changes in the landscape. The Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment (2010) identifies Landscape Character Areas across Northumberland and assesses their qualities and sensitivities to change and development. There are 4 key landscape character

types within the Belford neighbourhood area: Haggerston; Lucker; Farne Islands Coast; and Belford Hills. Each area has its own particular sensitivities outlined in the Scoping Report and these sensitivities need to be managed and not intensified through future development.

- xii. The modified Plan includes minor alterations to Policy 6 (Local Green Space) which was necessary to address representations made by The Environment Agency following consultation on the SEA Scoping Report; minor alteration to Policy 11 (Overnight Tourist Accommodation) to allow for small scale extensions to existing static caravan sites; minor alteration to Policy 13 (Belford Conservation Area) to remove a requirement to retain existing shop fronts in all forms of development; and the creation of Policy 16 (Water Quality and Development) in order to meet recommendations from the Habitats Regulations Assessment and the original SEA Environmental Report. These changes have resulted in consequential renumbering of the policy on Landscape which now becomes Policy 17.

- xiii. The assessment demonstrates that the modifications to Policies 6, 11 and 13, and the introduction of Policy 16 individually and collectively support development that has limited environmental impact and the Plan provides appropriate tools to ensure mitigation of any potential negative environmental effects. The Plan as modified encourages the protection and enhancement of the environment as a whole, and provides an appropriate framework, working alongside other plans and programmes, to protect and enhance the environment. Implementation of the Plan overall is assessed as having positive or neutral effects on the environment. The assessment concludes that, with these modifications, implementation of the Plan would lead to no significant adverse environmental impacts and would provide some positive environmental effects.

Next Steps

- xiv. The Environmental Report and this Addendum will now be subject to consultation in accordance with the SEA Regulations. That will take place alongside consultation on the draft Plan. Subject to the outcome of that consultation the Report will be finalised. The final draft Neighbourhood Plan will then be submitted by the Parish Council to Northumberland County Council, along with the Environmental Report and other supporting documents required by legislation. The County Council will then consider whether the Plan and the various submission documents meet certain legal requirements. Provided these requirements are met the Plan will then progress to Independent Examination.

1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1 Belford Parish Council is currently preparing a neighbourhood development plan, often referred to simply as a 'neighbourhood plan', for the civil parish of Belford. The original draft Plan has been assessed through the process of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and an Environmental Report was prepared in November 2021. Changes to policies were recommended through the Environmental Report and the Parish Council subsequently proposed further minor modifications.
- 1.2 This Addendum Report considers the effects on the environment of the latest draft Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan through the SEA process. It should be read alongside the original Environmental Report. The SEA process and purpose is explained in detail in the Environmental Report (November 2021) and is therefore not repeated in this Addendum.

Structure of the Addendum Report

- 1.3 Regulation 12 of the SEA Regulations specifically sets out the requirements of an Environmental Report. It must identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing a plan, and of the reasonable alternatives, taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan. The Environmental Report must clearly show how these requirements have been met.
- 1.4 This Addendum has been prepared in accordance with these regulatory requirements having regard to the scope of the Plan and the limitations on the process which are set out in the original Environmental Report.

2. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Approach

What is Strategic Environmental Assessment?

- 2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects on the environment of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternative approaches to achieve the objectives of that plan. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maximise the emerging Plan's contribution to achieving sustainable development.
- 2.2 Neighbourhood development plans are 'development plan documents' for the purposes of the Planning Acts. Accordingly, 'Sustainability Appraisal' is not required. The SEA of the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan therefore addresses only the requirements of the SEA Directive and the SEA Regulations. Whilst it does not constitute a Sustainability Appraisal, it has informed wider considerations by the Parish Council in respect of ensuring the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development which is one of the 'basic conditions' required of neighbourhood plans.

Determining the need for an SEA Addendum

- 2.3 The need for SEA was identified through the HRA process and the need for appropriate assessment of the Plan. This automatically triggered the need for SEA and an Environmental Report was produced in November 2021. This Addendum report is required to assess any likely effects on the environment of changes that have been made to the Plan subsequent to the original Environmental Report.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Stages

- 2.4 The SEA Regulations prescribe a process for undertaking SEA and specific guidance on what must be addressed at each stage. These are described in the Planning Practice Guidance¹ and are shown in brief Figure 1 below. The stages highlighted in blue in Figure 1 have been completed. A detailed explanation of each stage is provided in the original Environmental Report.

