

# Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan

## Environmental Report

September, 2023

## Quality information

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# Non-technical summary

- 1.1 AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan (LNP), incorporating the settlements of Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick, 2021-2036. The LNP is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the adopted Northumberland Local Plan (March 2022) (NLP).
- 1.2 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising positive effects. Central to the SEA process is publication of an Environmental Report alongside the draft plan that presents certain required information. The aim is to inform the consultation and, in turn, plan finalisation.
- 1.3 Preparing the Environmental Report essentially involves answering three questions:
  - What has plan-making / SEA involved **up to this point** including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'?
  - What are the SEA findings **at this stage** (in relation to the draft plan)?
  - What happens next?

## This Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary

- 1.4 This is the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the Environmental Report for the LNP, in which the three questions are answered in turn. Firstly, there is a need to set the scene further by answering: *What's the scope of the SEA?*

## What is the scope of the SEA?

1.5 The scope of the SEA is reflected in a list of topics and objectives, which, taken together indicate the parameters of the SEA and provide a methodological 'framework' for assessment. The SEA framework summary is presented below:

*Table A: The SEA Framework summary*

SEA topic	SEA objective
Biodiversity	Protect, maintain, restore and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks.
Climatic Factors (adaptation)	Avoid and manage flood risk and support the resilience of the Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change.
Historic environment	Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the built environment.
Landscape	Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes.
Population and housing	Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their lives.

## Plan making/SEA up to this point

- 1.6 An important element of the required SEA process involves assessing **reasonable alternatives** in time to inform development of the draft plan, and then publishing assessment findings in the Environmental Report.
- 1.7 As such, Part 1 of this report explains how work was undertaken to develop and assess a 'reasonable' range of alternative approaches to the allocation of land for housing, or **housing growth scenarios**.
- 1.8 The process of arriving at housing growth scenarios involved a process of considering the strategic context ('top down' factors), alongside understanding of the sites available and in contention for allocation ('bottom up' factors). The process is set out in Section 5, and summarised in a flow diagram.
- 1.9 Ultimately two housing growth scenarios were identified as reasonable and so warranting formal assessment under the SEA framework – see Table B.
- 1.10 Option 1 reflects the proposed Plan approach to housing growth, with the allocation of three sites to provide an additional 37 dwellings.
- 1.11 Option 2 was tested as there is evidence of need for greater affordable housing provision. Therefore, this option involves a further 2 site allocations from the pool of site options found to be potentially suitable. This provides a total of 113 additional dwellings (76 more than Option 1).

*Table B: The housing growth scenarios*  
*N.B. figures are for the NCC Local Plan period (2016-2036)*

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
<b>Supply</b>	<b>(LNP)</b>	
(i) Longhoughton housing requirement figure (HRF)	<b>88</b>	<b>88</b>
(ii) Housing delivery – current position (Table 5-4)	78	78
<b>(iii) Residual housing requirement ( i-ii )</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
(iv) Total new supply to 2036	<b>37</b>	<b>113</b>
(v) Net growth, over and above residual requirement (iv-iii)	<b>27</b>	<b>103</b>
Percentage uplift on HRF (v/i x 100)	<b>31%</b>	<b>125%</b>

1.12 Table C presents the assessment. Presented subsequently is Longhoughton Parish Council's response to the assessment, i.e. reasons for supporting the preferred approach, which is **Scenario 1**.

**Assessment methodology:**

1.13 With regards to methodology: Within each row (i.e. for each of the topics that comprise the SEA framework) the columns to the right hand side seek to both **categorise** the performance of each scenario in terms of 'significant effects' on the baseline (using **red**, **pink**, **amber** and **light green**, **medium green** and **dark green**)<sup>1</sup> and also **rank** the alternatives in order of performance. Also, '=' is used to denote instances where the alternatives perform on a par (i.e. it is not possible to differentiate between them).

*Table C: Options assessment summary*

Topic	Option 1 LNP Approach	Option 2 Reasonable alternative
Biodiversity	1	2
Climatic factors (adaptation)	-	-
Historic environment	1	2
Landscape	1	2
Population & housing	2	1

<sup>1</sup> Red indicates a major negative effect; pink a moderate negative, amber a minor negative effect that is of limited or uncertain significance; light green a positive effect that is of limited or uncertain significance, medium green an effect of moderately positive effects and dark green a major positive effect. No colour is assigned where effects are considered to be neutral.

## Summary discussion

- 1.14 The assessment shows mostly positive effects associated with both scenarios.
- 1.15 Option 1 (the LNP approach) performs generally positively, with particularly positive effects for the population and housing topic and the historic environment topic.
- 1.16 Mixed effects are discussed for the landscape topic, minor positive effects are associated with the modest scale of development, policies promoting well designed schemes sympathetic to the character of the built environment and the safeguarding of green space. Some localised minor negative effects could arise due to impact on landscape character on allocated sites. However, it should be acknowledged that there are measures proposed to seek to ensure that development on allocated sites is not brought forward without improvements to green space. Therefore, **neutral effects** are predicted overall in this respect.
- 1.17 Option 2 also performs well generally, with a major positive for the population and housing topic as it would produce greater housing growth; facilitating the provision of more affordable housing and greater choice in the market. However, it is less preferable to Option 1 in respect of historic environment and landscape topics. A potential major negative effect is acknowledged with respect to landscape due to the larger scale of growth proposed and the more sensitive locations involved. However, with mitigation and enhancement this would likely be limited to a **moderate negative effect**. There are also greater potential negative effects on heritage in respect of one of the additional sites.
- 1.18 The options perform similarly with regards to climatic factors.
- 1.19 The plan-makers responded to the growth options assessment as follows:
- 1.20 The preferred approach is to take forward Option 1 as the basis for the LNP. This approach is considered to broadly align with the findings of the assessment, which finds Option 1 to perform well with respect to all of the key sustainability issues, both in absolute terms and relative terms. Option 2 only performs better with regards to an increased delivery of housing, but it is considered that social benefits will still be significant under Option 1, but with a reduced potential for negative effects on landscape and heritage.

## Assessment findings at this stage

- 1.21 Part 2 of the Environmental Report presents an assessment of the LNP as a whole, as it stands at the current time (pre submission plan). It also assesses the reasonable alternative (Option 2).
- 1.22 Assessment findings are presented as a narrative under the different SEA topics within the SEA framework. The assessment reaches the following overall conclusions for the NLP approach (Option 1):
- Overall, the Plan appraisal has served to highlight the potential for predominantly positive effects of varying degrees of significance.
- 1.23 **Moderate long-term positive effects** are anticipated in relation to the population and housing SEA theme. The growth strategy will exceed the HRF and meet some of the specialist needs for older persons housing, military housing and provide affordable housing. The additional growth (to that proposed in the NLP) also serves to provide a buffer to better secure housing delivery.

- 1.24 Several Plan policies are considered to have beneficial effects on the health and wellbeing of residents, including affordable housing provision, the allocation of local green space (LGS), public open space (POS), the safeguarding of community facilities and the promotion of active travel through enhancement and expansion of walkways and cycleways.
- 1.25 **Minor positive effects** are predicted in relation to biodiversity due to the allocation of LGS and POS and the requirement for biodiversity net gain. The housing growth is not expected to give rise to significant effects due to the limited scale proposed and the mitigation in place through strategic level policies and the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service.
- 1.26 **Minor long term positive** effects are recognised for climate change adaptation as the Plan allocates development in areas at low risk of flooding and includes policies that seek to protect and enhance open green space.
- 1.27 **Moderate positive effects** are envisaged for the historic environment as the sites allocated for development are not constrained in terms of heritage assets. The Plan also contains policies seeking to preserve the character and settings of the historic environment, the designation of LGS and the promotion of high-quality design.
- 1.28 Mixed effects are envisaged with respect to the landscape topic, **minor positive effects** are associated with the modest scale of development, policies promoting well designed schemes sympathetic to the character of the built environment and the safeguarding of green space. It is important to acknowledge that minor negative effects could arise due to development on 'green space' at allocated sites. However, it is envisaged that there would be green space improvements at site allocations (guided by masterplans and design codes), and so it is considered unlikely that such negative effects would indeed arise. As such, **neutral effects** are recorded with a degree of uncertainty.

## Monitoring

- 1.29 The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report.
- 1.30 It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken by Northumberland County Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 1.31 The SEA has not identified any potential for significant negative effects that would require closer monitoring.
- 1.32 Moderate positive effects are predicted for the 'population and housing' and the 'historic environment' topics. It is suggested that the following measures could be appropriate for monitoring effects:
- Annual net housing completions.
  - Affordable housing delivery.
  - Changes in number of buildings and features of historic/ heritage importance (e.g. listed buildings, structures on the Northumberland Historic Environment record (HER)).

## Next steps

- 1.33 This Environmental Report is published alongside the pre submission version of the LNP. The 'pre submission' version of the Plan will then be submitted to NCC (alongside this Environmental Report). The Plan and supporting evidence will be then published for further consultation, and then submitted for examination.
- 1.34 If the outcome of the Independent Examination is favourable, the LNP will then be subject to a referendum, and the plan will be 'made' if more than 50% of those who vote are in support. Once made, the LNP will become part of the Development Plan for Northumberland

# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan ('LNP') 2021–2036.
- 1.2 The LNP is being prepared in the context of the adopted Northumberland Local Plan (March 2022).
- 1.3 The LNP will be used to guide and shape development within the Plan area.
- 1.4 SEA is a required process for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to minimising negative effects and maximising positive effects.<sup>2</sup>

## SEA explained

- 1.5 It is a requirement that the SEA process is undertaken in-line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.6 In-line with the Regulations, a report (known as the Environmental Report) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that “*identifies, describes and evaluates*” the likely significant effects of implementing “*the plan, and reasonable alternatives*”.<sup>3</sup> The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.7 More specifically, the Report should answer the following three questions:
  1. What has plan-making / SEA involved up to this point?
    - including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
  2. What are the SEA findings at this stage?
    - i.e. in relation to the draft plan.
  3. What happens next?

## This Environmental Report

- 1.8 This report is the Environmental Report for the LNP. It is published alongside the 'pre submission' version of the Plan, under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended).
- 1.9 This report answers questions 1, 2 and 3 in turn, to provide the required information.<sup>4</sup> Each question is answered within a discrete 'part' of the report.
- 1.10 However, before answering Q1, two further introductory sections are presented to further set the scene.

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<sup>2</sup> The pre-submission consultation stage of the draft LNP

<sup>3</sup> Regulation 12(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

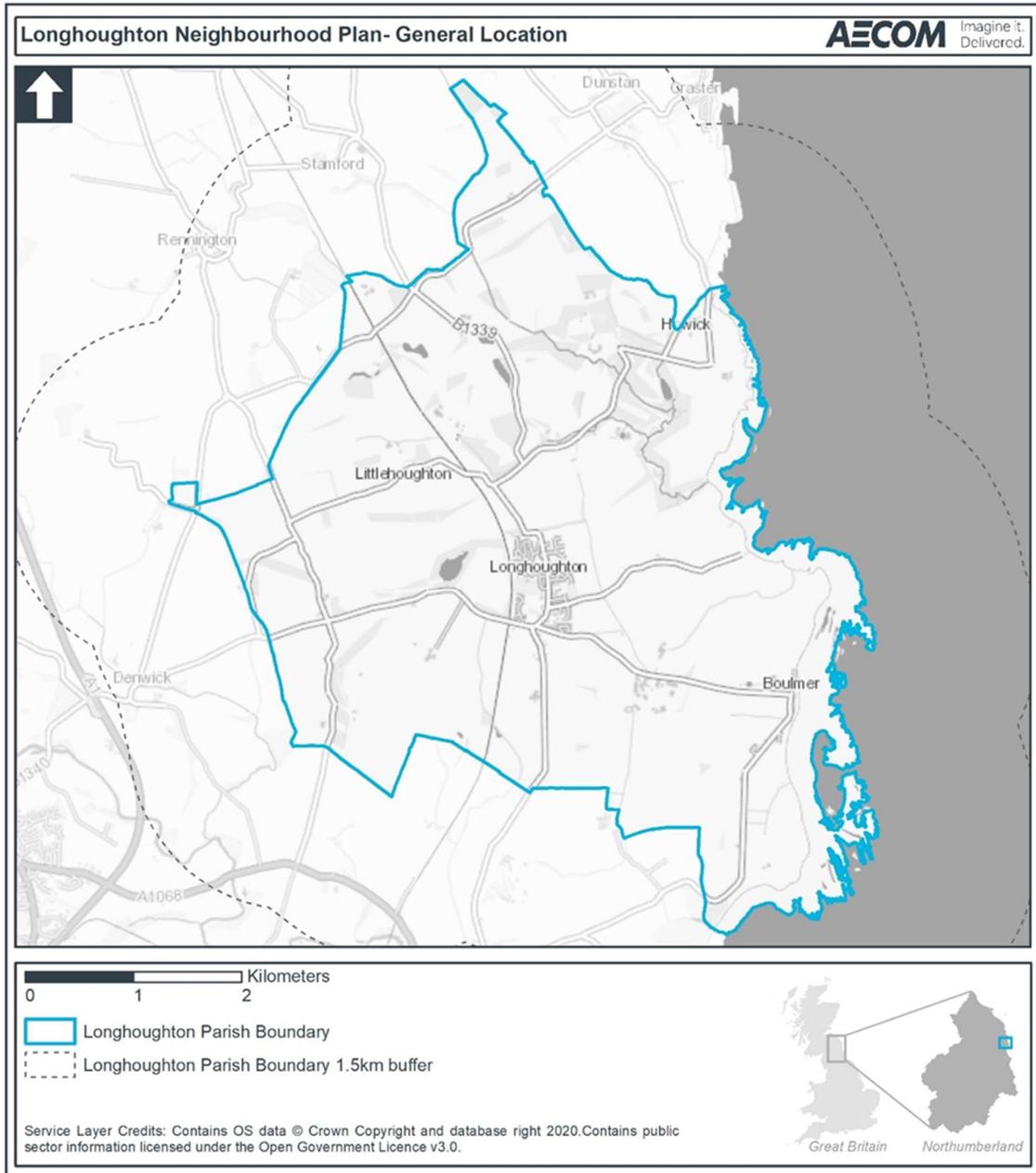
<sup>4</sup> See **Appendix A** for further explanation of the report structure including its regulatory basis.

## 2. What is the plan seeking to achieve?

### Introduction

- 2.1 This section considers the context provided by the adopted Northumberland Local Plan (NLP), before setting out the established LNP vision and objectives. The Plan area is shown in Figure 2.1.
- 2.2 The NLP (adopted March 2022) is a single new Local Plan which covers the whole of Northumberland with the exception of the Northumberland National Park, which is a separate local planning authority. It sets out the strategic planning policies, general scale and distribution of new development, provides planning principles and allocations to meet Northumberland's needs to the year 2036.
- 2.3 Longhoughton is within the NLP's *North Northumberland Delivery Area* and is designated as a *Service Village*; the third tier of the settlement hierarchy (after Main Towns and Service Centres). Service Villages are expected to provide a proportionate level of housing and be a focus for investment in the wider rural area. This level of development is intended to support the provision and retention of local retail, services and facilities. Boulmer and Howick are classified as *Small Villages* where a proportionate level of development is expected.
- 2.4 NLP Strategic Policy HOU3 (Housing requirements for neighbourhood areas) sets a housing requirement figure (HRF) of 88 homes in the LNP area over the period 2016-2036. The policy does not allocate specific sites within the LNP area.
- 2.5 NLP Policy HOU5 (Housing types and mix) sets out that a range of good quality, energy-efficient homes, including affordable homes, will be provided to deliver a more balanced mix of tenures and housing types and sizes, alongside supported specialist housing for older and vulnerable people. Development proposals will be assessed according to how well they meet the needs and aspirations of those living in and seeking to move to Northumberland, as identified in the most up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment or local housing needs assessment.
- 2.6 NLP Policy HOU6 (Affordable housing provision) states that major development proposals of 10-or-more units (5 or more in AONB) or 0.5 hectares and above will be expected to provide Affordable Housing (AH) according to a tiered requirement ranging from 10% to 30% depending on area value and development size.
- 2.7 The Neighbourhood Plan area (NA) is a medium value area where a 15% AH contribution would be required on developments greater than 30 dwellings (developments above 10 but less than 30 are exempt). Areas of the parish that fall within the AONB (i.e. area between the B1339 and the coast) would be required to provide 15% AH contribution on developments of 5-9 units and developments of 30 plus units.

Figure 2-1 The LNP area



2.8 The LNP adopts the following vision;

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***'In 2036 the Parish of Longhoughton, which includes the unique and distinctive villages of Boulmer, Howick and Longhoughton, will be an attractive place to live and grow with a community that is sustainable, cohesive, and thriving.***

***The diverse needs and wellbeing of the existing and future residents will be provided for and the community will be sustainable in relation to the facilities and infrastructure available to residents.***

***Residents will have good access to facilities and be well connected.***

***The natural, historic, and environmental character of the area will be maintained and enhanced for future generations by ensuring that new developments are of an appropriate quality, scale and design and embed important habitats for wildlife.***

***New development will minimise environmental harm by ensuring the prudent use of natural resources in both construction and occupation. It will be designed to be resilient to the effect of climate change.***

***All people who live in the parish will have the opportunity to participate in shaping their surroundings and feel proud of where they live.'***

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2.9 The LNP encompasses the following set of objectives;

#### **Table 2-1 Objectives of the LNP**

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##### **Objective 1 – Sustainable Development:**

*Ensuring new development makes a positive contribution to social, environmental or economic needs and that any negative impacts, particularly those contributing to climate change, are adequately mitigated*

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##### **Objective 2 – Housing:**

*The location, quantity and type of housing built in the parish, is appropriate to its sustainability and reflects the distinct character and needs of the villages of Boulmer and Howick and Longhoughton.*

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##### **Objective 3 - Business:**

*Supporting and encouraging appropriate and sustainable levels of business growth and development across the parish.*

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##### **Objective 4 - Environment:**

*Protecting and improving the natural environment of the parish by: conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; protecting the integrity of the internationally designated coastal sites; and supporting the creation, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure networks.*

**Objective 5 - Heritage:**

*Protecting and enhancing the distinctive character of the villages and the built heritage of the parish.*

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**Objective 6 - Community:**

*Protecting and supporting the development of key community facilities and infrastructure to ensure that the community is inclusive and sustainable.*

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**Objective 7 – Transport and Access:**

*Promoting access to facilities and services for all residents and creating safe and high-quality roads, pavements and green routes including footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways.*

# 3. What is the scope of the SEA?

## Introduction

3.1 The aim here is to introduce the reader to the scope of the SEA, i.e. the sustainability themes and objectives that should be a focus of the SEA. Supplementary information is presented in Appendix II.

## Consultation

3.2 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, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England. As such, these authorities were consulted over a 5 week period between April and May 2021 and the responses received are detailed in the SEA Scoping Report.

## The SEA framework

3.3 The scoping stage involved the collection of information pertaining to the state of the environment in the Plan area and the relevant objectives/ targets set out within relevant plans, policies, and programmes. This information allowed for a range of key issues to be identified and determined what topics should be the focus of the SEA. This led to the identification (or scoping-in) of five SEA topics which formed the SEA Framework; the basis for appraising the Plan (and reasonable alternatives).

3.4 Table 3.1 presents a summary of topics and objectives that together form the backbone of the SEA scope. Together with the supporting appraisal questions they comprise a ‘framework’ (see SEA Scoping Report) under which to undertake assessment; derived from an understanding of policy context and baseline conditions. Only topics with the potential for significant effects to arise have been included in the framework, meaning that it focuses on the important issues.

**Table 3-1 Summary of the SEA framework**

<b>SEA topic</b>	<b>SEA objective</b>
Biodiversity	Protect, maintain, restore and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks.
Climatic Factors (adaptation)	Avoid and manage flood risk and support the resilience of the Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change.
Historic environment	Protect, enhance and manage the integrity, distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the wider built environment.
Landscape	Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes.
Population and housing	Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their lives.

## **Part 1: What has plan-making/ SEA involved to this point?**

# 4. Introduction (to Part 1)

## Overview

- 4.1 The parish was designated as a neighbourhood area in October 2018. The decision to prepare a neighbourhood plan was informed by initial surveys of residents which began in 2017. Early engagement has continued since the areas designation. Further details are available on the neighbourhood plan website <https://longhoughtonndp.co.uk/>
- 4.2 Longhoughton Parish Council (LPC) gathered a range of evidence and undertook consultation with communities and other key stakeholders to identify the issues and opportunities that need to be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan (avoiding duplication of issues covered by the NLP). Informed by the results of that consultation, a focused set of proposals, supported by evidence was developed.
- 4.3 LPC also commissioned AECOM (through Locality) to produce a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). This serves to provide an estimate of the quantity of Affordable Housing required and the type and size of housing best suited to the needs of the parish.
- 4.4 The first step in the SEA process was the development of a Scoping Report which was published and sent to the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England for consultation. The 5 week consultation took place between April and May 2021.
- 4.5 A draft Plan has been shared with AECOM, who have undertaken an appraisal of the Plan ‘as a whole’, taking into account each of the individual policies in combination. As part of this process, it is important to consider ‘**reasonable alternatives**’.
- 4.6 More specifically, this part of the report presents information on the consideration given to reasonable alternative approaches to addressing a particular issue that is of central importance to the plan, namely the allocation of land for housing, or **housing growth scenarios**.

## Why focus on housing growth scenarios?

- 4.7 The decision was taken to develop and assess reasonable alternatives (‘scenarios’) in relation to the matter of housing growth in light of the Plan objectives (see para 2.7), and because there is the likelihood of being able to differentiate between the merits of alternatives/scenarios in respect of ‘significant effects’. National Planning Practice Guidance is clear that SEA should focus on matters likely to give rise to significant effects.

## Defining scenarios

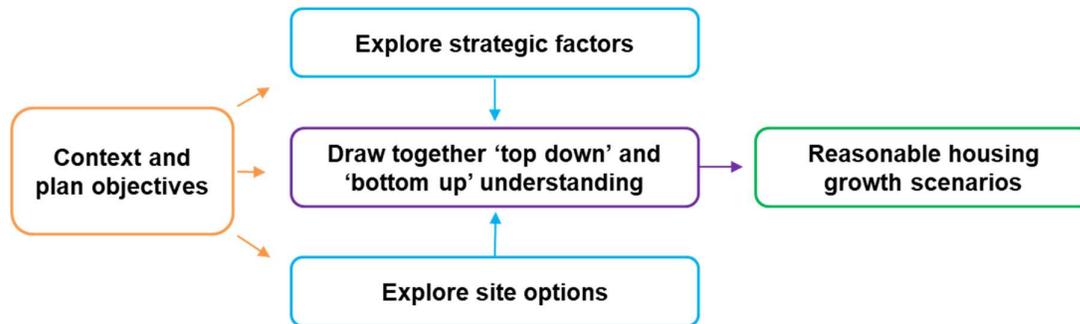
- 4.8 The aim here is to explain a process that led to the definition of a reasonable range of housing growth scenarios for assessment, and thereby present “an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with”.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Schedule 2(8) of the SEA Regulations.

