



Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Environmental Report

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Non-Technical Summary

Introduction

1. Lesbury Parish Council is currently preparing a neighbourhood plan for the Lesbury Parish area. Communities may choose to produce a neighbourhood plan. However, they are not required to do so since neighbourhood planning powers are discretionary. Once in force, the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for Northumberland, which is the background against which planning decisions are made.

What is Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)?

2. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process of assessing the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. Assessment is a legislative requirement under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (often referred to as the SEA Regulations). The process of assessment is governed by requirements set out in those Regulations.

3. This 'Environmental Report' and is a key output of the SEA. It tells the story of the stages of the SEA process to date, and presents the findings of the assessment to date.

What is the purpose of Strategic Environmental Assessment?

4. The main purpose of the 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 stakeholders and certain specified consultees to allow them to comment on and shape the approach taken to assessment and to comment on the outcomes.

Why is a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan necessary?

5. Not every neighbourhood plan requires SEA. The need for SEA is influenced by the nature of the area covered by the plan, the proposed objectives and policies of the plan and its likely significant environmental effects.

6. In the case of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan an assessment known as a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' (HRA) triggered the need for an SEA due to the likely significant effects of introducing certain policies that support development in

the Parish. HRA is a requirement of separate legislation and all neighbourhood plans must be assessed against the requirements of that legislation. HRA specifically assesses the effects of plans on Natura 2000 and European Designated sites. These are networks of internationally important, high quality nature conservation sites.

7. Confirmation from Northumberland County Council that the outcome of the HRA triggered the need for SEA came after consultation had commenced on a Pre-Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan. This timing has had no influence on the outcome of the SEA which is an iterative process with the main requirement being the need for completion of SEA prior to adoption of plans.

8. The Parish Council has taken the opportunity to review representation made in response to consultation on the Pre-Submission Plan. Some modifications have been made to the Plan in response to representations made during that consultation. The Plan has also been modified to take account of recommendations made through the HRA process. The SEA has therefore considered the effects of the modified version of the Plan on the environment. This Environmental Report describes the assessed impact on the environment of the Draft Submission version of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan (October 2019). That version of the Plan will be made available alongside the Environmental Report for the purposes of consultation required under the SEA Regulations.

What has the Strategic Environmental Assessment involved so far?

9. There are six key stages in undertaking an SEA:

Stage A – Screening

The first stage is to decide whether or not an SEA is required. This is referred to as screening. The need for a SEA for the Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan was triggered by a separate assessment (the HRA). Accordingly no further consideration was required about whether the Plan should be subject to SEA.

Stage B- Scoping

This stage is about deciding the scope of the assessment and the level of detail required for the SEA. A scoping report was produced and consultation took place with the 'consultation bodies' in accordance with the SEA Regulations, specifically: Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. The Scoping Report included:

- A review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of European, national, regional and local plans, policies and programmes relevant to the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan;
- A description of the baseline environmental position in the area;
- Identification of key environmental issues and problems in the area; and

- An SEA Framework, which forms the basis of the proposed methodology for undertaking the SEA

Stage C – testing

This stage is about assessing the Neighbourhood Plan. This involved:

- Testing the Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies;
- Examining and assessing any reasonable alternatives;
- Predicting the effects;
- Evaluating and scoring the effects;
- Identifying measures to mitigate adverse effects and maximise positive impacts; and
- Proposing measures for monitoring the environmental effects of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Stage D – reporting

This Environmental Report presents the outcome of the assessment carried out at stage C of the process at this point in time. This may be modified in future should further significant changes be made to the Plan prior to it being brought into force.

Stage E consulting

This report will be subject to consultation with prescribed consultation bodies and others who have an interest in the Plan and in the area.

Stage F monitoring

This stage will not take place until the Neighbourhood Plan is ‘made’ (brought into force) and the effects of implementing the Plan can be monitored.

SEA Scope and Limitations

10. 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 Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been influenced by the relatively small geographic area covered by the Plan and the overall strategy, vision and objectives. It has also been informed by a higher level ‘Sustainability Appraisal’ of the emerging Northumberland Local Plan. That process includes an assessment of the environmental impacts of introducing the Local Plan.

11. 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 in light of alternatives is also inherently difficult and requires a degree of judgement.

What does the Strategic Environmental Assessment tell us?

12. The area covered by the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan is environmentally sensitive, hosting a number of international, national and locally designated 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 and surroundings are rich in biodiversity. There may be opportunities for enhancement. There are also potential pressures which could lead to disturbance or depletion of habitats and species;
- Any growth in development and any increase in levels of car ownership could lead to higher greenhouse gasses with resulting impacts on climate change;
- Additional future development has the potential to exacerbate flood risk unless suitable mitigation is secured;
- The Neighbourhood Area contains a range of heritage assets and part of the area is within the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). These are assets which could be sensitive to new development;
- Census data shows that Lesbury Parish experienced a population increase of 15.6% in the period 2001 to 2011. It also has an ageing population with associated implications in respect of the sustainability and viability of services and facilities in the longer term;
- There are no immediate pressures from existing second or holiday homes but continued demand for these properties may have detrimental impacts on sustainability;
- 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;
- Reliance upon private vehicles is high. This reflects the rural nature of the area. This is likely to continue to be the case.

13. The appraisal demonstrates that individually and collectively the policies and objectives of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan serve to mitigate any potential negative environmental effects and enhance positive effects. The Plan overall therefore has positive or neutral effects on the environment. There are no significant adverse impacts as a result of the Plan.

14. The 'reasonable alternatives' considered in the plan making process related to:

- alternative settlement boundaries;
- potential site allocations for housing;
- important community spaces; and
- controls over the occupation of new dwellings as principal residences.

15. The SEA demonstrates the alternatives do not represent more favourable outcomes in respect of environmental impacts; and, for settlement boundaries and housing allocations, the identification of genuine reasonable alternative options other than those preferred policy approaches defined in the draft Plan diminished significantly as a result of progress made on the Northumberland Local Plan and the identification of indicative housing requirements for the Parish over the Plan period to 2036.

Next Steps

16. The Environmental Report will now be subject to consultation in accordance with the SEA Regulations. 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 Lesbury Parish Council is currently preparing a neighbourhood development plan, often referred to simply as a neighbourhood plan, for the Lesbury Parish area.
- 1.2 The Localism Act 2011 introduced neighbourhood planning powers. These various powers are contained in modifications to the Planning Acts and allow parish councils and, where parishes don't exist, groups of people from the community, called neighbourhood forums, to formulate neighbourhood development plans and neighbourhood development orders. These documents are intended to guide and shape development in a particular area. Neighbourhood planning powers are discretionary and there is no particular obligation on parish councils or local communities to prepare plans. However, where neighbourhood plans are prepared they must have regard to national policies and must be in general conformity with local strategic planning policies.
- 1.3 To be brought into legal force, which is known as being 'made', a neighbourhood development plan must pass an independent examination and meet certain 'basic conditions' defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These include that the making of the plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations.
- 1.4 One of these EU obligations is European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. This is often referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (the SEA Directive). The need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) must be determined and, where necessary, an assessment of the effects a plan may have on the environment must be completed prior to a plan being brought into legal force.
- 1.5 The SEA Directive '*seeks to provide a high level of protection of the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing plans and programmes*'. The SEA Directive is transposed into UK legislation through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). It is these regulations with which a neighbourhood plan must comply.
- 1.6 It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to decide whether a neighbourhood plan complies with relevant legislative obligations. The

Local Planning Authority for Lesbury Parish is Northumberland County Council. The County Council has confirmed that SEA is required for the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan. This requirement was triggered by an assessment under the Habitats Regulations which concluded that the introduction of certain policies in the Plan would be likely to have significant effects on sites protected for their ecological importance at a European level. This automatically means that a SEA must be completed before a plan can be brought into force.

- 1.7 Beyond its duty to advise and assist Lesbury Parish Council with neighbourhood planning¹, Northumberland County Council offered its additional assistance to help by undertaking the SEA process and preparing this report. This additional support is akin to the role of an independent consultancy and was offered to assist in light of the limited resources available to the Parish Council and the lack of support available from any other sources, including the government's national support programme for neighbourhood planning.

Purpose of Report

- 1.8 The outcome of the SEA process is the preparation of an 'Environmental Report'. This Environmental Report has been prepared in line with the procedures prescribed in the SEA Regulations.

Structure of the Report

- 1.9 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.
- 1.10 In order to meet requirements described in the SEA Regulations, and to produce a user friendly document, the remainder of this report has been structured to include the following chapters:

Chapter 2. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Approach

Chapter 3. Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan and policy context

Chapter 4. Environmental baseline position

¹ as required by paragraph 3 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Chapter 5. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Framework used to appraise the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Chapter 6. Appraisal of the effects of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan, and reasonable alternatives, on the environment

Chapter 7. Monitoring and Next steps

Scope and Limitations

- 1.11 In accordance with national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)², Strategic Environmental Assessment should only focus on what is needed to assess the likely significant effects of a neighbourhood plan. It should focus on the environmental impacts which are likely to be significant. To this end, the SEA does not need to be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is considered to be appropriate for the content and level of detail in the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.12 Furthermore, in undertaking the assessment, it is necessary to be mindful of the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in the plan making process in order to avoid duplication of assessment. Accordingly, the SEA process has been informed by the Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging Northumberland Local Plan, which includes an SEA of that Plan.
- 1.13 It should be noted that in undertaking any SEA, there are certain limitations which are referred to throughout this Environmental Report. For example, the assessment is based on the information found to be available at the time of undertaking the SEA. There may be additional information, which has not been identified or in some instances the available information may be dated, such as data derived from the census. In addition, projecting or forecasting the future situation, with or without the plan is not a precise science. It involves a level of judgement to be applied, including considering the wide range of external factors which could have an indirect influence on the environment over time.

² Paragraph: 030 Reference ID: 11-030-20150209

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 Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maximise the emerging Plan's contribution to achieving sustainable development.
- 2.2 In some circumstances a Strategic Environmental Assessment may be undertaken as a part of a 'Sustainability Appraisal'. The Sustainability Appraisal process has a broader remit than SEA. In addition to assessing the likely effects of a plan or programme on the environment, a Sustainability Appraisal involves examining the likely effects of a plan in social and economic terms.
- 2.3 Neighbourhood development plans are 'development plan documents' for the purposes of the Planning Acts. Accordingly 'Sustainability Appraisal' is not required. The SEA of the Lesbury 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 Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.4 Not every neighbourhood plan requires SEA. The need for SEA is influenced by the objectives and policies proposed in the plan and the nature of the area to which the plan applies and any likely significant environmental effects. In order to determine if a neighbourhood plan requires SEA, a screening process is necessary. Screening the need for SEA includes consideration of requirements set out in The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the 'Habitats Regulations'). Where a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) concludes that significant environmental effects are likely as a result of the objectives or policies contained in a plan the SEA Regulations indicate that this automatically triggers the need for SEA.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 2.5 The Habitats Regulations require that competent authorities assess the potential impacts of land use plans on the Natura 2000 network of European protected sites. For the purposes of the Regulations, Northumberland County Council is the competent authority. The purpose of assessment is to determine whether there will be any 'likely significant effects' on any European site as a result of the plan's implementation, either alone or 'in combination' with other plans or projects; and, if so, whether these effects will result in any adverse effects on that site's integrity with reference to the site's conservation objectives. The process by which the effects of a plan or programme on European sites are assessed is known as 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' (HRA).
- 2.6 In accordance with the Habitats Regulations, an HRA screening exercise was undertaken to identify the likely impacts of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan upon European sites, either alone or 'in combination' with other projects or plans, and to consider whether these effects are likely to be significant.
- 2.7 The screening exercise found that the possibility of significant effects could not be excluded, therefore it was deemed necessary to undertake a more detailed assessment, known as 'Appropriate Assessment (AA)'. This conclusion automatically triggered the need for SEA. The AA is reported separately from the SEA of the Plan, but importantly has helped to inform the appraisal process, particularly in respect of the potential impact the introduction of some policies may have on biodiversity and habitats.

SEA of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.8 Having regard to the stage reached in plan preparation when confirmation was received that SEA was required, and noting that consultation had been carried out on a Pre-Submission Draft Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan (December 2018) in accordance with requirements set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, it was concluded by the Parish Council that it would be appropriate to undertake the SEA of the Plan as modified following that statutory stage of consultation. This has also provided an opportunity to modify the Plan to reflect the conclusions of the AA.
- 2.9 The Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considered the representations made in response to consultation on the Pre-Submission draft Neighbourhood Plan. This resulted in some modification to the Plan. A draft 'Submission Version' of the Plan containing various modifications was prepared by the Steering Group and finalised in October 2019. It is that

version of the Plan that has been assessed in this SEA Environmental Report. That version of the Plan will be made available alongside consultation on the Environmental Report.

- 2.10 It should be noted that changes made to the Plan following consultation on the Pre-Submission Draft Plan are not considered sufficiently significant to the extent that further statutory consultation would be required under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 2.11 The point in the plan-making process when it was determined that SEA should be undertaken, and the time at which this assessment was completed, has had some impact on the evaluation of reasonable alternatives through the SEA process. The extent to which genuine reasonable alternatives were available to assess through the SEA process at the time this assessment was undertaken is, to some extent, a reflection of progress at the strategic planning level made by the County Council in the preparation of the Northumberland Local Plan. More particularly, the need for indicative local housing requirements for neighbourhood areas was introduced through paragraphs 65 and 66 of the National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019). Those requirements, including for Lesbury Parish, have now been included in the draft Northumberland Local Plan which is at an advanced stage in the plan-making process.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Stages

- 2.12 The SEA Regulations prescribe a process for undertaking SEA and specific guidance on what must be addressed at each stage. The stages for the SEA of the Neighbourhood Plan are included in Planning Practice Guidance³ and are as follows:

Stage A - Screening	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine whether the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects 2. Consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies
Stage B - Setting the context and Objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify other relevant policies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives 2. Collect baseline information 3. Identify sustainability issues and problems 4. Develop the strategic environmental assessment framework 5. Consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies on the scope of the strategic environmental assessment
Stage C – Defining	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Test the neighbourhood plan objectives

³ Paragraph: 033 Reference ID: 11-033-20150209

and refining alternatives and assessing effects	<p>against the strategic environmental assessment framework</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Develop the neighbourhood plan options including reasonable alternatives 3. Evaluate the likely effects of the neighbourhood plan and alternatives 4. Consider ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects 5. Propose measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the neighbourhood plan
Stage D – Prepare the environmental report	
Stage E – Publish and consult the consultation bodies and the public on the environmental report	
Stage F- Post making reporting and monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare and publish post adoption statement 2. Monitor significant effects of implementing the neighbourhood plan 3. Respond to adverse effects

Stage A

- 2.13 Stage A is often referred to as screening and is the process of determining whether the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. In the case of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan the need for SEA was confirmed through the outcome of the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Stage B

- 2.14 The SEA Regulations require that “*When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies*”. In England, these consultation bodies are Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. The consultation bodies were consulted on the scope of the SEA for the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan in April 2019.
- 2.15 The Scoping Report included:
- A review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of European, national, regional and local plans, policies and programmes relevant to the

Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan – this work has been kept under review, but has not required updating since the scoping stage and is presented in Appendix A.

- A baseline against which the Neighbourhood Plan could be assessed – based on the anticipated scope of the neighbourhood plan's effects, the baseline position was presented in respect of the following environmental topics:
 - Air quality;
 - Biodiversity and geodiversity;
 - Climate Change (including flood risk);
 - Landscape and historic environment;
 - Land, soil and water resources;
 - Population and community;
 - Human health; and
 - Transportation
- Key environmental issues or problems for the Neighbourhood Area – based on the above topics, the key issues and problems were identified. Where the issues were of little or no relevance to the Plan they would not be addressed or afforded more limited weight.
- An SEA Framework – the SEA framework is a set of objectives and guiding questions used to determine and assess the likely significant effects on the environment of the objectives and policies in the Plan. It is a recognised method by which the likely effects of the plan and alternative options can be described, analysed and compared. The SEA framework is set out in Appendix B.

Consultation responses to the SEA Scoping document are provided in Appendix F to this Report and were taken into account and informed the subsequent stage of assessment. Responses are summarised as follows:

Historic England:

Advise that cultural heritage issues could be scoped out of the SEA and need not form part of the assessment.

Natural England:

Advise that survey data of recreational visitors to the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar highlight that a high percentage of visitors reside within a 10km buffer zone of the coast, with this part of the coastline offering significant opportunity for access to designated sites. Appropriate mitigation may take the form of various schemes and provisions and developers should liaise with

the Local Planning Authority on how to address the issue of mitigation as and where appropriate.

Any increase in housing numbers will have a likely significant effect on the special interest features of designated sites. Therefore the SEA should reinforce the requirements to mitigate recreational disturbance through the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service which seeks to provide a strategic approach to mitigation of negative effects arising from recreational disturbance.

Environment Agency:

Welcome the inclusion of a SEA objective and assessment questions in relation to supporting the resilience of the Neighbourhood Area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding. However, it was noted that the Neighbourhood Plan proposed to allocate local green spaces. Local green space sites LGS1 and LGS3 are situated within the floodplain, and within flood zones 2 and 3, which are at high risk of flooding. The Neighbourhood Plan should seek to ensure that ground raising activities within sites LGS1 and LGS3 are not undertaken, as it may increase the risk of flooding within these sites. This should be reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Stage C

- 2.16 Following consultation on the SEA Scoping Report, testing of the objectives and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan was progressed. This involved each of the five actions identified in the defined SEA stages, that is:
- Testing the Plan objectives and policies against the strategic environmental assessment framework;
 - Developing the Plan options including reasonable alternatives;
 - Evaluating the likely effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and alternatives;
 - Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects; and
 - Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan

Stage D

- 2.17 Preparation of this Environmental Report represents stage D of the process. It seeks to present information on the draft Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan and the alternative options considered. The Environmental Report explains the process that was undertaken and provides an assessment setting out how

the policies chosen in the draft Plan, and any reasonable alternatives, perform against a range of environmental objectives.

- 2.18 In accordance with **Stage E**, this report will be subject to consultation. **Stage F** will not take place until the Neighbourhood Plan is made and the effects of implementing the Plan can be monitored.

3. Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan and policy context

Neighbourhood Plans

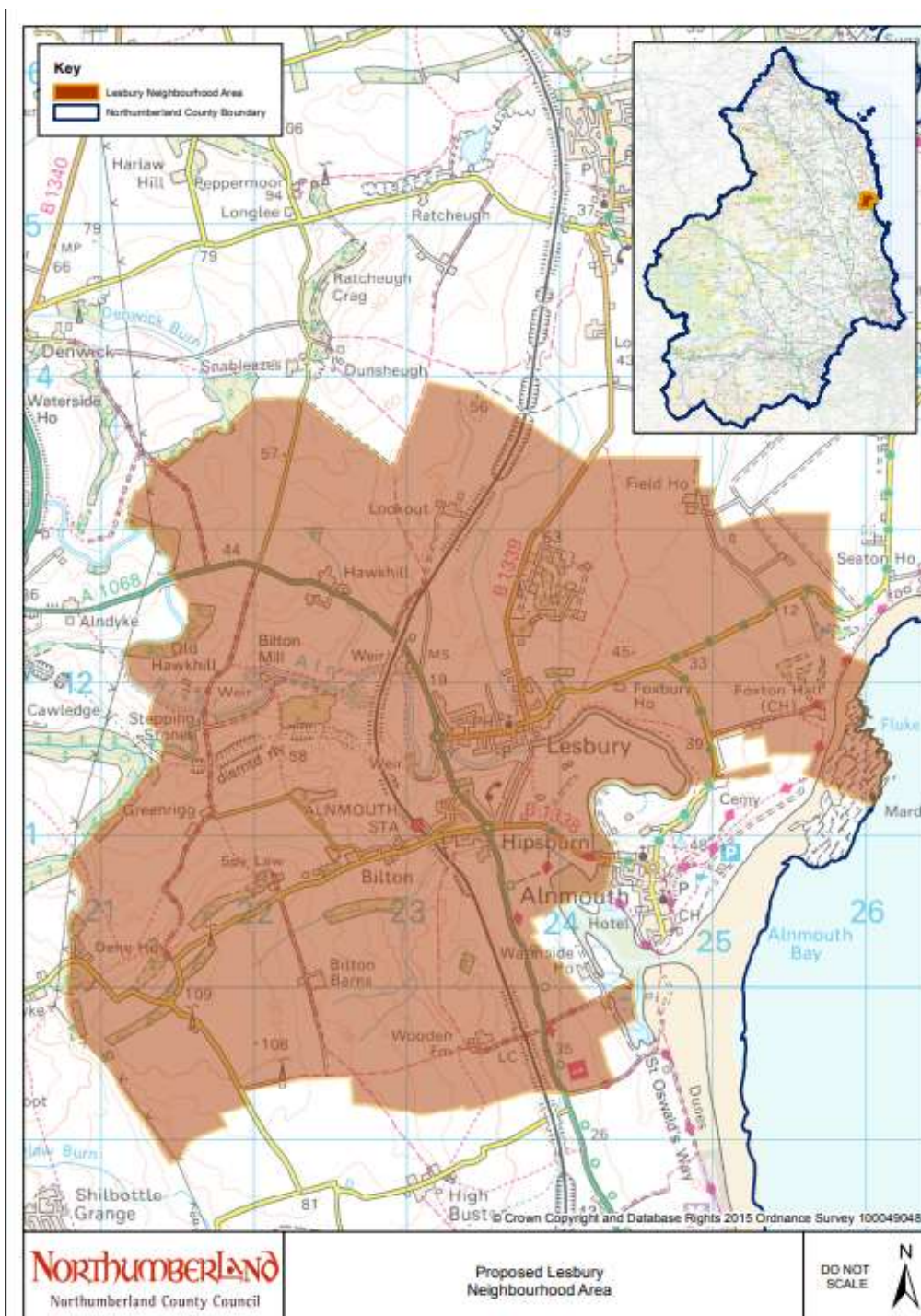
- 3.1 Communities have a right to use discretionary powers introduced into the Planning Acts in 2011 to produce a neighbourhood development plan, often just known as a 'neighbourhood plan'. Communities are not required by legislation to produce such a plan but they may choose to do so in order to shape development in their area. Local Planning Authorities have a duty to support those groups which choose to pursue a neighbourhood plan and are required to bring plans into force provided they meet all statutory obligations. Once neighbourhood plans are 'made' (brought into legal force) they become part of the statutory development plan and must be used in making decisions on planning applications in the area to which they apply.
- 3.2 There are various regulations governing neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood Plans may only be prepared by a 'qualifying body' defined under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Where parish councils exist these are, by default, the 'qualifying body' for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. The preparation of plans is subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012; The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent amendments); and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. Neighbourhood plans may only be prepared for areas specifically defined as 'neighbourhood areas'. For areas where parishes exist it is normally the whole of a parish that is defined as a neighbourhood area.
- 3.3 Neighbourhood plans must meet several statutory requirements to ensure they are legally compliant. This includes meeting what are known as the 'basic conditions'. It must be demonstrated that the basic conditions have been met before a neighbourhood plan can proceed to a referendum and then be formally 'made' by the Local Planning Authority. These are set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Planning Practice Guidance⁴. Independent examination of neighbourhood plans comprises an assessment of the extent to which a plan meets the basic conditions and other legal obligations. The basic conditions applying to neighbourhood plans are that:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;

⁴ Paragraph: 065 Reference ID: 41-065-20140306

- the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- the making of the neighbourhood 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);
- the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
- all prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.4 The Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by Lesbury Parish Council, as the qualifying body. If the Plan passes independent examination and is supported in a local referendum it will be 'made' by Northumberland County Council as the Local Planning Authority. The Neighbourhood Plan will cover the Lesbury Neighbourhood Area which is shown on the map below and comprises the whole of the administrative area of Lesbury Civil Parish.



- 3.5 Lesbury Parish is in a rural area situated on the Northumberland coast, east of Alnwick. Initial work on a Neighbourhood Plan for Lesbury began in September 2016 with the Parish newsletter seeking views from all parishioners about their top three priorities for development in Lesbury and their ideas for the future. The Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was created by the Parish Council to help guide the preparation of a plan. The Steering Group comprises six volunteers from the community, including representatives from the school, church and village hall; and four Parish Councillors.
- 3.6 During the early stages of formulating their ideas for issues to be addressed in a neighbourhood plan the Steering Group met with Northumberland County Council, representatives from Northumberland Estates, Community Action Northumberland and visited the Glendale Gateway Trust in Wooler to discuss ideas and consider options for their plan.
- 3.7 In November 2017 a community event was held in Lesbury Village Hall to present a draft vision and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan. Over 70 people attended the event and the draft vision and objectives were unanimously endorsed. Residents were invited to send in further comments at any time.
- 3.8 A number of community workshops were then held during May and June 2018 to look at the topics of housing, parking and transport and community facilities. These workshops would help further shape the draft vision and objectives and inform draft policy areas.
- 3.9 A Pre-Submission Draft Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan was prepared which, having regard to the outcome of workshop discussions and further analysis, sought to address the key issues of:
- Protecting the important characteristics of the settlements of Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton and the surrounding countryside;
 - Seeking high quality sustainable design in new development;
 - Ensuring any new housing focuses on providing affordable housing for younger people;
 - Protecting and improving the community facilities and supporting the provision of new facilities;
 - Supporting the preservation and enhancement of the special character of the area; and
 - Ensuring the area remains well connected, healthy and safe for all.
- 3.10 The Pre-Submission Draft Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan set out the following vision and objectives:

The Neighbourhood Plan Vision:

'By 2036 we will have retained and improved our community facilities, protected our valued green spaces and special landscapes; preserved the distinctiveness of each of the separate settlements of Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton and preserved our unique historic environment. New housing will sustain our community over the Plan period and meet locally identified housing needs across the generations, from older people, to young families and new households. All new development will be well designed, having paid special attention to our unique sense of place, the historic environment and to incorporating the latest in high quality design and sustainable building technology, to contribute to making the Neighbourhood Area an attractive, well connected, healthy and safe place to live, visit and work.'

OBJECTIVE 1: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Our Objective is to preserve the special landscapes in our parish, by seeking high quality sustainable design in new development, protecting the special qualities of the Northumberland Coast AONB, and ensuring our settlements remain distinct and separate from each other.

OBJECTIVE 2: HOUSING

Our Objective is to ensure any new housing meets the Parish's housing requirement defined in the emerging Local Plan for Northumberland and focuses on providing housing for younger families and older people wishing to downsize.

OBJECTIVE 3: OUR COMMUNITY

Our Objective is to protect and improve the facilities we have and, where needed, support the provision of new community facilities. We will protect important and highly valued green spaces in each of the settlements.

OBJECTIVE 4: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Our Objective is to ensure that all new development preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the Lesbury Conservation Area and pays special attention to the conservation of non-designated heritage assets identified in the Plan.

OBJECTIVE 5: WELL-CONNECTED, HEALTHY AND SAFE PLACES

To ensure the Neighbourhood Area remains a well-connected, healthy and safe place to live, visit and work

- 3.11 In order to deliver the vision and objectives, the Draft Plan included the following policies:
- Policy 1: Sustainable development
 - Policy 2: Settlement boundaries
 - Policy 3: Design in new development
 - Policy 4: Rural exception sites and community led housing
 - Policy 5: Community, recreational and visitor facilities
 - Policy 6: Local Green Spaces, recreational spaces and allotments
 - Policy 7: The Lesbury Conservation Area
 - Policy 8: Non-designated heritage assets
 - Policy 9: Parking and highways improvements at Alnmouth railway station
 - Policy 10: Improvements to walking and cycling routes
- 3.12 Consultation on the Pre-Submission Draft Plan, in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations 2012, was undertaken from 18th December 2018 until 11th February 2019. Three public events were held during the consultation period on the 12th and 29th January 2019 in Lesbury Village Hall and on the 16th January 2019 at Hipsburn Primary School.
- 3.13 The Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considered the representations made in response to consultation on the Pre-Submission draft Neighbourhood Plan. This has resulted in some modification to the Plan. Further modifications were made as a result of the outcome of the Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment. A draft 'Submission Version' of the Plan was prepared by the Steering Group in October 2019. It is that version of the Plan that has been assessed in this SEA Environmental Report. That version of the Plan will be made available alongside consultation on the

Environmental Report in addition to the original Pre-Submission Plan (December 2018).

The Strategic Planning Policy Context

- 3.14 Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan. In Northumberland, the development plan consists of the adopted Core Strategies and saved policies of the Local Plans of the former local planning authorities that made up Northumberland, prior to Local Government Reorganisation in 2009.
- 3.15 Specifically, Lesbury lies within the former Alnwick District Council administrative area. The Alnwick District Wide Local Plan was adopted in April 1997. Subsequently, the Alnwick Core Strategy was adopted in October 2007. The Core Strategy superseded a number of Local Plan policies. However, a number of policies from the Alnwick Local Plan were 'saved' beyond September 2007 and continue to form part of the statutory development plan for the former Alnwick District Council area, along with the Alnwick Core Strategy.
- 3.16 A new Northumberland Local Plan is set to supersede all existing Core Strategy and Local Plan documents currently extant in Northumberland. Northumberland County Council submitted the Northumberland Local Plan, to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 29 May 2019 for examination. The Local Plan is, at the time of preparing this Report, subject to independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate. Hearings will take place towards the end of 2019 and early into 2020 with a view to adoption thereafter in 2020.
- 3.17 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared having regard to the need to meet the 'basic condition' requiring policies and the Plan as a whole to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan. It is recognised by the Parish Council that the existing Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (1997) and Alnwick LDF Core Strategy (2007) are somewhat dated. However, for the purposes of neighbourhood planning they contain the strategic policies against which the neighbourhood Plan must be assessed. The Parish Council has also taken into account the emerging strategic planning policy context set out in the draft Northumberland Local Plan when formulating the Neighbourhood Plan. This approach has regard to advice provided in national Planning Practice Guidance concerning the relationship between emerging local plans and neighbourhood plans.
- 3.18 The Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted to Northumberland County Council, alongside this Environmental Report. The County Council will

consider whether the Plan may progress to Independent Examination in terms of meeting legal requirements.

- 3.19 If the Plan is successful at Independent Examination and meets the basic conditions referred to in para 3.3 above, 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. Once made, the Plan will become part of the statutory development plan for the Parish of Lesbury.
- 3.20 The SEA has been undertaken to support the Neighbourhood Plan in meeting the basic conditions, and particularly the need to ensure that the Plan is compatible with, and does not otherwise breach EU obligations. The Environmental Report provides an assessment of the impact draft policies presented in the Draft Submission (October 2019) version of the Plan may have on the environment.

4. Environmental baseline position

Plans, programmes, policies and strategies

- 4.1 In order to establish a clear scope, and in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Regulations, it was necessary to review and develop an understanding of a wide range of relevant plans, programmes, policies and strategies. The Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan first needed to be framed in the context of international, European, national, regional and local objectives and take account of strategic planning and environmental policies. The purpose of this review was to highlight the key elements of these plans and strategies that will influence the preparation of the SEA to ensure that their requirements are taken into account.
- 4.2 Recognising national Planning Practice Guidance in respect of taking a proportionate approach to SEA of Neighbourhood Plans and avoiding duplication of work, the review of such plans and programmes, policies and strategies was derived from the Sustainability Appraisal of the Northumberland Local Plan (produced by Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Ltd). It was considered that the same plans, programmes, policies and strategies would be relevant to the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan but additional consideration would be given to any more locally specific context. Appendix A provides the full schedule and outlines brief details of their potential relevance to the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.3 The plans and programmes identified do not act in isolation and links between their scale and objectives can be made. International and national plans and strategies often provide high level guidance, with their objectives being reflected in plans at a regional, sub-regional or local level. The schedule of plans and programmes identifies the diversity of documents that are considered to have a bearing on the preparation of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

The Baseline – Environmental issues

- 4.4 The selected environmental themes for the assessment, set out below, incorporated the ‘SEA topics’ suggested by Annex I(f) of the SEA Directive⁵.

⁵ The SEA Directive does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on *“the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors”*.

These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of Neighbourhood Plan effects. These topics are:

- Air quality;
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity;
- Climate change (including flood risk);
- Landscape and historic environment;
- Land, soil and water resources;
- Population and community;
- Human health; and
- Transportation

4.5 The interrelationships between the above topics were also taken into account.

4.6 The following provides a brief overview of the baseline environmental characteristics in the Lesbury Parish area and the likely evolution thereof without the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan as required in Planning Practice Guidance⁶. As described, some of the issues are of little or no relevance i.e. do not represent environmental problems or opportunities and therefore have not been addressed in the SEA or have been afforded a more limited focus. The baseline provides the broad basis against which to assess the likely effects of the draft plan and any reasonable alternatives.

Air quality

4.7 As of February 2019, the Lesbury Neighbourhood Area has no recorded Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), and air quality is not automatically monitored anywhere within the Neighbourhood Area as part of the Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment process carried out by Northumberland County Council⁷.

4.8 Lesbury is in a rural part of Northumberland, where the air quality is generally good. Air quality is impacted by: nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) from road traffic near to main roads; particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) from road traffic near to main roads; and naturally occurring Ozone near the sea and in the hills of Northumberland. Road traffic is highly unlikely to increase to such levels that it would have a detrimental impact on air quality in the area.

4.9 Key environmental problems or issues

⁶ Paragraph: 036 Reference ID: 11-036-20140306

⁷ <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Public-Protection/Pollution/2015-LAQM-Updating-and-Screening-Assessment-Report.pdf>

- Partly on account of the rurality of the area there are no current or future anticipated air quality issues.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site

- 4.10 The Northumbria Coast SPA covers the coastline of the Neighbourhood Area. The SPA is recognised as a wetland of international importance and is therefore also designated as a Ramsar Site under the Ramsar Convention. The citation for the SPA states: *“The Northumbria Coast SPA includes much of the coastline between the Tweed and Tees Estuaries in north-east England. The site consists of mainly discreet sections of rocky shore with associated boulder and cobble beaches. The SPA also includes parts of three artificial pier structures and a small section of sandy beach.”*
- 4.11 The site hosts populations of species contained in the annexes of the European Birds Directive (2009/147/EC) including the Annex II listed Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) during the breeding season, and the Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*) and Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) over the winter.

Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)⁸

- 4.12 Designated under the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC contains four Annex I habitats and one Annex II species which are noted as the primary reasons for its designation. These are as follows:
- Annex I habitats:
 - Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide;
 - Large shallow inlets and bays;
 - Reefs; and
 - Submerged or partially submerged sea caves.
- 4.13 The general character of the site is predominantly marine areas and sea inlets (approximately 73%), with tidal rivers, estuaries, mudflats, sandflats, lagoons, sea cliffs and coastal sand dunes located in the remaining 27%.
- Annex II species:
 - Grey Seal (*Halichoerus grypus*)

Northumberland Marine Special Protection Area (SPA)

⁸ <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/ProtectedSites/SACselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0017072>

- 4.14 The Northumberland Marine SPA was classified in January 2017 and is located on the Northumberland coast between Blyth and Berwick-Upon-Tweed. The site supports a wide range of marine habitats. The coastal parts of the site consist of sandy bays separated by rocky headlands backed by dunes or soft and hard cliffs. There are extensive areas of inter-tidal rocky reef, long sandy beaches at Beadnell, Embleton and Druridge Bay and extensive sand and mud flats at Budle Bay and Fenham Flats at Lindisfarne. Discrete areas of intertidal mudflats and estuarine channels are also included where the site extends into the Aln, Coquet, Wansbeck and Blyth estuaries. The open coast habitats extend into the subtidal zone, where large shallow inlets and bays and extensive rocky reefs are present. Further offshore, soft sediments predominate.
- 4.15 The Northumberland coast and surrounding sea supports important breeding colonies of seabirds and auks, protected at four existing SPAs: Farne Islands SPA, Coquet Island SPA, Lindisfarne SPA and Northumbria Coast SPA. The surrounding waters are protected by Northumberland Marine SPA; these areas are used by the seabirds and auks for foraging and maintenance activities, such as bathing and preening.

Northumberland Shore Site of Special Scientific Interest⁹

- 4.16 Northumberland Shore SSSI was notified in 1992 under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The SSSI contains two broad habitats and six notified features, including populations of Golden Plover, Purple Sandpiper, Redshank, Ringed Plover, Sanderling and Turnstone. The citation for this SSSI states:
- “The Northumberland shore consists largely of sandy bays separated by rocky headlands with wave-cut platforms, backed by dunes or soft and hard cliffs. Discrete areas of estuarine intertidal mudflats and saltmarsh are also included.*

Annual counts carried out during the winters of 1983/84 to 1989/90 show that two species of shorebird are present in internationally important numbers (i.e. at least 1% of the East Atlantic Flyway population), turnstone (regularly over 1300) and purple sandpiper (regularly over 600). The populations of four other species regularly exceed 1% of the British wintering populations and thus are of national importance; i.e. 240 sanderling (1.6% of the British population), 37 ringed plover (1.6%), 1100 redshank (1.5%), and 3500 golden plover (1.8%).

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<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S2000134&SiteName=&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=>

The Northumberland Shore as a whole is used by a wide variety of other shorebirds in winter, including up to 400 curlew, 1000 oystercatcher, 2000 dunlin, 600 knot, 150 bar-tailed godwit and 4000 lapwing. Arctic and little terns breed on the shore during the summer. The inter-tidal zone is also favoured all year round as a feeding area for eiders, which are present along the coast in nationally important numbers and use the mudflats by the Coquet estuary as a feeding ground for their young.”

- 4.17 Additionally, the site is included in the list of Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention, also fulfilling the criteria for listing as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under European Birds Directive (2009/147/EC).

4.18 Alnmouth Saltmarsh and Dunes Site of Special Scientific Interest¹⁰

Alnmouth Saltmarsh and Dunes SSSI was notified in 1988 under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The SSSI contains two broad habitats and 12 notified features. The citation for this SSSI states:

“Alnmouth Saltmarsh and Dunes comprises mature saltmarsh and mudflats behind a single sand dune ridge in the Aln estuary. The saltmarsh is the largest area of this habitat on the north east coast of England between Lindisfarne and the Tees Estuary. The sand dunes, extending south in a single ridge from the river mouth, are of interest for the varied plant communities including the transition zone along the saltmarsh interface. Several plant species and associations found at this site are at or close to the northern limit of distribution in Great Britain.”

Habitats of Principal Importance

The following habitats are recognised as being of principal importance in the Lesbury Neighbourhood Area:

Deciduous woodland, scattered throughout Lesbury Parish;

Maritime cliff and slope;

Mudflats;

Saltmarsh;

Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.