¹ Paragraph: 033 Reference ID: 11-033-20150209

Figure 1: Stages already undertaken in the SEA of Belford Neighbourhood Plan

Stage	Tasks
Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives. 2. Collect baseline information. 3. Identify environmental problems. 4. Develop SEA objectives. 5. Consult on the scope of SEA.
Stage B: Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Test the Plan objectives against the SEA objectives. 2. Develop the Plan options including reasonable alternatives. 3. Predict the likely effects of the Plan, including alternatives. 4. Evaluate the likely effects of the Plan, including alternatives. 5. Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects. 6. Propose measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the Plan.
Stage C: Preparing the Environmental Report	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present the predicted environmental effects of the Plan, including alternatives, in an Environmental Report.
Stage D: Consultation and decision-making	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult the public and Consultation Bodies on the draft Plan and the Environmental Report. 2. Assess significant changes to the Plan to ensure that the environmental implications are assessed and taken into account. 3. Make decisions on how the Environmental Report and consultees' opinions have been taken into account in deciding the final form of the Plan.
Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop methods for monitoring implementation of the Plan and publish these in a 'post adoption statement'. 2. Monitor significant effects of implementing the Plan. 3. Respond to adverse effects.

3. Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan

3.1 The Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by Belford Parish Council. The Neighbourhood Plan will cover the Belford Neighbourhood Area which comprises the whole of Belford Parish. The Parish area was modified through a boundary review in April 2021. The modified Belford Neighbourhood Area was designated by Northumberland County Council in May 2021 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Modified Belford Neighbourhood Area (April 2021)



- 3.2 The Vision and Objectives of the Plan are set out in the original Environmental Report and are therefore not repeated here.
- 3.3 The Plan originally contained 16 planning policies. These are listed in Table 1 below and are presented in full in the Environmental Report. Table 1 shows the more recent changes proposed which are the subject of this Addendum Report. Specifically, the Addendum assesses the likely environmental effects of amendments to Policy 6, 11 and 13; and a new Policy 16. The new and amended policies are provided in full at Appendix A of this Addendum Report.

Table 1 – Changes to the policies in the Belford Neighbourhood Plan

Policies in original draft Plan	Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan (April 2022)
Policy 1: New Housing Development Policy 2: Community Led Housing Policy 3: Accessible and Adaptable Housing Policy 4: Community Facilities Policy 5: Recreational Open Space Policy 6: Local Green Space Policy 7: Belford Village Centre Policy 8: Broadband Infrastructure and Telecommunications Policy 9: Rural Business Development and Tourism Policy 10: Belford Industrial Estate Policy 11: Overnight Tourism Accommodation Policy 12: Provision and Improvements of Pedestrian and Cycling Routes Policy 13: Belford Conservation Area Policy 14: Design in New Development Policy 15: Protected Habitats and Species Policy 16: Valued Landscapes	Policy 1: New Housing Development Policy 2: Community Led Housing Policy 3: Accessible and Adaptable Housing Policy 4: Community Facilities Policy 5: Recreational Open Space Policy 6: Local Green Space Policy 7: Belford Village Centre Policy 8: Broadband Infrastructure and Telecommunications Policy 9: Rural Business Development and Tourism Policy 10: Belford Industrial Estate Policy 11: Overnight Tourist Accommodation Policy 12: Provision and Improvement of Pedestrian and Cycle Routes Policy 13: Belford Conservation Area Policy 14: Design in New Development Policy 15: Protected Habitats and Species Policy 16: Development and Water Quality Policy 17: Valued Landscapes
Policy has been amended New policy has been created	

4. Environmental baseline position

- 4.1 A comprehensive explanation of the current environmental baseline within and affecting the Belford Neighbourhood Area is set out in the original Environmental Report. It is not necessary to repeat that information in this Addendum Report. The only material alteration to the assessment of the environmental baseline concerns the advice provided by Natural England in March 2022 and included in the more recent review of the Habitats Regulations scoping report, concerning the impact of excess nitrogen entering the Lindisfarne Special Protection Area. This matter is addressed through the inclusion of a new policy in the Plan concerning nutrient neutrality (Policy 16).

