

# **Craster Neighbourhood Plan**

## **Basic Conditions Statement**

**March 2020**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Craster Parish Council. It accompanies the Submission Draft Craster Neighbourhood Plan (CNP), which has been submitted to Northumberland County Council (NCC) under section 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations General (2012 – ‘the Regulations’).
- 1.2 The CNP has been prepared by Craster Parish Council, the qualifying body for the area covering Craster Parish, as designated by NCC on 29 January 2019 (a copy of the designation document is included at Appendix 1).
- 1.3 The CNP relates to planning matters (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<sup>1</sup> as laid out in the regulations.
- 1.4 This statement sets out how the CNP has been prepared in accordance with the regulations and 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 regulations state that a neighbourhood plan will have met the basic conditions if:
- 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); and
  - d. the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

- 1.5 The key milestones in the preparation of the CNP can be summarised as:

29 January 2019	Designation of the Craster Neighbourhood Area
August 2019	Parish wide survey
January – March 2020	Pre-Submission Draft Plan engagement, including a drop-in event
April 2020	Submission

- 1.6 Sections 2 – 5 of this statement provide information to demonstrate how the Submission Draft CNP meets the basic conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> Such as minerals and waste matters or nationally significant infrastructure projects.

## 2. National policies and advice

- 2.1 National Planning Policy is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (2019 - NPPF) and guidance is set out within the National Planning Practice Framework (NPPG). The Submission Draft CNP has been prepared having regard to the NPPF and NPPG.
- 2.2 The CNP contains only one policy. The table below provides a summary of how it has had regard to national policy and guidance. The paragraphs referred to are considered to be the most relevant to the policy and are not intended to be a comprehensive list of every possible relevant paragraph.

Table 1: Conformity with national policies and guidance

Craster NP Policy	National policies and guidance	
	References	Comments on conformity
Policy 1 Managing second and holiday homes	NPPF: 77  NPPG: Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 67-009-20190722	<p>Paragraph 77 of the NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to be responsive to local circumstances in rural areas and identifies the importance of maintaining the vitality of rural communities. NPPG highlights that people living in rural areas can face 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>The housing background paper supporting the CNP highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a significantly higher percentage of people aged 65 and over (34.8%) and a much lower percentage of people aged 15 and under (11.8%) in the parish compared to the county as a whole (20.1% and 17%);</li> <li>• Craster contains a larger proportion of one person households with larger numbers of households aged over 65 (22.1%) compared to the county as a whole (14%);</li> <li>• Economic activity rates are significantly less within the parish (41.6%) with a high level of retired people (29.6%) compared to the county as a whole (32.1% and 18.8%);</li> <li>• Of the 245 household spaces in the parish, 39.2% of dwellings had no usual residents, an increase of 13% from 26.2% in 2001;</li> <li>• Council tax records identify that 55 homes were second homes, which equates to 28.4% of the housing stock and 44 properties within the parish are registered as self-catering holiday units.</li> </ul> <p>The evidence above illustrates that there is a need to seek to implement a planning policy approach which will help manage the future vitality of the local community.</p>

### **3. 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 CNP 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.’*
- 3.3 The vision of the plan is that by 2036 the parish will contain a mix of housing that meets the needs of a revitalised local community. The policy aims to deliver this vision by limiting new housing to that which has a principal residence restriction. It also does not support the creation of new second homes. The vision of the plan and proposed planning 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. In addition, it is hoped that the policy will assist in the management of house prices, particularly by helping to make smaller houses affordable to local people.

## 4. Development Plan – strategic policies

- 4.1 This section considers the extent to which the policy contained within the CNP 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 - ADCS); and
  - Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997 - ADLP).
- 4.2 NCC provided confirmation of the strategic policies in the development plan that cover the plan area; this is included at Appendix 2. Table 2 sets out how policy 1 of the CNP is in general conformity with the relevant strategic development plan policy. The new Northumberland Local Plan is currently subject to public examination; therefore reference is made within table 5 to the emerging draft policies (NLP(d)).

Table 2: General conformity with the strategic policies

Craster Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Strategic Development Plan Policy	
	Policy	Comments on conformity
Policy 1 Managing second and holiday homes	ADCS: Policy S1, S10	<p>Whilst the ADCS 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. Policy S1 identifies Craster as a 'local needs centre', which is a settlement with limited services, or which are peripherally located in relation to employment and transport. Development in Craster is therefore currently restricted to that which satisfies local needs only.</p> <p>Policy S10 seeks to focus new cultural and tourism development within or adjacent to rural service centres, sustainable village centres and local needs centres. This policy seeks to ensure that new tourism development will avoid an adverse impact on the well-being of communities.</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 ADCS.</p>
	ADLP	The ADLP does not refer to the pressures created by second and holiday homes.
	NLP(d): STP1	The NLP highlights the issue of the impact of the increasing numbers of second and holiday homes in the county (paragraphs 7.6 and 7.50-7.53), explaining that the prevalence is most stark along

Craster Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Strategic Development Plan Policy	
	Policy	Comments on conformity
		<p>the north Northumberland Coast. The NLP acknowledges that second and holiday homes do provide some economic benefits. However, it is stated that 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, some settlements have begun to lose their sense of community with some services only operating at certain times of year. In addition, during peak holiday seasons, some services struggle to meet the needs of visitors as well as the permanent population. The NLP 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, restricts the occupancy of new market dwellings in parishes where 20% or more of household spaces are identified as having no permanent residents. It will require a principal residency restriction to be applied and secured through a section 106 legal agreement.</p> <p>Policy STP1 identifies a settlement hierarchy for the county. Craster is not specifically referred to within the settlement hierarchy. As a village, policy STP1 would support development in Craster where it would support the social and economic vitality of the area, including other settlements nearby.</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. EU obligations

### European Convention on Human Rights

- 5.1 Throughout the preparation of the CNP emphasis has been placed to ensure that no sections of the community have been isolated or excluded. The CNP 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. NCC provided a screening opinion, which is available on the NCC website<sup>2</sup>, 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 Craster 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 Craster 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.”*

### 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 a HRA are:
- Screening - to ascertain whether or not plans or proposals would give rise likely significant effects on European Sites;
  - Appropriate Assessment - to identify whether there will be an adverse effect on European Site integrity; and

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



- Subsequent procedures where significant effect on integrity of European Sites remains.

5.5 A Habitats Regulations Assessment screening opinion was undertaken by NCC. 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 the NCC website<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-policy/Neighbourhood.aspx>

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement, which is required under Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Neighbourhood Planning) Regulations 2012 has demonstrated that the CNP:
- 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 CNP also complies with the legal requirements set out in Paragraph 8(1) 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 CRASTER 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 Craster as the 'Craster 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	Craster
Relevant qualifying body	Craster Parish Council
Decision published	29 January 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: Craster

b) Map of the neighbourhood area: See below.



## Appendix 2: Development plan – strategic policies



### 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
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.
  - 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

## Appendix A

### The Craster Neighbourhood Plan

The current statutory development plan for the Craster 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 Craster 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 Craster 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 Conserve 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