4.19 North Northumberland Dunes Special Area of Conservation¹¹

Designated under European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the North Northumberland Dunes SAC contains five Annex I habitats and one Annex II species which are noted as the primary reasons for its designation. These are as follows:

¹⁰ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=s1002309>

¹¹ <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0017097>

Annex I habitats:

- Embryonic shifting dunes;
- Shifting dunes along the shoreline with “*Ammophila Arenaria*”;
- Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation;
- Dunes with *Salix repens* ssp. *Argentea* (*Salicornia arenariae*);
- Humid dune slacks.

The general character of the site is identified as tidal rivers, estuaries, mud flats, sand flats, lagoons (including saltwork basins) (25%); Salt marshes, salt pastures, salt steppes (5%); coastal sand dunes, sand beaches, Machair (67%); inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (1%); bogs, marshes, water fringed vegetation, fens (1%); heath, scrub, maquis and Garrigue, *Phragmites* (1%).

Annex II species:

Petalwort (*Petalophyllum ralfisii*).

Designations outside the Lesbury Neighbourhood Area

A number of other designations lie beyond the boundary of the Lesbury Neighbourhood Area, but within a reasonable distance. These include:

- North Northumberland Dunes SPA
- Castle Point to Cullernose Point SSSI
- Warkworth Dunes and Saltmarsh SSSI (1km);
- Longhoughton Quarry SSSI (1.3km);
- Howick to Seaton Point SSSI (2.4km);
- River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands SSSI (3.1km);
- Coquet Island SSSI (6.5km);
- Low Hauxley Shore SSSI (8.2km).

Summary of future baseline

Habitats and associated species may potentially face increasing pressures from future development within the neighbourhood area, which may be exacerbated by the effects of climate change and has the potential to lead to changes in the distribution and abundance of species and changes to the composition and character of habitats. New development can have a range of impacts on protected areas, but one that is likely to arise from all new housing or tourist accommodation, or an increase in visitor numbers as a result of tourism, is increased recreational activity on the coast. This can lead to disturbance to bird species and the spread of a non-native plant invasive species.

- 4.21 The Neighbourhood Area and surroundings contain a number of important international and national designations, as well as internationally and nationally significant species. Development in the Neighbourhood Area, increasing numbers of visitors and wider climate change have the potential for negative effects on the environment in terms of disturbance or depletion of those habitats and species.
- 4.20 Specifically new development can have a range of impacts on protected areas. One that is likely to arise from all new housing or tourist accommodation, or an increase in visitor numbers as a result of tourism, is increased recreational activity on the coast. This can lead to disturbance to bird species and the spread of a non-native plant invasive species.

Key environmental problems or issues

- The Neighbourhood Area contains a number of important international and national designations, as well as internationally and nationally significant species. Development in the Neighbourhood Area and or increasing number of visitors has the potential for effects on the environment in terms of habitats and species.

Climate Change

- 4.21 Coastal, fluvial and surface water run-off flood risk within the Neighbourhood Area is likely to increase in the future as a result of development, land use change and climate change. Northumberland observed greater reductions in greenhouse gas emissions per capita between 2005 and 2012 (27%) compared to the North East (20.5%) and England (16.7%). No emissions data is available for the Neighbourhood Area.

Potential effects of climate change

- 4.22 The outcome of research on the probable effects of climate change in the UK was released in 2018 by the UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) team¹². UKCP18 provides the most up-to-date assessment of how the climate of the UK may change over the 21st century and provides projections of future changes to the climate, based on simulations from climate models.

¹² <http://ukclimateprojections.metoffice.gov.uk>

4.23 As highlighted by the effects of climate change for central England by the 2070s for a low emissions scenario¹³ are likely to be as follows:

- The estimate of summer rainfall change is 41% drier to 9% wetter;
- The estimate of winter precipitation change is 3% drier to 22% wetter;
- The estimate of summer temperature change is no change to 3.3oC warmer;
- The estimate of winter temperature change is -0.1oC cooler to 2.4oC warmer.

4.24 The effects of climate change for central England by the 2070s for a high emissions scenario are likely to be as follows:

- o The estimate of summer rainfall change is 57% drier to 3% wetter;
- o The estimate of winter precipitation change is 2% drier to 33% wetter;
- o The estimate of summer temperature change is 1.1oC warmer to 5.8oC warmer;
- o The estimate of winter temperature change is 0.7oC warmer to 4.2oC warmer.

4.25 These results are broadly consistent with the figures provided in the research from UKCP09.

4.26 A range of issues may result from such climatic changes, some of which could affect the Neighbourhood Area. These include:

- Effects on water resources from climate change;
- Reduction in availability of groundwater for abstraction;
- Adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain;
- Increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100 year floods;
- A need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers;
- A need to upgrade flood defences;
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding;
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution;
- Spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
- Increased demand for air conditioning;
- Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence;
- Risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperatures; and
- Flooding of roads.

¹³ <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/metofficegovuk/pdf/research/ukcp/ukcp18-infographic-headline-findings-land.pdf>

Flood risk

- 4.27 The eastern boundary of the Neighbourhood Area comprises part of the North Northumberland coastline. Many areas along the coast are located within Flood Zone 3 (medium-high risk of coastal flooding), meaning that they are classed as having a 0.5% or greater (1:200) chance of being affected by coastal flooding in any given year. Additionally, the River Aln is a watercourse extending north-west from Alnmouth. Some land adjacent to the River Aln is also located in Flood Zone 3. Surface water drainage and sewer flooding is also a risk for some parts of the Neighbourhood Area.
- 4.28 Climate change has the potential to increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. This is likely to increase the risks associated with climate change (including fluvial, coastal and drainage related flooding) with an increased need for resilience and adaptation. Additional future development has the potential to exacerbate flood risk without suitable mitigation.
- 4.29 Moving forward, with increased awareness of climate change and new technologies, greenhouse gas emissions generated in the Neighbourhood area could reduce. For example, as a result of wider adoption of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy production and reduced waste. Conversely, increases in the built footprint of the Neighbourhood Area and increases in car ownership could contribute to increases in levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

Key environmental problems or issues

- The effects of climate change could increase flood risk in the Neighbourhood Area while future development has the potential to exacerbate flood risk;
- Increases in population and increasing car ownership could contribute to increases in absolute levels of greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Energy efficiency, renewables, reduced waste could reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Landscape and historic environment

Landscape

- 4.30 Over a third of the Neighbourhood Area is located within the Northumberland Coast AONB boundary. The Northumberland Coast was designated as an AONB in 1958 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Following the introduction of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act

2000, the government confirmed that landscape qualities of both National Parks and AONBs were equivalent. As such, the protection given by the land use planning system to natural beauty in areas designated as National Parks and AONBs should also be equivalent. Additionally, a large area of the AONB lies within the North Northumberland Heritage Coast, which is recognised for its landscape, recreational and heritage interest. Although Heritage Coasts are ‘defined’ rather than designated, they are established to conserve, protect and enhance the best stretches of undeveloped coast in England¹⁴.

4.31 The Northumberland Coast AONB covers an area of 138km² along a 64km stretch of the coastline between Berwick-upon-Tweed and the Coquet Estuary, and includes about a third of the Neighbourhood Area on its eastern side. The AONB is situated within the North Northumberland Coastal Plain National Character Area (NCA1) The Northumberland Coastal Plain NCA (NCA1), as defined in *Countryside Character of England*, are:

- Narrow, low lying, windswept coastal plain, with wide views east towards the sea and west to the Cheviots. Particularly striking views along the coast;
- Intensively farmed landscape of predominantly open, mixed, arable land with limited trees and woodland, with permanent pasture/semi-natural grassland typical of the valleys and coastal fringes;
- Diverse coastal scenery, with a ‘hard’ coast of high cliffs, off-shore islands, and rocky headlands, alternately contrasting with a ‘soft’ coast of wide, sweeping sandy bays backed by sand dunes, and also intertidal flats backed by saltmarsh to the south;
- Patches of coastal grazing marsh still remain;
- Rivers Aln, Coquet and Tweed, as well as numerous smaller watercourses, meander across the coastal plain to the sea;
- Coastal plain and offshore islands provide rich wildlife habitats, particularly for migratory and breeding sea birds;
- Distinctive historic heritage reflects importance of ecclesiastical influences and the strategic defence of the coast and English/Scottish border. Features include prominent medieval castles, fortifications and structures from both world wars and religious buildings;
- Whin Sill intrusions produce dramatic landscape features, including the coastal cliffs at Bamburgh and the Farne Islands. Inland, outcrops and escarpments form distinctive local landmarks and support rare, semi-natural, whinstone grasslands;

¹⁴ Natural England (2015): Heritage Coasts: Definition, purpose and Natural England’s Role, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heritage-coasts-protecting-undeveloped-coast/heritage-coasts-definition-purpose-and-natural-englands-role>

- Dispersed pattern of isolated farmsteads, small nucleated villages, fishing villages and small coastal resort towns;
- Long history of mineral extraction, including whinstone quarrying and opencast coalmining, to the south of Berwick-Upon-Tweed.

4.32 The Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment (2010) identified five Landscape Character Types and 12 Landscape Character Areas within the National Character Area.

One character area within LCT2 Coastal Incised Valley:

- *Lower Aln (2a): This valley is relatively deep and broad, and is steep-sided in places, such as below Denwick. There are significant blocks of coniferous forestry at Bilton Wood and along the Cawledge Burn. The urban edge of Alnwick is often prominent in views, although the large industrial buildings adjacent to the A1 are well screened. The modern settlement of Hipsburn is also unobtrusive in the landscape. The A1 and A1068 create the impression of a busy landscape which, combined with the settlements, offers little tranquillity. The disused railway is used as a footpath, although unofficially as there are plans to reopen the line. The Alnwick Castle Registered Park and Garden extends into the west of the area.*

Two character areas within LCT3 Farmed Coastal Plain:

- *Rock (3c): This area is similar to 3b, but is generally more wooded. The transition is gradual, but this area is characterised by coniferous shelterbelts and deciduous woodland strips. Hedgerows are more common, although their condition remains variable. Belts of Scots pine are a distinctive feature. Estate influences occur at Rock House and Howick Hall, resulting in a more intimate landscape experience.*
- *Longframlington (38a): This character area occupies undulating, relatively high ground bordering the coastal plain between the Aln and Coquet valleys. Rectilinear field units are bounded by hedgerows originating from the parliamentary enclosures. Sizeable coniferous plantations can be found around Swarland and north of Shilbottle. Although the last colliery closed in the late 1990s, coal mining was formerly a significant presence in this landscape, with collieries at Shilbottle, Whittle and Longframlington. Although full restoration is yet to have been completed, there is little physical evidence of this industry now. Other former industrial activity included lime and tile manufacturing.*

One area within LCT4 Rocky Coastline:

- *Craster Coast (4c): This straight section of coast has few bays and little sand, the exception being the natural harbour off Boulmer Haven. The coast is low-lying, with locally predominant ridges, known as 'heughs' around Craster. At the northern end of the area, Dunstanburgh Castle is the dominant*

feature, while to the south, the radar apparatus at RAF Boulmer is widely visible. Few roads follow this section of coast, although there is an extensive footpath network.

One character area within LCT5 Sandy Coastline:

- *Aln and Coquet Estuaries (5c): This strip is bookmarked by the tidal estuaries of the Aln and Coquet. Sweeping sandy beaches are backed by well developed dune systems and open arable fields. The dunes near Alnmouth have been developed as a 'links' golf course. Both estuaries feature well preserved dune and saltmarsh systems. Alnmouth is an important local centre for sailing. Extensive views over the landscape to the sea are available from the busy A1068. Visitor pressure is concentrated in the settlements of Alnmouth and Warkworth.*

Historic environment

- 4.33 The Neighbourhood Area has a rich historic environment. Numerous features are recognised through historic environment designations, including the statutory listed buildings and scheduled monuments, which are nationally designated, as well as the Lesbury Conservation Area, designated at a local level. The Lesbury Conservation Area was designated in 1972¹⁵.
- 4.34 The 2014-2019 Northumberland Coast AONB Management Plan categorises the historic environment into four themes: ecclesiastical, castles and defence, fishing and farming, and industry and transport. This highlights that the history of human interaction and occupation of landscape is integral to the character of the AONB.
- 4.35 Historic England is the statutory consultee for certain categories of listed building consent and all applications for scheduled monument consent. The historic environment is protected through the planning system, via conditions imposed on developers and other mechanisms. The Lesbury Conservation Area contains a number of designated heritage assets, including the Grade II* listed church, and around 6 other listed assets.
- 4.36 New development in the Neighbourhood Area has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets; for example, through inappropriate design and layout. It should be noted, however, that existing historic environment designations, AONB Management Plan and the existing statutory

¹⁵ Lesbury Conservation Area Character Appraisal:
<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-and-Building/Conservation/Lesbury-CAA.pdf>

plans and emerging Local Plan offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings. Additionally, a Conservation Area Character Appraisal exists for the Lesbury Conservation Area, offering additional protection in terms of outlining suggested priorities for management and decision making for areas within the Conservation Area.

4.37 New development has the potential to lead to small, but incremental, changes to landscape and townscape character and quality in and around the Neighbourhood Area. However, new development need not be harmful.

4.38 Key environmental problems or issues

- New development in the Neighbourhood Area has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets and landscape character; and
- The Neighbourhood Area contains part of the Northumberland Coast AONB. Development in or near to the AONB can result in negative effects on the purposes of its designation.

Land, Soil and Water Resources

Land quality

4.39 There are no 'Special Sites' within the Neighbourhood Area, as defined under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act. The Neighbourhood Area does have historic land uses, which may have resulted in soil and groundwater pollution. There are no recorded pollution incidents related to industrial sites regulated under the EC Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive (IPPC).

4.40 Quality of agricultural land

4.41 The Agricultural Land Classification classifies land into six grades (in addition to 'non-agricultural' and 'urban' land), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the 'best and most versatile' land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. In terms of the location of the best and most versatile agricultural land, no detailed classification has been carried out in the Neighbourhood Area¹⁶. An area of land to the south of the B1338 in Lesbury contains areas of Grades 2, 3a, 3b and 4 Agricultural Land. This area is bordered at its northern edge by the River Aln running west to east.

¹⁶ MAGIC Interactive Map: Landscape; POST 1988 Agricultural Land Classification (England): <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

Watercourses

- 4.42 The main watercourse flowing through the Neighbourhood Area is the River Aln. Additionally, smaller watercourses such as the Hip Burn and Cawledge Burn are also located within the Neighbourhood Area. The River Aln and Aln Estuary are classified as having 'good' water quality¹⁷.
- 4.43 Water supply and waste water provision in the area is provided by Northumbrian Water. The Kielder Water Resource Zone (WRZ) serves the Neighbourhood Area. The Final Water Resources Management Plan (2010-2035)¹⁸ states that, while dry year deployable output to 2040 reduces by 1.1% due to climate change, there will remain a significant surplus throughout the planning horizon and beyond.
- 4.44 Groundwater Source Protection Zones have been defined by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes and springs that are used for public drinking water supply. The zones show the risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area. The Neighbourhood Area contains no SPZs¹⁹.
- 4.45 Due to increasing legislative and regulatory requirements, there are increasing pressures to improving recycling and composting rates. In terms of water quality, the requirements of the Water Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality in watercourses in the wider area. Water quality could potentially be affected by pollution incidents in the area, the presence of non-native species and physical modifications to water bodies.
- 4.46 For the Kielder Water Resource Zone (WRZ), in a dry year there will be no constraint on the deployable output and therefore no constraints, as mentioned in the Final Water Resources Management Plan (2010-2035). While dry year deployable output is expected to reduce by 1.1%, it is not expected that climate change would affect the ability to supply water in the zone.

Key environmental problems or issues

- None identified

¹⁷ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/WaterBody/GB510302203300>

¹⁸ https://www.nwl.co.uk/assets/documents/NW_Final_Published_PR14_WRMP_Report.pdf

¹⁹ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

Population and Community

Population

- 4.47 The population of the Civil Parish of Lesbury was shown in the 2011 Census as 1007, equating to a density of 0.6 people per hectare or 61.3 per km². The population of Lesbury is ageing. There has been a significant increase in the population of Lesbury from the 2001 Census to the 2011 Census, with an increase from 871 to 1007, an increase of 15.6%. Average household size remains unchanged at 2.2 people per household.
- 4.48 According to Census data, Lesbury experienced a population increase of 15.6% in the period 2001 to 2011. While Northumberland, the North East and England as a whole experienced increases over this same period, the increase seen in Lesbury has been significantly higher, and almost double the national average of 7.9%.
- 4.49 The population of Lesbury is also ageing, which is consistent with Northumberland-wide trends. This can raise challenges in respect of the proportion of the working age population. It can also place increasing pressures on facilities such as doctors.
- 4.50 Census evidence suggests around 11% of homes in the neighbourhood area could be second homes in 2011. This was agreed to be not a large enough percentage to create a principal residency policy in the Neighbourhood Plan but something the Parish Council would continue to monitor should the Plan be modified to reflect changes in any new census data. Trends suggest homes may continue to be bought up as second homes. In 2017 the Resolution Foundation reported that there had been a 30 per cent increase between 2000-02 and 2012-14 in the proportion of adults who own multiple properties, rising 1.6 million to 5.2 million people (one in ten adults) in that period. The analysis also found increasing trends of people who do not own property.

Key environmental problems or issues

- The increase in population, together with an ageing population in the Neighbourhood Area, can lead to the pressure on community services and facilities and pressure on other facilities.

Human Health

Age structure

- 4.51 Lesbury has a significant number of residents aged 60 or over with over half the population of the Parish (63%) being aged 45 and over. Compared to Northumberland, the North East and the national average, Lesbury has a significantly lower percentage of people aged 0-44, and a significantly higher percentage aged 45 and over.

Household deprivation

- 4.52 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights, as described below. The seven deprivation domains are as follows:

- Income;
- Employment;
- Education, Skills and Training;
- Health Deprivation and Disability;
- Crime;
- Barriers to Housing and Services; and
- Living Environment.

Two supplementary indices (subsets of the Income deprivation domains) are also included:

- Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index; and
- Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index.

- 4.53 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardised geographies designed to be as consistent in population as possible, with each LSOA containing approximately 1000 to 1500 people. In relation to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015, LSOAs are ranked out of 32,844 in England and Wales, with 1 being the most deprived. Ranks are normalised into deciles, with a value of 1 reflecting the top 10% most deprived LSOAs in England and Wales.

- 4.54 One LSOA has been identified in relation to the Neighbourhood Area:
- E01027376: Northumberland 001A

Northumberland 001A has a workforce with average levels of income and employment, but with very poor levels of education, including adult skills. The indoor and outdoor quality of life is excellent, as is the living environment. While there don't appear to be significant barriers to housing and services, geographical barriers do appear slightly worse by comparison.

Health and wellbeing

- 4.55 Deprivation is a significant contributor to poor health and can have adverse effects on wellbeing. Although levels of very good health in the Neighbourhood Area fall below regional and national averages, the percentage of people within the Neighbourhood Area who consider themselves in 'good health' and 'fair health' is comparatively higher than the regional and national averages.
- 4.56 Broadly speaking, the health and wellbeing of within the Neighbourhood Area is generally good in comparison with regional and national averages. However, an ageing population has the potential to increase pressures on community and healthcare services and is therefore an influence on the future health and wellbeing within the Neighbourhood Area.

Key environmental problems or issues

- An ageing population has the potential to increase pressures on community and healthcare services and is therefore an influence on the future health and wellbeing within the Neighbourhood Area; and
- The number of those in poor health can increase pressure on healthcare services.