5. The SEA Framework used to appraise the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.1 An SEA Framework is a recognised method by which the likely effects of a Plan and any reasonable alternative options can be described, analysed and compared. It comprises objectives, which are statements of what is intended should be achieved through the implementation of the Plan, specifying a desired direction of environmental change. These are evaluated having regard to various guiding questions. It is not the intention of the assessment to answer all of the guiding questions. The questions will act as prompts to help focus the assessment as an informed evaluation of likely significant environmental effects arising from the implementation of the Plan or any reasonable alternative options.
- 5.2 The SEA Framework for the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan (see Figure 3) was informed by the review of relevant plans and programmes and the analysis of the baseline position to identify environmental issues. The framework was subject to consultation with the consultation bodies as part of the SEA Scoping stage and has been confirmed as being appropriate for the task through that process.

Figure 3: SEA Framework for the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Objective	Guiding questions
Biodiversity, flora and fauna 1. Protect and enhance biodiversity features.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support continued improvements to the status of the European designated sites of significance within the neighbourhood area? Support the status of SSSIs located wholly or partly within the neighbourhood area? Protect and enhance semi-natural habitats? Protect and enhance priority habitats, and the habitat of priority species? Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? Support enhancements to multifunctional green infrastructure networks? Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?
Climatic factors 2. Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Area	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the number of journeys made and reduce the need to travel? Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources?

SEA Objective	Guiding questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable sources?
Climatic factors 3. Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at higher risk of flooding, taking into account the likely future effects of climate change? • Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing surface water runoff (either within the neighbourhood area or downstream)? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the neighbourhood area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?
Population and Human Health 4. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality housing which people can afford, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes? • Support enhancements to the current housing stock? • Meet the needs of all sectors of the community? • Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people’s needs? • Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? • Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?
Population and Human Health 5. Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents of the neighbourhood area to work locally	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and enhance the viability of small local businesses? • Support the diversity of local businesses and the economy? • Support employment opportunities which enable residents to work from home?
Population and Human Health 6. Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the neighbourhood area	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups? • Promote the use of healthier modes of travel? • Improve access to the countryside for recreational use?
Population and Human Health 7. Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the need to travel through sustainable patterns of land use and development? • Encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel? • Enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements? • Facilitate working from home and remote working? • Improve road safety?

SEA Objective	Guiding questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?
<p>Population and Human Health</p> <p>8. Cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve access to local, high-quality community services and facilities</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of a range of high-quality, accessible community facilities? • Encourage and promote social cohesion and encourage active involvement of local people in community activities? • Minimise fuel poverty? • Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing local residents? • Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people? • Support the provision of land for allotments and cemeteries?
<p>Soil</p> <p>9. Manage soil and land resources in a sustainable manner.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of previously developed land? • Avoid the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land?
<p>Water</p> <p>10. Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improvements to water quality? • Minimise water consumption?
<p>Landscape</p> <p>11. Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the integrity of the landscape in the neighbourhood area? • Conserve and enhance landscape features?

Methodology

5.3 The methodology employed in conducting an environmental assessment is set out in the Environmental Report. The SEA Framework has been used to assess the likely significant environmental effects arising from implementation of the following new and modified policies:

- Policy 6. Local Green Space – amended policy
- Policy 11. Overnight Tourist Accommodation - amended policy
- Policy 13. Belford Conservation Area - amended policy
- Policy 16. Development and Water quality - new policy

5.4 Figure 4 below illustrates the scoring system applied in the assessment.

Figure 4: Matrix for the SEA of the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Assessment	Description	Key
Major positive effect	The objective/policy/alternative addresses all the elements that are required to protect the environment and address the relevant sustainability issues in the neighbourhood area and would help achieve the applicable SEA objective. The objective/policy/alternative also sets out how, where and when the policy will be implemented. It will have a positive impact in relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors.	✓✓
Minor positive effect	The objective/policy/alternative addresses all the elements that are required to protect the environment and address the sustainability issues in the neighbourhood area and would help achieve the applicable SEA objective.	✓
Minor negative effect	The objective/policy/alternative conflicts with the SEA objective.	X
Major negative effect	The objective/policy/alternative conflicts with the SEA objective. It also sets out how, where and when the policy will be implemented and this will have a negative effect in relation to characteristics of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptors.	XX
Neutral effect	The objective/policy/alternative does not have an effect or has a neutral effect on the achievement of the SEA objective.	0
Not Applicable	The objective/policy/alternative does not apply to the SEA objective	NA

6. Appraisal of the effects of Policies 6, 11, 13 and 16 of the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan, on the environment

- 6.1 The appraisal has been structured using the SEA Framework. For each SEA Objective, the likely significant effects of the relevant policy have been predicted and evaluated where possible. Account has been taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, including the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects, as far as this is possible.