4.9 Specifically, there is a need to: **1)** explain strategic factors with a bearing on defining scenarios; **2)** discuss work completed to examine site options (i.e. sites potentially in contention for allocation); and then **3)** explain how the ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’ understanding generated through steps (1) and (2) were married together in order to arrive at reasonable housing growth scenarios.

**Figure 4.1: Defining scenarios**



## Strategic factors

4.10 The aim of this section is to explore the strategic factors with a bearing on the establishment of reasonable housing growth scenarios. Specifically, this section of the report explores:

- Quantum – how many new homes must the LNP provide for?
- Broad distribution – broadly where is more/less suited to allocation?

## Quantum

4.11 The NLP identifies Longhoughton as a *Service Village* within the ‘North Delivery Area’ and allocates it an indicative requirement of 88 new dwellings (4.4 units/annum) over the 20-year period between 2016 and 2036. However, the NLP does not identify sites for residential development within the NP area. Since the start of the NLP period (2016) there have been 67 completions in the parish and there are 5 extant planning permissions for an additional 10 dwellings. The completions and planning permissions add up to 76 dwellings; equating to 86% of the Housing Requirement Figure (HRF).

4.12 The Parish Council commissioned AECOM to carry out a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for the Longhoughton NP which concluded that the average market home (including entry level homes) for sale is out of reach for those on average household incomes and therefore well out of the price range of those on the lowest household incomes. The assessment calculated a need for 89 affordable homes for sale (which exceeds the HRF), recommending that Longhoughton should seek to boost affordable housing for sale (e.g. First Homes and shared ownership tenures).

## Broad distribution

4.13 There are several environmental, heritage and landscape constraints within the LNP area. These considerations have determined the broadly acceptable locations for growth with the LNP in the first instance.

- 4.14 In terms of environmental constraints, Longhoughton has several environmental designations, including the Northumbria Coast Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar, the Northumberland Shore Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Howick to Seaton Point SSSI, the Longhoughton Quarry SSSI, the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and the Berwick to St. Mary's Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ). The Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) associated with the SSSIs cover the entirety of the NP area.
- 4.15 There are several heritage designations in the NP area including listed buildings, a Scheduled Monument and Registered Park and Gardens.
- 4.16 A large part of the NP area is within the Northumberland Coast AONB. The coastal, low-lying, open topography of much of the NP area render the landscape sensitive to change due to extensive vistas, within and outside of the area.
- 4.17 In terms of flood risk, The NP area falls predominantly within Flood Zone 1, although a stretch of Flood Zone 2 and 3 runs along the coastal areas and Howick Burn.

## Site options

- 4.18 Having discussed strategic, 'top-down' factors with a bearing on establishing housing growth scenarios, the next step is to consider the site options that are in contention for allocation.
- 4.19 A key starting point is the LNP Housing site assessment background paper (HSAP), which examines potential sites, assessing their suitability according to a set of criteria. The first stage of the assessment focused on identifying potential sites for housing development. It considered all the sites within the NP area that were assessed in the Northumberland Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (summarised in Table 4-1), sites put forward as part of the LNP Call for Sites (1 site in Boulmer) and sites identified by the LNP Steering Group (19 sites).
- 4.20 The next stage involved the initial filtering of sites considered to be clearly in conflict with NPPF and strategic policies or with those factors discussed above under the heading 'broad distribution'.
- 4.21 Following the initial elimination of unsuitable sites, the remaining sites were then subjected to detailed assessment. A site appraisal pro-forma was developed to assess potential sites for allocation in the LNP. This was based on National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and Locality's toolkit for neighbourhood planners<sup>6</sup>. Each site was appraised to establish whether it was suitable, available and achievable (viable) for development in principle and if so, whether it would be appropriate to allocate in the LNP. The site proformas capture information about each site including and its current use, constraints and accessibility considerations. The sites assessment conclusions were then reviewed, and sites considered suitable, available and achievable were taken forward to the next step. Subsequently the level of development appropriate for each of the remaining sites was identified based on the SHLAA and /or appropriate housing density for the location. This was also informed through reference to the design code and masterplanning process for sites.

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<sup>6</sup> [Locality: How to assess and allocate sites for development - A toolkit for neighbourhood planners](#)

4.22 Finally early engagement with landowners and the public was conducted, the comments/ feedback taken into consideration and the sites adopted through inclusion in the pre-submission draft of LNP.

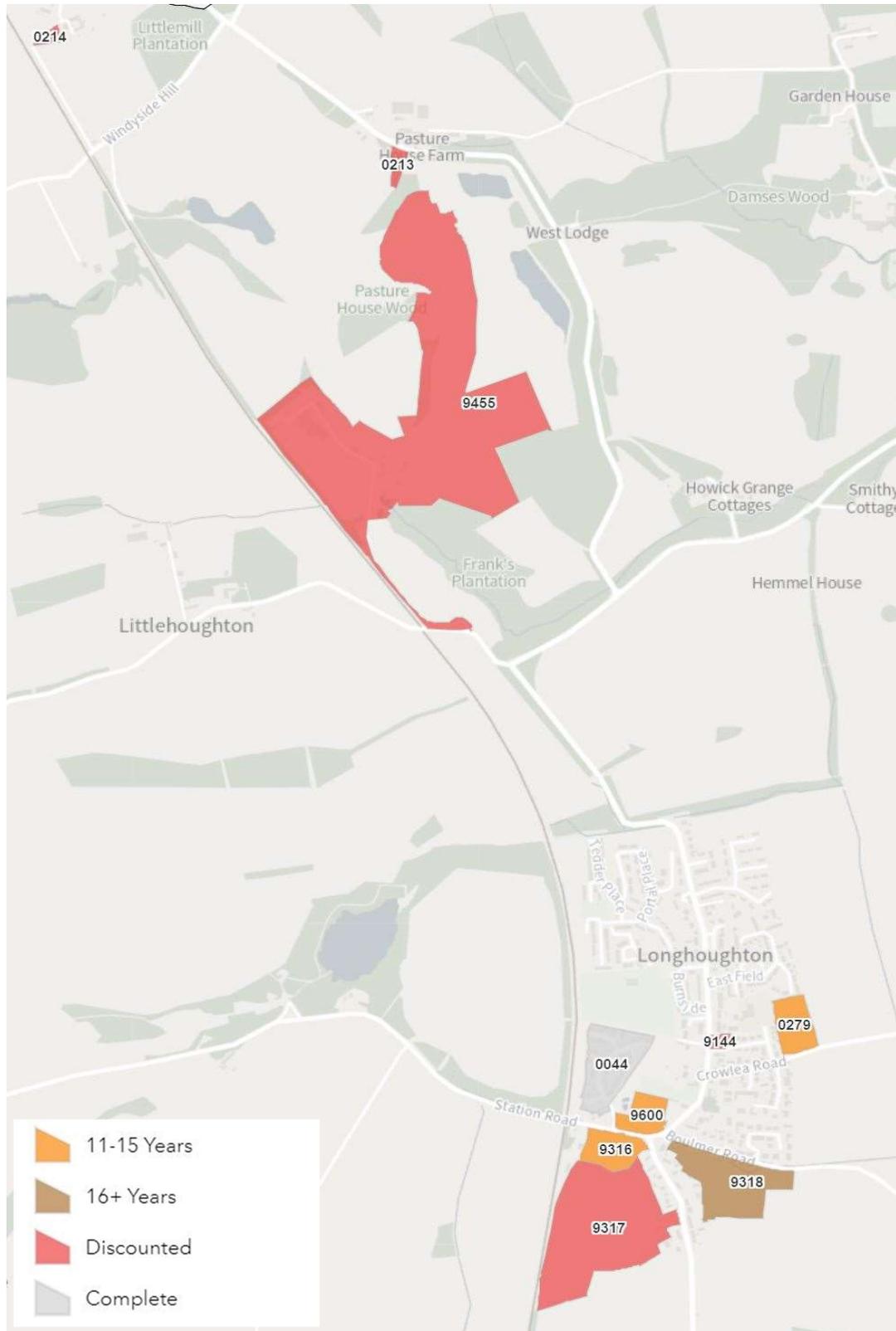
4.23 Table 4-1 shows a summary of the SHLAA sites assessment and Table 4-2 shows the additional sites identified by the Steering Group as suitable/ potentially suitable for development. Some of these partially overlap SHLAA sites.

**Table 4-1 SHLAA sites within the LNP area<sup>7</sup>**

<b>SHLAA Ref.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>SHLAA assessment</b>
0044	West of Burnside	Completed (66 dwellings)
0208	Northwest of Redsteads	Discounted in SHLAA
0213	South of Pasture House	Discounted in SHLAA
0214	West of Little Mill Farm (mostly Greenfield)	Discounted in SHLAA 'not in settlement' (0.2ha)
0279	Playing fields	Not LP compliant but could be considered 11-15 yrs 'other SHLAA sites, not LP compliant and not contributing to LP requirement, but potentially offering longer-term and/or post-plan contingency' (capacity 22)
9037	Seaton House Farm Boulmer	Suitable, available and achievable
9144	26 North End	Discounted
9316	South of Station Road, Longhoughton	Potentially deliverable 11-15 yrs, not LP compliant and not contributing to LP requirement, but potentially offering longer-term and/or post-plan contingency (capacity 22)
9317	Land southwest of Longhoughton	Discounted
9318	Southeast of Longhoughton	Potentially deliverable 16+ yrs. Not LP compliant and not contributing to LP requirement, but potentially offering longer-term and/or post-plan contingency (capacity 35)
9455	Howick Quarry Littlehoughton	Discounted
9600	Land at junction of Station Road	Suitable, available, achievable 11-15 yrs. (capacity 5). 'LP compliant and contributing to LP requirement'

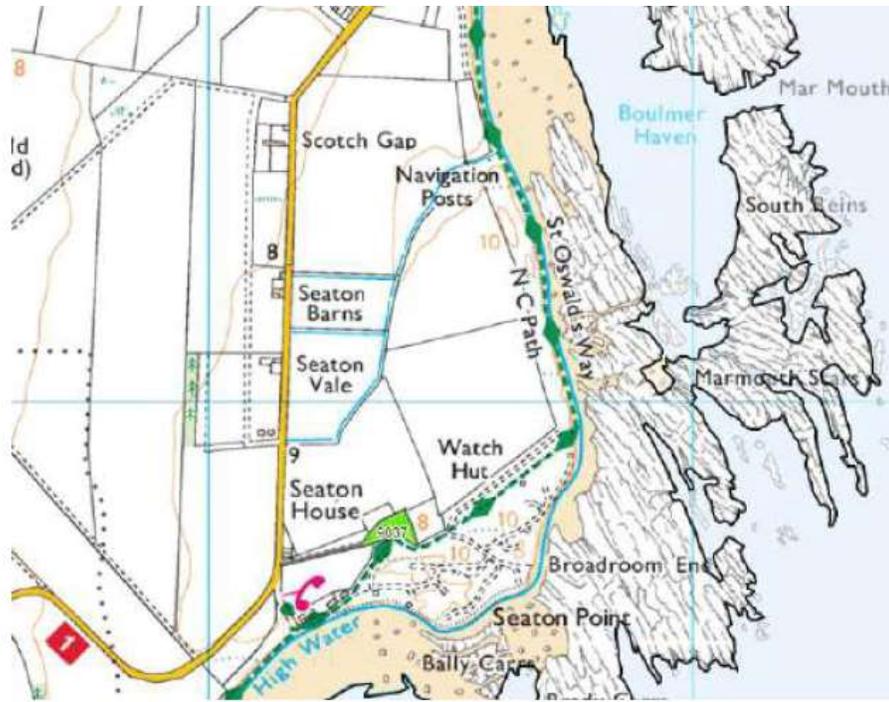
<sup>7</sup> **Red** indicates discounted/ unsuitable sites, **Amber** indicates potentially suitable site for delivery in 11-15 years, **Brown** indicates sites potentially suitable for residential allocation in the longer terms (16 year or more), **Green** indicates potentially suitable site for delivery in 0-5 years.

Figure 4-2 SHLAA 2021 Sites within the Neighbourhood Plan Area<sup>8</sup>



<sup>8</sup> Source: [Northumberland County Council website](#)

Figure 4-2b SHLAA 2021 Sites within the Neighbourhood Plan Area (Boulmer)



**Table 4-2 Sites identified as suitable for residential allocation by the LNP Steering Group<sup>9</sup>**

<b>LNP Ref.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>LNP assessment conclusion</b>
L2	Portal place – Northeast	Not available for market housing but potentially suitable for Military personnel housing – capacity 12 units
L6	Former Johnnie Johnson sheltered housing site	Suitable for residential development possibly community owned. Brownfield site – capacity 6 units
L8	Old recreation field (SHLAA site 0279)	Suitable for mixed use development (housing, open space and parking) – this is SHLAA site 0279 in Table 5-1 above – capacity 14 units.
L11	Station Road-South, Longhoughton (SHLAA site 9316 plus part of SHLAA site 9317)	Potentially suitable for residential (including affordable housing), open space and greenway.  This is large site (capacity up to 40 units)
L12	Boulmer Road -South (upper part of SHLAA site 9318 along Boulmer Rd.)	Potentially suitable for mixed development (housing, open space and greenway) – capacity up to 36
B3	Boulmer South	Suitable housing site 17 units (bungalows)

<sup>9</sup> **Green** denotes sites considered suitable for residential development and **Amber** denotes sites potentially suitable for residential development.

## LNP Proposed site allocations

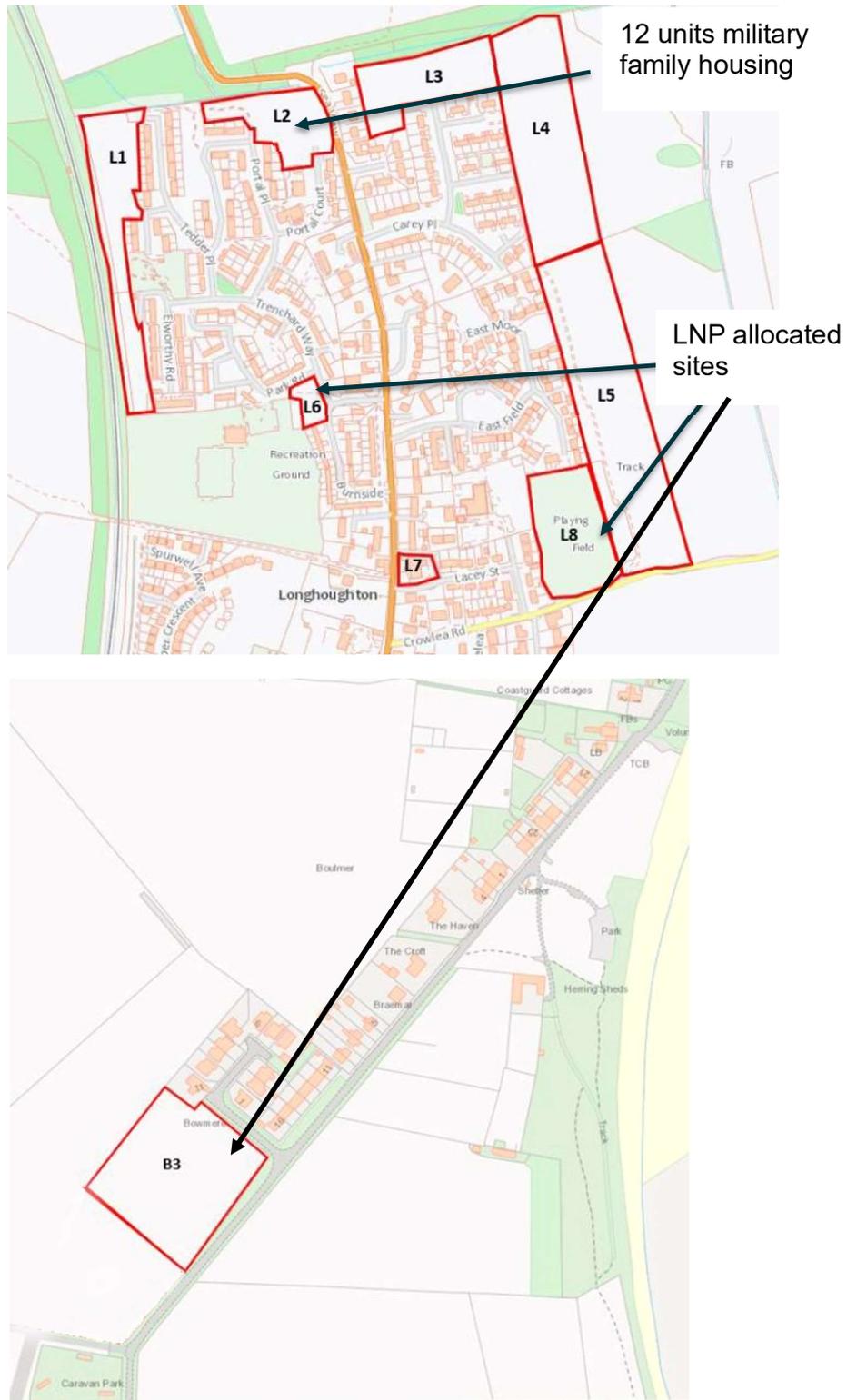
4.24 Following the site assessment process described above, the LNP identified three sites for housing within the existing Longhoughton settlement boundary. Three additional sites outside the settlement boundary for Longhoughton were identified as potentially suitable for housing provision, including a further site at Boulmer (Table 4-3). The level of housing that would be delivered from the sites identified as being suitable, available and achievable is 113 dwellings.

**Table 4-3 Sites identified as potentially suitable for new housing by the LNP housing site assessment**

LNP ref.	Site name	Capacity	Remarks
Sites within Longhoughton settlement boundary			
L2	Portal Place	Not available for market housing but potentially suitable for up to 12 dwellings to serve a future armed forces housing.	Site currently allocated as Protected Open space (POS) in the NLP.
L6	Former Johnnie Johnson site	6	Vacant brownfield sites (formerly sheltered housing).
L8	Old Recreation Field (SHLAA site 0279)	14	SHLAA site 0279 within the Longhoughton settlement boundary – currently allocated as POS in the NLP.
Capacity (within settlement boundary)		<b>20</b>	Excluding L2
Sites outside the Longhoughton settlement boundary			
L11	South of Station Rd. Longhoughton	40	
L12	South of Boulmer Rd. Longhoughton	36	
B3	Boulmer South	17	
Capacity outside settlement boundary		<b>93</b>	
Total potential delivery in the NA		<b>113</b>	(20+93)

4.25 The LNP proposes to allocate the two sites L6 and L8 (through LNP Policies LBH5 & LBH6 respectively) that are within Longhoughton's existing settlement boundary and the Boulmer South site B3 (Policy LBH7). The LNP states that the latter would help address the issue of the large number of holiday homes within the village which can negatively impact the community's future sustainability. These LNP allocations would produce 37 new dwellings. The LNP sites proposed for allocation are shown in Figure 4-3.

Figure 4-3 Sites proposed for allocation (housing) in the NLP<sup>10</sup>



<sup>10</sup> Source: LNP Housing site assessment background paper

## The reasonable alternatives

4.26 The adopted Local Plan (the NLP) gives an indicative housing requirement figure (HRF) of 88 homes for Longhoughton. Since the start of the NLP period (2016) there have been 67 completions in Longhoughton Parish. There are also sites with extant planning permissions and sites with pending applications. Assuming the current applications are granted and dwellings completed, a total of 78 new dwellings would be expected, equating to around 89% of the HRF (Table 4-4). Therefore, the HRF is largely fulfilled in Longhoughton Parish with the remaining 10 dwellings likely to come through smaller windfall sites over the Plan period.

**Table 4-4 NA Housing delivery - current position**

Housing delivered (Apr. 2016 – Mar. 2022)	67
Sites with planning permission (as of Jan. 2022)	10
Pending applications	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>78 dwellings</b>

4.27 The HNA, which assessed the level, type and size of Affordable Housing (AH) needed in the parish to 2036, noted that the level of home ownership in Longhoughton Parish is significantly lower than that in the wider County and the national average, noting that average entry level market housing is unaffordable to average income households in the parish. The HNA calculated a need for 89 affordable homes for sale (e.g. through discounted market homes, shared ownership and rent-to-buy schemes) over the Plan period. The assessment acknowledged that the LNP is unlikely to accommodate this requirement in full as it exceeds the overall housing need identified in the NLP.

4.28 Adopted policy HOU6 in the NLP requires 15% of all new homes to be delivered as Affordable Housing on sites of 10 or more dwellings or 0.5 hectares or more (or proposals for five units or more within the AONB). Furthermore, affordable housing is typically provided and made financially viable by its inclusion as a proportion of larger market developments. Therefore, the allocation of more housing growth is likely to make affordable housing more viable, facilitating the provision of more AH in the parish.

4.29 This SEA therefore considered the following alternative options:

- Not to allocate additional housing growth as the HRF is largely delivered and the remaining 10 units are likely to be provided through windfall sites between now and 2036.
- The LNP approach allocating sites for up to 37 new dwellings which would produce up to 115 new dwellings when completions, current extant/ pending permissions are taken into account. This would produce an uplift of 31% over the HRF, helping with the provision of more affordable housing.
- A higher growth option achieved through the inclusion of all the LNP allocated sites in addition to the two sites identified as potentially suitable for allocation in the LNP site assessment process, namely sites L11 and L12. This would result in a growth of 113 new dwellings (Table 4-5). When completions and permissions are taken into account this option would result in a total of 191

new dwellings. This would add further flexibility and would be likely to contribute a greater number of affordable homes.

**Table 4-5 High growth option**

Site ref. / name	Capacity
L6 Former Johnnie Johnson sheltered housing site	6
L8 Old recreation field (SHLAA site 0279)	14
B3 Boulmer South	17
L11 Station Road-South, Longhoughton (SHLAA9316 plus part of SHLAA 9317)	40
L12 Boulmer Road -South (upper part of SHLAA site 9318)	36

Total **113 dwellings**

4.30 In conclusion, on the basis of the discussion above (i.e. all of Section 4, read as a whole), these are the potential housing growth scenarios for assessment:

- Not to allocate any further development in Longhoughton as completions since the NLP start period (2016) plus sites with permissions and pending permission would provide up to 78 dwellings representing just over 89% of the growth requirement (and could therefore rely on windfall development to meet remaining target). Given the higher locally assessed affordable housing need, the LNP Steering Group considered this to be an unsustainable option that does not meet Plan objectives. Therefore it **does not constitute a reasonable alternative**.
- The position outlined in the LNP (the Plan approach) which allocates the Former Johnnie Johnson site (L6), Old recreation ground site (L8) and the Boulmer South site (B3) equating to a total growth of 37 dwellings (or 115 when completions and permissions are included). This would help to improve flexibility and affordable housing provision. This is a reasonable alternative.
- Pursue a higher growth scenario developing all the sites in Table 4-5, maximising growth to help further improve affordable housing provision. This option would produce 113 units (or 191 when completions and permissions are included). This is a reasonable alternative given evidence for affordable housing needs.
- Pursue a higher growth scenario, but allocate just one of the additional sites outside the urban area (L11 or L12). This would give rise to an additional two options. The LNP Steering Group consider that it is proportionate to appraise just one strategic alternative that is sufficiently distinct to allow a comparison against the draft Plan approach. Therefore, it is considered unnecessary to appraise two further options that would involve just one additional site being released (and would not be as significantly different from the proposed Plan approach).