Transportation

Infrastructure

- 4.57 The East Coast Main Line cuts through the Neighbourhood Area from north to south, with Alnmouth Railway Station being located within Lesbury. The closest part of the strategic road network is the A1068 which links to the A1 beyond the Neighbourhood Area boundary.

Availability of Cars and Vans

- 4.58 Over three quarters (78.9%) of those living within the Neighbourhood Area have access to one or two cars or vans, with an average of 1.5 cars or vans per household. 10% of households have no cars or vans.

Travel to work

- 4.59 The most frequently used method of travel to work is via car or van (70.7%). A higher percentage of people work from home (11.3%) than use any other form of transport other than by car or van.
- 4.60 Car/van ownership in the Neighbourhood Area is clearly linked to the number of people who travel to work by car/van and the rural nature of the area, necessitating travel by car. 6.3% of those of working age in the Neighbourhood Area travel to work on foot. 11.3% work from home. Increased trends of home working and flexible working may increase this. Additionally, 9.3% use public transport with 1.4% travelling by bicycle. 0.9% of people travel by other means.

Key environmental problems or issues

- Car ownership and travel to work by car are high in the Neighbourhood Area reflecting the rural nature of the area

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

- 5.1 An SEA Framework is a recognised method by which the likely effects of a Plan and alternative options can be described, analysed and compared. It comprises objectives, which are intended to be a statement of what is intended, specifying a desired direction of environmental change. It also includes guiding questions. It is not the intention of the assessment to answer all of the questions identified below. The questions are posed to act as prompts and to help focus the assessment of likely significant environmental effects.
- 5.2 The SEA Framework for the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan was informed by the review of plans and programmes and the analysis of the baseline position to identify environmental problems and key issues. The framework was subject to consultation with the consultation bodies as part of the SEA Scoping stage.

SEA Objective	Assessment prompts
Biodiversity and Geodiversity Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological 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?
Climate Change 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

SEA Objective	Assessment prompts
	<p>meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable sources?
<p>Climate Change Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <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?
<p>Landscape and Historic Environment Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes</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 and townscape features?
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources Ensure the efficient use of land</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>Land, Soil and Water Resources Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of waste produced? • Support the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste? • Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction?
<p>Land, Soil and Water Resources</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improvements to water quality?

SEA Objective	Assessment prompts
Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise water consumption?
Population and Community 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	Will the option/proposal help to: <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?
Human Health Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, 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?
Human Health 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?
Human Health Improve the health and	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessibility to a range of leisure,

SEA Objective	Assessment prompts
wellbeing of residents within the neighbourhood area	<p>health and community facilities, for all age groups?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of healthier modes of travel? • Improve access to the countryside for recreational use?
Transportation Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <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? • Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?

Methodology

- 5.3 Based on the contents of the current Submission Draft Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan (October 2019), the SEA Framework has been used to appraise: the Neighbourhood Plan vision and objectives; the proposed policies; and reasonable alternatives where they exist.
- 5.4 Along with identifying effects, consideration was given to the likely level of significance of the effects. This includes an assessment of whether the effects are positive or negative and whether the degree of significance is major or minor. The SEA Regulations specify the criteria which should be taken into account. These criteria essentially relate to the nature of the effects arising from the Plan and the value and vulnerability of the receptors as follows:
- How valuable and vulnerable is the receptor that is being impacted?
 - How probable, frequent, long lasting and reversible are the effects?
 - What is the magnitude and spatial scale of the effect?
 - Are the effects positive or negative?

- 5.5 The assessment involved judgement in respect of the likely effects of the Neighbourhood Plan, the significance of any effects and the nature of those effects.
- 5.6 Evaluating effects is inherently challenging. There are inevitably many limitations. There is uncertainty about predicting the implications of implementing planning policies. The ability to evaluate effects is also limited by the understanding of the baseline. Accordingly, the SEA can only be assumed to identify the broad implications for the SEA topics. In this regard the assessment takes a proportionate approach, as required by the guidance.
- 5.7 The figure below illustrates the scoring system applied to assist in the assessment. Given the assessment must be informed by judgement, a small group of suitably qualified officers was set up to apply the scoring. This collective approach helped to ensure a degree of objectivity beyond those familiar with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Score	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 Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan and reasonable alternatives on the environment

- 6.1 The key purpose of this Environmental Report is to present information and an assessment of the effects the implementation of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan, and any reasonable alternative options considered, may have on the environment. This chapter presents the findings of the assessment in relation to the Draft Submission version (October 2019) of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

SEA of Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

- 6.2 It is important that the objectives of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan are aligned and compatible with the SEA objectives. The Plan objectives have therefore been assessed using the SEA Framework which is presented in Appendix D. The assessment confirms that the Neighbourhood Plan objectives are in accordance with the environmental objectives having a positive or neutral effect.

Appraising the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan and Reasonable Alternatives

- 6.3 The SEA needs to consider and compare any reasonable alternatives that could deliver the Plan's objectives as the Plan evolves, including the preferred approach, and assess these against the baseline environmental characteristics of the area. The assessment should consider the likely situation if the Neighbourhood Plan were made, if it were not made, or if it were made containing those reasonable alternatives.

Reasonable Alternatives

- 6.4 Reasonable alternatives are defined in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) as '*the different realistic options considered in developing the policies in the plan*'. They need to be sufficiently distinct so that meaningful comparisons can be made. However, PPG acknowledges that there may be limited alternatives that can realistically be considered in the context of the strategic policies for the neighbourhood area²⁰.

²⁰ Paragraph: 038 Reference ID: 11-038-20190722

- 6.5 In the case of the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan, the SEA was initiated following consultation on the Pre Submission Draft Plan. This was because of the later determination under the Habitats Regulations which triggered the need for SEA.
- 6.6 It should be noted that the vision and objectives established for the Neighbourhood Plan and the strategic policies in the statutory development plan will limit the reasonable alternatives that can realistically be considered. In some instances the only reasonable alternative would be a 'no policy' alternative, which is appraised in the baseline analysis. This is provided in Chapter 4 of this Report.
- 6.7 Progress made on the preparation of the Northumberland Local Plan, and the introduction through paragraphs 65 and 66 of NPPF more specifically of the obligation placed on the Local Planning Authority to identify at least an indicative housing requirement figure for neighbourhood areas have further limited the extent of reasonable alternatives available to meet the objectives set for the Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan. Nevertheless, it is helpful, as part of this assessment, to describe the outcomes of the plan-making process as they emerged and changed over time in the context of considering what may have been reasonable alternatives. This is particularly relevant to the intention to create settlement boundaries; and to considerations about potential housing site allocations through the neighbourhood planning process.

Alternative Settlement Boundaries

- 6.8 In preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, alternative settlement boundaries were considered. The Plan includes settlement boundaries for Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton. All three are relatively tightly drawn around existing built development, while allowing for infill development within those settlements.
- 6.9 Settlement boundaries were defined for all three settlements through policies in the Alnwick District Wide Local Plan (April 1997). However, those policies related to these settlement boundaries were not 'saved'. Therefore there are currently no planning policy settlement boundaries for Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton.
- 6.10 The Parish Council decided that settlement boundaries were appropriate in order to give greater protection to important areas of countryside and that these must be defined within the context of a requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to support the delivery of sufficient sustainable development in the Neighbourhood Area. This has been an objective of the Parish Council for a long time and was originally identified in the Lesbury

Parish Plan (2009). This approach must be based on the need to ensure there is sufficient housing land available within the settlement boundaries to accommodate housing growth over the plan period up to 2036. These are discussed and described in detail in the settlement boundary evidence paper available on the Parish Council website <http://www.lesbury-pc.org.uk/ndp-finaldocs.php>

- 6.11 The key alternative considered in the plan making process was the creation of larger settlement boundaries as a result of early and informal consultation on potential housing site allocations (see Appendix E). All three settlements were explored in terms of their potential to deliver a small amount of housing, up to 45 dwellings. A potential alternative was also explored that incorporated a much larger housing development immediately east of Alnmouth Railway station.
- 6.12 The focus of these initial discussions used the Northumberland County Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) sites as the basis for discussion through the Steering Group's Neighbourhood Plan workshops. These discussions did not progress to formal housing site assessments to determine any suitability, deliverability, viability and availability of the sites. If these initial housing site allocations had been progressed in the Plan it would have meant expansion of the settlement boundaries either north of Lesbury Village, east and west of Hipsburn or southeast of Bilton, in some format, to include one or more of the SHLAA sites for housing.
- 6.13 These alternative settlement boundaries options were subsequently dismissed. That decision was informed by: the size of the SHLAA sites in relation to the existing settlements; the emerging Northumberland Local Plan housing requirements for the Parish; a housing needs assessment; and further comments given in consultation responses from the local community. The housing site allocations reasonable alternatives are discussed in further detail below.
- 6.14 The Northumberland Local Plan identifies a countywide housing requirement for a minimum of 17,700 net additional dwellings over the 20 year plan period which runs from 2016 to 2036. It goes on to identify a minimum indicative requirement for new homes across parishes where neighbourhood areas have been designated. These are set out in Policy HOU3 of the draft Northumberland Local Plan.
- 6.15 Policy HOU3 of the draft Local Plan identifies an indicative minimum requirement for 45 additional dwellings in Lesbury Parish during the Local Plan period. This is a slight increase from the requirements set out in an earlier draft of the Local Plan which identified a requirement for 39 dwellings.

However, as recognised in the draft Northumberland Local Plan there are more than the required 17,700 homes already in under construction or with planning permission, yet to be started. While some of these permissions may lapse and not be delivered, analysis of delivery rates indicate that there is a reasonably high degree of confidence that the majority of permitted housing applications will come forward and be delivered.

- 6.16 The majority of the indicative minimum requirement for 45 dwellings in Lesbury Parish has already been met. It is calculated that there is a small current shortfall of 6 housing units to be provided over the Plan period up to 2036. As described in the settlement boundary methodology background paper for the Neighbourhood Plan, the proposed settlement boundaries accommodate enough land to meet the housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Area relying only on windfall allowances, through the support for rural exception sites on the edges of settlements, through the re-use of redundant buildings in the countryside, and through infill development within settlement boundaries (Policies LNP 1, 2 and 4 apply).
- 6.17 As a result of these requirements and the conclusions reached on how additional housing may be delivered it was therefore determined that it would not be necessary to draw more extensive settlement boundaries or to allocate any sites for housing development through the Neighbourhood Plan. Wider boundaries were considered to be likely to result in higher rates of development with associated negative environmental impacts including:
- Creating adverse impacts on the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside;
 - Eroding the character of the three rural settlements including the character of Lesbury Conservation area;
 - Putting greater pressure on areas of biodiversity and geodiversity importance (notably by increasing recreational pressure);
 - Increasing reliance on private cars with associated impacts on greenhouse gasses and climate change;
 - Exacerbating problems with second home ownership; and
 - Increasing pressure on local services and infrastructure.
- 6.18 Having regard to the indicative minimum housing requirement for the Lesbury Neighbourhood Area provided by the Local Planning Authority, the vision and objectives established in the Neighbourhood Plan, the extent of current housing commitments in the Neighbourhood Area and the availability of land through windfall sites within settlements, by the development of 'rural exceptions affordable housing' and through the conversion of other rural buildings to residential use as supported in the Neighbourhood Plan it was concluded through the SEA that no genuine reasonable alternative approaches exist in relation to establishing settlement boundaries other than

those defined in the Neighbourhood Plan. Accordingly no further detailed assessment is required on this matter.

Housing Site Allocations

- 6.19 In developing the Neighbourhood Plan, during the early stages of plan preparation a number of housing sites were considered for potential allocation. A number of focus groups and small workshops were held in the community to discuss different options for housing site allocations in the Plan (see Appendix E).
- 6.20 Using SHLAA housing information produced by Northumberland County Council the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considered the merit of 5 potential sites for the basis of their discussions on alternative scenarios. Each site was discussed for its merits and problems and two potentially more favoured sites were identified should the Neighbourhood Plan decide to allocate some land for housing. The two sites identified for consideration in the Neighbourhood Plan were:
- SHLAA ref. 0273, Land north of Alnmouth Station; and
 - SHLAA ref. 0274, Land south of Bilton Rd.

However, it was noted that there would be problems associated with the development of both of these sites in terms of access, sewerage disposal, drainage, landscaping and footpaths.

- 6.21 Progress on the emerging Northumberland Local Plan overtook events at the parish level. Definition of indicative minimum housing requirements coupled with current delivery of housing in Lesbury Parish dampened the appetite for further alternative site discussions in the Steering Group. The Parish Council decided not to pursue any housing allocations through the Neighbourhood Plan. The decision to create relatively tight settlement boundaries with a reliance on windfall housing, rural exception affordable housing sites and the re-use of redundant buildings in the Countryside was chosen as the preferred approach to carry forward in a draft Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.22 Having regard to the indicative minimum housing requirement for the Lesbury Neighbourhood Area provided by the Local Planning Authority, the vision and objectives established in the Neighbourhood Plan, the extent of current housing commitments in the Neighbourhood Area, the availability of land for small scale windfall residential development within settlements, by the development of 'rural exceptions affordable housing' and through the conversion of other rural buildings to residential use as supported in the Neighbourhood Plan it was concluded through the SEA that no genuine reasonable alternative approaches exist in relation to the allocation of sites for

housing. Accordingly no further detailed assessment is required on this matter.

Locally Important Green Spaces

- 6.23 In developing the Neighbourhood Plan there were a number of important green spaces that were identified through community engagement. Qualities like their recreational use, environmental use or significance to the community were discussed. Topic based workshops were held by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to facilitate discussion in the community about the merit of the green spaces identified.
- 6.24 During the workshops, and after further scrutiny of the potential locally important green spaces, the Steering Group considered whether these important spaces could qualify for Local Green Space designation. By using criteria defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the Steering Group assessed the suitability of the locally important sites and decided to allocate eight Local Green Spaces as the preferred approach in the Plan. The other sites that did not qualify for this designation were proposed to be given other protection through the designation of Recreational Space or Allotments through policies in the Plan.
- 6.25 The approach employed by the Parish Council has resulted in protection being afforded through proposed planning policies to all areas identified by the community as having value and importance to them. Accordingly there are no further reasonable alternatives to assess through the SEA process.

Principal Residency

- 6.26 Early engagement with the community at the initial stages of plan preparation, resulted in many residents suggesting a need for more permanent residents living in the area.
- 6.27 The draft Northumberland Local Plan includes a policy to restrict all development to 'principal occupancy' in those areas that can demonstrate in excess of 20% holiday homes/second homes in their area.
- 6.28 Lesbury Parish is estimated to have around 11% holiday/second homes in the area based on information available through the 2011 Census data. The Steering Group carried out some initial local surveying to see if there was more up to date evidence of second home ownership but concluded that insufficient evidence was currently available to support the introduction of residential occupancy controls through policies in the Plan. Accordingly, no further assessment is required of alternative approaches since it is acknowledged that introducing such controls over occupation of new dwellings has no evidential support.

Appraisal findings

- 6.29 The appraisal has been structured using the SEA Framework. For each SEA Objective, the likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan 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 and Geodiversity

(SEA Objective 1) Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features.

- 6.30 The Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan sets out a number of 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.
- 6.31 Key designations in the Neighbourhood Area and their attributes are described in section 4 of this Report which outlines the environmental baseline characteristics. Designations which demonstrate the value and potential vulnerability of the area to environmental effects include the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar Site, Berwickshire and Northumberland Coast SAC, North Northumberland Dunes SAC, Northumberland Shore Site SSSI, a Local Wildlife and Geological Site, Alnmouth Saltmarsh and Dunes SSSI as well as habitats of principal importance.
- 6.32 Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan does not support major development in the Northumberland Coast AONB and Northumberland Heritage Coast other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. This accords with the national policy approach to protection of such areas.
- 6.33 Advice provided by the County Ecologist during the HRA pre-screening of the Plan, and subsequently in the Appropriate Assessment, confirmed mitigation would need to be required through policies in the Plan to address likely significant impacts on coastal European sites. It was recommended that this should comprise a requirement for contributions to be made to the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service from development that results in a net increase in the number of dwellings or additional tourist accommodation. That recommendation was supported by Natural England in their response to

consultation on the SEA Scoping Report. In the current version of the Plan (October 2019) mitigation requirements have been added to Policies 1, 2 and 4.

- 6.34 In order to ensure that effective mitigation can be provided to address the impacts of new residential development and recreational activity within coastal European sites, Northumberland County Council has introduced the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service. This is a developer-funded warden service. This service may, where necessary, be supplemented by other regulatory mechanisms, such as the County Council's Public Space Protection Order which requires dogs to be kept on lead in certain circumstances including when disturbance is being caused to wildlife.
- 6.35 Policy 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan identifies three settlement boundaries on the Policies Map at Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton. The nature of a settlement boundary is to offer more certainty around the types of development that will be supported within the settlements and outside in the open countryside. Settlement boundaries support the intention expressed in paragraph 170 of the NPPF that planning policies should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Policy 2 gives great weight to the conservation of landscapes around the settlements and, in particular, to the Heritage Coast and the scenic beauty of the coast including views across the AONB to the coast from Hipsburn, Lesbury and Bilton. This approach would positively contribute to this SEA objective.
- 6.36 Policy 3 relates to design in new development. Criteria (c) of the policy requires appropriate landscaping to be incorporated into any scheme including the retention of trees and hedgerows and the planting of new trees characteristic to the local area. The final criterion in the policy requires measurable net gains for biodiversity to be delivered through development. In the Neighbourhood Area it is recognised in the Plan that simple measures such as restoring neglected hedgerows and habitats or creating ponds could provide measurable net gains for wildlife. These small measures could be delivered quickly and therefore achieve net gains in a short period of time.
- 6.37 Policy 4 relates to rural exception sites and community-led housing. By its very nature any new housing could have a negative impact on the protection and enhancement of all biodiversity and geological features. The policy does make a positive contribution by stating that proposals for rural exception sites will not be supported on sensitive settlement edges, as defined on the Policies Map and, in light of the recommendations made earlier, and through the HRA process, Policy 4 requires developers to contribute to the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service and thereby mitigate the impact of development on European designated sites.

- 6.38 Policy 6 designates a series of Local Green Spaces. The spaces serve a number of purposes including in respect of biodiversity. Specifically The Wynd by Steppey Lane and the corner of Lesbury Road and Curly Lane are valued for their biodiversity and habitat provision.
- 6.39 Policy 10 identifies three proposals to improve walking, cycling and disabled access in the Plan Area that will be supported. The policy also supports improvements to existing, and provision of new, cycle and pedestrian routes in the Neighbourhood Area where it can be demonstrated that any negative impacts on European designated sites as a result of these proposals can be adequately mitigated.
- 6.40 Whilst it is recognised that Lesbury Parish is an environmentally vulnerable area, the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have positive effects on biodiversity and geodiversity through the implementation of preservation and habitat enhancement policies. Development in the area is only ever likely to be of a relatively small scale and therefore any negative effects are likely to be minor. However, residential development and tourist accommodation of any scale could have a negative effect on European sites because that the development will increase recreational pressure. Policies in the Plan ensure that those negative impacts will be mitigated through the requirement for contributions from residential and tourist accommodation development to be made to the Northumberland Coast Mitigation
- 6.41 **ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS:**
No changes are required to meet SEA Objective 1.