Biodiversity, flora, and fauna

SEA Objective 1: Protect and enhance biodiversity features

- 6.2 The Belford Neighbourhood Plan sets out provisions to limit the impact of development on features and areas of biodiversity interest, and to support enhancements to ecological networks within the Neighbourhood Area.
- 6.3 Policy 6, Local Green Space, designates 5 areas of Local Green Space and has been amended to protect existing flood defences. Where biodiversity features are present in a local green space the protective nature of the policy will help enhance or protect these features. The policy continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.
- 6.4 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, supports proposals for small scale tourist accommodation subject to environmental and amenity controls. The policy was amended to support the small-scale expansion of existing static caravan and holiday home parks. The policy now allows for more development than the initial policy did. When read alongside Policy 15, Protected Habitats and Species, it continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.
- 6.5 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, does not apply to the SEA objective
- 6.6 Policy 16, Development and Water quality, is a new policy written to ensure that water quality in the Lindisfarne SPA is not adversely affected by further development. This is a requirement created through the appropriate assessment carried out to meet obligations set out in the Habitats Regulations. This policy has a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.

Assessment Conclusions

- 6.7 Where relevant, the amended policies as drafted, are likely to have a minor positive effect on SEA Objective 1.

Climatic Factors

SEA Objective 2: Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Area

SEA Objective 3: Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding

- 6.8 Policy 6, Local Green Space, helps increase the resilience of any biodiversity features present on these spaces to the effects of climate change by supporting their retention and supporting any development on these spaces only in very special circumstances. The policy has been modified to reflect advice provided by the Environment Agency in their response to consultation on the SEA Scoping Report to secure alignment of the Plan with SEA Objective 3 by seeking to protect existing flood defences, taking into account the likely future effects of climate change. The policy now has a minor positive effect on the SEA Objective 3.
- 6.9 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, supports proposals for small scale tourist accommodation subject to environmental and amenity controls. The policy was amended to support the small-scale expansion of existing static caravan and holiday home parks. The policy now allows for more development than the initial policy did. When read alongside Policy 15, Protected Habitats and Species, it continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.
- 6.10 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, does not apply to these objectives
- 6.11 Policy 16, Development and Water Quality, is a new policy written to ensure that water quality in the Lindisfarne SPA is not adversely affected by further development. This is a requirement created through the appropriate assessment carried out to meet obligations set out in the Habitats Regulations. This policy has a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.

Assessment Conclusions

- 6.12 Where relevant, the amended policies, as drafted are likely to have a minor positive effect on the achievement of SEA Objectives 2 and 3.

Population and Human Health

SEA Objective 4: Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality housing which people can afford, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types, and tenures.

6.14 The amended and new policies do not apply to this objective.

Population and Human Health

SEA Objective 5: Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents of the neighbourhood area to work locally

6.15 Policy 6, Local Green Space, does not apply to this objective.

6.16 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, supports proposals for small scale tourist accommodation subject to environmental and amenity controls. The policy was amended to support the small-scale expansion of existing static caravan and holiday home parks. The policy now allows for more development than the initial policy did. This policy supports and enhances the viability and diversity of local businesses and the economy. The policy continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.

6.17 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, does not apply to this objective

6.18 Policy 16, Development and Water Quality, does not apply to this objective

Assessment Conclusions

6.19 Where relevant, the amended policies, as drafted, continue to have a minor positive effect on the achievement of SEA Objective 5.

Population and Human Health

SEA Objective 6: Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the neighbourhood area

6.20 Policy 6, Local Green Space, designates 5 open spaces that are demonstrably special to the community and protects them in a manner similar to that of Green Belt land. Each site has recreational value, which may indirectly improve the wellbeing of residents. The policy continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective

6.21 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, supports proposals for small scale tourist accommodation subject to environmental and amenity controls. The policy was amended to support the small-scale expansion of existing static caravan and

holiday home parks. The policy now allows for more development than the initial policy did. The policy continues to help to promote access to the countryside and leisure activities, though this effect is likely to be negligible given its limited applicability to local residents. The policy continues to have a neutral effect on the SEA objective.