4.31 The housing growth scenarios associated with the reasonable options introduced above are set out in Table 4.6.

**Table 4-6 The reasonable housing growth scenarios**

	<b>Scenario 1 (LNP)</b>	<b>Scenario 2</b>
<b>Supply</b>		
(i) Longhoughton housing requirement figure (HRF)	<b>88</b>	<b>88</b>
(ii) Housing delivery – current position (Table 4-4)	78	78
<b>(iii) Residual housing requirement ( i-ii )</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>
(iv) Total new supply to 2036 (through NP)	<b>37</b>	<b>113</b>
(v) Net growth, over and above residual requirement (iv-iii)	<b>27</b>	<b>103</b>
Percentage uplift on HRF (v/i x 100)	<b>31%</b>	<b>125%</b>

4.32 It is pertinent to clarify the following with regards to reasonable alternatives:

- **Defining scenarios** - is ultimately the responsibility of the plan-maker, although the SEA consultant (AECOM) is well placed to advise.
- **Assessing scenarios** - is the responsibility of the SEA consultant.
- **Selecting a preferred scenario** - is the responsibility of the plan-maker.

### **Structure of this part of the report**

4.33 This part of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 5** - explains the SEA appraisal methodology
- **Chapter 6** - presents the appraisal of the LNP and reasonable alternative
- **Chapter 7** - explains reasons for supporting the preferred approach
- **Section 8** - presents conclusions and recommendations
- **Section 9** - explains next steps and plan finalisation
- **Section 10** - identifies monitoring measures

## **Part 2: What are the SEA findings at this stage?**

## 5. Introduction (to Part 2)

- 5.1 The aim of this section is to present an assessment of the pre-submission draft of the LNP and the one identified reasonable alternative.
- 5.2 The LNP includes 14 policies to guide development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. These are set out in Table 5.1 below and referenced where pertinent throughout the appraisal text.

**Table 5-1 LNP policies**

<b>Policy no.</b>	<b>Title</b>
<b>LBH1</b>	Embedding energy efficiency and renewable energy
<b>LBH2</b>	Location of new development
<b>LBH3</b>	Design
<b>LBH4</b>	Land to the north east of Portal Place, Longhoughton
<b>LBH5</b>	Former Johnnie Johnson sheltered housing, Longhoughton
<b>LBH6</b>	Old Recreation Field, Longhoughton
<b>LBH7</b>	Boulmer south
<b>LBH8</b>	New housing development within Boulmer
<b>LBH9</b>	Small scale rural exception sites
<b>LBH10</b>	Landscape
<b>LBH11</b>	Community services and facilities
<b>LBH12</b>	Local green space
<b>LBH13</b>	Protected open space
<b>LBH14</b>	Walking and cycling network

### Methodology

- 5.3 The assessment identifies and evaluates 'likely significant effects' on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability objectives identified through scoping (see Table 3.1) as a methodological framework.
- 5.4 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the strategic nature of the policies under consideration and understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a 'no plan' scenario) that is inevitably limited. Given uncertainties there is a need to make assumptions, e.g. in relation to plan implementation and aspects of the baseline that might be impacted. Assumptions are made cautiously and explained within the text (with the aim of striking a balance between comprehensiveness and conciseness). In some instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict 'significant effects', but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) of the draft plan in more general terms.
- 5.5 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking account of the criteria presented within Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations. For example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible.

- 5.6 Cumulative effects are also considered, i.e. the potential for the LNP to impact an aspect of the baseline when implemented alongside other plans, programmes and projects. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

## 6. Assessment of the LNP & Reasonable Alternative

### Introduction

- 6.1 The aim of this section is to present assessment findings in relation to the two options set out below:
- **Option 1** - The position outlined in the LNP (the Plan approach) which allocates the Former Johnnie Johnson site (L6), Old recreation ground site (L8) and the Boulmer South site (B3) equating to a total growth of 37 dwellings (or 115 when completions and permissions are included).
  - **Option 2** - The reasonable alternative (higher growth scenario) which involves developing all the sites identified in Table 4-5, maximising growth to further improve affordable housing provision. This option would produce 113 units (or 191 when completions and permissions are included).
- 6.2 The assessment is presented below under five topic headings, reflecting the established assessment framework (see Section 3). A final section (Chapter 10) then presents overall conclusions.
- 6.3 The assessment takes account of the site allocations involved for each option, as well as how these interact with the full range of proposed Plan policies. The alternative option contains two sites that are not allocated, and therefore they do not have site specific policies to refer to (unlike for Option 1). To ensure a comparative appraisal, assumptions are therefore made that site specific policies would also be established should this approach to housing delivery be chosen.

### Biodiversity

#### Option 1

- 6.4 There are several international, European and nationally protected biodiversity sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area. These include: the Northumbria Coast Ramsar and SPA, the Northumberland Shore SSSI, the Howick to Seaton Point SSSI and Longhoughton Quarry SSSI. There is also a Marine Conservation Zone: the Berwick to St Mary MCZ.
- 6.5 In terms of housing site allocations, the coastal areas of Longhoughton and the villages of Howick and Boulmer are likely to be more sensitive due to their proximity to the coastal Ramsar/ SPA, SSSIs and the MCZ. The majority of the NP area falls within SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) associated with the Northumberland Shore and Howick to Seaton Point SSSIs. A check (GIS data in Magic Map) of the three proposed residential site allocations indicates that developments of 10 or more residential units (or any development outside settlement boundaries) would require consultation with Natural England on likely risks to the Northumberland Shore SSSI.

- 6.6 Sites L6 and L8 are allocated for up to 20 dwellings and lie around 2km from the Northumberland shore SSSI. The Boulmer site (up to 17 units) is adjacent to the current built up area of Boulmer within 300m of the coastal Ramsar and SSSI sites and would require consultation with Natural England on potential impacts. Whilst effects are unlikely on the Howick to Seaton Point SSSI<sup>11</sup>, notified for its importance as a coastal geological site, development can potentially have adverse effects on the Northumberland Shore SSSI and the Northumbria Coast Ramsar, notified for being a wetland of international importance. The site provides important wintering grounds for shore birds, and it is of international, or national significance for six species, purple sandpiper, turnstone, sanderling, golden plover, ringed plover and redshank.
- 6.7 The area is also used by a wide variety of other shorebirds in winter, including curlew, oystercatcher, dunlin, knot, bar-tailed godwit and 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. Natural England's views about management state that 'the birds that use the foreshore for feeding and roosting are vulnerable to disturbance from human activities, for example, bait digging, dog walking and wildfowling. Therefore, developing the three sites could place increased pressure on the coastal Ramsar/ SSSI sites due to the increase in population and associated increase in disturbance from recreational activities. The coastal biodiversity sites are also sensitive to changes in water quality which could be affected by polluted surface water runoff from residential developments. However, effects are likely to be limited in scale due to the relatively small scale of development proposed and the additional protection offered by strategic level policies including adopted strategic policy ENV1 and ENV2. The latter requires developer contributions to the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service (CMS) which aims to mitigate the potential impacts on international protected sites from new housing and tourism development. All the sites proposed in the NLP are within the 7km zone (from coastline) and would therefore require contribution to the CMS. The CMS employs coastal wardens who educate and advise recreational users (e.g. dog walkers, joggers, horse riders and sea anglers) as to how they can enjoy the coast without causing excessive disturbance to important bird populations. Cumulatively (competitions, permissions and LNP allocations), the level of growth expected would be less than 120 dwellings overall, therefore, the potential for significant negative effects on coastal biodiversity sites is anticipated to be **neutral** with the proposed mitigation in place.
- 6.8 Policy LBH3 (Design) is potentially beneficial with respect to biodiversity as it requires development to incorporate green and blue infrastructure that connects with existing networks. It also requires the protection of existing habitats and wildlife corridors. This is likely to help improve species mobility by reducing habitat fragmentation and enhancing habitat networks.
- 6.9 Positive effects are anticipated from policies LBH5 (Former Johnnie Johnson sheltered housing, Longhoughton) and LBH6 (Old Recreation Field, Longhoughton) and LBH7 (Boulmer south) as these require biodiversity net gain as part of new development.

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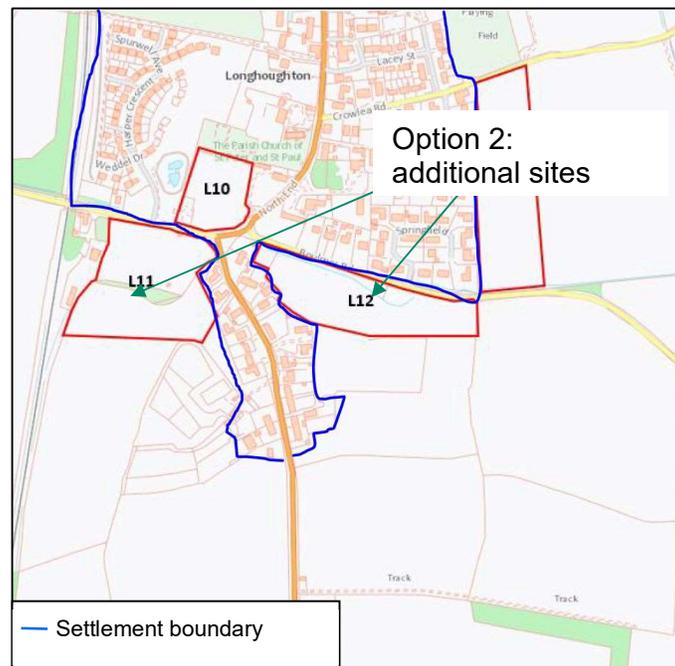
<sup>11</sup> According to Natural England: 'The key management principle for coastal geological sites is to maintain exposure of the geological interest by allowing natural processes to proceed freely.'

- 6.10 Policy LBH12 (Local green space) (LGS) seeks to protect 8 areas of local green space through the LGS designation. This proffers the same level of protection as that afforded to green belt land thus protecting these important areas of open space from future development. Urban green spaces often provide habitats that support biodiversity, these can serve as biodiversity stepping stones linking to wider biodiversity networks. When combined with other areas designated as Protected Open Space (POS) in Policy LB12 (Protected open space), which designates 14 areas of local amenity open space, these policies serve to provide an extended, connected network of green /open spaces helping reduce habitat fragmentation caused by development. Therefore, minor positive effects are expected.
- 6.11 Overall, **minor positive effects** are envisaged through policies requiring biodiversity net gain and the allocation of LGS and POS to protect areas of green/ open space.
- 6.12 The housing growth is not expected to give rise to significant effects due to the limited scale proposed and the mitigation in place though strategic level policies and the CMS.

## Option 2

- 6.13 In addition to the housing sites allocated in the LNP, Option 2 includes sites L11 (Station Road South SHLAA9316 and part of SHAA9317) and L12 Boulmer Road South. Part of SHLAA site 9318). Site L12 would extend the existing settlement southward along Boulmer Road. This would form a natural expansion of the current built up area in Longhoughton as the resulting development would be adjacent to the residential areas north of Boulmer Road and the residential area along the South End (B1339). However, the resulting development would fall outside (and adjacent to) the southern settlement boundary of Longhoughton (Figure 6-1).

**Figure 6-1 Option 2 additional site allocations L11 and L12**



- 6.14 Sites L11 and L12 would provide an additional growth of 70 dwellings. Site L12 is within the AONB and is approximately 2.3 Km from the coastal SSSI/ Ramsar sites whilst L11 is just outside the AONB and around 2km from the SSSI/ Ramsar sites along the coast. Both sites are within the impact zones associated with the Northumberland Shore and Howick to Seaton Point SSSIs. Therefore, developments here would require consultation with Natural England on likely risks to the Northumberland Shore SSSI. Both sites are within the 7km zone (from coastline) and would therefore require contribution to the CMS. Cumulatively (competitions, permissions and LNP allocations), the level of growth expected would be around 191 dwellings overall, whilst this is more than in Option 1, it remains relatively modest and comprises completions and commitments. This option would still benefit from the above described positive effects associated with LNP policies allocating POS, LGS and seeking BNG. Therefore with the strategic level mitigation in place, the effects are anticipated to be similar to those predicted for Option 1, namely **minor positive** overall.
- 6.15 However, given that there would be an increased loss of green space, this option is considered to rank less preferable compared to Option 1 with regards to biodiversity.

## Climate change adaptation

### Option 1

- 6.16 The NLP is unlikely to have a significant effect on carbon emissions. That said, Policy LBH1 (Embedding energy efficiency and renewable energy) is generally positive as it promotes sustainable design, energy and water efficiency, and measures to reduce waste and facilitate recycling. Other measures supported include the provision of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, onsite renewable energy generation and the retrofitting of historic buildings (where appropriate) to improve energy efficiency.
- 6.17 In terms of climate change adaptation, the NP area falls predominantly within Flood Zone 1 (low flood risk) with stretches of Flood Zone 2 and 3 along the coastal areas and Howick Burn. There is potential for surface water flooding to occur across the NP area, although areas susceptible to this are scattered amongst areas with lower risk of fluvial flooding. The shore is under threat from rising sea levels and associated coastal erosion, this is likely to impact areas such as Boulmer for example due to its proximity to the coast. That said, there are coastal defences in place and it is expected these would be enhanced as the risk increases over the plan period and beyond.
- 6.18 In terms of housing site allocations, none of the allocations are within areas at significant risk of flooding. In this respect, neutral effects are anticipated but it would be important to ensure that new development does not increase flood risk to neighbouring areas.
- 6.19 The LGS and POS designations (Policy LBH12 and LBH13) discussed above are helpful with respect to flood resilience as open spaces and green infrastructure can make a valuable contribution to managing surface water runoff. The effects of climate change are anticipated to include increased frequency of heavy rain events. Open spaces and green infrastructure can form part of critical flood risk management by providing space to manage flooding helping to protect built up areas.

- 6.20 The areas designated as LGS along the coast (at Boulmer Links and Boulmer Hall Farm) also help to safeguard space for future coastal defences to protect against further coastal erosion (e.g. rock berms), preventing the need for future (expensive) roll back<sup>12</sup>/ leaseback<sup>13</sup> schemes. Furthermore, the NP area overlaps habitat network enhancement zone 1 (e.g. along the eastern boundary of the parish along the coast and in Boulmer) where the LGS designation will be helpful in facilitating the expansion and joining up of existing habitat patches and improving connections between them. There is also overlap with habitat network enhancement zone 2 (e.g. at Boulmer) where the LGS allocation will be helpful in facilitating improvements to the biodiversity value through the green infrastructure provision.
- 6.21 Overall, the avoidance of placing development in areas of high flood risk, alongside measures to increase climate resilience through the protection, enhancement and provision of green open space are considered to have **minor positive effects** on climate change adaptation, particularly in the long term.

## Option 2

- 6.22 The additional housing sites involved, L11 and L12, are in locations of low flood risk (Flood zone 1) and this option would also benefit from NLP policies seeking the protection, enhancement and provision of green open space. Therefore Option 2 is considered likely to produce **minor positive effects**. In terms of ranking, both options are on par as none involve growth in areas at risk of flooding, and both could incorporate measures to help manage surface water run off and climate change issues.

## Historic environment

### Option 1

- 6.23 The NP area contains 51 listed buildings, a scheduled Monument and a Registered Park and Garden in addition to 142 locally listed assets in the Northumberland Historic Environment Record.
- 6.24 In terms of housing site allocations, there are no designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the LNP allocations and the development sites proposed are not expected to affect important views and settings associated with the historic environment. Therefore, significant effects on the historic environment are considered unlikely (**neutral effects**).
- 6.25 As part of the evidence base supporting the preparation of the LNP a Design Code was prepared to inform policy development. This is based on an analysis of the special characteristics of the parish, describing practical design approaches to show how future development can conserve and enhance local distinctiveness. In this context Policy LBH3 (Design) is likely to have positive effects as it seeks high quality design, informed by the Design Codes, that is in keeping with the character of the surroundings. The policy requires new development to be appropriate in terms of scale, density, materials, and architectural styles. It also requires new development to enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting and the retention of views that contribute to the local character.

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<sup>12</sup> the relocation/replacement of at risk property and infrastructure to areas inland away from the eroding coastline.

<sup>13</sup> the process of purchasing an at-risk property and leasing it out for the remainder of its economic life.

- 6.26 Policy LBH12 allocates several areas as LGS including areas that form part of the setting of heritage assets such as St Peter and St Pauls Church where this is likely to enhance the significance of the heritage asset and its setting and protect it from future encroachment. Similarly, the designation of POS (LBH12) serves to protect important amenity open spaces within the parish that form an important part of the historic fabric and townscapes of the parish.
- 6.27 The cumulative effects of growth on the historic environment could also have negative implications, particularly as a result of increased traffic and congestion. The Plan seeks to combat this by allocating limited development commensurate with the level of services and facilities in the parish. Policy LBH14 which seeks to enhance pedestrian and cycle networks within the parish is also helpful in this context.
- 6.28 Overall, the potential for **moderate positive effects** is recognised, namely through policies seeking to preserve the character and settings of the historic environment, the designation of LGS and the promotion of high-quality design.

## Option 2

- 6.29 Site allocation L11 is in close proximity to a Grade II listed building (the Old Smithy). Development here is likely to significantly alter the character of the heritage asset's setting (the site is currently an open field) and therefore potentially adverse effects are possible due to the change in setting. It may be possible to mitigate potential effects (e.g. through sympathetic design and landscaping). The other additional site, L12, is not constrained in terms of the historic environment, and so effects would be less prominent.
- 6.30 Overall, mixed effects are anticipated, **minor positive effects** in relation to Plan policies seeking to preserve the character and settings of the historic environment, the designation of LGS and the promotion of high-quality design with potentially **minor negative effects** associated with the impacts on the setting of the designated heritage asset near site L11.

## Landscape

### Option 1

- 6.31 The former Johnnie Johnson sheltered housing site is a brownfield site within the existing settlement at Burnside, Longhoughton. The site is currently a grassed area therefore developing it is unlikely to have adverse impact on the landscape and may have positive effects with appropriate landscaping and tree planting as it will help reuse a brownfield site that fits within an existing settlement.
- 6.32 The Old Recreation Field (L8) site is within the Northumberland Coast AONB and the North Northumberland Heritage Coast. It is currently an open field designated a protected open space in the NLP and currently used as a playing field and by dog walkers. Developing the site could lead to a change to the character of the surrounding landscape to the east and south of site when approaching the village through Crowlea Rd. That said the site would form a natural extension to the adjacent residential areas to the north and west of the site and the entire site is within the Longhoughton settlement boundary and policy LBH6 includes the provision of high quality open space including for recreation.

- 6.33 The Boulmer south site (B3) is also within the AONB and the Heritage Coast. The development would extend the current linear settlement along Beach View southwards. Given the open, flat terrain the development would significantly alter the existing local landscape character. However, the current masterplan envisages low rise development in the form of Dormer Bungalows in keeping with the adjacent built form therefore effects are unlikely to be significant.
- 6.34 The site allocations and supporting policies have been supported by the masterplan and design codes developed alongside the Neighbourhood Plan. This should ensure an appropriate density, layout and type of new homes is appropriate. Indeed, it will be necessary for environmental improvements to be demonstrated for development to come forward on the allocated sites.
- 6.35 Policy LBH10 (Landscape) requires new development to maintain and enhance (if appropriate) the positive elements of the landscape of the parish as outlined in the Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment, Longhoughton Boulmer and Howick Design Code and Northumberland Coast AONB Management Plan. Proposals must also take into account the impact on important views and conserve local landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows. Similarly, policy LBH3 (Design) is potentially positive as it requires development to take into consideration established building lines, boundary treatments and roof lines that are in keeping with the street scene; thus helping preserve the exiting townscape.
- 6.36 Policies LBH12 and LBH13 are expected to lead to positive effects on the landscape as they safeguard areas of green space and amenity open space through the LGS and POS designations. These spaces form an intrinsic part of the parish's landscapes and villagescape.
- 6.37 Areas such as Evelyn Howick Memorial Nature Reserve, Boulmer Links, St Peter and St Pauls Churchyard and the Pondfield make a major contribution to the distinctiveness of the parish therefore, the policy is beneficial (**minor positive**) as it will help protect these important parts of the landscape and preserve important view and vistas.
- 6.38 Overall, **minor positive effects** are predicted, associated with the modest scale of development, policies promoting well designed schemes sympathetic to the character of the built environment and the safeguarding of green space.
- 6.39 It is important to acknowledge that some localised minor negative effects could potentially arise due to development on green space. However, development on allocated sites will be informed by their respective policies, masterplans and design codes, which all seek to minimise negative effects and promote positive ones in terms of environmental improvements and appropriate design. As such, it is considered likely that the residual effects would be **neutral**, though there is a degree of uncertainty.

## Option 2

- 6.40 Site 12 is within the Northumberland Coast AONB and the Northumberland Heritage Coast and L11 is adjacent to the AONB. The sites are just outside the settlement boundary south of Longhoughton in an area largely comprised of open fields. Given the relatively large size of these sites (compared to the other site options) development at either site would alter the character of the landscape here, extending southward the built-up area of the parish.

- 6.41 It should be possible to apply mitigation measures and seek to improve green infrastructure provision through Plan policies, and therefore, it is considered that the residual effect would be moderately negative.
- 6.42 This option would still benefit from the positive effects associated with policies promoting well designed schemes sympathetic to the character of the built environment and the safeguarding of green space.
- 6.43 Overall, mixed effects are predicted. Potential **moderate negative effects** due to the larger additional sites, where development could alter the character of the landscape in sensitive locations<sup>14</sup> . Conversely, **minor positive effects are** associated with plan policies seeking high quality design and safeguarding local green space (and the need to secure environmental improvement on allocated sites).

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<sup>14</sup> In combination, the negative effects of LB11 and LB12 are more pronounced, but the release of either site alone would still be anticipated to have moderate negative effects.