Climate Change

(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

- 6.42 The Lesbury Parish Neighbourhood Plan recognises the village of Lesbury and settlement of Hipsburn as settlements with services and facilities. Bilton does not have any services or facilities within its settlement boundary but all three settlements are located close enough to access each others services and facilities sustainably.
- 6.43 The Alnwick LDF Core Strategy clusters Lesbury, Hipsburn, Bilton and Alnmouth together, as a sustainable village centre. The Neighbourhood Plan approach is to support housing development within settlement boundaries in most instances and, rural exceptions sites on the built up edges of settlement boundaries. This approach would help create settlements as centres providing homes close to services. This can promote sustainable modes of transport, notably walking and cycling.
- 6.44 There are regular bus services which connect the settlements in Lesbury Parish with Alnmouth and Alnwick, as well as Berwick to the north and Morpeth, Ashington and Newcastle to the south. Alnmouth railway station on the East Coast Mainline is situated between the settlements of Bilton and Hipsburn. However, the area is still rural in nature and this prohibits the opportunities for any significant shift to sustainable transport. There will continue to be a high reliance upon private cars, even in the long term.
- 6.45 Policy 1 criterion (c) seeks to support development for new and expanded social, community, leisure, recreational and educational facilities which contribute to the maintenance of sustainable communities in Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton. This could contribute positively to reducing the need to travel to benefit from such facilities further afield. Policy 1 criterion (d) also supports small-scale rural business and economic development proposals involving conversion of existing buildings, and/or sensitively designed new buildings where landscape and other impacts can be adequately mitigated.
- 6.46 This permissive approach within the settlement boundaries would help to reduce the number of journeys made and also reduce the need to travel to access any new business. Small-scale business development within the settlement boundaries would also promote the use of sustainable modes of

transport including walking and cycling. Overall, this approach would support SEA Objective 2.

- 6.47 Policy 2 supports small-scale rural business, the re-use of redundant buildings and small-scale tourism developments amongst other proposals, outside the settlement boundaries in the open countryside. While this approach would mean the distance travelled to access any of these new services could be further than the distance travelled within the settlement boundaries the distance would be minor and the Plan would still encourage a reduction in the number of journeys made to other settlements or towns outside the Neighbourhood Area. This approach would support SEA Objectives 2 and 3.
- 6.48 Policy 3 addresses design in all new development and how it should incorporate and demonstrate against a list of design related criteria. Criterion (d) requires Sustainable Urban Drainage systems to be incorporated which take opportunities for improving biodiversity in their design, or demonstrate why such a system would not be practicable. Criterion (g) requires opportunities to be taken where possible to incorporate embedded renewables, such as solar panels, heat pumps and other measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the building. Criterion (h) supports minimising energy consumption and maximising passive solar gain in new development. This approach would support SEA Objectives 2 and 3.
- 6.49 The eastern boundary of the Neighbourhood Area comprises part of the North Northumberland coastline. Many areas along the coast are located within Flood Zone 3. The River Aln extends north-west from Alnmouth. Some land adjacent to the River Aln is located in Flood Zone 3. Surface water drainage and sewer flooding is a risk for some parts of the Neighbourhood Area. The Plan does not seek to allocate land for development in these areas or elsewhere. The strategy in the Neighbourhood Plan is to direct development, in most instances, to areas within the settlement boundaries and where there is limited flood risk. The scale of development supported through the Plan would be such that major negative impacts on flood risk should not occur. This approach would support SEA Objective 3.
- 6.50 In preparing the Plan, alternative housing site allocations were considered. Appendix G illustrates that the alternative housing site allocations identified in the SHLAA and used to inform early alternatives may have impacted negatively on some flood risk areas if settlement boundaries were drawn to include those sites or if those sites were allocated for development.
- 6.51 Policy 6 seeks to protect a number of Local Green Spaces in the Neighbourhood Area. All of the Local Green Space designations are located within or adjacent to each of the three settlements. This would certainly

reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable modes of transport in terms of accessing these spaces. During the scoping stage of the SEA the Environment Agency stated that the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to ensure that *ground raising activities within sites LGS1 and LGS3 are not undertaken, as it may increase the risk of flooding within these sites*. This has been reflected in modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan policy.

- 6.52 Policy 9 supports any extension to the existing car parks at Alnmouth Railway Station, and/or the creation of additional parking spaces at the station, if required. This may not help reduce the number of journeys made or reduce the need to travel, but could promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport. Any minor negative effect on SEA Objective 2 or 3 would be mitigated by including the requirement in the Policy that any scheme should incorporate improved pedestrian and cycle access as well as electric charging points for cars.
- 6.53 Policy 10 relates to improvements to walking and cycling routes. The policy supports the improvement of existing walking and cycle routes and the provision of new walking and cycling routes in the plan area. This would promote the use of sustainable modes of transport and potentially improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the plan area.
- 6.54 The strategic approach set out in the neighbourhood Plan seeks to reduce the need to travel. It supports sustainable transport where it is possible to do so. The Plan also includes policy provisions to ensure climate change is considered and mitigated in new development. The Neighbourhood Plan policies are considered to have a largely neutral or positive effect on Climate Change
- 6.55 **ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS:**
No changes are required to meet SEA Objectives 2 or 3.

Landscape and Historic Environment

(SEA Objective 4) Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes

- 6.56 The Neighbourhood Area has a rich historic environment. Numerous features are recognised through historic environment designations including the statutory listed buildings and scheduled monuments, which are nationally designated. Over a third of the Neighbourhood Area is located within the

Northumberland Coast AONB boundary. Additionally, a large area of the AONB lies within the North Northumberland Heritage Coast, which is recognised for its landscape, recreational and heritage interest.

- 6.57 New development in the Neighbourhood Area has the potential to impact negatively on the fabric and setting of heritage assets and landscapes, for example, through inappropriate design and layout. Existing designations, the AONB Management Plan and the existing development plan offer a degree of protection to such assets and their settings. Additionally, a Conservation Area Character Appraisal exists for the Lesbury Conservation Area, offering protection in terms of outlining suggested priorities for management and decision making within the Conservation area.
- 6.58 The Neighbourhood Plan serves to reinforce protection and enhancement of the Landscape and Historic Environment. Policy 2 gives great weight to the conservation of landscapes around the settlements and, in particular, to the Heritage Coast and the scenic beauty of the coast including views across the AONB to the coast from Hipsburn, Lesbury and Bilton.
- 6.59 Policy 3 deals with design in new development and states permission will be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities for improving the character and quality of the area. For areas within the Northumberland Coast AONB, this will include incorporating the principles contained in the most recent version of the Northumberland Coast AONB Design Guide. Policy 4 requires that any rural exception housing sites should not impact unacceptably on the local landscape.
- 6.60 Policies 7 and 8 relate to the Lesbury Conservation Area and Non-designated heritage assets respectively. These provide more local detail than the existing development plan. Policy 7, criterion (d), requires special consideration to be given to the impact of development on historic buildings in the Conservation Area, including designated and non-designated heritage assets. The Plan requires that development proposals that fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance and quality of the Lesbury Conservation Area will be refused.
- 6.61 The Neighbourhood Plan policies are considered to have a largely neutral or positive effect on Landscape and the Historic Environment and therefore support SEA Objective 4.
- 6.62 **ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS:**
No changes are required to meet SEA Objective 4.

Land, Soil and Water Resources

(SEA Objective 5) Ensure the efficient use of land.

(SEA Objective 6) Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste.

(SEA Objective 7) Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.

- 6.63 The Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development and therefore does not actively promote development on previously developed land. However, there are development principles which encourage effective use of land. Notably, Policy 2 on settlement boundaries which directs any new housing within the settlements on a small-scale basis and on the immediate edges of the built up areas if it is a rural exception site for affordable housing, subject to other restrictions regarding landscape impact.
- 6.64 The settlement boundaries identified in the plan area have been drawn tightly in recognition of the scale of proposed housing required to meet needs in the Parish as set out in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan and the need to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The emerging Local Plan identifies a minimum of 45 dwellings being required over the plan period, of which 39 have already been delivered. Settlement boundaries should have a positive effect on the efficient use of land by avoiding sprawl into the countryside. They should also contribute positively to the avoidance of the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land. In terms of the location of the best and most versatile agricultural land, no detailed classification has been carried out in the Neighbourhood Area. An area of land to the south of the B1339 in Lesbury contains areas of Grades 2, 3a, 3b and 4 Agricultural Land. This area is bordered on its northern edge by the River Aln which runs west to east.
- 6.65 Alternative settlement boundaries were considered in the context of allocating land for housing at Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton. In all cases extended boundaries to incorporate a housing allocation would have included additional agricultural land, including land in the Agricultural Grades mentioned above (see SHLAA site No 0046). The preferred option set out in the Plan therefore avoids the potential loss of graded and non-graded agricultural land.
- 6.66 Policy 4 supports rural exception affordable housing sites and community led housing provided these do not impact unacceptably on the local landscape,

particularly on sensitive settlement edges which are defined on the Policies Map. The precise location of these sites, should they come about, cannot be assessed since, by definition, they cannot be planned for. However, the Plan contains sufficient controls to limit impacts. The Plan provides a positive contribution to help avoid the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

- 6.67 The plan does not make explicit reference to reducing waste or supporting the re-use and recycling of waste. Policy 3 Design in new development does require new developments to demonstrate “*other measures to help reduce the carbon footprint of the building*”. However, there are increasing legislative and regulatory requirements out-with the planning system for improving recycling and composting rates. The plan does not make explicit reference to recycling and minimising resources during construction. However this could be indirectly secured through the Plan’s policy intention to support the reuse of buildings of substantial construction.
- 6.68 Water quality is not addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan. The requirements of the Water Framework Directive are 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. It is not expected that climate change would affect the ability to supply water in the Kielder Water Resource zone.
- 6.69 Policy 3 requires new development to demonstrate how Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) have been included or for applicants to demonstrate why SuDS cannot be employed. SuDS can include elements of water harvesting thereby reusing water with positive effects in respect of water consumption.
- 6.70 The Neighbourhood Plan policies are considered to have a largely neutral or positive effect on land, soil and water resources. The Plan generally supports SEA Objectives 5, 6 and 7.
- 6.71 **ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS:**
No changes are required to meet SEA Objectives 5, 6 or 7.

Population and Community

(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

- 6.72 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and improve the facilities in the area and, where needed, support the provision of new community facilities. Policy 1 supports new and expanded social, community, leisure, recreational and educational facilities which contribute to the maintenance of sustainable communities in Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton. This supports SEA Objective 8.
- 6.73 Policy 5 provides detail on community, recreational and visitor facilities. Proposals that will enhance the viability and/or the community value of existing community and recreational facilities will be supported. The policy also supports the provision of a number of new facilities for local business, recreation, education and a community orchard. The policy does not support the loss of community facilities.
- 6.74 Policy 6 relates to protecting Local Green Spaces. As recognised in the supporting text, Local Green Spaces can be valuable assets for the community in a number of ways including for recreation. The Policy slightly confuses its intention by including recreational spaces and allotments within the same policy. The recreational spaces and allotments will not be protected in the same way as the Local Green Spaces and this may need to be modified for clarity. The inclusion of detail on allotments in a policy supports SEA Objective 8.
- 6.75 Fuel poverty is not expressly addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan. However Policy 3 includes embedding renewables and minimising energy consumption which could indirectly have positive impacts addressing fuel poverty in the longer term.
- 6.76 Policy 10 supports proposals to improve opportunities for walking, cycling and disabled access. It also identifies certain key proposals. This policy would support SEA Objective 8 by improving the accessibility of other key local facilities in the longer term.
- 6.77 The Neighbourhood Plan policies are considered to have a largely positive effect on population and community.
- 6.78 **ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS:**
No changes are required to meet SEA Objective 8.

Human Health

(SEA Objective 9) Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.

(SEA Objective 10) Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents of the Neighbourhood Area to work locally.

(SEA Objective 11) Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Area.

- 6.79 There are a range of objectives and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan with potential for indirect effects on health. There is an ageing population within the Neighbourhood Area. Over half of the population of the Parish are over the age of 45 and a significant number over 60. Generally, the health and wellbeing of those living within the Neighbourhood Area is good.
- 6.80 Policy 1 supports small-scale housing development within the settlement boundaries of Lesbury, Hipsburn and Bilton, including affordable and social housing and self-build units and small-scale affordable and social housing development on rural exception sites on the built-up edges of settlements except where this leads to 'major' development in the AONB. This would positively contribute to SEA Objective 9 by helping to provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality affordable housing.
- 6.81 Policy 2 relates to settlement boundaries and supports rural exception affordable housing outside the settlements. The policy also supports the re-use of redundant buildings where these buildings were originally of substantial construction and where the scheme would improve the appearance of the site. The policy supports housing to meet the essential need for a rural worker and includes support for proposals where design is of exceptional quality.
- 6.82 Policy 3 seeks to secure high quality and sustainable design. Good design can improve the character and quality of the area, indirectly improving people's wellbeing and enjoyment of the area in which they live or visit.
- 6.83 Policy 4 provides further detail on support for rural exceptions affordable housing and community-led housing to meet identified local needs. This supports SEA Objectives 9 and 10.

- 6.84 Policy 5 positively supports a new “hub” in the vicinity of Alnmouth Railway station to include a tourist information centre, community uses, business uses and/or small-scale retail uses. Policy 9 supports parking and highways improvements at Alnmouth Railway Station and could indirectly help support a vibrant mixed economy in terms of access to the area. This supports SEA Objectives 10 and 11.
- 6.85 Policy 10 supports improvements to walking and cycling routes and supports the provision of new routes. This could help support residents of the area to work locally by improving sustainable access to people’s places of work. The Neighbourhood Plan policies are considered to have a largely neutral or positive effect on human health and support SEA Objectives 9, 10 and 11.
- 6.86 **ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS:**
No changes are required to meet SEA Objectives 9, 10 or 11.

Transportation

(SEA Objective 12) Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel

- 6.87 The approach adopted in the Neighbourhood Plan is to support small-scale housing development within settlement boundaries and on rural exception sites. This reinforces the role of these settlements as centres providing the focus for new homes being close to local services. This supports SEA Objective 12 in that it can reduce the need to travel. However, it must be recognised that the area is rural in nature and there will be continued reliance on services, facilities and employment outside the Neighbourhood Area and many of the journeys taken to access those will be by private car. There is scope for some modal shift to sustainable transport due to the presence of Alnmouth Railway Station in the Parish and local bus services.
- 6.88 Policy 1 supports a reduction in the need to travel by promoting sustainable patterns of land use and development. Policy 2 directs new development to locations within the settlements and close to services thereby reducing the need to travel. Policy 2 also supports small-scale rural business and economic proposals within the settlements which address the same objective and could also help facilitate working from home and remote working.

- 6.89 Policy 9 supports extension to the existing car parks at Alnmouth Railway Station. Whilst this still allows for additional journeys by car, the policy intention is to encourage modal shift and mixed mode journeys thereby supporting SEA Objective 12. The policy seeks to mitigate negative effects on SEA Objective 12 by adding the requirement that any scheme should incorporate improved pedestrian and cycle access as well as electric charging points for cars.
- 6.90 Policy 10 supports improvements to walking and cycling routes and supports the provision of new routes. This provides a positive effect on the promotion of sustainable transport use and reduces the need to travel and thereby supports SEA Objective 12.
- 6.91 Overall, the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to result in a largely positive effect on transportation. However, given the likely small scale of development and the small geography covered, the effects are not likely to be significant. The rural nature of the area means reliance will continue to be placed on the use of private cars.
- 6.92 **ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS:**
No changes are required to meet SEA Objective 12

Strategic Environmental Assessment Conclusions

- 6.93 The assessment has demonstrated that:
Overall, the Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to positive or neutral environmental effects. No modification is required to the Plan to meet the SEA Objectives.
- 6.94 Whilst the area hosts a number of environmental designations reflecting its environmental value and sensitivity, the Neighbourhood Plan's vision, objectives and policies have avoided significant environmental impacts and the policies will serve to mitigate potential adverse effects.

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. 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.

Next Steps

- 7.2 This Environmental Report will be subject to consultation. Subject to any necessary amendments the report will be finalised.
- 7.3 There are a number of subsequent stages before the Lesbury 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 SEA Environmental Report. The County Council will consider whether the Plan is suitable to progress to Independent Examination in terms of meeting legal requirements.
- 7.4 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 Lesbury and will be used to make decisions on planning applications in that area.

Appendix A: Review of Plans and Programmes

The following provides a review of plans and programmes, which is derived from the Sustainability Appraisal of the Northumberland Local Plan. It should be noted that in a number of instances the relevance of the plan or programme relates to the Local Plan and therefore are only indirectly related to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
International/European Plans and Programmes		
EC (2011) A resource-efficient Europe – Flagship Initiative under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM 2011/21)		
<p>This flagship initiative aims to create a framework for policies to support the shift towards a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy which will help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boost economic performance while reducing resource use; • Identify and create new opportunities for economic growth and greater innovation and boost the EU's competitiveness; • Ensure security of supply of essential resources; and • Fight against climate change and limit the environmental impacts of resource use. 	<p>Each Member State has a target calculated according to the share of energy from renewable sources in its gross final consumption for 2020. The UK is required to source 15 per cent of energy needs from renewable sources, including biomass, hydro, wind and solar power by 2020. From 1 January 2017, biofuels and bioliquids share in emissions savings should be increased to 50 per cent.</p>	<p>The Local Plan policies should take into account the objectives of the Flagship Initiative.</p> <p>The SEA framework should include objectives and guide questions that relate to resource use.</p>
European Commission (2013) Strategy on adaptation to climate change		
<p>The EU strategy aims to make Europe more climate-resilient by adapting to the changing climate. It aims to provide a coherent approach to enhance preparedness and capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change. The three key objectives of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting action by Member States – encouraging Member States to adopt adaptation strategies and provide funding to boost capacity; • 'Climate-proofing' action at EU level – promoting adaptation in vulnerable sectors such as agriculture and fisheries; and 	<p>No target or indicators.</p>	<p>The SEA framework should include criteria relating to climate resilience.</p>

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better informed decision-making – addressing gaps in knowledge and improving the European information sharing platform, Climate-ADAPT. 		
European Commission (2014) A Policy Framework for Climate and Energy in the period from 2020 to 2030		
The 2030 Climate and Energy Framework was adopted in 2014 and builds on the 2020 targets. The greenhouse gas emissions and renewable energy targets are binding, while the energy efficiency target will be reviewed in 2020.	<p>It sets three key targets for 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 40% cuts in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels); At least 27% share for renewable energy; and At least 27% improvement in energy efficiency. 	The SEA framework should include the consideration of energy and greenhouse gas emissions.
European Landscape Convention 2000 (became binding March 2007)		
Convention outlined the need to recognise landscape in law, to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and creation of landscapes, and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies. It also encourages the integration of landscape into all relevant areas of policy, including cultural, economic and social policies.	<p>Specific measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising awareness of the value of landscapes among all sectors of society, and of society's role in shaping them; Promoting landscape training and education among landscape specialists, other related professions, and in school and university courses; The identification and assessment of landscapes, and analysis of landscape change, with the active participation of stakeholders; Setting objectives for landscape quality, with the involvement of the public; and The implementation of landscape policies, through the establishment of plans and practical programmes. 	SEA objectives must consider the outcomes of the convention.
EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)		
<p>Establishes a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevents further deterioration and protects and enhances the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystems; Promotes sustainable water use based on a long-term protection of available water resources; Aims at enhanced protection and improvement of the aquatic environment, inter alia, through specific measures for the 	The achievement of "good status" for chemical and biological river quality. Production of River Basin Management Plans.	SEA framework should consider effects upon water quality and resource.