6.22 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, does not apply to this objective

6.23 Policy 16, Development and Water Quality does not apply to this objective

Assessment Conclusions

6.24 Where relevant, the amended policies, as drafted, continue to have a neutral or minor positive effect the SEA Objective 6.

Population and Human Health

SEA Objective 7: Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel

6.25 Policy 6, Local Green Space, does not apply to this objective.

6.26 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, supports proposals for small scale tourist accommodation subject to environmental and amenity controls. The policy was amended to support the small-scale expansion of existing static caravan and holiday home parks. The policy now allows for more development than the initial policy did. The policy continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.

6.27 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, does not apply to this objective.

6.28 Policy 16, Development and Water Quality does not apply to this objective.

Assessment Conclusions

6.29 Where relevant, the amended policies continue to have a minor positive effect on the SEA Objective 7.

Population and Human Health

SEA Objective 8: Cater for existing and future residents' needs as well as the needs of different groups in the community, and improve access to local, high-quality community services and facilities

- 6.30 Policy 6, Local Green Space, designates 5 locally important green spaces in the neighbourhood area and protects them from inappropriate development so they can continue to be enjoyed for their beauty, historic significance, tranquillity, or biodiverse qualities. The policy continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.
- 6.31 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, does not apply to this objective.
- 6.32 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, does not apply to this objective.
- 6.33 Policy 16, Development and Water Quality does not apply to this objective.

Assessment Conclusions

- 6.34 Where relevant, the amended policies continue to have a minor positive effect on the on the SEA Objective 8.

Soil

SEA Objective 9: Manage soil and land resources in a sustainable manner

- 6.35 Policy 6, Local Green Space, does not apply to this objective.
- 6.36 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, supports proposals for small scale tourist accommodation subject to environmental and amenity controls. The policy was amended to support the small-scale expansion of existing static caravan and holiday home parks. The policy now allows for more development than the initial policy did. However, development is still limited to that which is small scale. The policy continues to have a neutral effect on the SEA Objective
- 6.37 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, does not apply to this objective.
- 6.38 Policy 16, Development and Water Quality does not apply to this objective.

Assessment Conclusions

- 6.39 Where relevant, the amended policies, as drafted, continue to have a minor positive effect on the achievement of SEA Objective 9.

Water

SEA Objective 10: Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.

- 6.40 Water quality was not addressed in original draft Plan. It was concluded that requirements of the Water Framework Directive were likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality in watercourses in the wider area. Water quality could also be affected by pollution incidents in the area, the presence of non-native species and physical modifications to water bodies.
- 6.41 Policy 6, Local Green Space, does not apply to this objective.
- 6.42 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, does not apply to this objective.
- 6.43 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, does not apply to this objective.
- 6.44 Policy 16, Development and Water Quality, is a new policy written to ensure that water quality in the Lindisfarne SPA is not adversely affected by further development. This is a requirement created through the appropriate assessment carried out to meet obligations set out in the Habitats Regulations. This policy has a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.

Assessment Conclusions

- 6.45 Where relevant, the amended policies, as drafted, continue to have a minor positive effect on the SEA Objective 10.

Landscape

SEA Objective 11: Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes

- 6.46 Policy 6, Local Green Space, protects 5 important local green spaces in a manner consistent with national policy on Green Belt land. Development would only take place in very special circumstances. By supporting the integrity of the landscape in the neighbourhood area the policy continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.
- 6.47 Policy 11, Overnight Tourist Accommodation, supports proposals for small scale tourist accommodation subject to environmental, landscape impact and amenity controls. The policy was amended to support the small-scale expansion of existing static caravan and holiday home parks. The policy now allows for more development than the initial policy did. The policy continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.
- 6.48 Policy 13, Belford Conservation Area, supports proposals within or affecting the setting of the Belford Conservation Area which preserve or enhance the character or appearance and quality of the Conservation Area and make a positive contribution to local character, distinctiveness, and significance through the careful use of

materials and design. The policy continues to have a minor positive effect on the SEA objective.