## Population and housing

### Option 1

- 6.44 The NLP designates Longhoughton as a 'Service Village', the third tier of the settlement hierarchy. Service villages are required to provide for a proportionate level of housing (NLP Policy STP1) and be the focus for investment in rural areas to support the provision and retention of local retail, services and facilities.
- 6.45 New development will be commensurate to the size of the settlement. Boulmer and Howick are defined as 'Small Villages' which will support a proportionate level of development. NLP policy HOU3 sets a housing requirement figure of 88 dwellings for Longhoughton over the NLP period (2016-2036).
- 6.46 Policy HOU6 requires the provision of onsite affordable housing on all sites of 10 (5 within the AONB) or more units or 0.5ha or more. The LNP is within a medium value area therefore, the expected contribution is 15% affordable. The policy also provides guidance with regard to tenures and dwelling types of the on-site affordable homes. Within medium value areas, 33% of the affordable homes should be to rent and 67% for affordable home ownership. Any offsite provision of affordable housing is required to be clearly justified
- 6.47 NLP Policy HOU5 sets out that residential development is expected to provide a range of good quality dwellings, including affordable homes, delivering a balanced mix of tenures and housing types and sizes, alongside supported specialist housing for older and vulnerable people.
- 6.48 The policy adds that *'development proposals will be assessed according to how well they meet the needs and aspirations of those living in and seeking to move to Northumberland, as identified in the most up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment or local housing needs assessment.'*
- 6.49 A housing Needs Survey conducted by Community Action Northumberland in Longhoughton attracted a good level of response (28%) with a significant proportion of respondents expressing a need for housing, citing lack of suitable homes in terms of size (too big or too small). Another theme to emerge was the lack of specialist older persons housing to allow older residents to downsize. The responses also showed a desire for more affordable housing for sale and for rent.
- 6.50 The Longhoughton Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) concluded that an average market home is unaffordable to median income households in the parish. Likewise, the income required to buy an average entry-level home is unaffordable to median income households. The HNA notes that prices may be distorted by the high proportion of armed forces exclusive properties as a reduced stock can increase demand, leading to higher prices.
- 6.51 The HNA estimates a need for 89 affordable homes for sale (e.g. discontinued First Homes, shared ownership and rent-to-buy tenures) over the LNP period. Since affordable housing provision is made viable through the provision of greater numbers of market homes, the housing growth required to achieve the estimated affordable housing need will be much greater than the HRF figure of 88 homes. In this context a higher growth scenario is likely to facilitate greater affordable housing provision. A larger housing provision would also help provide a wider choice of housing types and sizes.

- 6.52 When taking into account completions since the start of the NLP period (67 dwellings), sites with planning permission (10) and pending applications (1) a total of 78 units are likely to be delivered. When added to the LNP allocations a total of 115 new homes would be delivered (78+37). This represents 31% uplift on the HRF. However, the additional allocations proposed in the LNP would be expected to yield around 4-5 new affordable homes (15% of growth at Old Recreation ground site and the Boulmer South site) representing only a small fraction of the need assessed in the HNA.
- 6.53 The policy (if amended) could have further positive effects by setting standards in relation to specific accessibility standards such as Building Regulations M4(3) 'wheelchair user' dwellings, M4(3)(a) 'wheelchair adaptable' dwellings or M4(3)(b) 'wheelchair accessible' dwellings.
- 6.54 Policies LBH6 (Old Recreation Field, Longhoughton) and LBH7 (Boulmer South) propose housing developments of 14 and 17 new bungalows respectively. These comprise a mix of 2 and 3 bedrooms and would include 15% affordable units. These policies are expected to have positive effects as they will help meet some of the need identified in the housing need survey for smaller homes particularly more accessible homes such as bungalows. The smaller (2 bedroom) homes would allow older residents to downsize freeing up larger homes for growing families whilst the larger (3 bedroom) bungalows can provide suitable accommodation for families as well. However, the policies do not specify accessibility standards such as Building Regulations M4(3) 'wheelchair user' dwellings, M4(3)(a) 'wheelchair adaptable' dwellings or M4(3)(b) 'wheelchair accessible' dwellings.
- 6.55 LBH8 (New housing development within Boulmer) is anticipated to have positive effects as it seeks to address the high level of second/ holiday homes in the village, an issue highlighted in the HNA as contributing to the lack of housing. The policy seeks to apply a restriction secured through a planning condition or section 106 legal agreement which requires the occupier of a home with a principal residence restriction to keep proof that they are meeting the restriction. An occupier will be obliged to provide this proof if/ when Northumberland County Council requests this information.
- 6.56 Policy LBH4 allocates a site (Land to north of portal place, Longhoughton) for 12 dwellings for military personnel family housing. This will have beneficial effects as it will help meet some of the assessed housing need and also reduce pressure on the local housing market (identified in the HNA as contributing to the higher property prices in the parish).
- 6.57 Policy LBH9 (Small scale rural exception sites) seeks to facilitate the provision of affordable housing (AH) in rural locations outside (but adjacent to) the settlement boundaries of Longhoughton and Boulmer. These are to be 100% affordable in perpetuity – subject to viability. Where 100% AH is unviable the policy allows for the inclusion of some market housing to improve viability through cross subsidy, but this must be demonstrable and independently verifiable. The policy is potentially positive as Rural Exception Sites prioritise people with a connection to a rural area (e.g. current residents, or those with family/ employment to the area) who are in need of housing.

- 6.58 LBH11 (Community services and facilities) seeks to safeguard important community facilities and venues in the parish such as sports centres, schools, village halls and churches. Proposals that result in the loss of such facilities will need to demonstrate that the venue/ service is no longer viable or no longer needed or provide a replacement of equivalent size and quality. The policy is likely to have **minor positive effects** as it serves to protect and enhance community facilities and services within the NP area. Such facilities often serve to reduce social isolation thus improving the health and wellbeing of the community, and they also play an important role in the development of vibrant neighbourhoods by creating a sense of place and providing opportunities for people to meet and interact socially.
- 6.59 Policy LBH14 (Walking and cycling network) is also predicted to have beneficial effects as it supports the improvement/ extension of cycling/ walking networks and greenways to allow traffic free access to local services, green spaces, towns and neighbourhoods.
- 6.60 Green space provides multiple health and wellbeing benefits to communities, encouraging active travel, outdoor recreation, providing visual amenity and tranquillity. In this context policy LBH12 (Local green space) is likely to have beneficial effects on the local population as it designates important areas of green space as LGS, safeguarding them from future encroachment. Similarly LBH12 is likely to have beneficial effects as it seeks to safeguard areas of open space from development.
- 6.61 Overall, **moderate positive effects** are anticipated in the long term as a result of the growth strategy, which exceeds the HRF and will help meet some of Longhoughton's housing needs, including housing that is suitable for older residents, families, military personnel and will provide some affordable housing (on allocated sites and through LBH9 in particular). This will secure housing delivery creating more choice and flexibility in the local housing market. The provision of affordable housing is also likely to help younger residents to remain in the area ensuring the long-term sustainability of Longhoughton's community.

## Option 2

- 6.62 This option would deliver 76 additional dwellings compared to Option 1 exceeding the HRF by 125%. This is significantly positive in terms of housing provision as it will meet a larger proportion of the housing need including some affordable housing. The two larger sites (L11 and L12) would be expected to provide an additional 10 affordable dwellings compared to Option 1. This option would also benefit from the policies described above seeking to protect community facilities, green/ open space and provide housing for military personnel and older residents. Therefore effects are considered to be **major positive** overall.

## Summary of assessment findings

6.63 Table 6-1 presents a summary of the assessment findings in relation to the two options.

6.64 With regards to methodology: Within each row (i.e. for each of the topics that comprise the SEA framework) the columns to the right hand side seek to both **categorise** the performance of each scenario in terms of ‘significant effects’ on the baseline (using **red**, **pink**, **amber** and **light green**, **medium green** and **dark green**)<sup>15</sup> and also **rank** the alternatives in order of performance. Also, ‘ = ’ is used to denote instances where the alternatives perform on a par (i.e. it is not possible to differentiate between them).

6.65 The assessment shows several positive effects associated with both options. Option 1 (the LNP approach) performs generally well with moderate positives for two of the topics: ‘population and housing’ and the ‘historic environment’. This option also records minor positives with respect to landscape, biodiversity and climatic factors.

6.66 Option 2 also performs well generally, with a major positive effect predicted for the population and housing due to the greater housing growth likely to produce more affordable housing and greater choice in the market. However, mixed effects are envisaged with respect to landscape with potentially moderate negative effects identified. This is due to the larger scale of growth proposed and its location just outside the settlement boundary south of Longhoughton, in an area largely comprised of open fields. Mixed effects are also predicted with respect to the historic environment. This is due to some localised minor negative effects associated with developing site L12, which would likely impact the setting of a heritage asset (Grade II listed Old Smithy) and leave residual effects.

6.67 In terms of ranking, Option 1 is preferable to Option 2 for ‘Biodiversity’, Historic Environment and ‘Landscape’, whilst Option 2 is preferable for ‘Population and Housing’. It is for the decision-maker (also consultees), not this assessment, to assign weight to the various pros and cons and then arrive at a conclusion on which scenario is best-performing overall.

**Table 6-1: Options assessment summary**

Topic	Option 1 LNP Approach	Option 2 Reasonable alternative
Biodiversity	1	2
Climatic factors (adaptation)	-	-
Historic environment	1	2
Landscape	1	2
Population & housing	2	1

<sup>15</sup> Red indicates a major negative effect; pink a moderate negative, amber a minor negative effect that is of limited or uncertain significance; light green a positive effect that is of limited or uncertain significance, medium green an effect of moderately positive effects and dark green a major positive effect. No colour is assigned where effects are considered to be neutral.

# 7. The preferred approach

## Introduction

7.1 The aim of this section is to present the plan-makers reasons for supporting the preferred approach, in light of the scenarios assessment presented above.

## Reasons for supporting the preferred approach

7.2 The plan-makers responded to the assessment as follows:

*“The preferred approach is to take forward Option 1 as the basis for the LNP. This approach is considered to broadly align with the findings of the assessment, which finds Option 1 to perform well across most of the key sustainability issues, both in absolute terms and relative terms”.*

7.3 With regards to Option 2, the assessment highlights that it does not perform as well in terms of biodiversity, the historic environment and landscape. Conversely, this option performs better in terms of population and housing.

7.4 The process of defining and assessing growth scenarios serves to highlight that the key choice to make between Option 1 and Option 2 is the trade-off between the additional benefits in terms of housing growth (Option 2) and the better performance against environmental factors associated with Option 1. The latter would still achieve moderate positive effects in terms of housing. The LPC considers that Option 1 is most appropriate on balance in terms of sustainable development and the objectives of the Plan.

## 8. Conclusions & recommendations

- 8.1 Overall, the Plan appraisal has served to highlight the potential for mostly positive effects.
- 8.2 **Moderate long-term positive effects** are anticipated in relation to the population and housing SEA theme as a result of the growth strategy which will exceed the HRF and meet some of the specialist needs for older persons housing, military housing and provide affordable housing. The additional growth (to that proposed in the NLP) also serves to provide a buffer to better secure housing delivery.
- 8.3 Several Plan policies are considered to have beneficial effects on the health and wellbeing of residents through the allocation of LGS, POS, the safeguarding of community facilities and the promotion of active travel through enhancement and expansion of walkways and cycleways.
- 8.4 As well as securing affordable housing through market development on allocated and windfall development, policy LBH9 (Small scale rural exception sites) is likely to facilitate the provision of more affordable housing. This will help meet a greater amount of the identified local AH need in the LNP area. Rural Exception Sites prioritise people with a connection to a rural area (e.g. current residents, or those with family/ employment to the area) who are in need of housing, which is beneficial for this demographic.
- 8.5 The creation of a settlement boundary for Boulmer and the requirements of LBH8 should also help to address the issues of non-permanent residences in this settlement, contributing positive effects to housing and local wellbeing.
- 8.6 **Moderate positive effects** are also envisaged for the historic environment through policies seeking to preserve the character and setting of the parish's settlements and the designation of LGS and the promotion of high-quality design.
- 8.7 With respect to biodiversity; **minor positive effects** are predicted in relation to the allocation of LGS and POS and the requirement for biodiversity net gain (though this is not beyond existing requirements). The housing growth is not expected to give rise to significant effects due to the limited scale proposed and the mitigation in place through strategic level policies and the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service. There are areas of habitat fragmentation action zone along the coast, north east of the parish where the LNP (through policy) could address habitat fragmentation through targeted habitat creation.
- 8.8 **Minor long-term positive effects** pertaining to the theme of climate change adaptation are predicted due to the avoidance of high flood risk areas alongside measures to increase climate resilience through the protection, enhancement and provision of green open space.
- 8.9 **Minor positive effects** are predicted for landscape associated with the modest level of development, the location of sites within existing settlements, the policies seeking to preserve the distinctiveness and character of the parish and the designation of LGS / POS.

8.10 Though some development could occur on 'green space', the Plan seeks to ensure that environmental improvements are secured and the site allocations are guided by masterplans and design codes. Therefore, neutral effects are predicted in this respect.

## **Part 3: What are the next steps?**

## 9. Plan finalisation

- 9.1 This Environmental Report accompanies the pre submission draft of the LNP for consultation.
- 9.2 The 'pre submission' version alongside this environmental report will then be submitted to NCC. The Plan and supporting evidence will be then published for further consultation, and then submitted for examination.
- 9.3 If the outcome of the Independent Examination is favourable, the LNP will then be subject to a referendum, and the plan will be 'made' if more than 50% of those who vote are in support. Once made, the LNP will become part of the Development Plan for Northumberland.

## 10. Monitoring

- 10.1 The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report.
- 10.2 It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken by NCC as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 10.3 The SEA has not identified any potential for significant negative effects (moderate or major) that would require closer monitoring.
- 10.4 Moderate positive effects are predicted for the population and housing and the historic environment topics. It is suggested that the following monitoring measures be included in the AMR:
  - Annual net housing completions.
  - Affordable housing delivery.
  - Changes in number of buildings and features of historic/ heritage importance (e.g. listed buildings, structures on the Northumberland Historic Environment record (HER)).

# Appendices

# Appendix I: Meeting the Regulations

As discussed in Chapter 1 above, Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans Regulations 2004 (the Regulations) explains the information that must be contained in the Environmental Report; however, interpretation of Schedule 2 is not straightforward. Table AI.1 links the structure of this report to an interpretation of Schedule 2 requirements, whilst Table AI.2 explains this interpretation. Table AI.3 identifies how and where within this report the requirements have been met.

*Table AI.1: Questions answered by this report, in-line with an interpretation of regulatory requirements*

		Questions answered	As per regulations, the report must include...
<b>Introduction</b>		What's the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes</li> </ul>
	What's the SEA scope?	What's the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level</li> <li>▪ Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance</li> </ul>
		What's the sustainability 'baseline'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan</li> <li>▪ The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be affected</li> <li>▪ Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance</li> </ul>
		What are the key issues and objectives that should be a focus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment</li> </ul>
<b>Part 1</b>	What has plan-making / SEA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach)</li> <li>▪ The likely significant effects associated with alternatives</li> <li>▪ Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives assessment / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan</li> </ul>	
<b>Part 2</b>	What are the SEA findings at this current stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan</li> <li>▪ The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan</li> </ul>	
<b>Part 3</b>	What happens next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A description of the monitoring measures envisaged</li> </ul>	

Table A1.2: Interpretation of the regulations

<u>Schedule 2</u>	<u>Interpretation of Schedule 2</u>	
<i>The report must include...</i>	<i>The report must include...</i>	
(a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	i.e. answer - <i>What's the plan seeking to achieve?</i>
(b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'context'?</i>
(c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;		
(d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;	The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'baseline'?</i>
(e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan'	
(f) the likely significant effects 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;	The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	
(g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What are the key issues &amp; objectives?</i>
(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information	Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of appraisal	
(i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.	An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (i.e. an explanation of the 'reasonableness of the approach)	i.e. answer - <i>What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?</i> <b>[Part 1 of the Report]</b>
	The likely significant effects associated with alternatives, including on issues such as... ... and an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives considered / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.	
	The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan	i.e. answer - <i>What are the assessment findings at this current stage?</i> <b>[Part 2 of the Report]</b>
	The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan	
	A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring	i.e. answer - <i>What happens next?</i> <b>[Part 3 of the Report]</b>

i.e. answer - *What's the scope of the SA?*

*Table A1.3: 'Checklist' of how (throughout the SEA process) and where (within this report) regulatory requirements are met*

Regulatory requirement	Discussion of how requirement is met
<b>A) The Environmental Report must present certain information</b>	
1. An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Chapter 2 ('What is the plan seeking to achieve') presents this information.
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;	These matters have been considered in detail through scoping work, which has involved dedicated consultation on a Scoping Report.
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	The 'SEA framework' – the outcome of scoping – is presented within Chapter 3 ('What is the scope of the SEA?').
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.;	More detailed messages, established through a context and baseline review are also presented in Appendix II.
5. The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	The SEA framework is presented within Chapter 3 ('What is the scope of the SEA'). Also, Appendix II presents key messages from the context review.  With regards to explaining " <i>how...considerations have been taken into account</i> ", Chapter 7 explains 'reasons for supporting the preferred approach', i.e. explains how/ why the preferred approach is justified in light of alternatives assessment.
6. The likely significant effects 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. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects);	Chapter 6 presents alternatives assessment findings (in relation to housing growth, which is a 'stand-out' plan policy area).  Chapters 9 presents an assessment of the draft plan.  With regards to assessment methodology, Chapter 8 explains the role of the SEA framework/scope, and the need to consider the potential for various effect characteristics/ dimensions.
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	The assessment highlights certain tensions between competing objectives, which might potentially be actioned when finalising the plan, and specific recommendations are made in Section 9 and 10.

Regulatory requirement	Discussion of how requirement is met
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Chapters 4 and 5 deal with 'Reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with', in that there is an explanation of the reasons for focusing on particular issues and options. Also, Chapter 7 sets out reasons for selecting the preferred option (in-light of alternatives assessment).
9. Description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Art. 10;	Chapter 12 presents measures envisaged concerning monitoring.
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	The NTS is provided at the beginning of this Environmental Report.
<b>B) The Report must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan</b>	
Authorities with environmental responsibility and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the Draft Plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Art. 6.1, 6.2)	At the current time, this Environmental Report is published alongside the 'pre-submission' version of the Neighbourhood Plan, with a view to informing Regulation 14 consultation.
<b>C) The report must be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan</b>	
The environmental report prepared pursuant to Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of any transboundary consultations entered into pursuant to Article 7 shall be taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to the legislative procedure.	This Environmental Report, and consultation responses received, will be taken into account when finalising the plan.

# Appendix II: SEA Scoping Report



# Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Scoping Report

Longhoughton Parish Council

July 2021

## Quality information

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## Acronyms

AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
ASR	Air Status Report
LNP	The draft Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan
LPC	Longhoughton Parish Council
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
LEP	Local Economic Partnership
LNR	Local Nature Reserves
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

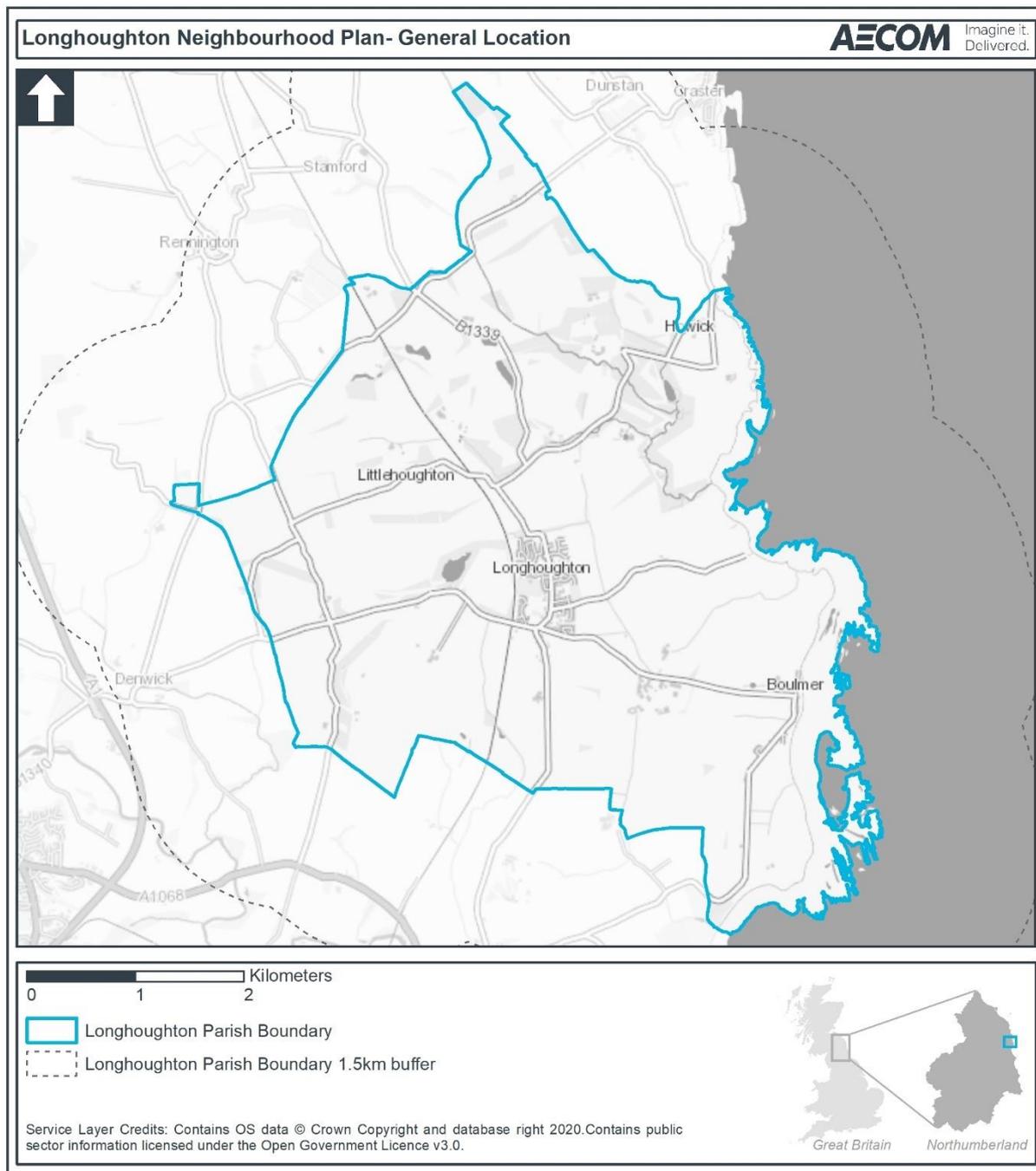
- 1.1.1 Longhoughton Parish Council is in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the sustainable future growth of the Parish. AECOM has been commissioned to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of Longhoughton NDP on behalf of the Town Council.
- 1.1.2 The NDP is being prepared in the context of the adopted and emerging Local Plan for Northumberland. The NDP will form part of the development plan for Longhoughton, alongside the Local Plan.
- 1.1.3 NDPs are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in Northumberland, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the Neighbourhood Planning process where appropriate.