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
<p>progressive reduction of discharges, emissions and losses of priority substances and the cessation or phasing-out of discharges, emissions and losses of the priority hazardous substances;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures the progressive reduction of pollution of groundwater and prevents its further pollution, and Contributes to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts. 		
EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment		
<p>The SEA Directive provides the following requirements for consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorities which, because of their environmental responsibilities, are likely to be concerned with the effects of implementing the plan or programme, must be consulted on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Environmental Report. These authorities are designated in the SEA Regulations as the Consultation Bodies (Consultation Authorities in Scotland); The public and the Consultation Bodies must be consulted on the draft plan or programme and the Environmental Report, and must be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinions. Other EU Member States must be consulted if the plan or programme is likely to have significant effects on the environment in their territories. The Consultation Bodies must also be consulted on screening determinations on whether SEA is needed for plans or programmes under Article 3(5), i.e. those which may be excluded if they are not likely to have significant environmental effects. 	No targets or indicators	The Directive sets the basis for SEA as a whole and therefore indirectly covers all objectives.
EU Directive 2002/91/EC (2002) on the energy performance of buildings		
<p>The European Union Energy Performance of Buildings Directive was published in the Official Journal on the 4th January 2003. The overall objective of the Directive is to <i>promote the improvement of energy performance of buildings within the Community taking into account outdoor climate and local conditions as well as indoor climate requirements and cost effectiveness.</i></p> <p>The Directive highlights how the residential and tertiary sectors, the majority of which are based in buildings, accounts for 40%</p>	It aims to reduce the energy consumption of buildings by improving efficiency across the EU through the application of minimum requirements and energy use certification.	The Directive will help manage energy demand and thus reduce consumption. As a result, it should help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and ensure future energy security.

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
of EU energy consumption.		
EU (2006) Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy		
<p>In June 2001, the first European sustainable development strategy was agreed by EU Heads of State. The Strategy sets out how the EU can meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The Strategy proposes headline objectives and lists seven key challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change and clean energy; • Sustainable transport; • Sustainable consumption and production; • Conservation and management of natural resources; • Public health; • Social inclusion, demography and migration; and • Global poverty. 	<p>The overall objectives in the Strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard the earth's capacity to support life in all its diversity, respect the limits of the planet's natural resources and ensure a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment. Prevent and reduce environmental pollution and promote sustainable consumption and production to break the link between economic growth and environmental degradation; • Promote a democratic, socially inclusive, cohesive, healthy, safe and just society with respect for fundamental rights and cultural diversity that creates equal opportunities and combats discrimination in all its forms; • Promote a prosperous, innovative, knowledge-rich, competitive and eco-efficient economy which provides high living standards and full and high-quality employment throughout the European Union; and • Encourage the establishment and defend the stability of democratic institutions across the world, based on peace, security and freedom. Actively promote sustainable development worldwide and ensure that the European Union's internal and external policies are consistent with global sustainable development and its international commitments. 	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan should be consistent with the objectives of the Strategy and in turn promote sustainable development.</p>
EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to provide a consistent approach to managing flood risk across Europe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach is based on a 6 year cycle of planning which includes the publication of Preliminary Flood Risk Assessments, hazard and risk maps and flood risk management plans. The Directive is transposed into English law by the Flood Risk Regulations 2009. 	<p>The SEA framework should consider objectives relating to flood risk.</p>
EU Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) and previous Directives (96/62/EC; 99/30/EC; 2000/69/EC; and 2002/3/EC)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Directive provides that most of existing legislation be merged into a single directive (except for the fourth daughter directive) with no change to existing air quality objectives. • Relevant objectives include: • Maintain ambient air quality where it is good and improve it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes thresholds for pollutants. 	<p>The SEA framework should include objectives relating to air quality.</p>

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
<p>in other cases; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain ambient-air quality where it is good and improve it in other cases with respect to sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter and lead. 		
Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies 181 endangered species and sub-species for which the Member States are required to designate Special Protection Areas. • Makes it a legal requirement that EU countries make provision for the protection of birds. This includes the selection and designation of Special Protection Areas. 	<p>Target Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of protected areas; • Upkeep and management; and • Re-establishment of destroyed biotopes. 	<p>The SEA framework should consider objectives to protect and enhance biodiversity including wild birds.</p>
Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and subsequent amendments		
<p>Directive seeks to conserve natural habitats. Conservation of natural habitats requires member states to identify special areas of conservation and to maintain, where necessary landscape features of importance to wildlife and flora.</p> <p>The amendments in 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify the species protection regime to better reflect the Habitats Directive; • Provide a clear legal basis for surveillance and monitoring of European protected species (EPS); • Toughen the regime on trading EPS that are not native to the UK; and • Ensure that the requirement to carry out appropriate assessments on water abstraction consents and land use plans is explicit. 	<p>No targets or indicators</p>	<p>The SEA framework objectives should include priorities for the protection of landscape features for ecological benefit.</p>
EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 – towards implementation		
<p>The European Commission has adopted an ambitious new strategy to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU by 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy provides a framework for action over the next decade and covers the following key areas: • Conserving and restoring nature; • Maintaining and enhancing ecosystems and their services; • Ensuring the sustainability of agriculture, forestry and 	<p>There are six main targets, and 20 actions to help Europe reach its goal.</p> <p>The six targets cover:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full implementation of EU nature legislation to protect biodiversity. 2. Better protection for ecosystems, and more use of green infrastructure. 3. More sustainable agriculture and forestry. 4. Better management of fish stocks. 	<p>The SEA framework should include priorities protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</p>

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
fisheries; • Combating invasive alien species; and • Addressing the global biodiversity crisis.	5. Tighter controls on invasive alien species. 6. A bigger EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.	
The Convention for the protection of the architectural heritage of Europe (Granada Convention)		
The Convention for the protection of the architectural heritage of Europe is a legally binding instrument which set the framework for an accurate conservation approach within Europe. The following objectives are identified: • Support the idea of solidarity and cooperation among European Parties, in relation to heritage conservation. • It includes principles of "conservation policies" within the framework of European cooperation. • Strengthen and promote policies for the conservation and development of cultural heritage in Europe.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objectives relating to conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.
The European Convention on the protection of archaeological heritage (Valetta Convention)		
This Convention aims to protect the European archaeological heritage as a source of European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objectives relating to conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.
United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNCCC) (2001) The Cancun Agreement		
Shared vision to keep global temperature rise to below two degrees Celsius, with objectives to be reviewed as to whether it needs to be strengthened in future on the basis of the best scientific knowledge available.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include greenhouse gas emissions.
UNESCO World Heritage Convention (1972)		
The World Heritage Convention sets out the duties of States Parties in identifying potential sites and their role in protecting and preserving them. By signing the Convention, each country pledges to conserve not only the World Heritage sites situated on its territory, but also to protect its national heritage. The States Parties are encouraged to integrate the protection of the cultural and natural heritage into regional planning programmes, set up staff and services at their sites, undertake scientific and technical conservation research and adopt	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objectives relating to conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
measures which give this heritage a function in the day-to-day life of the community.		
UNFCCC (1997) The Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC		
The Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC established the first policy that actively aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by industrialised countries.	Construction is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions due to the consumption of materials and use of energy. The Kyoto Protocol aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions of the UK by 12.5%, compared to 1990 levels, by 2008 – 2012.	The Kyoto Protocol is influential to achieving sustainable development as it encourages transition to a low carbon economy. Therefore it is an integral factor in planning documents.
UNFCCC (2016) The Paris Agreement		
The Paris Agreement's central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Additionally, the agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change. To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework will be put in place, thus supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries, in line with their own national objectives.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include greenhouse gas emissions.
World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) Our Common Future (The Brundtland Report)		
<p>The Brundtland Report is concerned with the world's economy and its environment. The objective is to provide an expanding and sustainable economy while protecting a sustainable environment. The Report was a call by the United Nations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To propose long-term environmental strategies for achieving sustainable development by the year 2000 and beyond; • To recommend ways concern for the environment may be translated into greater co-operation among countries of the global South and between countries at different stages of economical and social development and lead to the achievement of common and mutually supportive objectives that take account of the interrelationships between people, resources, environment, and development; • To consider ways and means by which the international 	The report issued a multitude of recommendations with the aim of attaining sustainable development and addressing the problems posed by a global economy that is intertwined with the environment.	The Brundtland Report provided the original definition of sustainable development. The cumulative effect of the SEA objectives seeks to achieve sustainable development.

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<p>community can deal more effectively with environment concerns; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help define shared perceptions of long-term environmental issues and the appropriate efforts needed to deal successfully with the problems of protecting and enhancing the environment, a long term agenda for action during the coming decades, and aspirational goals for the world community. 		
National Plans and Programmes		
Committee on Climate Change (2017) UK Climate Change Risk Assessment		
<p>This report reaffirms the UK Governments need to continue to consider climate change a threat to the UK and forms a basis for the regions of the UK to create a climate change risk assessment. The report identifies the following likely effects of climate change on the UK: increased flooding, rise in milder winters and hotter summers which could have wider health impacts, water supply issues, loss of biodiversity and ecosystems especially in coastal regions and a loss in business productivity.</p>	No targets or indicators	<p>The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to climate change and reducing its causes and potential effects.</p>
Department for Culture, Media & Sport (2013) Scheduled Monuments and Nationally Important but Non-Scheduled Monuments		
<p>This policy statement sets out Government policy on the identification, protection, conservation and investigation of nationally important ancient monuments, under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. It includes principles relating to the selection of scheduled monuments and the determination of applications for scheduled monument consent.</p>	No targets or indicators	<p>The SEA framework should include specific objectives relating to cultural heritage</p>
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, 2019)		
<p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in July 2018, and updated in February 2019, replaced the previous NPPF which was published in 2012.</p> <p>The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration</p>	No targets or indicators	<p>The NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the neighbourhood plan. The neighbourhood plan should reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide development locally.</p>

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in planning decisions. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a 'golden thread' running through both plan making and decision taking. Local Planning Authorities should plan positively to seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making		
National Planning Practice Guidance		
Planning Practice Guidance is designed to support the NPPF. It reflects the objectives of the NPPF which are not repeated here.	No targets or indicators	The Neighbourhood Plan and SEA framework should reflect the principles of the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance.
National Planning Policy for Waste (DCLG, 2014)		
<p>This document sets out detailed waste planning policies for local authorities. States that planning authorities need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a proportionate evidence base in preparing Local Plans. • Identify sufficient opportunities to meet the identified needs of their area for the management of waste streams. • Identifying suitable sites and areas. 	The overall objective of the document is to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. Planning plays a pivotal role e.g. by ensuring the design and layout of new development and other infrastructure complements sustainable waste management.	The SEA framework should consider objectives which relate to re-use, recycle and reduce.
Written Statement on Sustainable Drainage Systems (DCLG, 2014)		
This statement sets out that it is the Government's expectation that sustainable drainage systems will be provided in new developments wherever this is appropriate.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should reflect the Government's commitment to sustainable drainage systems and include references to sustainable water usage and treatment.
The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National Strategy for Climate and Energy (DECC, 2009)		
<p>This Paper plots out how the UK will meet the cut in emissions set out in the budget of 34% on 1990 levels by 2020. The Plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New money for a 'smart grid', and to help regions and local authorities prepare for and speed up planning decisions on renewable and low carbon energy whilst protecting legitimate environmental and local concerns; • Funding to significantly advance the offshore wind industry in the UK; • Funding to cement the UK's position as a global leader in wave and tidal energy; 	<p>Sets out a vision that by 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 1.2 million people will be in green jobs; • 7 million homes will have benefited from whole house makeovers, and more than 1.5 million households will be supported to produce their own clean energy; • Around 40 percent of electricity will be from low-carbon sources, from renewables, nuclear and clean coal; • We will be importing half the amount of gas that we otherwise would; and • The average new car will emit 40% less carbon than now. 	The strategy covers a number of SEA objectives including climate change, energy and air quality; landscape; geology and biodiversity; and waste.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to explore areas of potential "hot rocks" to be used for geothermal energy; • Challenging 15 villages, towns or cities to be testbeds for piloting future green initiatives; • Support for anaerobic digestion; • Encouraging private funding for woodland creation; and • Reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill, and better capture of landfill emissions etc. 		
The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (DEFRA, 2007)		
<p>The Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out a way forward for work and planning on air quality issues; • Sets out the air quality standards and objectives to be achieved; • Introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles; and • Identifies potential new national policy measures which modelling indicates could give further health benefits and move closer towards meeting the Strategy's objectives. 	<p>The Air Quality Strategy sets out objectives for a range of pollutants that have not been reproduced here due to space constraints.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should take account of the Air Quality Strategy where there are likely to be issues relating to air quality</p>
Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests (DEFRA, 2007)		
<p>Key aims for government intervention in trees, woods and forests are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to secure trees and woodlands for future generations; • to ensure resilience to climate change; • to protect and enhance natural resources; • to increase the contribution that trees, woods and forests make to our quality of life; • And to improve the competitiveness of woodland businesses and products. <p>These aims will form the basis on which the Delivery plan will be developed by Natural England and the Forestry Commission England (FCE). The strategy provides a national policy direction, which can be incorporated alongside regional priorities within regional forestry frameworks.</p>	<p>Strategy aims to create 2,200 hectares of wet woodland in England by 2010.</p>	<p>The SEA framework should include reference to the protection and enhancement of trees, woods and forests, in turn ensuring resilience to climate change.</p>
England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles, Conserving Biodiversity in a Changing Climate (DEFRA, 2008)		
<p>The report sets out a number of broad principles and goals</p>	<p>No targets or indicators</p>	<p>The SEA framework should include an objective/guide</p>

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<p>including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve existing biodiversity • Conserve protected areas and other high quality habitats • Reduce sources of harm not linked to climate change • Use existing biodiversity legislation and international agreements • Conserve range and ecological variability of habitats and species 		<p>questions related to protecting existing habitats and species.</p>
Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England (DEFRA, 2009)		
<p>The Strategy is underpinned by the following vision: By 2030, all England's soils will be managed sustainably and degradation threats tackled successfully. This will improve the quality of England's soils and safeguard their ability to provide essential services for future generations. Achieving this vision will mean that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agricultural soils will be better managed and threats to them will be addressed; • soils will play a greater role in the fight against climate change and in helping us to manage its impacts; • soils in urban areas will be valued during development, and construction practices will ensure vital soil functions can be maintained; and • Pollution of our soils is prevented, and our historic legacy of contaminated land is being dealt with. 	No targets or indicators	<p>The SEA framework should include an objective/guide question relating to the effects of policies/proposals on soils.</p>
Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services		
<p>The Strategy is designed to help to deliver the objectives set out in the Natural Environment White Paper.</p>	<p>The Strategy includes the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating 200,000 hectares of new wildlife habitats by 2020; • Securing 50% of SSSIs in favourable condition, while maintaining at least 95% in favourable or recovering condition; • Encouraging more people to get involved in conservation by supporting wildlife gardening and outdoor learning programmes; and • Introducing a new designation for local green spaces to enable communities to protect places that are important to them. 	<p>The SEA framework should include an objective/guide question that supports the vision emphasising biodiversity.</p>
Natural Environment White Paper: The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (DEFRA 2011)		

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<p>The Natural Environment White paper sets out the Government's plans to ensure the natural environment is protected and fully integrated into society and economic growth.</p>	<p>The White Paper sets out four key aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Protecting and improving our natural environment; (ii) Growing a green economy; (iii) Reconnecting people and nature; and (iv) International and EU leadership, specifically to achieve environmentally and socially sustainable economic growth, together with food, water, climate and energy security and to put the EU on a path towards environmentally sustainable, low-carbon and resource-efficient growth, which is resilient to climate change, provides jobs and supports the wellbeing of citizens. 	<p>The SEA framework should include an objective/guide question that supports the vision emphasising biodiversity.</p>
UK Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework (DEFRA, 2012)		
<p>The Framework is to set a broad enabling structure for action across the UK between now and 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To set out a shared vision and priorities for UK- scale activities, in a framework jointly owned by the four countries, and to which their own strategies will contribute; • To identify priority work at a UK level which will be needed to help deliver the Aichi targets and the EU Biodiversity Strategy • To facilitate the aggregation and collation of information on activity and outcomes across all countries of the UK, where the four countries agree this will bring benefits compared to individual country work; and • To streamline governance arrangements for UK- scale activity. 	<p>The Framework sets out 20 new global 'Aichi targets' under 5 strategic goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society; • Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use; • To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems species and genetic diversity; • Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services; and • Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building. 	<p>The SEA framework should ensure that the objectives of biodiversity conservation and enhancement are taken into consideration.</p>
The National Adaptation Programme – Making the Country Resilient to a Changing Climate (DEFRA, 2013)		
<p>This Programme contains a mix of policies and actions to help adapt successfully to future weather conditions, by dealing with the risks and making the most of the opportunities. It sets out a number of objectives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a clear local planning framework to enable all participants in the planning system to deliver sustainable new development, including infrastructure that minimises vulnerability and provides resilience to the impacts of climate change; • To increase the resilience of homes and buildings by helping 	<p>The Programme identifies a number of actions although no formal targets are identified.</p>	<p>The SEA framework should include an objective/guide question relating to climate change adaptation.</p>

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<p>people and communities to understand what a changing climate could mean for them and to take action to become resilient to climate risks; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure infrastructure is located, planned, designed and maintained to be resilient to climate change, including increasingly extreme weather events. 		
Waste Management Plan for England (DEFRA, 2013)		
<p>Sets out the Government's ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management.</p> <p>The document includes measures to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage reduction and management of packaging waste; • Promote high quality recycling; and • Encourage separate collection of bio-waste. • Promote the re-use of products and preparing for re-use activities 	<p>The Plan seeks to ensure that by 2020 at least 50% of weight waste from households is prepared for re-use or recycled and at least 70% by weight of construction and demolition waste is subject to material recovery.</p>	<p>The SEA framework should consider opportunities to reduce waste and encourage recycling and composting</p>
A Simple Guide to Biodiversity 2020 and Progress Update (DEFRA, 2013)		
<p>An update to the above 'Biodiversity 2020: a Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (Defra, 2011).</p>	<p>This update reaffirms the need to achieve the above priorities and states that progress is being made through people working to prevent the loss of biodiversity at all levels of government.</p>	<p>The SEA framework should consider an objective/guide questions related to improving biodiversity.</p>
Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement (DEFRA, 2013)		
<p>The Policy Statement has the following three key objectives, in priority order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the nation's trees, woodlands and forests from increasing threats such as pests, diseases and climate change; • Improving their resilience to these threats and their contribution to economic growth, people's lives and nature; and • Expanding them to increase further their economic, social and environmental value. 	<p>To achieve the objectives, Defra will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Natural Capital Committee and the Office of National Statistics to develop a set of natural capital accounts for UK forestry and use this to develop a set of natural capital accounts for the Public Forest Estate; • Develop a woodland ecosystem market roadmap by summer 2013 to bring together actions by Government and our partners over the next 5 years to (a) build knowledge (b) develop wider networks of collaboration and expertise and (c) implement mechanisms and projects to demonstrate good practice; and • Work with other organisations and initiatives to support the further development of markets in forest carbon and other ecosystem services such as water and biodiversity 	<p>The SEA framework should seek to protect woodland and enhance its value where practicable.</p>