6.49 Policy 16, Development and Water quality does not apply to this objective.

Assessment Conclusions

6.50 Where relevant, the amended policies, as drafted, continue to have a minor positive effect on the SEA Objective 11.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Addendum Conclusions

6.51 The summary of the assessment of the modified and additional policies against SEA Objectives is set out in figure 7. The assessment concludes that overall, the Belford Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan is likely to continue to lead to minor positive or neutral environmental effects. Whilst the area hosts a number of environmental designations reflecting its environmental value and sensitivity, the Neighbourhood Plan's vision, objectives, and policies should, on the whole help to avoid significant environmental impacts arising from development in the future, and the policies will, to a limited degree, serve to mitigate some of the potential adverse effects.

6.52 The conclusion of this assessment is that no further modification is required to any of the policies assessed to address any likely significant positive or negative environmental effects of their implementation.

Figure 6: Original Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan Policies against the SEA Objectives

	Policy 1. New Housing Development	Policy 2. Community Led Housing	Policy 3. Accessible and Adaptable Housing	Policy 4. Community Facilities	Policy 5. Recreational open Space	Policy 6. Local Green Space	Policy 7. Belford Village Centre	Policy 8. Broadband and Telecommunications	Policy 9. Rural Business Development and Tourism	Policy 10. Belford Industrial Estate	Policy 11. Overnight Tourist Accommodation	Policy 12. Walking and Cycling Routes	Policy 13. Belford Conservation Area	Policy 14. Design in new Development	Policy 15. Protected Habitats and Species	Policy 16. Valued Landscapes
SEA OBJECTIVES																
1. Protect and enhance biodiversity features	✓	NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓	NA	NA	✓	✓✓	NA
2. Reduce the contribution to climate change	✓	✓	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	0	✓	NA	✓	NA	NA
3. Support resilience to the potential effects of climate change	✓	✓	NA	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	✓	✓	0	NA	NA	✓	✓	NA
4. Provide an appropriate mix of good quality affordable housing	✓✓	✓	✓✓	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA	NA
5. Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents to work locally	NA	NA	NA	✓	NA	NA	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
6. Improve the health and wellbeing of residents	✓	NA	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA	NA	NA	0	✓	NA	✓	NA	NA
7. Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA	NA	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	NA	✓	NA	NA
8. Cater for residents' needs, and improve access to local, high-quality community facilities	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA	✓	NA	NA	✓	NA	✓	NA	NA
9. Manage soil and land resources in a sustainable manner	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA	NA	✓	NA	0	✓✓	0	NA	NA	0	NA	NA
10. Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	✓	NA	NA
11. Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes	✓	✓	NA	✓	✓	✓	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓✓

Figure 7: Re-assessment of policies 6, 11, 13 and 16 against the SEA Objectives

POLICIES	Policy 1. New Housing Development	Policy 2. Community Led Housing	Policy 3. Accessible and Adaptable Housing	Policy 4. Community Facilities	Policy 5. Recreational open Space	Policy 6. Local Green Space	Policy 7. Belford Village Centre	Policy 8. Broadband and Telecommunications	Policy 9. Rural Business Development and Tourism	Policy 10. Belford Industrial Estate	Policy 11. Overnight Tourist Accommodation	Policy 12. Walking and Cycling Routes	Policy 13. Belford Conservation Area	Policy 14. Design in new Development	Policy 15. Protected Habitats and Species	Policy 16. Development and Water quality	Policy 17. Valued Landscapes
	SEA OBJECTIVES																
1. Protect and enhance biodiversity features						✓					✓		NA			✓	
2. Reduce the contribution to climate change						✓					✓		NA			✓	
3. Support resilience to the potential effects of climate change						✓					✓		NA			✓	
4. Provide an appropriate mix of good quality affordable housing						NA					NA		NA			NA	
5. Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents to work locally						NA					✓		NA			NA	
6. Improve the health and wellbeing of residents						✓					0		NA			NA	
7. Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.						NA					✓		NA			NA	
8. Cater for residents' needs, and improve access to local, high-quality community facilities						✓					NA		NA			NA	
9. Manage soil and land resources in a sustainable manner						NA					0		NA			NA	
10. Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner						NA					NA		NA			✓	
11. Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes						✓					✓		✓			NA	

7. Monitoring and Next Steps

Monitoring

- 7.1 Monitoring the significant effects of the implementation of a neighbourhood plan that was subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment will enable unforeseen adverse effects to be identified and enable appropriate remedial actions to be taken. For identified significant effects consideration should be given to identifying:
- the criteria or thresholds for remedial action;
 - the type of remedial actions that could be taken, for example reviewing the relevant policy or implementing additional mitigation measures; and
 - the responsibility for taking the action.
- 7.2 Monitoring will be led by the Parish Council but will be informed by monitoring data captured by Northumberland County Council in respect of the Northumberland Local Plan (2022).