1.1.4 The Key information relating to the Longhoughton NDP is presented in the table below (Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1. Key facts relating to the NDP for Longhoughton**

Name of Responsible Authority	Longhoughton Parish Council
Title of Plan	Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan
Subject	Neighbourhood Planning
Purpose	<p>The Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan will be in general conformity with the emerging Northumberland Local Plan.</p> <p>Once 'made' the Longhoughton NDP will be used to guide and shape development within the Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan area.</p>
Timescale	To 2036
Area covered by the plan	The Neighbourhood Plan area covers the civil parish of Longhoughton. It is located on the East Coast in Northumberland, England. The main settlement in this predominantly rural parish, is the village of Longhoughton which is about 4 miles northeast of Alnwick, 82 miles south east of Edenborough, 53 miles north of north of Newcastle upon Tyne and 314 miles north of London.
Summary of content	The Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision, strategy and a range of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan area.
Plan contact point	Adrian Hinchcliffe; <a href="mailto:adrian.hinchcliffe@btopenworld.com">adrian.hinchcliffe@btopenworld.com</a>

Figure 1-1 Longhoughton Location



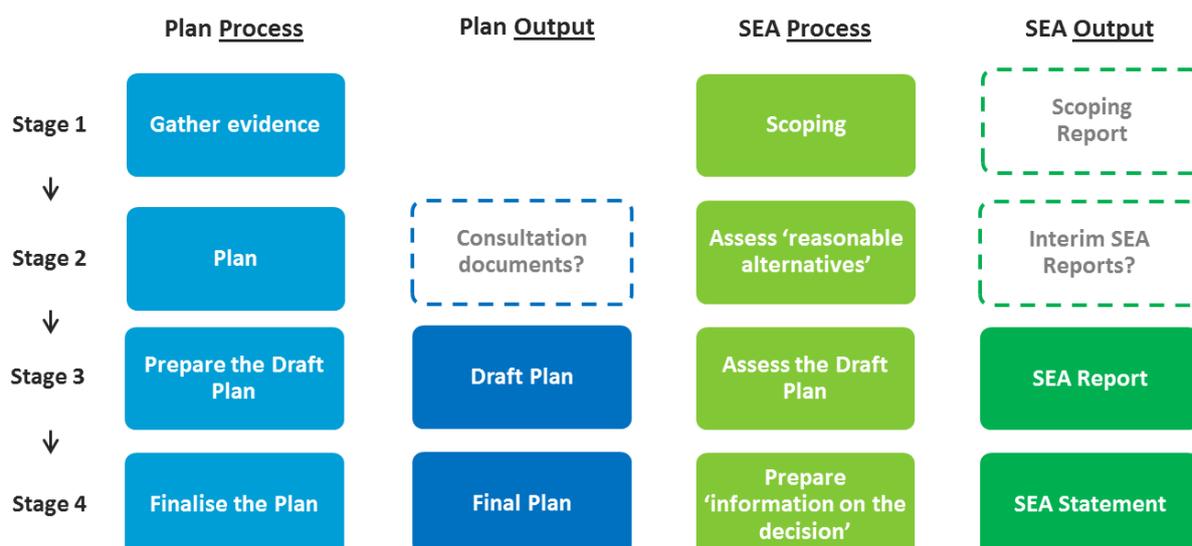
## SEA explained

1.1.5 The Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan has been screened in by Northumberland County Council as requiring a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. 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.

1.1.6 The European Directive 2001/42/EC<sup>1</sup> requires certain plans to be subject to a SEA. This Directive is realised in the UK through Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1633: The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (otherwise known as the SEA Regulations). These Regulations require an environmental assessment to be carried out on certain plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment. The plan has been determined to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. To meet this requirement, the plan is undergoing a SEA process which incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive.

1.1.7 SEA can be viewed as a four-stage process that produces a number of statutory and non-statutory outputs. As illustrated in Figure 1.2 below, ‘Scoping’ is a mandatory process under the SEA Directive, but the publication of a scoping report is a voluntary (but useful) output.

**Figure 1-2: SEA as a four step process**



<sup>1</sup> Directive 2001/42/EC: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/sea-legalcontext.htm>

## 1.2 Screening outcomes

1.2.1 The Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan was screened-in for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) by Northumberland County Council (NCC). NCC considered that that a HRA would be required in this instance as some of the policies in the draft plan are likely to give rise to significant effects on European sites (Northumberland Coast SPA/ Ramsar and North Northumberland Dunes SAC). Therefore, a SEA is required as “Appropriate Assessment” under the Habitats Regulations automatically triggers the requirement for SEA.

## 1.3 Introduction to scoping

1.3.1 One of the first stages in the SEA process is to establish what the key issues are that the appraisal should focus on. This is called ‘scoping’, and involves a review of relevant policies, plans and programmes (a ‘contextual review’) and information about the current and future state of the environment, economy and social factors (the ‘baseline’). This information is then used to set out a framework for undertaking strategic environmental assessments as the plan is developed.

1.3.2 The Regulations<sup>2</sup> require that certain statutory bodies are consulted on the scope of a SEA. This can be done in a number of ways, but most often a Scoping Report is produced that presents the key information and a methodology for how future appraisals will be undertaken. Statutory Consultees have 5 weeks to comment on the scope of the appraisal. In England, the statutory consultees are Natural England, The Environment Agency and Historic England.

1.3.3 Developing the draft scope for the SEA as presented in this report has involved the following steps:

- Defining the broader context for the Longhoughton NDP and associated SEA (i.e. EU, UK Government and local policy and commitments), to summarise the regulatory and legislative landscape;
- Establishing the baseline for the SEA, (i.e. the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the Longhoughton NDP) to help identify the plan’s likely significant effects;
- Identifying particular problems or opportunities (‘issues’) that should be a focus of the SEA; and
- Developing a SEA Framework comprising objectives and appraisal questions based on these issues, which can then be used to appraise the draft plan.

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<sup>2</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

## 1.4 Scoping outcomes

- 1.4.1 The SEA Regulations aim to encourage proportionate assessment and therefore it is important to scope out issues where it is apparent that the Plan could not affect the topic area in a significant way. In order to do this, an initial scoping sifting exercise has been undertaken. As a result, a number of SEA topic areas have been scoped-out without the need to establish a more detailed baseline position. For other topics, further detail was gathered through the scoping process, which led to additional topics being SCOPED OUT. Only Biodiversity, Climatic Factors, Historic Environment, Landscape and Housing have been identified for further assessment at the next stages of the SEA.
- 1.4.2 The relevant SEA topic areas and the reasons for the scoping decisions are set out in Table 1.2 below.

**Table 1.2: Scoping outcomes**

<b>SEA topic area</b>	<b>Scoping Outcomes</b>
Air Quality	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process, but subsequently <b>SCOPED OUT</b> as there are no Air Quality Management Areas in NDP area.
Biodiversity	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently <b>SCOPED IN</b> .
Climatic factors	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently <b>SCOPED IN</b> for climate change resilience and flood risk.
Historic Environment	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently <b>SCOPED IN</b> .
Landscape	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently <b>SCOPED IN</b> .
Waste	The Plan is unable to influence this to a significant extent and therefore this topic area can be <b>SCOPED OUT</b> . Key issues relating to waste will be to ensure adequate access for waste collection, and storage that does not affect the street scene.
Minerals	The plan does not pose any sterilisation risk to mineral resources. Therefore, this topic area can be <b>SCOPED OUT</b> .
Land, Soil and Water Resources	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process, but subsequently <b>SCOPED OUT</b>
Population and Housing	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently <b>SCOPED IN</b> .
Health and Wellbeing	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process and subsequently <b>SCOPED OUT</b>
Transportation	Considered in greater detail through the scoping process, but subsequently <b>SCOPED OUT</b>

## 1.5 Structure of this Scoping Report

1.5.1 The outcomes of the scoping exercise for the topic areas further considered in the scoping process (following the initial sift) have been presented as follows:

- Chapter 2: Air Quality;
- Chapter 3: Biodiversity;
- Chapter 4: Climatic factors (Flood Risk and Climate Change);
- Chapter 5: Historic Environment;
- Chapter 6: Landscape;
- Chapter 7: Land, Soil and Water Resources;
- Chapter 8: Population and Housing;
- Chapter 9: Health and Wellbeing; and
- Chapter 10: Transportation.

1.5.2 In accordance with the SEA Directive, the final chapters of the report summarise the overarching sustainability issues, set out the SEA Framework and outline the next stages in the process. To demonstrate a clear trail of how the SEA objectives have been identified, each topic Chapter (which is scoped into the SEA) concludes with suggested objectives and supporting criteria for inclusion in the SEA Framework. Appendix A includes suggested site assessment criteria to be considered when assessing allocated development sites in the NDP.

## 2. Air Quality

### Focus of theme:

- Air pollution sources
- Air quality hotspots
- Air quality management

### 2.1 Policy Context

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)<sup>3</sup> outlines the importance of sustainable development and infrastructure in improving air quality and subsequently the environment and public health.

- *‘Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.’*
- *‘Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.’*
- New and existing developments should be prevented from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution.

2.1.2 Local Planning Authorities are required to publish annual Air Quality Annual Status Reports (ASRs) to discharge their monitoring obligations under Part IV of the Environment Act (1995). Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and Part II of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 requires local authorities in the UK to review air quality in their area and designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if improvements are necessary. Where an AQMA is designated, an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) must then be put in place.

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<sup>3</sup> HM GOV (2019) National Planning Policy Framework, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

- 2.1.3 The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 transpose into UK law the Ambient Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) which sets legally binding limits for outdoor concentrations of major air pollutants which impact public health.
- 2.1.4 The Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance (2018)<sup>4</sup> issued by Defra for Local Authorities provides advice as to where the National Air Quality Objectives apply. These include outdoor locations where members of the public are likely to be regularly present for the averaging period of the objective (which vary from 15 minutes to a year).
- 2.1.5 Published in January 2018 by the UK Government, 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'<sup>5</sup> sets out a number of goals and policies in order to help the natural world regain and retain good health. In this context, Goal 1 'Clean Air' and the policies contained within 'Chapter 4: Increasing resource efficiency and reducing pollution and waste' within the 25 year plan are relevant.
- 2.1.6 The Clean Air Strategy<sup>6</sup> (2019) sets out the strategy for improving air quality, including goals to reduce exposure to toxic pollutants like nitrogen oxides, ammonia, particulate matter, non-methane volatile organic compounds and sulphur dioxide. For example, the strategy aims to reduce particulate matter emissions by 30% by 2020, and by 46% by 2030.
- 2.1.7 The government's draft Environment Bill (2019-2021); which is currently completing its passage through Parliament, sets out new legal frameworks for air pollution, water quality and nature conservation. It requires the secretary of state (SoS) to establish long-term (minimum 15 years) targets with respect to air quality for England by 31 October 2022. This includes a requirement to set a target annual mean level for PM<sub>2.5</sub> in air. Targets set are to be reviewed at least every 5 years. Under the bill the SoS is required to prepare an environment improvement plan (EIP) for England to significantly improve the natural environment. The EIP must have a minimum span of 15 years. DEFRA's current 25 year plan, which includes clean air goals, will be the first EIP. A new body; the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) will act as the watchdog on matters of environmental compliance.

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<sup>4</sup> Defra (2018) Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance [online] available at:

<https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/documents/LAQM-TG16-February-18-v1.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Defra (2019) Clean Air Strategy at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/770715/clean-air-strategy-2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/770715/clean-air-strategy-2019.pdf)

- 2.1.8 The Defra report Action for air quality in a changing climate<sup>7</sup> (2010) focuses on the synergies between the two issues of air quality and climate change. In particular, it notes the potential for additional health benefits through the closer integration of climate and air pollution policy. It is suggested that co-benefits can be realised through a variety of means, including promoting low carbon vehicles and renewable energy.
- 2.1.9 In terms of the local context, Northumberland County Council is required to monitor air quality across the county, report regularly to Defra and take action where nationally set levels are likely to be exceeded. Monitoring is undertaken to assess levels of nitrogen dioxide, Sulphur dioxide, ozone, benzene and particulates. Where exceedances exist, areas are declared as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and local authorities are required to produce an Action Plan to improve air quality in the area. There are currently no AQMAs in Northumberland.
- 2.1.10 The Northumberland Local Transport Plan (LTP)<sup>8</sup> sets out the county council's vision, aims and objectives for transport over the period 2011-2026. The LTP's goals include; reducing carbon emissions and improving quality of life and healthy natural environment. The LTP sets out to achieve this through various strategies; including, helping to create sustainable communities by affording safe and quality access to key services and helping to provide a healthy lifestyle through enabling and promoting active travel. The LTP is accompanied by Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP). This aim to enable the public's use of rights of way for recreation and purposeful journeys. It also promotes wider countryside access, contributing to the social and economic wellbeing of residents and visitors.

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<sup>7</sup> Defra (2010) Air Pollution: Action in a Changing Climate [online] available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69340/pb13378-air-pollution.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69340/pb13378-air-pollution.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Northumberland Transport Plan 2011-2016; <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Roads-streets-and-transport/transport%20policy/Local%20Transport%20Plan/Local-Transport-Plan-2011-2026.pdf>

## 2.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

- 2.2.1 Northumberland County Council's Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)<sup>9</sup> states that the Council currently monitors air quality at two monitoring stations in Blythe and these currently meet the national air quality objectives. The council's monitoring of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) across the county indicated that none of the monitored locations require further investigation or monitoring. Similarly, 2.5 micron particulate (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) monitoring (sited to one of the busiest urban roads in Northumberland) currently meets the UK national air quality objectives and also meets Scotland's stricter cap limit. The report concludes that the national air quality objectives have been met for annual means and daily exceedances for particulates (PM<sub>10</sub>) and annual mean and hourly exceedances nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and that no further detailed assessment is required for any of the monitored pollutants within the county.
- 2.2.2 There are no air quality management areas (AQMA) in Northumberland and the last AQMA was revoked in 2012 due to improving air quality.

### Summary of future baseline

- 2.2.3 Whilst no significant air quality issues currently exist within the Longhoughton NDP area, new employment and /or housing provision within the NDP area can potentially have adverse effects on air quality through increase traffic flows and associated levels of pollutants such as NO<sub>2</sub>.
- 2.2.4 Whilst the existing baseline for air pollutants is relatively low, future development can potentially lead to increased pollution.
- 2.2.5 The implementation of the Northumberland Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2026, which includes improved foot and cycle links to bus stations and stops and cycle storage at interchanges, is likely to encourage active travel and reduce the reliance on the cars.
- 2.2.6 Improvements in air quality may be experienced as a result of lower emission vehicles, which could offset any increases associated with traffic.

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<sup>9</sup> Northumberland County Council 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report (Nov. 2019); <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Public-Protection/Pollution/2019-LAQM-Annual-Status-Report.pdf>

## 2.3 Key headline issues

2.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Traffic and congestion have the potential to increase vehicular emissions and reduce air quality in the area (though low emissions vehicles could offset this to an extent).

## 2.4 Scoping outcome

2.4.1 The scale of development associated with the plan is such that any additional effects, taken in isolation or in-combination, are not predicted to be significant.

2.4.2 For the above reasons, air quality has been **SCOPED OUT** of the SEA.

2.4.3 Whilst significant effects are unlikely, it is still possible for the Plan to contribute towards air quality improvements. This is evident from the Plan aims and objectives seeking to achieve environmental improvements.

## 3. Biodiversity

### Focus of theme:

- European and nationally designated sites
- Local wildlife sites
- Priority habitats and species

### 3.1 Policy Context

3.1.1 At the European level, the EU Biodiversity Strategy<sup>10</sup> was adopted in May 2011 in order to deliver an established new Europe-wide target to '*halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020*'.

3.1.2 The European Commission Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment<sup>11</sup> (2013) suggests that a SEA should focus on ensuring 'no-net-loss of biodiversity' before considering mitigation and compensation. The assessment should also take account of 'ecosystem services' and the links between natural environment and economy.

3.1.3 Natural England's Conservation Objectives for European Sites<sup>12</sup> are based on the qualifying nature conservation features for which site has been specifically designated and informed by the ecological requirements of those features. These Objectives are specifically needed by to ensure that new plans or projects proceed without having an adverse effect on the integrity of a European Site unless, in the absence of alternative solutions, there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest and the necessary compensatory measures can be secured. The objectives for SACs and SPAs are as below;

- SACs: Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its qualifying features, by maintaining or restoring;

For Qualifying Habitats :

- Extent and distribution of qualifying habitats
- Structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying habitats, and
- Supporting processes on which qualifying habitats rely

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<sup>10</sup> European Commission (2011) Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 [online] available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1\\_EN\\_ACT\\_part1\\_v7%5b1%5d.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7%5b1%5d.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> European Commission (2013) Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment [online] available at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/pdf/SEA%20Guidance.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Natural England: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6490068894089216>

#### For Qualifying Species :

- Extent and distribution of habitats of qualifying species
  - Structure and function of habitats of qualifying species
  - Supporting processes on which habitats of qualifying species rely
  - Populations of qualifying species, and
  - Distribution of qualifying species within the site.
- 
- SPAs: Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;
    - Extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
    - Structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
    - Supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
    - Populations of each of the qualifying features, and
    - Distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

#### 3.1.4 Key messages from the NPPF (2019) include:

- One of the three overarching objectives of the NPPF is an environmental objective to *'contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment' including by 'helping to improve biodiversity.'*
- *'Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value [...], take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.'*
- *'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with the statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'*
- *'To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:*
  - a. *Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*
  - b. *Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity'*

- Paragraph 175: *When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*
  - a. *if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
  - b. *development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
  - c. *development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
  - d. *development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged.*

3.1.5 The Government's 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'<sup>13</sup> (2018) sets out a series of goals for improving the environment and how they will work with communities and businesses over the next 25 years to achieve them. Actions proposed of relevance to the protection and promotion of biodiversity are as follows:

- Develop a Nature Recovery Network to protect and restore wildlife and provide opportunities to re-introduce species that have been lost from the countryside.
- Achieve a good environmental status of the UK's seas while allowing marine industries to thrive and complete our economically coherent network of well-managed marine protected areas.
- Provide international leadership and lead by example in tackling climate change and protecting and improving international biodiversity.
- Support and protect international forests and sustainable agriculture.

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<sup>13</sup> Defra (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

- 3.1.6 The government's draft Environment Bill (2019-2021); in December 2018 the UK government announced plans for new environmental legislation setting out a new framework for environmental law post-Brexit. The Environment Bill was published in January 2020. It sets out new legal frameworks for air pollution, water quality and nature conservation. It also establishes a new environmental watchdog – the Office for Environmental Protection – to hold governments and other public bodies to account when the environment is under threat. In March 2019 the government confirmed that new developments must deliver an overall increase in biodiversity in order to achieve a 'biodiversity net gain'. This requirement was set out in the Environment Bill summer policy statement (July 2019). The Bill had the first day of its report stage on Tuesday 26 January 2021.
- 3.1.7 The Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) (2008)<sup>14</sup> offers a series of specific plans for each of the threatened species and/or habitats within the area with the intention to protect their levels within the Northumberland local authority area. It is noted that the BAP dates from 2008 and has not been updated.
- 3.1.8 The emerging Local Plan has been informed by a Habitats Regulations Assessment<sup>15</sup> (July 2018). The purpose of the HRA is to assess possible effects of the Local Plan on the nature conservation interests of sites designated on a European Level under the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives. The commitment of the council to protect and enhance biodiversity features is outlined under Policy ENV2 of the Draft Plan for Regulation 18 Consultation (July 2018).

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<sup>14</sup> [https://www.nwt.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/Nland Biodiversity Action Plan.pdf](https://www.nwt.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/Nland_Biodiversity_Action_Plan.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Northumberland County Council (2018) Habitat Regulations Assessment [online] available at: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-and-Building/planning%20policy/Local%20Plan/NCC-Habitats-Regulations-Assessment-July-2018.pdf>

## 3.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

- 3.2.1 Northumberland has a range of wildlife species and habitats. A number of these are protected sites; the designation of which helps to preserve the biodiversity and the character of the areas. Nature designations within Longhoughton and the surrounding area are presented in the following table and illustrated in Figure 3.1.

**Table 3.1 Nature Designations within Longhoughton**

Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast SAC
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	Northumbria Coast SPA
Ramsar Sites	Northumbria Coast Ramsar
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Northumberland Shore SSSI, Howick to Seaton Point SSSI Longhoughton Quarry SSSI
Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ)	Berwick to St. Mary's (UKMCZ0055)
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)/ Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	Evelyn Howick Memorial (LNR)

- 3.2.2 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are areas designated under EU Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora. There are around 256 SACs in England. Together with Special Protection Areas (SPA) they form a network of protected sites across the EU referred to as "Natura 2000".

- 3.2.3 The Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast SAC is an extensive predominately rocky stretch of coastline. It supports a biodiverse assemblage of marine life, covering 115 km of coastline and extending out to four nautical miles to encompass 645 square kilometres of shore and sea. Designated features comprise mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, large shallow inlets and bays, Reefs, submerged/ partially submerged sea caves. The SAC is also designated for the Grey Seal which is amongst the rarest seals in the world.
- 3.2.4 A major aim of the Birds Directive is to conserve the habitats of qualifying wild birds in order to ensure their survival and reproduction. The Special Areas of Protection Designation is a key mechanism in achieving this. The Northumbria Coast SPA supports internationally important populations of Purple Sandpipers and Turnstone. The site is also listed as a Ramsar site under the Ramsar convention for its internationally important wetland status. The Northumbria Coast SPA overlaps with the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC. The SPA overlaps with the Northumbria Coast Ramsar site discussed below.
- 3.2.5 Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. It aims to protect and conserve rare wetland habitats for their importance in conserving biological diversity. The Northumbria Coast Ramsar is designated for; the Little Fern (breeding), Purple Sandpiper (wintering) and Turnstone (wintering).
- 3.2.6 There are over 4,100 Sites of Specific Scientific Importance (SSSI) in England, which cover around 8% of the country's land area. SSSIs are recognised as amongst the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. There are several, overlapping, SSSI designated sites within the NP area including; the Northumberland Shore SSSI, Howick to Seaton Point and the Longhoughton Quarry SSSI.

- 3.2.7 The Northumberland Shore SSSI (also designated as LNR, SAC and SPA) covers an area of 1,926 ha. which includes most of the coastline between the Scottish border and the Tyne Estuary. It provides important wintering grounds for shore birds, and it is of international, or national significance for six species, purple sandpiper, turnstone, sanderling, golden plover, ringed plover and redshank<sup>16</sup>. Turnstone and Purple Sandpiper are two of the bird species found in Internationally important numbers here. Other Birds found in nationally important numbers include; Sanderling, Ringed Plover, Redshank and Golden Plover. The Northumberland Shore as a whole is used by a wide variety of other shorebirds in winter, including; Curlew, Oystercatcher, Dunlin, Knot, Bar-tailed Godwit and 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<sup>17</sup>. Operations likely to damage the special interest include, grazing, application of pesticides/ herbicides, discharge of materials, release of wild/ domestic animals, destruction of flora and fauna, drainage operations, land reclamation, construction activities and use of vehicles/ craft likely to disturb coastal habitats and birds.
- 3.2.8 The Howick to Seaton Point SSSI is an area of around 190 ha, extending along the length of the coast, forming the eastern boundary of the NP area. It is also listed as of national importance in the Geological Conservation Review. The section of coast between Howick and Seaton Point is an outstanding mid-Carboniferous locality<sup>18</sup>. It provides one of the few shoreline exposures of the Namurian, and an Upper Limestone Group and the unconformably overlying 'Durham Millstone Grit'. Nationally important numbers of golden plover are known to use this section of coast. The site condition is classed as being 100% Favourable. Operations likely to damage the special interest include; discharge of materials, changes in tree/ woodland management, land reclamation, drainage measures, construction and erection of permanent or temporary structures. The site overlaps four other designations namely; Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC, Northumberland Marine SPA, Northumbria Coast Ramsar and Northumbria Coast SPA.
- 3.2.9 The Longhoughton Quarry SSSI is a disused Whinstone quarry. Natural England<sup>19</sup> states that; *'the Whin Sill (a tabular layer of the igneous rock dolerite) has been intruded beneath the Great Limestone and has incorporated 'rafts' of the overlying sediment. These form exceptionally striking demonstrations of the intrusive nature of the Whin Sill and clearly show the baking effects of the molten rock on the incorporated sediment'*. Operations likely to damage the special interest include; discharge of materials, construction and modification of natural and manmade features.