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Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) in UK (DEFRA, 2017)		
This plan sets out how the Government will improve air quality in the UK by reducing nitrogen dioxide emissions in towns and cities. The air quality plans set out targeted local, regional and national measures across 37 zone plans (areas which have identified air quality issues with nitrogen dioxide), a UK overview document and a national list of measures. Measures relate to freight, rail, sustainable travel, low emission vehicles and cleaner transport fuels, among others.	No targets or indicators	The SEA should consider the effects of the WRMP on air quality.
National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (Environment Agency, 2011)		
The objective of this strategy is to reduce the risk of flooding and coastal erosion and manage its consequences.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include an objective/guiding questions relating to mitigation of flooding and coastal erosion.
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Area Act 1979		
The Act defines sites that warrant protection as ancient monuments. They can be a Scheduled Ancient Monuments or <i>"any other monument which in the opinion of the Secretary of State is of public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest attaching to it"</i> .	No targets identified.	The SEA framework should consider including objectives that protect and enhance the historic environment, including ancient monuments.
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981		
The main UK legislation relating to the protection of named animal and plant species includes legislation relating to the UK network of nationally protected wildlife areas: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).	No targets identified.	The SEA framework should consider including objectives that protect and enhance the environment, including wildlife and natural features.
Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990		
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.	No targets identified.	The SEA framework should consider including objectives that protect and enhance the historic environment, including listed buildings and conservation areas.
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000		
This Act: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gives people greater freedom to explore open country on foot; 	No targets identified.	The SEA framework should consider including objectives that protect and enhance the environment, including wildlife and natural features, and consider including objectives relating to access to walking and cycling.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> creates a duty for Highway Authorities and National Park Authorities to establish Local Access Forums; provides a cut-off date of 1 January 2026 for the recording of certain rights of way on definitive maps and the extinguishment of those not so recorded by that date; offers greater protection to wildlife and natural features, better protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and more effective enforcement of wildlife legislation; and Protects Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty with legislation similar to that for National Parks. 		
Sustainable Energy Act 2003		
<p>The Act aims to promote sustainable energy development and use and report on progress regarding cutting the UK's carbon emissions and reducing the number of people living in fuel poverty.</p>	<p>Specific targets are set by the Secretary of State as energy efficiency aims.</p>	<p>The Act requires the encouragement and reporting on the UK's attempts to increase energy efficiency and renewable energy use. The SEA Framework should include objectives relating to climate change and energy use.</p>
Securing the Future – the UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)		
<p>The Strategy has 5 guiding principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living within environmental limits; Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; Achieving a sustainable economy; Promoting good governance. <p>Using sound science responsibly alongside 4 strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable consumption and production; Climate change and energy; Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement; and Sustainable communities. 	<p>The Strategy contains a new set of indicators to monitor progress towards sustainable development in the UK. Those most relevant at the district level include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenhouse gas emissions; Road freight (CO2 emissions and tonne km, tonnes and GDP); Household waste (a) arisings (b) recycled or composted; and Local environmental quality 	<p>The SEA framework should reflect the guiding principles of the Strategy.</p>
The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006		
<p>The Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes provision about bodies concerned with the natural environment and rural communities; Makes provision in connection with wildlife, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Parks and the Broads; 	<p>The Act contains no formal targets.</p>	<p>SEA objectives must consider the importance of conserving biodiversity and landscape features as set out in the Act.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amends the law relating to rights of way; • Makes provision as to the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council; and • Provides for flexible administrative arrangements in connection with functions relating to the environment and rural affairs and certain other functions; and for connected purposes. 		
The Climate Change Act 2008		
<p>This Act aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve carbon management and help the transition towards a low carbon economy in the UK; and • To demonstrate strong UK leadership internationally, signalling that the UK is committed to taking its share of responsibility for reducing global emissions in the context of developing negotiations on a post-2012 global agreement at Copenhagen. 	<p>The Act sets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legally binding targets - greenhouse gas emission reductions through action in the UK and abroad of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions in CO2 emissions of at least 26% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline. The 2020 target will be reviewed soon after Royal Assent to reflect the move to all greenhouse gases and the increase in the 2050 target to 80%. <p>Further, the Act provides for a carbon budgeting system which caps emissions over five year periods, with three budgets set at a time, to set out our trajectory to 2050.</p>	<p>The SEA framework must ensure that greenhouse gases are reduced or minimised and that energy use comes increasingly from renewable sources.</p>
The Planning Act 2008		
<p>Introduces a new system for nationally significant infrastructure planning, alongside further reforms to the Town and Country Planning system. A major component of this legislation is the introduction of an independent Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC), to take decisions on major infrastructure projects (transport, energy, water and waste). To support decision-making, the IPC will refer to the Government's National Policy Statements (NPSs), which will provide a clear long-term strategic direction for nationally significant infrastructure development.</p>	<p>No key targets.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan and SEA framework should take into account any relevant National Policy Statements when published.</p>
The UK Renewable Energy Strategy 2009		
<p>The Strategy sets out to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place the mechanisms to provide financial support for renewable electricity and heat worth around £30 billion between now and 2020; • Drive delivery and clear away barriers; • Increase investment in emerging technologies and pursue 	<p>A vision is set out in the document whereby by 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 30% of our electricity is generated from renewables; • 12% of our heat is generated from renewables; and • 10% of transport energy is generated from renewables. 	<p>The SEA framework should include objectives which seek to provide support for renewable energy.</p>

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<p>new sources of supply; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new opportunities for individuals, communities and business to harness renewable energy. 		
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010		
This is the UK transposition of EC Directive 92/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.	This is the UK transposition of EC Directive 92/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.	This is the UK transposition of EC Directive 92/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.
The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England (2010)		
<p>The Vision of the Statement is <i>"that the value of the historic environment is recognised by all who have the power to shape it; that Government gives it proper recognition and that it is managed intelligently and in a way that fully realises its contribution to the economic, social and cultural life of the nation."</i> This vision is supported by six aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic Leadership: Ensure that relevant policy, guidance, and standards across Government emphasize our responsibility to manage England's historic environment for present and future generations; 2. Protective Framework: Ensure that all heritage assets are afforded an appropriate and effective level of protection, while allowing, where appropriate, for well managed and intelligent change; 3. Local Capacity: Encourage structures, skills and systems at a local level which: promote early consideration of the historic environment; ensure that local decision makers have access to the expertise they need; and provide sufficiently skilled people to execute proposed changes to heritage assets sensitively and sympathetically; 4. Public Involvement: Promote opportunities to place people and communities at the centre of the designation and management of their local historic environment and to make use of heritage as a focus for learning and community identity at all levels; 5. Direct Ownership: Ensure all heritage assets in public ownership meet appropriate standards of care and use while allowing, where appropriate, for well managed and intelligent change; 6. Sustainable Future: Seek to promote the role of the historic environment within the Government's response to climate 	No key targets.	The SEA framework should consider including objectives that protect and enhance the historic environment,

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change and as part of its sustainable development agenda.		
Flood and Water Management Act 2010		
The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 makes provisions about water, including provision about the management of risks in connection with flooding and coastal erosion.	<p>Those key targets related to water resources, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To widen the list of uses of water that water companies can control during periods of water shortage, and enable Government to add to and remove uses from the list. • To encourage the uptake of sustainable drainage systems by removing the automatic right to connect to sewers and providing for unitary and county councils to adopt SUDS for new developments and redevelopments. • To reduce 'bad debt' in the water industry by amending the Water Industry Act 1991 to provide a named customer and clarify who is responsible for paying the water bill. • To make it easier for water and sewerage companies to develop and implement social tariffs where companies consider there is a good cause to do so, and in light of guidance that will be issued by the Secretary of State following a full public consultation. 	The SEA framework should include criteria in relation to flood risk management.
Water for Life: White Paper (2011)		
<p><i>Water for Life</i> describes a vision for future water management in which the water sector is resilient, in which water companies are more efficient and customer focused, and in which water is valued as the precious and finite resource it is.</p> <p><i>Water for Life</i> includes several proposals for deregulating and simplifying legislation, to reduce burdens on business and stimulate growth. Ofwat's proposals for reducing its regulatory burdens complement these.</p>	No target or indicators	In order to ensure future water management is resilient SEA should consider resilience to climate change and should consider the human environment to ensure water companies remain customer focused.
UK Marine Policy Statement (2011)		
<p>The Marine Policy Statement (MPS) is the framework for preparing Marine Plans and taking decisions affecting the marine environment. It identifies the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote sustainable economic development; • Enable the UK's move towards a low-carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of climate change; 	No specific targets identified.	The SEA framework should reflect the objectives of the MPS.

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and our heritage assets; and • Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues. • 		
Carbon Plan: Delivering our Low Carbon Future (2011)		
<p>This sets out how the UK will achieve decarbonisation within the framework of energy policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make the transition to a low carbon economy while maintaining energy security, and minimising costs to consumers, particularly those in poorer households. 	No key targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA needs to ensure that the plan is embracing the low carbon agenda and appropriate sustainability objectives are utilised to assess the plan's credentials in terms of a low carbon future and the impact it could have on climate change.
Water Act 2014		
<p>The provisions in the Act enable the delivery of Government's aims for a sustainable sector as set out in the Water White Paper in a way that this is workable and clear. This Act aims to make steps towards reducing regulatory burdens, promoting innovation and investment, giving choice and better service to customers and enabling more efficient use of scarce water resources.</p>	There are no formal targets or indicators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA Framework should consider objectives seeking to protect and improve the quality of inland and coastal waters.
Water Framework Directive (Standards and Classification) Directions (England and Wales) 2015		
<p>The regulations implement provisions of the Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC), the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (Directive 2008/105/EC) and the priority substances amendment of these directives (Directive 2013/39/EU). This includes directions for the classification of surface water and groundwater bodies, monitoring requirements, standards for ecological and chemical status of surface waters, and environmental quality standards for priority substances.</p>	No targets or indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA should include objectives relating to water quality, water resources, sustainable water use, and biodiversity.
Government Response to the Committee on Climate Change (2015)		
In June 2015 the Committee on Climate Change and the Adaptation Sub-Committee published the seventh progress report on Government's mitigation activity and the first statutory	In June 2015 the Committee on Climate Change and the Adaptation Sub-Committee published the seventh progress report on Government's mitigation activity and the first statutory	In June 2015 the Committee on Climate Change and the Adaptation Sub-Committee published the seventh progress report on Government's mitigation activity and the first statutory

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
assessment of the National Adaptation Programme. This included five recommendations and it is those recommendations that are responded to within this response.	assessment of the National Adaptation Programme. This included five recommendations and it is those recommendations that are responded to within this response	assessment of the National Adaptation Programme. This included five recommendations and it is those recommendations that are responded to within this response
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017		
This is the UK transposition of EC Directive 92/43/EC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.	The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European sites', the protection of 'European protected species', and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European Sites.	The SEA framework should include objectives which seek to conserve the natural environment.
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes 1 to 3		
The purpose of these Good Practice Advice notes is to provide information on good practice to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the National Planning Practice Guide (PPG).	No specific targets identified.	The SEA framework should include objectives relating to conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)		
<p>This report outlines the following aims that the UK Government hopes to achieve in the next 25 years:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clean air; 2. Clean and plentiful water; 3. Thriving plants and wildlife; 4. A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought; 5. Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently; 6. Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment; 7. Mitigating and adapting to climate change; 8. Minimising waste; 9. Managing exposure to chemicals; 10. Enhancing biosecurity 	To ensure the UK's environmental state improves over the next 25 years.	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan should encourage and support sustainable development;</p> <p>The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions which relate to sustainable development, air quality, mineral resources and protecting natural assets.</p>
Regional Plans and Programmes		
Northumberland Region River Basin and Flood Management Plans 2009-2015 (updated 2015) (Environment Agency 2015)		

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
There are several river basin and flood management plans that exist in the Northumberland region. They all express a need for local watercourses to be protected and for new developments to be carefully sited and designed to ensure they are not at risk of or increase the risk of flooding.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to protecting Northumberland's water resources and current and future residents from flooding.
State of the Environment in the North East (Natural England, 2009)		
This report by Natural England outlines the many and varied habitats and species that live in the north east of England. The report states the importance of the north east's natural environment and green spaces and the important role management of the natural environment will have on reducing the impacts of climate change.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to protecting the natural and open spaces of Northumberland and habitat rich areas.
The North East Climate Change Adaptation Study (North East Climate Change Partnership, 2008)		
This study highlights the potential scale and wide ranging affects that climate change could have on the north east region in the future. Some of the potential affects predicted are increased flooding and the severity of flooding, wildfires, health effects of extreme weather patterns, infectious diseases and pests, weather related damage to infrastructure and buildings, and a potential loss of business productivity.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to climate change and reducing its causes and potential effects.
Water Resources Management Plan 2015-2040 (Northumbrian Water, 2014)		
This Water Resource Management Plan outlines the water resources of Northumberland and tries to forecast how severe the demand for water will be in the future.	No targets or indicators	The SA framework should include objective/guide questions that relates to sustainable water resource management.
Sub-Regional Plans and Programmes		
Alnwick District Local Plan (Alnwick District Council, 1997) (as amended by Secretary of State's Direction 2007)		
A considerable amount of the policies contained within the Alnwick District Local Plan are saved policies and are therefore still relevant. These policies broadly aim to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the rural environment, its character, landscape natural resources and important habitats and species whilst promoting sensitive use of the countryside; 	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to sustainable development, protecting the historic and natural environment, infrastructure, the creation of new housing and employment land and protecting and enhancing local communities.

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance the need for new development alongside protecting the character and setting of the existing built environment, especially with regard to areas of special quality; • Ensure that the Alnwick district has sufficient housing to meet its current and future diverse needs and continue to address the housing imbalance found between the larger settlements and smaller, rural settlements of the district; • Continue to improve the level of infrastructure within the district; • Ensure that the district continues to grow economically and continue to grow the local tourism industry • Preserve and enhance local communities and ensure they have sufficient facilities and services for a good quality of life. 		
Alnwick District Core Strategy (Alnwick District Council, 2007)		
<p>The Alnwick District Local Development Framework (LDF) outlines a number of challenges facing the Alnwick area over the next 15 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plan outlines the issue of a declining young, economically active population alongside a rising aging, non-economically active population; • There is a need for new sustainable housing, services and employment opportunities across the region; • Continue to be a place tourists want to visit and ensure the areas natural and historical environment is protected; • Balance the need for new development alongside ensuring they are in areas that are easily accessible; and • A need to develop new community, educational and recreational facilities. 	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to sustainable development, protecting the historic and natural environment, infrastructure and the creation of new housing and employment land.
Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan (Northumberland County Council, 2008)		
<p>The Biodiversity Action Plan outlines several challenges facing the natural environment of Northumberland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational pressure; • Development; • Habitat fragmentation; • Nutrient enrichment; • Unsuitable management; • Sterilisation of the 'wild' through over tidiness; 	Maintain and even enhance Northumberland's current natural assets to ensure they can be enjoyed by residents and tourists.	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to protecting the natural environment.

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invasive species; • Climate change; • Vandalism. <p>The Biodiversity Action Plan also enforces the need to protect Northumberland's important designated natural assets.</p>		
Northumberland and North Tyneside Shoreline Management Plan 2 – Scottish Border to River Tyne (Northumberland County Council, 2009)		
<p>This plan outlines the following objectives that will allow for the management of the Northumberland and North Tyneside coast:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide an understanding of the coast, its behaviour and its values; • To define, in general terms, the risks to people and the developed, natural and historic environment within the SMP2 area over the next century; • To appraise different policy approaches and identify the preferred policies for managing those risks or creating opportunity for sustainable management; • To examine the consequences of implementing the preferred policies in terms of the objectives for management. • To set out procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of the SMP policies; • To inform others so that future land use and development of the shoreline can take due account of the risks and preferred SMP2 policies; • To comply with international and national nature conservation legislation and biodiversity obligations. 	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to protecting Northumberland's water resources (including the coast) and natural assets.
Northumberland Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Northumberland County Council, 2010)		
This Strategic Flood Risk Assessment provides an overview of areas that are at risk of flooding and pinpoints the main sources of flooding throughout the district.	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to flooding, climate change and increasing the districts resilience to the potential effects of climate change.
Northumberland Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment Final Report (Northumberland County Council, 2011)		
The Northumberland Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment report	No targets or indicators	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
<p>outlines the following aims and objectives it has to aid in reducing Northumberland's risk of flooding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify partners with a role and interest in flood risk management and describe the methods for continued engagement; • Establish an organisational framework and data management systems for the collation, storage and maintenance of flood risk data; • Determine significant flood risk and identify Flood Risk Areas within Northumberland by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describing significant historic flood events from local sources including the impacts of such events ▪ Describing the likely impacts of potential flood risk from local sources of flooding 		<p>that relate to increasing the resilience of Northumberland to the effects of climate change and locating developments outside of areas at risk of flooding.</p>
Northumberland Renewable, Low Carbon Energy Generation and Energy Efficiency Study (Northumberland County Council, 2011)		
<p>This report outlines measures for Northumberland to continue to improve its carbon efficiency to ensure it becomes a 'low carbon' region.</p>	<p>Balance the need for new homes against the need to maintain low-zero carbon growth.</p>	<p>The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relates to pollution, waste, renewable energy and sustainable development.</p>
Northumberland Coast AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 (Northumberland County Council, 2014)		
<p>The Northumberland Coast AONB management plan is governed by a vision that looks beyond 2019 to 2034 and is:</p> <p><i>"A sense of remoteness and wildness is maintained, with wide open coastal and sea views, a naturally functioning coastline rich in wildlife, and a clear distinction between settlements and open countryside. The AONB is a living, working area with a celebrated history and culture, and a vibrant present in which social and economic wellbeing is successfully integrated with the conservation and enhancement of the special qualities of the area."</i></p> <p>The above vision will be achieved through achieving the following 3 objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and enhance the special landscape, natural environment and cultural heritage of the Northumberland Coast AONB 	<p>That the Northumberland Coast AONB is continued to be well managed to ensure it is in a stronger position in 2019 than it was in 2014.</p>	<p>The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to these objectives and the vision, namely that new developments that could have any impacts upon the AONB are sustainable and protect or enhance the landscape and natural environment.</p>

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Northumberland Coast AONB remains as a living and thriving landscape Celebrate and discover the Northumberland Coast AONB 		
Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast European Marine Site Management Scheme (Northumberland County Council, 2014)		
This management scheme seeks to conserve and enhance the Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast so that it can be enjoyed by visitors and residents for years to come and ensure this rich habitat is not lost.	That the Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast natural assets are protected and where possible enhanced.	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to the protection of important natural and ecological areas and habitats.
Northumberland Strategic Partnership, The Heat is On: Strategic Framework for Climate Change Planning (2007)		
<p>This strategic partnership seeks to achieve the following aim: <i>"Encourage partners to put in place effective and timely measures at both corporate and community levels to address the causes and implications of climate change in Northumberland by mainstreaming climate change planning within their own core business."</i></p> <p>Northumberland is already feeling the effects of climate change with summers being hotter, less overall rainfall but with it being concentrated in the winter months, rising sea levels and more extreme types of weather.</p>	Increase Northumberland's resilience to climate change and its potential effects.	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to sustainable development, reducing waste and pollution, high quality design and developments being carefully sited to not be at risk of flooding.
Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment (Northumberland County Council, 2010)		
<p>The Landscape Character Assessment looks at the character of the landscape, how nature has influenced it, what it has looked like historically and what things make it distinctive. The study is divided into two parts.</p> <p>Part A - Landscape Classification Part A provides an understanding of the 44 different character types and the 108 landscape character areas. The map and associated descriptions provide a background to understanding landscape and its local distinctiveness, and provide a baseline against which change can be assessed.</p> <p>Part B - The Changing Landscape Part B sets out principles for each landscape character type.</p>	Maintain and enhance the properties most valued in the landscape.	The SEA framework should include objective/guide questions that relate to landscape and local distinctiveness.