Next Steps

- 7.3 The Environmental Report (November 2021) and this Addendum Report will be subject to consultation as required under the relevant SEA Regulations. This will take place alongside consultation on the draft Plan. Both Reports will be reviewed having regard to any representations received in response to that consultation.
- 7.4 There are a number of subsequent stages before the Belford Neighbourhood Plan can come into force, as described in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. In summary, the Neighbourhood Plan will be finalised and submitted to Northumberland County Council, alongside the Environmental Report and Addendum Report. The County Council will consider whether the submission meets legal requirements prior to arranging an Independent Examination.
- 7.5 If the Plan is successful at Independent Examination, the Plan will progress to Referendum. If more than 50% of voters vote in favour of the Plan, it will then be for Northumberland County Council to seek to 'make' the Plan, subject to meeting EU obligations. Once made, the Plan will become part of the statutory development plan for the Parish of Belford and must be used to make decisions on planning applications in the Belford Neighbourhood Area.

Appendix A – Relevant Policies in the Pre-Submission Draft Belford Parish Neighbourhood Plan subject to re-assessment, November 2022

POLICY 6: LOCAL GREEN SPACE

The sites listed below and shown on the Policies Map are designated as areas of Local Green Space which will be protected in a manner consistent with the protection of land within the Green Belt:

LGS1: Belford Central Park Playground, off William's Way

LGS2: Belford Community Woodland, Croftfield

LGS3: Belford Jubilee Woodland Park

LGS4: Croftfield Playground

LGS5: Belford Football Ground (The Meadows), Croftfield

Management of any development within these Local Green Spaces must be consistent with national policy on Green Belts. Inappropriate development will not be permitted other than where very special circumstances can be demonstrated. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Local Green Space by reason of inappropriateness, and other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Any development within LGS2 and LGS3 must not impact the function of flood defences located in these areas.

POLICY 11: OVERNIGHT TOURIST ACCOMMODATION

Proposals for small scale development, comprising bunkhouses, chalets, holiday lodges, touring caravan sites, camping sites, glamping pods, yurts and similar holiday accommodation, and the small-scale expansion of existing static caravan and holiday home parks will be supported where the occupation of any caravans, buildings or other structures is limited by condition or planning obligation to prevent their use other than as holiday accommodation, and where it can be demonstrated that:

- the development can be accommodated within the capacity of existing drainage and water supply infrastructure, or appropriate infrastructure can be provided;
- no significant adverse impact on highway safety would arise from the development;

- no significant adverse impact on residential amenity would arise from the development;
- the development can be accommodated sensitively in the landscape with great weight being given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty where development is proposed in the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- where proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the optimum use that is viable and justifiable; and
- where development proposals affect a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement is made, taking into account the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

All proposals must be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced person to clearly demonstrate the landscape and visual impact anticipated to arise from the development.

The creation of new large-scale static caravan and holiday home sites will not be supported.

POLICY 13: BELFORD CONSERVATION AREA

Development proposals within or affecting the setting of the Belford Conservation Area will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance and quality of the Conservation Area and make a positive contribution to local character, distinctiveness, and significance through the careful use of materials and design.

Development proposals that lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of the Belford Conservation Area will be refused. Development of poor design that fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance and distinctiveness of the Conservation Area will be refused.

Any proposed alterations to shop fronts, or the creation of new shop fronts, must reflect the design features dominant in the traditional shop fronts in the village centre and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Belford Conservation Area.

POLICY 16: DEVELOPMENT AND WATER QUALITY

Any new residential development, tourism accommodation or any other type of development that will increase foul water discharges must be accompanied by a nutrient budget and a plan to offset any increases in nitrogen levels entering the Lindisfarne SPA and Ramsar Site. Planning permission will only be granted where this nutrient budget shows that there will be no net increase in nitrogen entering the Lindisfarne SPA.