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<sup>16</sup> Natural England Northumberland Shore

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/2000134.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Natural England Howick to Seaton Point SSSI

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1000124&SiteName=howick%20to%20seaton%20&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

<sup>19</sup> Natural England <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Consent/1001655.pdf>

3.2.10 Natural England collects data on the condition of SSSIs and Table 3.2 below sets out the condition of the local SSSIs;

**Table 3.2 SSSI Conditions<sup>20</sup>**

Site	% area meeting PSA <sup>21</sup> target	% area favourable
Northumberland Shore SSSI	100%	100%
Howick to Seaton Point SSSI	100%	100%
Longhoughton Quarry SSSI	100%	100%

3.2.11 SSSI Impact Risk Zones, map zones around each SSSI according to the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is designated. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location. Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs. The majority of the NP area falls within SSSI Impact Risk Zones for the Northumberland Shore and Howick to Seaton Point SSSI.

3.2.12 Activities that are identified as potentially threatening to the SSSIs include residential development (of various scales depending on proximity to SSSI), infrastructure, commercial and industrial development, and development which may result in externalities such as waste and air pollution.

<sup>20</sup> Natural England (2021)

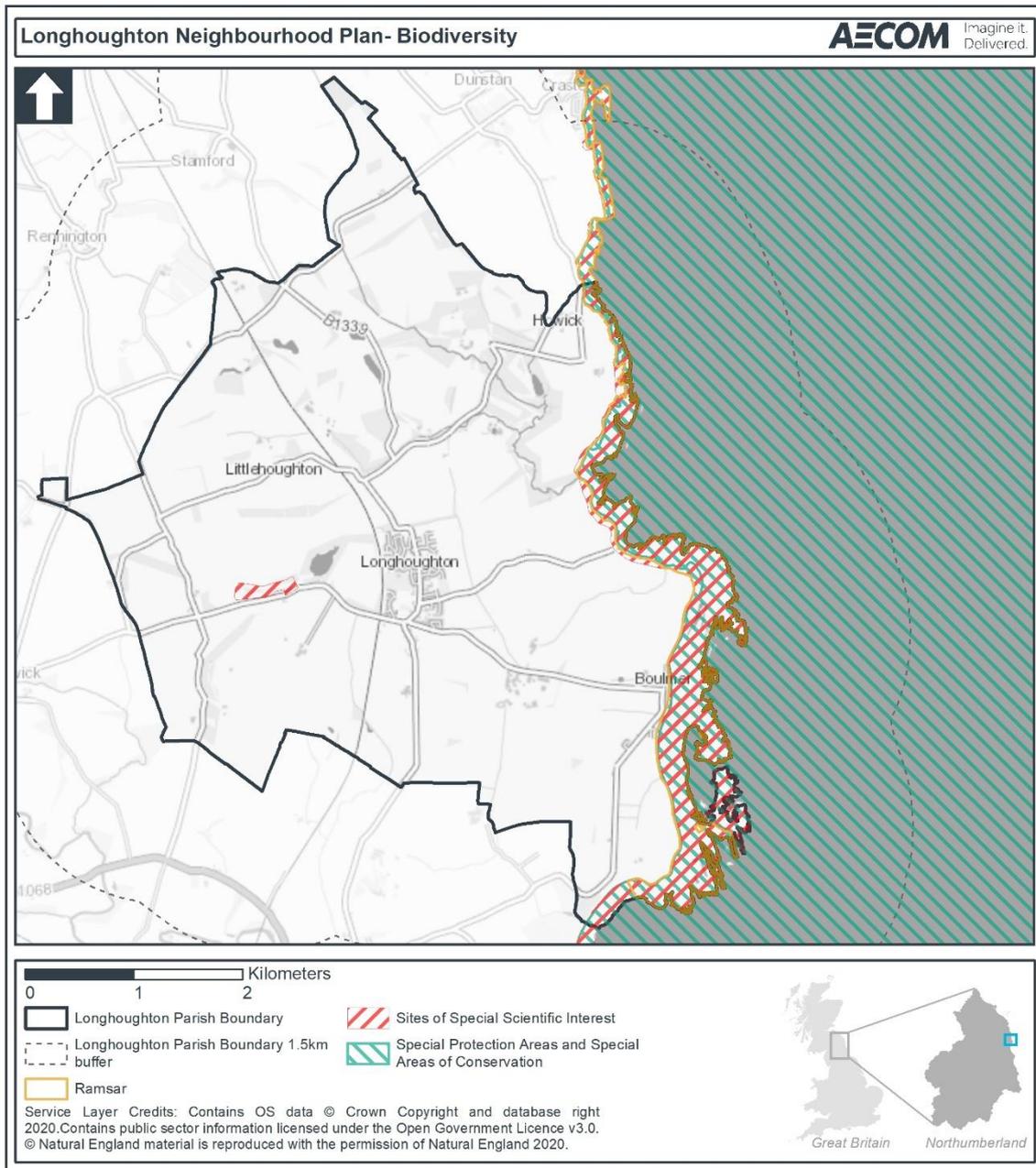
<sup>21</sup> A Public Service Agreement (PSA) target for SSSIs was set in 2000 for the then- Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions, role subsequently taken over by DEFRA.

- 3.2.13 There are 91 Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) in waters around England. MCZs are areas that protect a range of nationally important, rare or threatened habitats and species. The Berwick to St Mary's MCZ is an inshore site located along the Northumberland coast. The proposed area extends from Berwick-upon-Tweed in the north to St Mary's Island in the south and covers an area of 634 km<sup>2</sup>. The MCZ supports regionally and nationally (England) important numbers of common eider in the breeding and non-breeding seasons.
- 3.2.14 There are over 1,400 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) located throughout England. The purpose of LNRs is to provide the public with opportunities to study/learn about nature. To qualify for LNR status, a site must be of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment. The Evelyn Howick Memorial LNR is a disused limestone quarry with a fine example of Acre Limestone exposure and diverse habitats favoured by birds, amphibians and invertebrates.<sup>22</sup> The ponds around the edge of the site contain water plantain, bulrush and bur-reed, and are used by coots and moorhens, with frogs and smooth newts also present. Tufted duck, sparrowhawk and willow warbler are just a few of the bird species that can be seen at the reserve. Common mammals include stoats, moles and shrews. The grassland contains species such as bulbous buttercup, early purple orchid and mouse-eared hawkweed.
- 3.2.15 An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a statutory designation offering protection to areas of outstanding, distinct landscape character and natural beauty. There are 34 such designations in England. The eastern half of the NP area overlaps the Northumberland Coast AONB. This forms a narrow coastal strip, stretching from Berwick-upon-Tweed to Amble. Miles of open beach are complemented by extensive sand dunes. Special features include the island of Lindisfarne as well as numerous small islands and rocks of the Farne Islands. Areas of the coast include Whin Sill (tabular layer of dolerite, igneous rock) and ancient black basalt. The AONB includes several sites of SSSI including the Northumberland Shore and Howick to Seaton Point SSSIs (discussed above).

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<sup>22</sup> Northumberland Wildlife Trust <https://www.nwt.org.uk/nature-reserves/evelyn-howick-memorial>

**Figure 3-1 Biodiversity Designations in Longhoughton**



### 3.3 Future Baseline

- 3.3.1 A number of factors threaten protected and priority species and habitats within Northumberland. Notably recreational pressures, climate change, unsuitable land management and invasive species.
- 3.3.2 Development within the NDP area could encroach on certain habitats, threaten local species, and impact biodiversity networks in the absence of effective mitigation measures.
- 3.3.3 Increased development in the NDP area will place increased pressure on areas of biodiversity value due to land take for development and an increase in population. An increase in population is likely to lead to an increase in leisure and recreational pressure and increased demand for natural resources such as water. New development may lead to an increase in disturbance through human activity, loss of habitat, increased predation (e.g. from domestic pets), atmospheric, light, land and water pollution.
- 3.3.4 Habitats and species are likely to continue to be afforded protection through higher level planning policy (including the emerging NLP) and whilst these areas face increasing pressures from future development, planning policy should safeguard the most valued areas and protect ecological networks.

### 3.4 Key headline issues

- 3.4.1 There are several sites of high biodiversity importance within the NDP area. These include the Northumberland Shore, the Howick to Seaton Point and Longhoughton Quarry SSSIs. The risk impact zones associated with these SSSIs extend most of the NP area.
- 3.4.2 The NP area includes several SACs, SPAs such as the Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast SAC and the Northumbria Coast SPA. The latter is also a Ramsar site. The Northumberland Coast AONB overlaps the eastern half of the NP area.
- 3.4.3 Development in the NDP area could place increased pressure on areas of biodiversity value due to land take for development and an increase in population.

### 3.5 Scoping outcome

- 3.5.1 The SEA topic ‘Biodiversity’ has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA. There is potential for localised effects at sites that could be identified for development, as well as increased recreational pressure.
- 3.5.2 It will also be important to ensure that there are no significant adverse effects upon the numerous important biodiversity designated sites in the NDP area such as, the Berwickshire & North Northumberland Coast SAC, Northumbria Coast SPA and Ramsar site and the SSSI sites such as the Lower Northumberland Shore and the Howick to Seaton Point SSSIs.
- 3.5.3 There may also be opportunities to enhance ecological networks and achieve net biodiversity gains.

### 3.6 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Biodiversity SEA theme?

- 3.6.1 The SEA topic ‘Biodiversity’ has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 3.3 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

**Table 3.3 SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Biodiversity**

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support connections between habitats in the Plan area?</li> <li>• Avoid significant impacts on designated sites within and in the vicinity of the NP area including; the Northumberland Shore, Howick to Seaton Point and Longhoughton Quarry SSSIs and Northumberland Coast AONB?</li> <li>• Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area?</li> <li>• Achieve a net gain in biodiversity?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change?</li> </ul>

## 4. Climatic Factors (flood risk and climate change)

### Focus of theme:

- Greenhouse gas emissions;
- Effects of climate change and adaptation;
- Flood risk;

### 4.1 Policy Context

4.1.1 The UK Climate Change Act was passed in 2008 and established a framework to develop an economically credible emissions reduction path. It highlighted the role it would take in contributing to collective action to tackle climate change under the Kyoto Protocol, and more recently as part of the UN-led Paris Agreement. The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 means that there is now in place a legally binding target of net zero by 2050. The Climate Change Act includes the following:

- Commits the UK government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050. The target was based on a 2019 report; 'Net Zero-The UK's contribution to stopping global warming' and introduced into law through the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019.
- The Act requires the Government to set legally binding 'carbon budgets'. A carbon budget is a cap on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted in the UK over a five-year period. The carbon budgets are designed to reflect the cost-effective path to achieving the UK's long-term objectives. The first five carbon budgets have been put into legislation and run up to 2032.
- The Climate Change Committee (CCC) was set up to advise the Government on emissions targets, and report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Act requires the Government to assess the risks and opportunities from climate change for the UK, and to prepare for them. The associated National Adaptation Programme requires the Government to assess the risks to the UK from climate change, prepare a strategy to address them, and encourage key organisations to do the same.

4.1.2 The Clean Air Strategy released in 2019 sets out the Government plans for dealing with all sources of air pollution. The strategy sets out proposals in detail and indicates how devolved administrations intend to make their share of emissions reductions, and complements the Industrial Strategy, Clean Growth Strategy and 25 Year Environment Plan.

#### 4.1.3 Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF (2019) include:

- One of the three overarching objectives of the NPPF is an environmental objective to *‘contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment’ including by ‘mitigating and adapting to climate change’ and ‘moving to a low carbon economy.’ ‘The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.’*
- *Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.’*
- *‘Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.’*
- Direct development away from areas at highest risk of flooding (whether existing or future). *‘Where development is necessary, it should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.’*

4.1.4 In May 2019, the UK Parliament declared a climate emergency, with a view to explicitly acknowledging that human activities are significantly affecting the climate, and actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change should be paramount. This declaration has been mirrored by several local planning authorities across the country. Additionally, the shared vision produced by the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the Environment Agency in January 2020 outlines the use of nature-based solutions to tackle the climate and ecological emergency<sup>23</sup>. This includes through large-scale woodland planting in the right places, working with nature to manage flood risk, protecting and restoring peatlands, supporting farmers towards net zero, managing land in a more strategic way, as well as encouraging the use of less carbon intensive materials such as timber in construction.

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<sup>23</sup> GOV.UK (2020): ‘Environmental bodies set joint vision to tackle climate change’, [online] available to access via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environmental-bodies-set-joint-vision-to-tackle-climate-change>

4.1.5 The Flood and Water Management Act<sup>24</sup> highlights that alternatives to traditional engineering approaches to flood risk management include:

- Incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings, and retro-fitting properties at risk (including historic buildings);
- Utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding, for example through the management of land to reduce runoff and through harnessing the ability of wetlands to store water;
- Identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere;
- Planning to roll back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and
- Creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).<sup>25</sup>

4.1.6 DEFRA's National Adaptation Programme and Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting<sup>26</sup> is the second National Adaptation Programme (NAP). It sets out the government's response to the second Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) presenting the actions government is/ will be taking to address the risks and opportunities posed by a changing climate. It forms part of the five-yearly cycle of requirements laid down in the Climate Change Act 2008. The key actions include;

- Ensure that decisions on land use, reflect the level of current and future flood risk.
- Boost the long-term resilience of homes, businesses and infrastructure.
- Reducing risk of harm from flooding and coastal erosion through greater use of natural flood management solutions.
- Deliver more, better quality, local Green Infrastructure.
- Work to restore natural processes within river systems to enhance storage capacity.
- Set ambitious targets for water leakage reductions.
- Introduce a new Environmental Land Management scheme to deliver environmental outcomes.
- Implement Nature Recovery Network, linking habitat restoration/ creation to access, flood protection and water quality.

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<sup>24</sup> Flood and Water Management Act (2010) [online] available to access via:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

<sup>25</sup> N.B. The provision of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 came into force on the 1st of October 2012 and makes it mandatory for any development in England or Wales to incorporate SuDs.

<sup>26</sup> DEFRA The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting (July 2018) [online]

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/727252/national-adaptation-programme-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727252/national-adaptation-programme-2018.pdf)

- Incentivise good soil management to deliver environmental benefits.
- Introduce sustainable fisheries policy.
- Build ecological resilience on land, rivers, lakes and seas.
- Protect soils and natural carbon stores.
- Ensure a resilient food supply chain and review UK Food Security Assessment.
- Manage existing plant and animal diseases and reduce risk of future new ones.
- Tackle invasive on-native species.

4.1.7 Northumberland County Council is the lead local flood authority (LLFA) for the county as defined by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Under this role, it is the Council's responsibility to assist in the management of flood risk from local sources such as surface water, ordinary watercourses, groundwater, canals, lakes and small reservoirs. As a result, the Council has produced a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to outline how they will manage flood risk within local areas. The Key objectives from the Northumberland Local Flood Risk Management Strategy are<sup>27</sup>:

- Improve Knowledge and understanding of flood risk throughout Northumberland; Promote sustainable development to reduce local flood risk with consideration to the anticipated impact of climate change;
- Actively manage flood risk and drainage infrastructure to reduce the likelihood of flooding;
- Encourage communities to become more resilient to flooding by increasing public awareness and understanding their concerns; and
- Be better prepared for flood events and post flood recovery.

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<sup>27</sup> Northumberland County Council (2015) Local Flood Risk Management [online]  
<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Roads-streets-and-transport/coastal%20erosion%20and%20flooding/Local-flood-risk-management-strategy-action-plan.pdf>

4.1.8 The emerging NLP, Policy STP4; Climate change mitigation and adaptation, states that *'development proposals should mitigate climate change and contribute to meeting targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.'* The policy lists criteria to be considered when determining planning applications, these include;

- Development design that reduces the need to travel and encourages sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
- Are designed to reduce energy consumption;
- Incorporate decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy;
- Include the re-use of existing buildings, and materials;
- Incorporate multi-functional green infrastructure,
- Protect and enhance habitats that provide important carbon sinks, including peat habitats and woodland; and Incorporate electric vehicle charging facilities.

4.1.9 Policy STP4 further states that development proposals should support adaptation and resilience to climate change and not adversely impact the susceptibility of neighbouring areas to the effects of climate change. Criteria to be considered when determining planning applications include;

- Incorporation of features that provide resilience to climate change;
- Design that reduces demand on water resources;
- Take into account the risk of flooding and coastal change;
- Incorporate sustainable drainage systems to minimise and control surface water run-off; and
- Incorporate, where feasible, multi-functional green infrastructure.

4.1.10 NCC declared a 'climate emergency' vowing to halve carbon footprint by 2025 and make the county carbon neutral by 2030. NCC sets out how it is going about this in its second Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2023<sup>28</sup>. This includes a focus on both enabling activities (Policy, Engagement and Partnerships) and delivery activities (Heating; Transport; Renewable Energy Generation; Sequestration; Waste Reduction). Each of these priority action areas have a set of key targets detailed in the plan.

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<sup>28</sup> NCC Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2023 [online];  
<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/About-the-Council/Climate%20change/Climate-change-action-plan-2021-23.pdf>

## 4.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

#### Greenhouse gas emissions

- 4.2.1 The total per capita emissions figures for Northumberland (table 4.1) are lower than those for the North East region as a whole; this particularly the case from 2013 onwards. However, for 2005-2011 Northumberland's emissions were higher than those for England as a whole. The trend is reversed from 2013 onwards with Northumberland exhibiting lower emissions than average figures for England.
- 4.2.2 The pre 2013 Industrial and Commercial (I&C) emissions figures are significantly higher for Northumberland than the corresponding figures for the North East and England. However, the trend is reversed from 2013; with substantially lower I&C emissions figures observed (from 2013 onwards) for Northumberland than the corresponding figures over the same period for the North East
- 4.2.3 The data shows a trend of declining emissions for Northumberland, with the total emissions figure for 2018 representing an over 80% decline in emissions since 2005.

**Table 4.1: Per capita local CO<sub>2</sub> emission estimates; industry, domestic and transport sectors (kt CO<sub>2</sub>)<sup>29</sup>**

	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2018
<b>Northumberland</b>								
Industrial & Commercial	11.59	10.25	7.89	8.82	2.81	2.36	2.01	1.97
Domestic	2.82	2.69	2.47	2.29	2.40	1.96	1.76	1.73
Transport	2.14	2.15	1.97	1.92	1.87	1.96	2.04	1.99
<b>Total per capita</b>	<b>12.35</b>	<b>10.98</b>	<b>8.21</b>	<b>9.07</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>2.27</b>	<b>2.21</b>
<b>North East</b>								
Industrial & Commercial	9.08	8.68	6.93	4.98	6.70	5.13	3.13	2.92
Domestic	2.55	2.41	2.17	2.00	2.11	1.71	1.54	1.51
Transport	1.99	1.96	1.80	1.74	1.69	1.71	1.72	1.71
<b>Total per capita</b>	<b>13.09</b>	<b>12.51</b>	<b>10.37</b>	<b>8.19</b>	<b>10.01</b>	<b>8.08</b>	<b>5.92</b>	<b>5.67</b>
<b>England</b>								
Industrial & Commercial	3.79	3.61	2.96	2.73	2.80	2.27	1.85	1.80
Domestic	2.49	2.37	2.13	1.96	2.03	1.63	1.43	1.42
Transport	2.27	2.23	2.03	1.95	1.88	1.92	1.93	1.88
<b>Total per capita</b>	<b>8.49</b>	<b>8.14</b>	<b>7.04</b>	<b>6.55</b>	<b>6.62</b>	<b>5.72</b>	<b>5.12</b>	<b>5.00</b>

<sup>29</sup> National Statistics UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2018>

## Effects of climate change and adaptation

4.2.4 Climate change projections for the United Kingdom published as part of the UKCP18<sup>30</sup> programme provide detailed probabilistic projections of climate change. Although there is uncertainty in climate change predictions; the projected general trend is a move towards warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. However, natural variations mean that some cold winters, some dry winters, some cool summers and some wet summers will still occur. The following changes are likely to have taken place by 2070s. The changes mentioned below relate to an area in central England based on the 10-90<sup>th</sup> percentile range (low to high emissions) of emission scenario<sup>31</sup>:

- In UKCP18, the probabilistic projections provide local low, central and high changes across the UK, corresponding to 10%, 50% and 90% probability levels. These local values can be averaged over the UK to give a range of average warming between the 10% and 90% probability levels. By 2070, in the high emission scenario, this range amounts to 0.7°C to 4.2°C in winter, and 0.9°C to 5.4°C, in summer. For precipitation, corresponding ranges of UK average changes are -1% to +35% for winter, and -47% to +2% for summer, where positive values indicate more precipitation and negative values indicate reduced precipitation (drier summers).
- Hot summers are predicted to become more common, with the probability of a hot summer rising from the current 20-25% to up to 50% by the middle of the century.

4.2.5 Based on the above; in the future Longhoughton is likely to experience, a warmer climate, with drier summers and potentially wetter winters, which means that extreme events such as floods and droughts are likely to become less predictable and possibly more frequent.

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<sup>30</sup> Further information on the UKCP18 programme is available from:

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/index>

<sup>31</sup> Projections from UKCP18 Climate Change Over Land, which correspond to two emissions scenarios (Low and High). The medium emissions scenario - describes a world that has rapid economic growth, quick spreading of new and efficient technologies, and a global population that reaches 9 billion mid-century and then gradually declines. It also relies on a balance between different energy sources. The high emissions Scenario is characterised by similar economic and population trends as the medium emission scenario but with more reliance on power generation from fossil fuels. The low emissions scenario represents a more integrated ecologically friendly world, characterised by clean and resource efficient technologies, and lower global greenhouse gas emissions.