Key Objectives relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Key targets and indicators relevant to Neighbourhood Plan	Commentary (how the SEA Framework should incorporate the document's requirements)
The principles seek to maintain and enhance the properties most valued in the landscape.		

Appendix B: SEA Framework for the Assessment

SEA Objective	Assessment questions
Biodiversity Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological 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?
Climate Change 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? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable sources?

SEA Objective	Assessment questions
Climate Change 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?
Landscape and Historic Environment Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the integrity of the landscape in the neighbourhood area? • Conserve and enhance landscape and townscape features?
Land, Soil and Water Resources Ensure the efficient use of land	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of previously developed land? • Avoid the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land?
Land, Soil and Water Resources Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the amount of waste produced? • Support the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste? • Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction?
Land, Soil and Water Resources Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improvements to water quality? • Minimise water consumption?
Population and Community Cater for existing and future	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the development of a range of high-quality, accessible community facilities?

SEA Objective	Assessment questions
<p>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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>Population and Human Health Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <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?
<p>Population and Human Health Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents of the neighbourhood area to work locally</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <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?
<p>Population and Human Health Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the neighbourhood area</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <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?
<p>Population and Human Health Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.</p>	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <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?

SEA Objective	Assessment questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements? • Facilitate working from home and remote working? • Improve road safety? • Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?

Appendix C

Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policies against the SEA Framework

Table 1: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan policies against the SEA Framework

Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan

	SEA Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features	Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Area	Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.	Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes	Ensure the efficient use of land	Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste	Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	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	Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures	Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents of the Neighbourhood Area to work locally	Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Area	Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.
Neighbourhood Plan Policies												
Policy 1: Sustainable development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy 2: Settlement boundaries	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓
Policy 3: Design in new development	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	NA	✓	0	0	✓✓	NA	NA	✓
Policy 4: Rural exception sites and community led housing	0	0	0	✓	✓	NA	NA	✓	✓✓	0	✓	0
Policy 5: Community, recreational and visitor facilities	0	0	0	0	0	NA	NA	✓✓	0	0	✓✓	0
Policy 6: Local green spaces	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	0	NA	NA	✓✓	NA	NA	✓✓	NA
Policy 7: The historic environment in the Neighbourhood Area	NA	0	0	✓✓	0	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0	0
Policy 8: Non-designated heritage assets	NA	0	0	✓	0	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0	0

	SEA Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features	Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Area	Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.	Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes	Ensure the efficient use of land	Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste	Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	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	Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures	Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents of the Neighbourhood Area to work locally	Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Area	Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.
Policy 9: Parking and highways improvements at Alnmouth Railway Station	NA	✓	0	0	0	NA	NA	✓	0	✓	✓	✓
Policy 10: Improvements to walking and cycle routes	✓	✓	0	0	0	NA	NA	✓	0	✓	✓✓	✓✓

Appendix D

Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan objectives against the SEA Framework

Table 2: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan objectives against the SEA Framework

Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan

	SEA Objectives											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features	Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Area	Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding.	Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes	Ensure the efficient use of land	Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste	Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner	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	Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures	Support a vibrant, mixed economy which enables residents of the Neighbourhood Area to work locally	Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Area	Promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel.
Neighbourhood Plan Objectives												
Objective 1: Sustainable development in our Parish	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	0	NA	NA	NA	✓	NA	0	0
Objective 2: Housing	NA	0	NA	0	✓	NA	NA	✓✓	✓✓	0	0	0
Objective 3: Our community	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	NA	NA	✓✓	0	✓	✓✓	✓
Objective 4: Historic Environment	NA	0	0	✓✓	✓	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0	0
Objective 5: Well-connected, healthy and safe places	NA	✓	0	0	0	NA	NA	✓	0	✓	✓✓	✓✓

Appendix E – Reasonable Alternatives Supporting Information

Process for reaching our view on the type and size of development needed in Lesbury Parish; including the options considered.

We consulted and kept people up to date with events and progress via the newsletter, the website, telephone conversations, surveys, discussions and email.

It was through this process that we considered the best options for housing in Lesbury Parish.

Seeking views of residents

1. Parish Newsletter September 2016 issue 51

Views sought from all parishioners about their top three priorities for development in Lesbury and their ideas for the future. Also sought volunteers to become engaged in the NDP process.

2. Parish Newsletter February 2017 Issue 52

Recorded the fact that there had been 24 returns from the community, including three people from the community wishing to be involved and others seeking more information.

Identifying areas for small scale development was one of the priorities.

3. Parish Newsletter April 2017 Issue 53

Six volunteers from the community and four Parish Councillors formed the NDP Steering group. Representatives from the School, Church and Village Hall were included in the group.

These volunteers sought local views, using the priorities already submitted, examined what had been achieved from the Lesbury Parish Plan (2009) and what was outstanding, and worked together to produce draft Aims and Objectives for consultation.

4. In July 2017, an independent housing needs survey was commissioned through Community Action Northumberland (CAM). This was carried out during November and early results were made available in the Parish Newsletter (Issue 57, March/April 2018).

5. Information became available about community led housing. One member of the NDP Steering group attended a conference on community led housing and several members of the NDP Steering group visited Wooler to hear more about this approach (16th August 2017). The principles of this approach were reported to Lesbury Parish Council and gained considerable support as a possible way to provide houses in line with the needs of the Parish, without spoiling the natural beauty of the landscape.

6. Three meetings were held with the **Northumberland Estates manager and one of his colleagues** (28th June, 3rd and 17th August 2017). This was an approach made by the NDP Steering group to endeavour to work with Northumberland Estates. At one of these meetings, we were shown a Master Plan for housing development in Lesbury Parish, with three areas of large-scale housing development, but the Master Plan produced was old and out-of-date. During these discussions, Northumberland Estates stated that they were in favour of the provision of affordable housing in Lesbury and Hipsburn. There were also discussions with other landowners in the Parish.

7. Parish Newsletter August 2017 Issue 54

Progress report for residents and invitation to become involved.

8. Parish Newsletter November 2017 Issue 55

Explained about champions and community meeting on 7th November to talk about aims and objectives and the housing needs assessment. It urged people to respond to the survey so that we had as accurate a picture as possible about their views on housing development.

9. On 7th November 2017, we held a **public meeting** to explain that 'champions' (16 people from different parts of the Parish) would deliver the housing needs assessment and would try to keep up to speed with what was happening and would act as points of reference.

People attending the meeting unanimously endorsed the aims and objectives and were invited to send in further comments at any time. The need for a small amount of housing for families and the elderly continued to be a high priority. They were also positive about community led housing.

10. Parish Newsletter January 2018 Issue 56

Listed the priorities from the meeting held in November and invited further responses. The priorities did not change and were fairly consistent with the Lesbury Parish Plan (2009).

FEBRUARY 2018 NDP INFORMATION WAS PUT ON THE WEBSITE AND PARISHIONERS WERE MADE AWARE. Newsletters were also posted on the website. Members of the Steering group gave out their contact numbers and the champions made themselves available for discussion to people across the parish.

11. Parish Newsletter March/April 2018 Issue 57

Headlines from the Housing Needs Assessment; high return over 58% showed clearly that there was a wish to preserve the Parish and its beauty and that very few new houses were needed. There was no need for what were seen as 'luxury' 4 and 5 bedroomed properties, but there was a need for small scale development (5 or 6 homes, depending on need), bungalows for the elderly who, it was envisaged, would release larger houses for young families.

12. Lesbury Parish had been ‘zero rated’ for housing development for many years and this was evident in the Northumberland Local Plan. Over the last decade, housing development had been allowed and the number of houses already built or with planning permission to be built was included in the revised Northumberland Local Plan. In effect, the Northumberland Local Plan continued with the view that little or no development was needed. (The latest development [17/03535/OUT] was approved despite the fact that it met none of the identified needs in the housing survey, was outside the Village envelope as defined in the Alnwick Local plan and the PC had raised significant objections).

13. Three dates were offered for considering the options available for development and to allow for more detailed **views on potential development sites** and on housing. Maps were provided and people were shown the information from NCC setting out potential sites made available by landowners for development and NCC’s assessment of suitability (SHLAA 0045 Land north of Lealands, Lesbury, SHLAA 0046 Land behind Steppey Lane, Hipsburn, SHLAA 0273 Land north of Hillside, Hipsburn, SHLAA 0276 Land west of the railway station, Bilton and SHLAA 0426 Land north of Townfoot Steading). The meetings were held in the cricket pavilion, the school and the village hall on 15th, 17th and 19th May 2018, respectively. The pros and cons of using all the available sites were set out and views taken.

- The site north of Lealands (SHLAA 0045) was ruled out because of access and drainage issues. (This land is now subject to planning application 18/04527/OUT, even though the flooding issues have not been resolved. In recent months, several properties that border the site have experienced flooding).
- The site behind Steppey Lane (SHLAA 0046) was considered unsuitable because of poor access.
- The site to the north of Hillside (SHLAA 0273) was ruled out because of poor access and the fact that only part of the potential site was suitable for development. (This land is now subject to planning application 18/04528/OUT).
- The site to the west of the railway station (SHLAA 0274) was considered unsuitable because of poor access and a sloping site in close proximity to the railway line.
- Planning permission had been given for the site to the north of Townfoot Steading (SHLAA 0426).

There was no overall agreement on using any of the sites, but there was universal agreement on keeping any development to a minimum, based on local need. People left a note of their views and set out where they felt development should or should not occur. The NDP Steering group collated their views and the views of those who attended the meetings or submitted views subsequently.

14. Parish Newsletter May/June 2018 Issue 58

Included a summary of the outcomes from the three meetings on housing. It was very clear that there was no appetite for large scale housing development and that any houses that were proposed should, where possible, be built as infill. No houses should be built beyond the boundaries agreed for the Parish, unless there was a significant reason to make an exception.

Based on the fact that residents had rejected large scale development and had approved of the approach set out in the Lesbury Neighbourhood Development Plan,

we felt that they had considered all options available and had made their views very clear.

The Steering group, mindful of the fact that they were producing a Plan for the neighbourhood for local people adopted the approach to development that had gained strong approval.

15. In August 2018, Northumberland Estates submitted a formal pre-application enquiry for the development of 150 houses on land to the north of Lealands in Lesbury village.

16. Parish Newsletter August/September 2018 Issue 60

Summarised the outcome of all consultation and reminded people of the importance of making their views known.

17. Parish Newsletter October/November 2018 Issue 61

Summarised the outcomes of a further discussion held with Rory Wilson and Guy Munden of Northumberland Estates and gave a progress report.

18. In November 2018, some residents were confused when Northumberland Estates issued two leaflets inviting residents to take part in a consultation on proposals for development in Lesbury and Hipsburn. The leaflet concerning development in Hipsburn was sent to all parishioners in Alnmouth, but not all in Lesbury Parish and the leaflet concerning development in Lesbury was sent to some parishioners in Lesbury. Initially, a few residents thought the leaflets had come from the NDP, but we were able to advise them that this was not the case. The leaflets included a survey, which could be responded to by post or email. The outcomes were published and submitted to NCC planning department.

19. Parish Newsletter December 2018 Issue 62

Progress report and set out next steps, including consultation arrangements. Independent email address set up by the PC to receive comments.

20. The consultation period for the pre-submission (Regulation 14) Lesbury NDP ran from 18th December 2018 to 11th February 2019. Three public events were held during the consultation period, on the 12th and 29th January 2019 in the village hall and on the 16th January 2019 at the school.

People who came to the **public events** were keen to give their views on the proposals put forward by NE. The information they left was collated and presented to the planning department at NCC. Their views remain on the planning portal. There is an overwhelming view that housing of the kind proposed by Northumberland Estates did not meet the needs of local people and the scale of the housing proposed would have such an adverse impact on the Parish and the villages of Lesbury and Hipsburn that the whole character of Lesbury Parish would change.

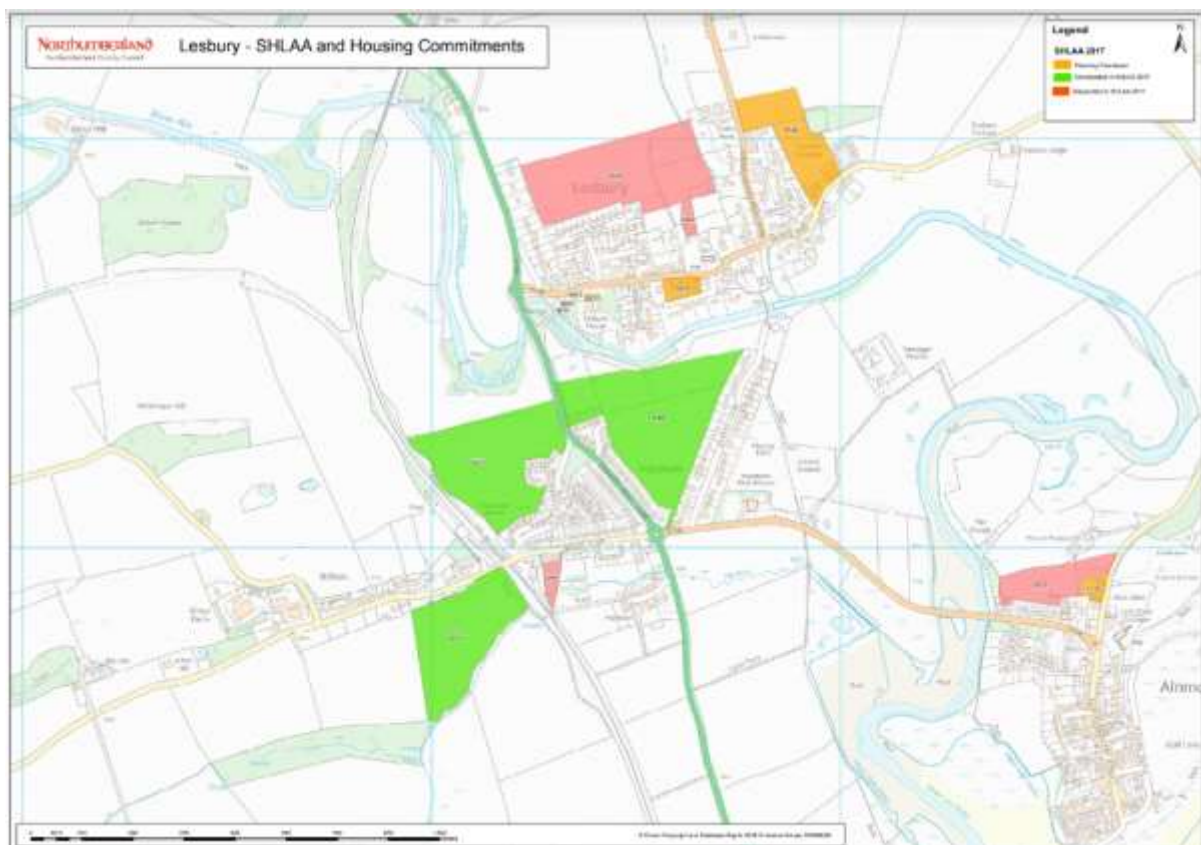
21. Parish Newsletter January/February 2019 Issue 63

Reminder of consultation process and emphasised that consultation would be ending on the 11th February 2019. (Extended consultation period because of Christmas Holiday and the potential impact this might have on statutory consultees.)

22. Parish Newsletter March/April 2019 Issue 64

150 responses received and analysed. Outcomes stated and next steps outlined. Having had several options explained in detail, people from Lesbury Parish fully supported the options set out in the NDP. (The number of respondents is higher than the number of respondents to the consultation organised by Northumberland Estates, even though the NE consultation included residents in Alnmouth, which is not part of Lesbury Parish. Overall, from the small number of respondents, there was not a majority in favour of the NE proposals and several stated their support for the NDP.)

In conclusion, residents in Lesbury Parish were given several options to consider before deciding on small scale housing development and no building in the open countryside, unless there are significant exceptions. Given the number of farms closing within the Parish and the sites that are available by developing farm buildings, it is expected that rural exceptions are extremely unlikely to occur.



Housing Consultation Workshops. Housing Site Options Map.

Appendix F – Statutory Consultees and their responses to the SEA Scoping Report



Historic England

Mr Rob Naples
Northumberland County Council
Communities & Infrastructure
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF

Direct Dial: 0191-2691232

Our ref: PL00558535

29 April 2019

Dear Mr Naples

**Environmental Assessment Regulations 2004: Regulation 9
Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan: SEA Scoping Report, April 2019**

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the above Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report. As the public body that advises on England's historic environment, we are pleased to offer our comments.

We agree that cultural heritage issues can be scoped out of the SEA and should not form part of the work as it is completed alongside the emerging neighbourhood plan.

I trust our comments will be taken in to consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Jules Brown
Historic Places Adviser
jules.brown@historicengland.org.uk



BESSIE SURTEES HOUSE 41-44 SANDHILL NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE NE1 3JF

Telephone 0191 269 1266
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Northumberland County Council
Planning Strategy
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF

Our ref: NA/2009/103757/SE-
16/SP1-L01
Your ref:
Date: 24 May 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

**Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report for
Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan**

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the SEA scoping report for Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan. Based on the review of the draft scoping report, we agree with the environmental issues that have been included. However, we have the following comments/advice to offer:

Flood Risk

We welcome the inclusion of a SEA objective and assessment questions in relation to supporting the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding. However, it is noted that the Neighbourhood Plan proposes to allocate local green spaces. Local green space sites LGS1 and LGS3 are situated within the floodplain, and within flood zones 2 and 3, which are at high risk of flooding. The Neighbourhood Plan should seek to ensure that ground raising activities within sites LGS1 and LGS3 are not undertaken, as it may increase the risk of flooding within these sites. This should be reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Yours faithfully

Lucy Mo
Planning Technical Specialist - Sustainable Places

Direct dial 020847 46524
Direct e-mail lucy.mo@environment-agency.gov.uk

Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7AR.
Customer services line: 03708 508 508
Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
www.environment-agency.gov.uk



Date: 17 June 2019
Our ref: 280482
Your ref: Lesbury NP SEA Scoping Report



Mr. Rob Naples
Planning Policy
Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Morpeth
NE61 2ER

Customer Services
Hombeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
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Cheshire
CW1 8GJ

BY EMAIL ONLY

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Mr. Naples,

Planning consultation: Consultation on Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report.

Location: Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 18 April 2019 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

In our review of the Lesbury neighbourhood plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping report, we wish to make the following comments:

Survey data of recreational visitors to the Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar highlight that a high percentage of visitors reside within a 10km buffer zone of the coast., with this part of the coastline offering significant opportunity for access to the aforementioned designated sites. Appropriate mitigation may take the form of various schemes and provisions and the developer should liaise with the LPA on how to address the issue of mitigation as and where appropriate. Details of a strategy to mitigate against recreational disturbance needs to be submitted within the context of this application.

It should be identified that any increase in housing numbers will have a Likely Significant Effect on the special interest features of designated sites. Therefore the SEA Scoping document should reinforce the requirements to mitigate against recreational disturbance through the Coastal Mitigation Service (CMS), which seeks to provide a strategic approach in countering negative effects through recreational disturbance.

Natural England seek to reflect this initiative within the scoping report for Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact me on 0208 225 6263. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller
Lead Sustainable Development Advisor

Appendix G – Flood Risk Zones in Lesbury



<https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/confirm-location?easting=423206&northing=611619&placeOrPostcode=Lesbury>