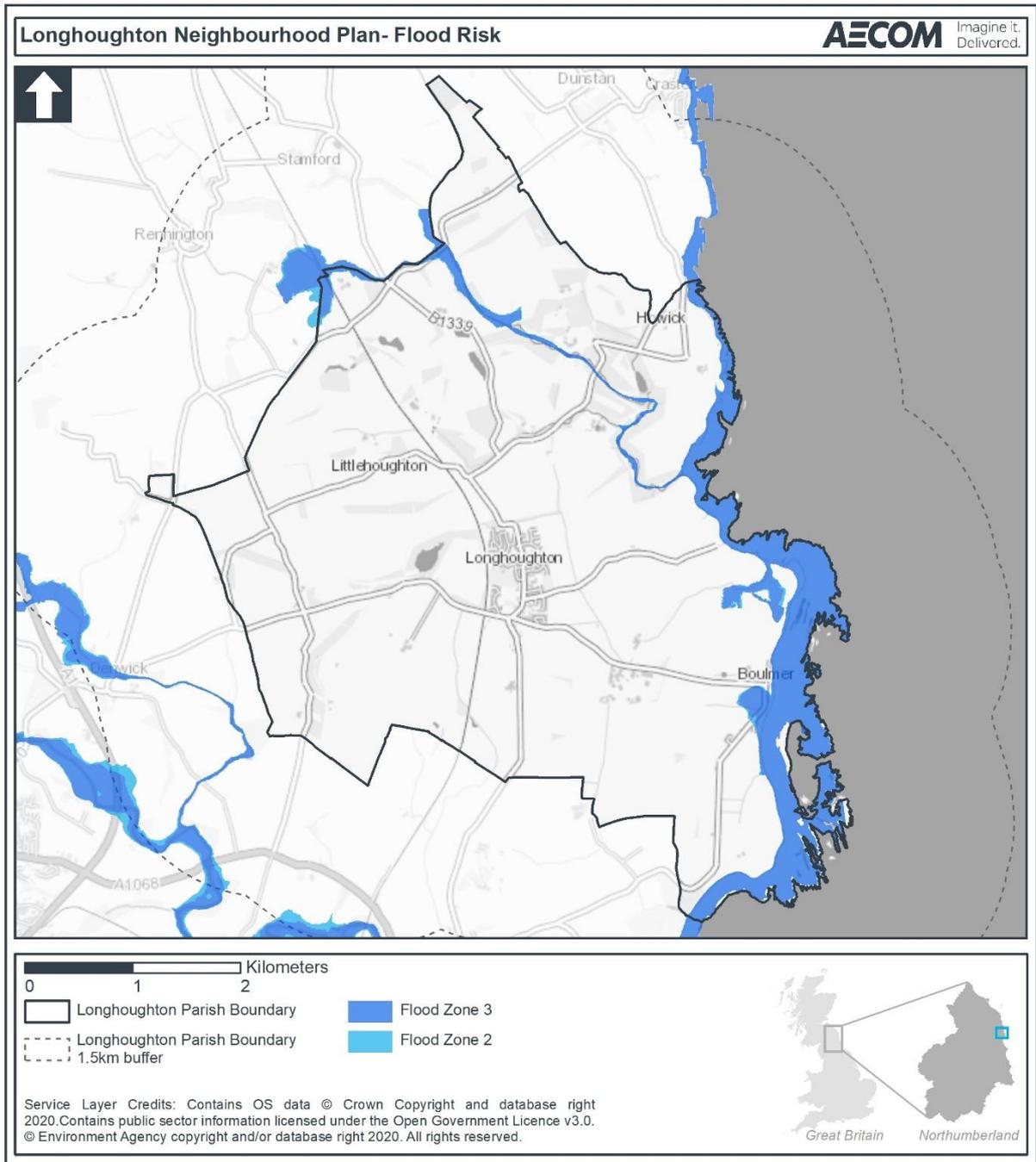
## Flood risk

- 4.2.6 A level 2 strategic flood assessment was completed in 2015 for Northumberland and looked at areas that would be at risk of pluvial flooding (surface water flooding), rivers/sea (fluvial/tidal), groundwater flooding, sewers and artificial sources such as reservoirs and canals. This helped to identify areas at particular risk of flooding in Northumberland. The assessment also included strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA) sites including 5 sites within Longhoughton. Of these, site West of Burnside (SHLAA ref. 44) was deemed to be at high risk of flooding (1 in 30 year exceedance probability). The Johnson House site (SHLAA ref 6524) was assessed to be at medium risk of flooding (1 in 100 year exceedance probability). The remaining sites were assessed as not being at risk of flooding.
- 4.2.7 Flood Zone 1 is defined as having a 'Low Probability' of flooding and incorporates areas where the annual probability of flooding is lower than 0.1% (a 1 in 1000 year flood event). Flood Zone 2 is defined as having a 'Medium Probability' of flooding, with an annual probability of flooding between 0.1% and 1.0% for fluvial flooding (between a 1 in 1000 year and 1 in 100 year flood event) or 0.1% and 0.5% for tidal and coastal flooding (between a 1 in 1000 year and 1 in 100 year flood event). Flood Zone 3 is defined as having a 'High Probability' of flooding, with an annual probability of beyond 1.0% for fluvial floods and beyond 0.5% for tidal and coastal floods.
- 4.2.8 Figure 4.1 indicates the location of flood zones 2 and 3 in Longhoughton. There is a narrow band of Zone 3 along the entire coastal area. Apart from the coastal areas there is an area of fluvial flooding risk (Flood Zone 3) but this is restricted to the Howick Burn water course. Otherwise, most of the NDP area is at low risk of flooding.

## Climate change adaptation

- 4.2.9 There is no baseline information or data relating specifically to climate change adaptation. However, there is a range of green infrastructure that will benefit communities in terms of flood risk, hotter summers and wetter winters. Northumberland's strategic green infrastructure (GI) includes international and national natural environmental designated sites, moorlands, forests and river valleys. It also includes blue infrastructure, such as; rivers, other water bodies and the sea. An analysis conducted by NCC concluded that there is an overall provision of 4,180 ha of accessible greenspace in the County provided through over 1,280 sites which translates to a provision of 13.4 ha per 1000 population. However, this varies across the county with the north area (which includes the NDP area) having the greatest provision at 18.3 ha per 1000 compared to the west area of the county which has significantly lower provision at 7.1ha per 1000 population (note this excludes the Northumberland National Park). At local level GI includes gardens, allotments, village greens, grassland, woodland and rights of way.

**Figure 4-1 Fluvial Flood Risk in the NDP area**



### Summary of future baseline

- 4.2.10 There is potential for climate change to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the NDP area. Such weather events are likely to increase the risks associated with climate change (including fluvial flooding) with an increased need for resilience and adaptation.
- 4.2.11 In terms of the exacerbation of climate change, GHG emissions could decrease through the adoption of energy efficient measures and cleaner energy (especially in transport and industry, which is a key contributor in the NDP area). However, increases in population and the number of households could counteract this.
- 4.2.12 Flood risk at any specific location may be influenced by local factors such as existing formal or informal flood defences and the capacity of existing drainage systems or road/rail culverts. The adoption of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDs) and introduction of Green Infrastructure within development schemes may reduce the speed of surface water run-off and have positive effects in terms mitigating flood risk.
- 4.2.13 Development in any instance has the potential to exacerbate flood risk within and in the vicinity of the NDP area by increasing the volume of surface water run-off, or by introducing areas of hard standing which could increase the speed of surface water run-off. The risk would be greatest if development were to take place in proximity of Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3 areas.
- 4.2.14 In the absence of the Plan, there will still be a need to satisfy policy measures relating to flood management.

### 4.3 Key headline issues

- 4.3.1 The key issues are as follows:
- Average per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are declining in Longhoughton and are below the regional and national average.
  - The NDP area falls predominantly within Flood Zone 1, although a stretch of Flood Zone 2 and 3 runs along the coastal areas and Howick Burn.
  - There is potential for surface water flooding to occur across the NDP area, although areas susceptible to this are scattered amongst areas with lower risk.
  - The likelihood of flooding from fluvial and non-fluvial sources could be exacerbated by development in the NDP area. However, opportunities for mitigation exist in sustainable design and Sustainable Urban Drainage.

## 4.4 Scoping outcome

4.4.1 With regards to climate change mitigation, the Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on carbon emissions. It is limited in the ability to implement higher standards of energy efficiency, and there are no plans in the scope of the Plan to identify areas of potential for renewable energy schemes. The scale of growth will not lead to significant emissions beyond what might be otherwise experienced in the absence of the Plan (likewise, any reduction is not likely to be significant). Therefore, this factor has been **SCOPED OUT** of the SEA process.

4.4.2 Resilience to climate change and flood risk has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA. There is the potential to explore how resilience to climate change can be enhanced as well as contributing towards flood risk mitigation. Flood risk could also be an important factor in terms of the site selection process.

## 4.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Climatic Factors SEA theme?

4.5.1 The SEA topic 'Climatic Factors' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 4.2 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

**Table 4.2: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Climatic Factors**

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Avoid and manage flood risk and support the resilience of the Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change?</li> <li>• Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk?</li> <li>• Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area?</li> <li>• Avoid placing development in areas that are at the greatest risk of flooding?</li> </ul>

## 5. Historic Environment

### Focus of theme:

- Designated heritage assets;
- Heritage at risk;
- Locally important features; and
- Archaeology and other historic records.

### 5.1 Policy Context

5.1.1 Heritage assets are protected under a number of different consents, required for new development and for carrying out works to existing buildings and sites including planning permissions and listed building consent. This requirement is covered in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The historic environment is managed using;

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest
- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 which provides specific protection for scheduled monuments

5.1.2 Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include:

- Heritage assets should be recognised as an *'irreplaceable resource'* that should be conserved in a *'manner appropriate to their significance'*, taking account of *'the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits'* of conservation, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to local character and distinctiveness.
- Plans should set out a *'positive strategy'* for the *'conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment'*, including those heritage assets that are most at risk.
- *'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss of less than substantial harm to its significance'*

5.1.3 The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England<sup>32</sup> (2010) sets out its vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life. The Heritage Statement (2017)<sup>33</sup> updates the 2010 Statement on the Historic Environment for England and sets out the Government's vision for supporting the heritage sector to help it to protect and care for heritage and the historic environment in the coming years, in order to maximise the economic and social impact of heritage and to ensure that everyone can enjoy and benefit from it.

5.1.4 Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1 – Second Edition (February 2019)<sup>34</sup> outlines ways to manage change that conserves and enhances historic areas in order to positively contribute to sustainable development. Principally, the advice note emphasises the importance of:

- Understanding the different types of special architectural and historic interest which underpin the designations; and
- Recognising the value of implementing controls through the appraisal and/or management plan which positively contribute to the significance and value of conservation areas.

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<sup>32</sup> DDCMS (2010) The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England [online] available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-governments-statement-on-the-historic-environment-for-england>

<sup>33</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2017) Heritage Statement; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-heritage-statement-2017>

<sup>34</sup> Historic England (2019): 'Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management: Advice Note 1 (second edition)'; <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/>

5.1.5 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA): Historic England Advice Note 8 (December 2016)<sup>35</sup> provides support to all stakeholders involved in assessing the effects of certain plans and programmes on the historic environment. It offers advice on heritage considerations during each stage of the SA/SEA process and helps to establish the basis for robust and comprehensive assessments. Advice Note 3 offers further guidance on how a positive strategy for the historic environment in Local Plans (also applies to neighbourhood plans) can ensure that site allocations avoid harming the significance of heritage assets, including effects on their setting<sup>36</sup>. It also recommends considering how the plan can present opportunities for the historic environment. For example, new development may better reveal the significance of heritage assets (NPPF paragraph 137) or may provide an opportunity to tackle heritage at risk through the sensitive development of specific sites.

5.1.6 The emerging Northumberland Local Plan sets out several policies pertaining to the heritage assets in the county;

- Policy ENV7 states that development proposals and decisions will be made to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the significance, quality and integrity of Northumberland's heritage assets and their settings.
- Policy ENV9 pertains to conservation areas and seeks to preserve or enhance their character and appearance and /or reinforce their attractiveness or better reveal their significance. Development that would lead to substantial harm would not be supported unless exceptional circumstances apply.

## 5.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

#### Designated Heritage Assets

5.2.1 The NDP area contains numerous heritage assets (see figure 5.1) including 53 listed buildings and a Scheduled Monument (Table 5.1). These buildings have been designated by Historic England as being of special interest by way of their historic and architectural value. Listing marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system, so that it can be protected for future generations. Grade I listed buildings in Longhoughton include the The Observatory (late C18 Gazebo and eyecatcher), Church of Saints Peter which dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> Century. There

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<sup>35</sup> Historic England (2016): 'SA and SEA: Advice Note 8'; <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>

<sup>36</sup> Historic England (2015) Advice Note 3: 'The Historic Environment and Site Allocation in Local Plans'; <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/heaq074-he-and-site-allocation-local-plans/>

- 5.2.2 Historic England 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England', established in 1983, currently identifies over 1,600 sites assessed to be of particular significance. The Register comprises gardens, grounds and other planned open spaces, such as town squares. The majority of sites registered are, or started life as, the grounds of private houses, but public parks and cemeteries form important categories too. Registration is a 'material consideration' in the planning process, meaning that planning authorities must consider the impact of any proposed development on the landscapes' special character. There are two such entries for Longhoughton; the extensive landscape parks and pleasure grounds developed from a series of medieval deer parks, around Alnwick Castle and the Late C18 parkland and early C19 wooded pleasure grounds associated with Howick Hall.
- 5.2.3 Scheduled Monuments are nationally important archaeological sites. Permission to alter scheduled monuments is required from the Secretary of State. The NP area has one Scheduled Monument representing a defended settlement, 600m south east of Red Stead. Defended settlements are a rare monument type, this example dates back to the Iron Age. They were an important element of the later prehistoric settlement pattern of the northern uplands and are important for any study of the developing use of fortified settlements during this period. All well-preserved examples are believed to be of national importance.<sup>37</sup>

**Table 5.1 Longhoughton Heritage Assets**

<b>Designations</b>	
Grade I	3
Grade II*	5
Grade II	45
Scheduled Monuments	1
Registered Parks & Gardens	2

<sup>37</sup> Historic England, [online] <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1014056>

### Heritage at Risk

5.2.4 Since 2008, Historic England has released an annual Heritage at Risk Register. The Heritage at Risk Register highlights some of the Grade I, Grade II and Grade II\* listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas, wreck sites and registered parks and gardens in England deemed to be 'at risk'. Whilst there are currently no heritage at risk entries on the Register for Longhoughton; disused listed buildings such as the Grade II\* Limekiln to east of the Limery, Little Mill, tend to suffer from exposure and encroachment of the surrounding environment<sup>38</sup>.

### Locally important features

5.2.5 In addition to designated heritage assets, the NP area is likely to contain many non-designated buildings and sites that contribute to the historic environment. The Historic Environment Record (HER) currently lists 158 entries for Longhoughton. These include air raid shelters, war memorials, cemeteries, churches, gravestones, farm buildings, houses/ cottages, Pillboxes etc.

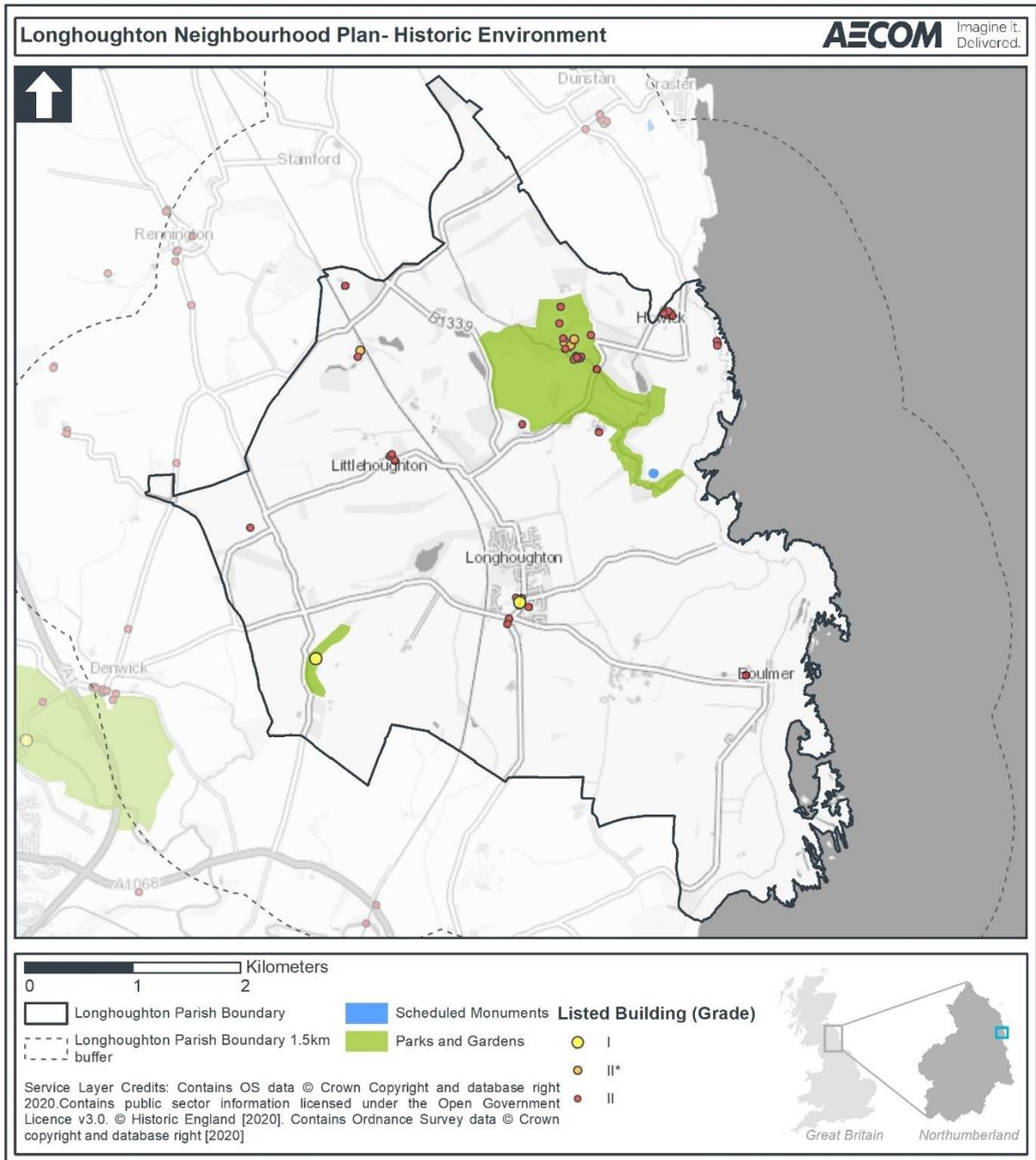
5.2.6 There are around 200<sup>39</sup> sites of archaeological interest within the NDP area. The majority being Bronze Age, Medieval, Iron age/ Celtic and Roman.

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<sup>38</sup> English Heritage report 2009 'Heritage at Risk register North East' [https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/har\\_register\\_north\\_east\\_2009/north\\_east\\_2009\\_har\\_register/](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/har_register_north_east_2009/north_east_2009_har_register/)

<sup>39</sup> ARCHI UK [https://www.archiuk.com/cgi-bin/archi\\_new\\_search\\_engine.pl?search\\_location=NU%2024%2015&search\\_type=archi\\_town\\_search&pwd=freesearch@freesearch.com&TownName=LONGHOUGHTON&county=Northumberland&search\\_range=10000&period=&font\\_size=&placename=Longhoughton&info2search4=archi\\_town\\_search&keywords=](https://www.archiuk.com/cgi-bin/archi_new_search_engine.pl?search_location=NU%2024%2015&search_type=archi_town_search&pwd=freesearch@freesearch.com&TownName=LONGHOUGHTON&county=Northumberland&search_range=10000&period=&font_size=&placename=Longhoughton&info2search4=archi_town_search&keywords=)

**Figure 5-1 Heritage designations in Longhoughton**



## Summary of future baseline

- 5.2.7 The numerous heritage assets in the NP area render the area sensitive to change. Heritage assets are significant not only due to their physical presence but also due to their setting. The NPPF defines setting as “the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.” Setting include, inter alia, key views of the asset in its wider context.
- 5.2.8 Development in the NDP area has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets and upon the character of the townscape. This may lead to negative effects, such as the delivery of unsympathetic design and material use. Conversely, it could lead to positive effects through redevelopment of derelict and underused land and buildings. In the absence of a plan, there is less strategic direction for the Parish though; meaning that negative effects may be more likely to occur.
- 5.2.9 It should be noted that historic environment designations and the historic environment related policies within the Local Plan<sup>40</sup> and the emerging Northumberland Local Plan, would offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings.

## 5.3 Key headline issues

### 5.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- The NDP area contains numerous heritage assets including a Scheduled Monument, Listed Buildings and Parks/ Gardens, which could be affected by policies and proposals within the plan (either positively or negatively). Furthermore, there are numerous non-designated heritage assets in the NP area which are particularly vulnerable to change, and these must be similarly protected by assessing the impacts of policies/ proposals on their significance and contribution to the historic environment. Assessment of the significance of affected heritage assets (a statement of heritage significance) must stem from the interest(s) of the heritage asset (archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic)<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The saved policies of Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan 1999 and the emerging Northumberland Local Plan.

<sup>41</sup> Historic England Advice Note 12 “Statements of Heritage Significance: “Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets”

## 5.4 Scoping outcome

5.4.1 Historic Environment has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as there is potential for significant effects upon heritage assets and their settings. It is also important to ensure that the wider character of the built and natural environment is protected and enhanced.

## 5.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Historic Environment SEA theme?

5.5.1 The SEA topic 'Historic Environment' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 5.2 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

**Table 5.2 SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Historic Environment**

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Protect, enhance and manage the integrity, distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the wider built environment. Promote heritage-led sustainable tourism	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment?</li> <li>• Contribute to better management of heritage assets?</li> <li>• Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?</li> <li>• Consider the impact on setting in a manner proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected.</li> <li>• Promote heritage-led regeneration?</li> <li>• Lead to the repair and adaptive re-use of a heritage asset and encourage high quality design?</li> </ul>

## 6. Landscape

### Focus of theme:

- Landscape and townscape character and quality

### 6.1 Policy Context

6.1.1 The European Landscape Convention (introduced in UK in 2007) promotes the protection, management and planning of landscapes and organises international co-operation on landscape issues. It covers land and water (inland and seas), natural, rural, urban and peri-urban landscapes.

6.1.2 Key messages from the NPPF include;

- *‘Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty [...]. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited.’*
- *Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy making provision for ‘conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure.’*
- *Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments ‘are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation of change (such as increased densities).’*
- *‘Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
  - *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils*
  - *recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; and*
  - *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.’*

6.1.3 The Government's 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' (2018) sets out a series of goals for improving the environment and how they will work with communities and businesses over the next 25 years to achieve them. Actions proposed of relevance to the conservation and enhancement of landscape character are as follows:

- Working with AONB authorities to deliver environmental enhancements.
- Identifying opportunities for environmental enhancement of all England's Natural Character Areas and,
- Monitoring indicators of landscape character and quality.

6.1.4 Natural England has produced 15 National Character Area profiles<sup>42</sup> (2015) for the North East of England; each of which, is distinctive with a unique 'sense of place'. These broad divisions of landscape form the basic units of cohesive countryside character, on which strategies for both ecological and landscape issues can be based.

6.1.5 The Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment looks at the character of the landscape within Northumberland and what makes it distinctive. It identifies the 44 different character types and the 108 distinctive landscape character areas across Northumberland.<sup>43</sup> These areas, their geology, topography, soils, biodiversity, woodland, human and historic influences, landform, land use and built form, are discussed in detail. It further sets out general guidelines relevant to the whole district but also specific guidelines for the management of each of the landscape character areas presented.

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<sup>42</sup> In-depth profiles are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles#ncas-in-north-east-england>

<sup>43</sup>LUC report (Aug. 2010); 'Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment' prepared for Northumberland County Council; <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-and-Building/planning%20policy/Studies%20and%20Evidence%20Reports/Landscape%20Green%20Spaces%20Studies/1.%20Landscape%20Character/Landscape-Character-Part-A.pdf>

6.1.6 The emerging Northumberland Local Plan sets out some policies that are relevant to the townscape and landscape of Longhoughton;<sup>44</sup>

- Policy ENV3 Landscape: The possibility of wider impacts on the landscape, townscape or seascape or of other significant impacts on the environmental resource will be assessed through the proportionate use of landscape and visual impact assessment;
- Policy ENV4 Tranquillity, dark skies and a sense of rurality: development proposals must minimise intrusive external features such as car parking and urban style boundary treatments and maintain the sense of openness of the countryside. Development should not result in an adverse impact on the level of dark skies particularly in AONBs such as Northumberland Coast AONB.
- ENV5 Northumberland Coast AONB; the special qualities of the AONB will be conserved and enhanced. The sensitivity of local landscapes and their capacity to accommodate new development will be taken into consideration when assessing development proposals.

6.1.7 The Northumberland AONB Management Plan sets out the special qualities of the AONB and considers the changes and pressures that could pose harm to these. The current management plan covers 2020-2024. The plan has the following vision for 2040;

- *‘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.’*

The plan adds; *‘the primary purpose to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB is the overriding principle underlying this Plan.’*

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<sup>44</sup> Northumberland County Council; Northumberland Local Plan Publication Draft Plan (Jan. 2019); <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-and-Building/planning%20policy/Local%20Plan/Northumberland-Local-Plan-Reg-19-Publication-Draft-January-2019-Web-PDF-Version.pdf>

## 6.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

6.2.1 The NDP area falls within the North Northumberland Coastal Plain National Character Area (NCA) as defined by Natural England (figure 6.1). This broad NCA provides the context to the character of the NP area. Its key characteristics are;

- Narrow, low-lying coastal plain with wide views east of the coast and out to sea, and west to the Northumberland Sandstone Hills and Cheviots.
- Diverse coastal scenery with the ‘hard’ coast of spectacular high cliffs, offshore islands and rocky headlands contrasting with the ‘soft’ coast of sweeping sandy bays, sand dunes, mudflats and salt marsh.
- Prominent, distinctive medieval castles, fortifications and religious buildings
- Limited woodland cover confined to small blocks and shelterbelts adjacent to farmsteads and settlements, with larger areas of mixed broadleaved woodland in the river valleys and around the Howick estate.
- Farmed landscape comprising large, open arable fields, with some remnant semi-natural grassland in the valleys and coastal fringes. Fields are bounded by low, often fragmented hedgerows, grey sandstone walls and post-and-wire fences.
- The rivers Tweed, Aln and Coquet, and numerous smaller watercourses, meander across the coastal plain to the sea.

6.2.2 The Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment<sup>45</sup> provides the most detailed assessment of landscape character in the NDP area. The NDP area overlaps the Farmed Coastal Plain and Rocky Coastline, landscape character types (LCT).

6.2.3 The Farmed Coastal Plain LCT comprises generally low-lying gently rolling landscape with broad flat areas with some small rounded hills. The area is drained by the small burns running down from the hills. Arable farmland predominates with frequent, unmaintained hedgerows. Tree cover is greater in the south, sparse to the north. Coniferous forestry occurs in small blocks. The area includes the Longhoughton Quarry SSSI.

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<sup>45</sup> LUC Report 2010 “Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment-Part A Landscape Classification”; <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-andBuilding/planning%20policy/Studies%20and%20Evidence%20Reports/Landscape%20Green%20Spaces%20Studies/1.%20Landscape%20Character/Landscape-Character-Part-A.pdf>

- 6.2.4 The landscape includes small linear villages such as Longhoughton; characterised by traditional stone buildings with some sympathetic and less sympathetic infill. Features include farmsteads in warm-coloured local sandstone, and sometimes with brick chimneys. The area comprises open landscape with varying degrees of enclosure due to changing levels of tree cover. The landscape also serves as access to the adjacent coastal AONB where the tourist sites are concentrated. There is a footpath network, several cycle routes, several caravan parks and historical features such as towers (Preston) and estate centres at Howick and Cheswick. Large country houses and their estates are an important aspect of historic. There are Registered Parks and Gardens at Belford Hall, Howick Hall, and Ratcheugh Crag.
- 6.2.5 The Rocky Coastline LCT; falls largely within the Northumberland Coast AONB. It comprises the rocky sections of the coastal strip, including prominent headlands and cliffs forming a dramatic shoreline with offshore rocks and islands. The LCT contains small fishing villages (now tourism centres), exposed coastal landscape with major historic features providing popular tourist attractions. Longhoughton overlaps the Craster Coast landscape character area of this LCT. This straight section of coast has few bays and little sand, the exception being the natural harbour of Boulmer Haven. The coast is low-lying. 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<sup>46</sup>.

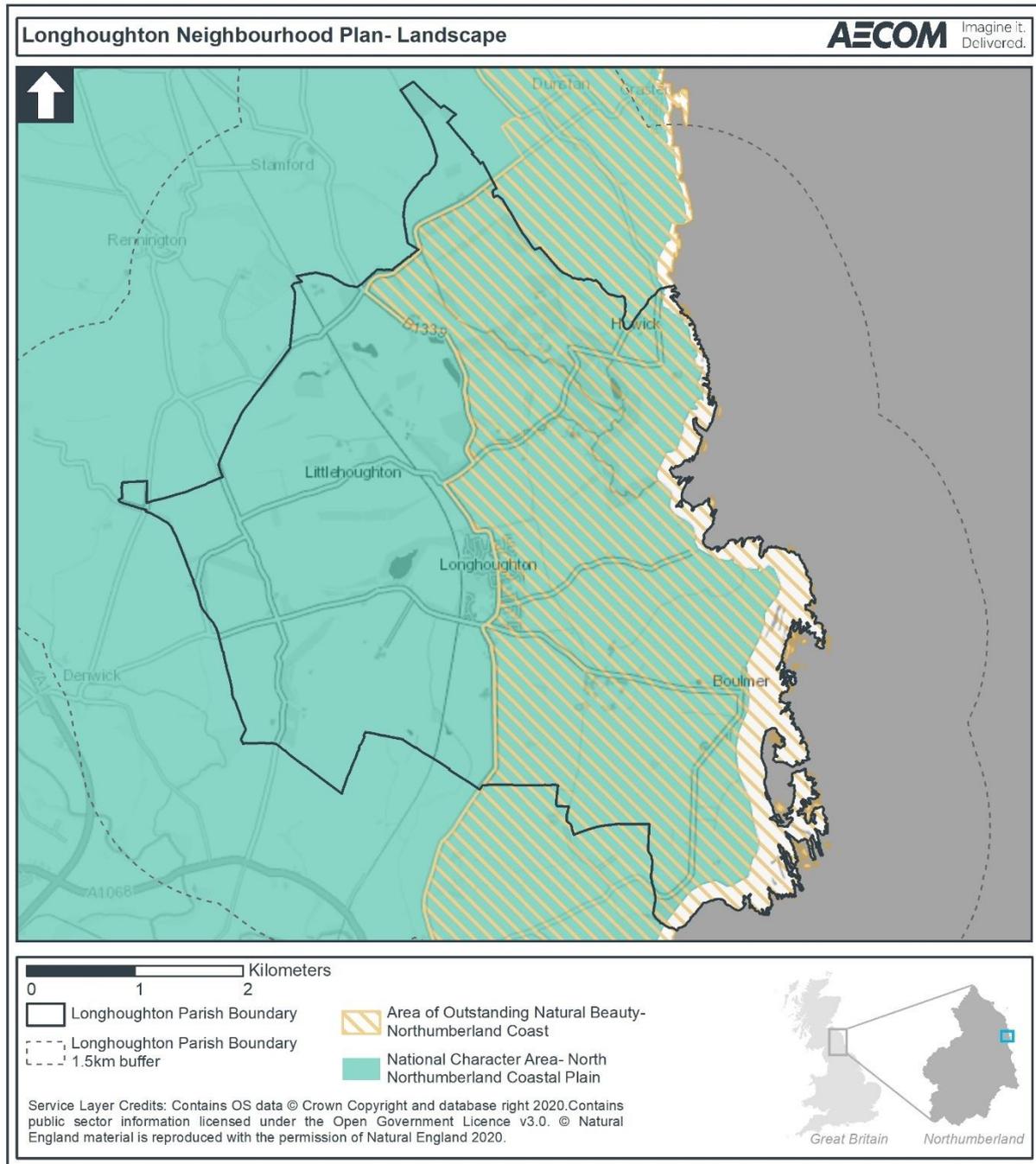
#### Summary of future baseline

- 6.2.6 The existing Development Plan and emerging NLP policies offer a degree of protection to the Northumberland Coast AONB and other landscape assets within the NP area. However, depending on the scale of development, a lack of overall vision and framework could result in the delivery of less sympathetic development styles, layouts and material choice. This could have a disruptive impact on the landscape through the lack of cohesive development. Insensitive development could also result in the loss of landscape features and adverse visual impact. Conversely, sensitive development presents an opportunity to enhance the existing townscape character of Longhoughton whilst respecting the key characteristics of the landscape.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid

**Figure 6-1 Longhoughton National Character Areas**



## 6.3 Key headline issues

### 6.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- There are valuable landscapes in the NP area that make a significant contribution to the character of the area. These comprise the Farmed Coastal Plain and Rocky Coastline LCT.
- A substantial part The NP area overlaps the Northumberland Coast AONB. The AONB is subject to pressures such as climate change (rise in sea levels and loss of coastal habitats and coastal erosion), loss of EU funding (through EU programmes such as LIFE and RDPE) and intense development pressure<sup>47</sup>.
- The existing Development Plan and the emerging NLP's policies offer a degree of protection to landscape assets and their settings, but insensitive development could have a disruptive impact on landscape.

## 6.4 Scoping outcome

6.4.1 Landscape has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA as there is potential for significant effects upon the character of landscapes. The NDP allocates sites for housing and the NDP can potentially have impacts (positive and negative) on landscape.

## 6.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Landscape SEA theme?

6.5.1 The SEA topic 'Landscape' has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 6.1 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

**Table 6.1: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Landscape**

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions
Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance landscape assets including the Northumberland Coast AONB?</li> <li>• Contribute to better management of landscape assets?</li> <li>• Identify and protect/enhance features of local importance?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the surrounding landscape?</li> <li>• Improve linkages to open space and the countryside?</li> </ul>

<sup>47</sup> Source: Northumberland Coast AONB Management Plan 2020-2024

## SEA Objective

## Supporting Questions

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# 7. Land, Soil and Water Resources

### Focus of theme:

- Soil resource and quality;
- Watercourses;
- Water availability; and
- Water quality.

## 7.1 Policy Context

7.1.1 The EU's Soil Thematic Strategy<sup>48</sup> (2006) presents a strategy for protecting soil resources in Europe. The main aim of the strategy is to minimise soil degradation and limit associated detrimental effects linked to water quality and quantity, human health, climate change, biodiversity and food safety.

7.1.2 Adopted in October 2000, the purpose of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater, driving a catchment-based approach to water management. In England and Wales there are 100 water catchments and it is Defra's intention is to establish a 'framework for integrated catchment management' across England. The Environment Agency is establishing 'Significant Water Management Issues' and recently presented second River Basin Management Plans to ministers. The plans seek to deliver the objectives of the WFD namely:

- Enhance the status and prevent the further deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and associated wetlands which depend on aquatic ecosystems;
- Promote the sustainable use of water;
- Reduce the pollution of water, especially by 'priority' and 'priority hazardous' substances;
- Ensure the progressive reduction of groundwater pollution; and
- Contribute to achieving 'good' water quality status for as many waterbodies as possible by 2027.

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<sup>48</sup> European Commission (2006) Soil Thematic Strategy [online] available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/three\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/three_en.htm)

### 7.1.3 Key messages from the NPPF include:

- ‘Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
  - i. protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils; and*
  - i. recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.’*
- Prevent new or existing development from being ‘adversely affected’ by the presence of ‘unacceptable levels’ of soil pollution or land instability and be willing to remediate and mitigate ‘despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate’.
- ‘Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.’
- ‘Encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains.’
- Planning policies and decisions should ‘give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs’, and ‘promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings.’
- Taking a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for water supply.
- Prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution.
- The government has produced a separate plan that specifically deals with planning policy in relation to waste management; this should be read in conjunction with the NPPF.

7.1.4 In Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England<sup>49</sup> (2009), a vision is set out for the future of soils in the country. It suggests that changing demands on our soils need to be better understood and it must be ensured that appropriate consideration is given to soils in the planning process.

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<sup>49</sup> Defra (2009) Safeguarding our Soils: A strategy for England [online] available at: <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/quality/land/soil/documents/soil-strategy.pdf>

- 7.1.5 The Future Water<sup>50</sup> strategy (2011) seeks to achieve a secure supply of water resources whilst protecting the water environment. This means greater efficiency in water use, application of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, managing diffuse pollution from agriculture, tackling flood risk and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 7.1.6 The Government's 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' (2018) sets out a series of goals for improving the environment and how they will work with communities and businesses over the next 25 years to achieve them. This includes using and managing land sustainably by protecting the best agricultural land, improving soil health and restoring and protecting peatlands. This also includes respecting nature by using our water more sustainably and requiring developments to bring about a net environmental gain which can include water quality.
- 7.1.7 River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) set out a framework for how all river basin stakeholders, including water companies and local communities, can help improve the quality of the water environment. There are eight RBMPs in England which all have a harmonised plan period of 2015-2021 and are reviewed every five years.
- 7.1.8 The Water Resources Management Plan<sup>51</sup> (2019) by Northumbria Water sets out how the organisation will ensure the sufficient supply of water over a 40-year period.
- 7.1.9 Northumberland County Council has conducted Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA) in 2010 and 2015 which are to be used as a way to identify all sources of flooding and assess the risk posed to each local area. Such assessments allow the areas which are potentially at risk of flooding to be identified, and a management strategy to be adopted.
- 7.1.10 The emerging NLP's, Policy POL2; seeks to protect soil and water quality by requiring development to; maintain soil quality, protect displaced soils and improve water quality. Development resulting in soil and/or water pollution would be required to incorporate pollution prevention/ reduction measures. However, where the likely pollution levels are deemed unacceptable, development would not be supported. Similarly, policy POL3 seeks to protect 'best and most versatile' agricultural land by withholding support for development unless the need for it clearly outweighs the need to protect BVM land and there are no suitable alternative sites on lower quality or previously developed and.

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<sup>50</sup> Defra (2011) Future Water – The government's water strategy for England [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-water-the-government-s-water-strategy-for-england>

<sup>51</sup> Northumbria Water (2019) Northumbria Water Resource Management Plan. Available at: <https://www.nwg.co.uk/responsibility/environment/wrmp/current-wrmp-2015-2020/>

7.1.11 The emerging NLP's Policy WAT1 seeks to ensure that water bodies achieve 'good status' by 2021 preventing any deterioration in their status. This would be achieved by;

- Supporting development and/or landscape measures that maintain, or enhance water quality, including bathing water;
- Not supporting development likely to have an adverse impact on water bodies (surface, ground and mine water) and ensuring that any development with potential impacts on water would bring about improvements to the affected water environment.
- Avoiding any reduction in the 'high status' of certain surface water bodies and assessing the effects of development on designated Bathing Waters.

7.1.12 Policy WAT2 of the emerging NLP seeks to ensure that water supplies and sewerage infrastructure will be maintained and secured having regard to the findings of the Northumberland Water Cycle Study. This includes ensuring the protection of existing abstraction sources and obtaining assurance from water provider that the supply capacity can support proposed development. Similarly, the policy seeks to ensure that sewerage treatment capacity can support proposed development.

## 7.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

#### Soil resources

7.2.1 The Agricultural Land Classification categorises land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are the 'best and most versatile' land (BVM) and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality.

7.2.2 As illustrated in Figure 7.1 the NDP area comprises a mix of non-agricultural land (urban use and other non-agricultural use). The limited post 1988 survey data shows some areas to be Grade 2 and Grade 3a BVM land. The majority of agricultural land is classified as grade 3, although it is likely some of this will include 3a BVM land.

## Watercourses

7.2.3 The NDP area overlaps the Berwick to Alnmouth Coast Operational Catchment (OC) part of the Northumberland Rivers Management Catchment (MC) which extends southwards from Berwick-upon-Tweed to the Blyth Valley, with the Cheviot Hills to west and the North Sea to the East. There are several water courses in this OC including the Rennington Burn from Source to North Sea which runs through the NP area (the water body includes Stamford Burn and Howick Burn). The overall classification (Table 7.1)<sup>52</sup> for this water body is 'Poor' (2019). The Environment Agency (EA) measures the quality of England's rivers in two ways. An ecological measure examines the diversity and health of its wildlife, while a chemical measure assesses whether rivers contain too much sewage, phosphate or other harmful substances. In this instance Polybrominated diphenyl ethers (flame retardants) and Mercury compounds are cited as main reason for the chemical 'Fail' status. Typically, such compounds are discharged to the environment through wastewater treated wastewater effluent and wastewater treatment sludge spreading.

**Table 7.1 EA Cycle 2 Classification: Rennington Burn**

<b>classification</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2019</b>
Ecological	Good	Moderate	Moderate	Poor	Poor
Chemical	Good	Good	Good	Good	Fail

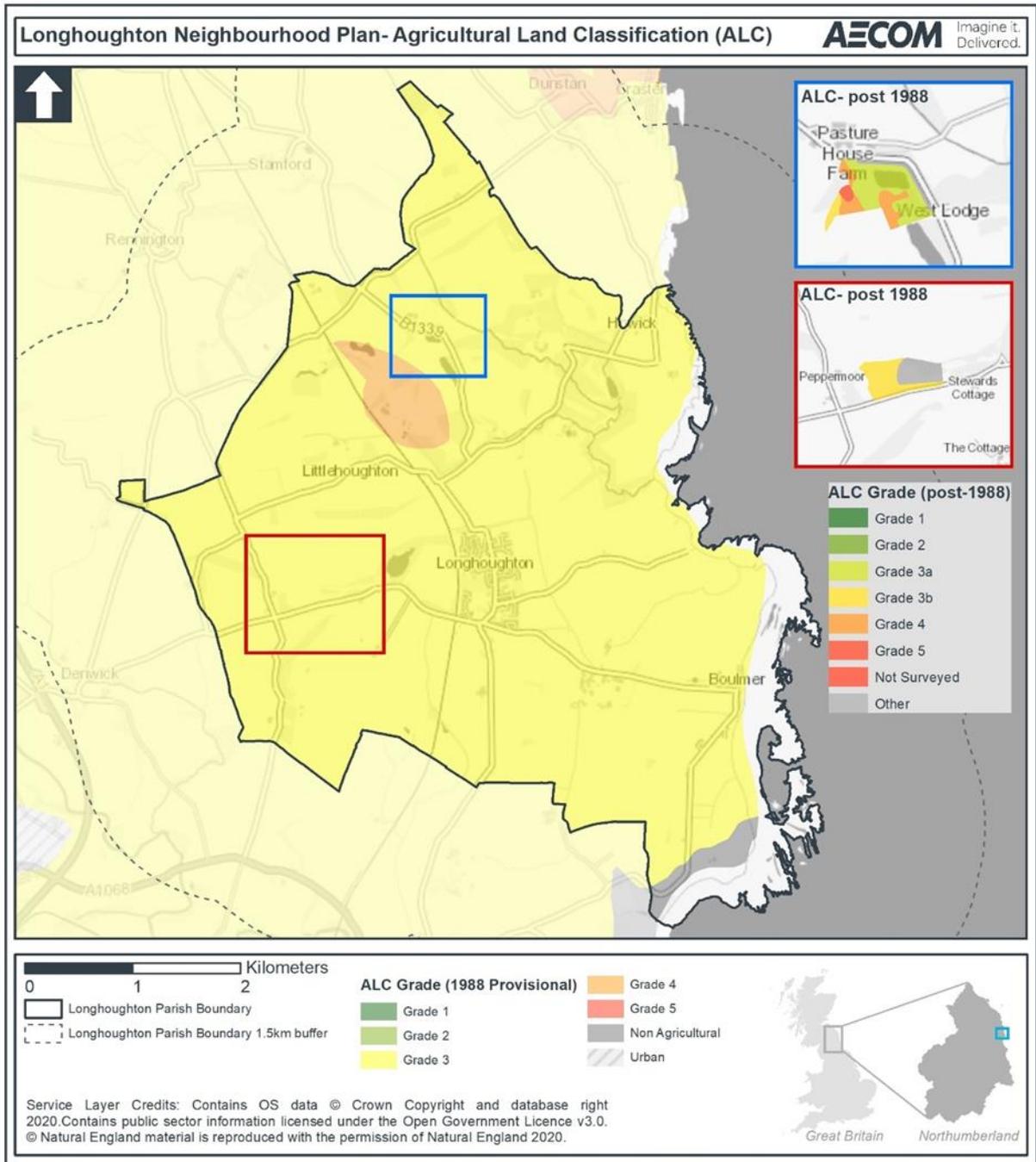
## Water quality

7.2.4 Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been designated 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. There are no SPZs within the NDP area.

7.2.5 The Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC) requires Member States to identify areas where groundwaters have nitrate concentrations of more than 50 mg/l nitrate or are thought to be at risk of nitrate contamination. Areas associated with such groundwaters are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) within which, Member States are required to establish Action Programmes in order to reduce and prevent further nitrate contamination. The NDP area does not fall within a Groundwater NVZ.

<sup>52</sup> Source: EA Rennington Burn Water Body [online] <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/WaterBody/GB103022076360>

**Figure 7-1 Indicative Agricultural Land Classification**



## Summary of future baseline

- 7.2.6 In terms of water quality; requirements set out in the Water Framework Directive are likely to lead to continued improvements to water quality in watercourses in the wider area. However, water quality could be affected by pollution incidents in the area, the presence of non-native species and physical modifications to water bodies.
- 7.2.7 Water availability in the area may be affected by increases in population and an increased occurrence of drought exacerbated by the effects of climate change, but this is likely to be negligible.
- 7.2.8 Development which requires sewage treatment may, if not designed correctly or located appropriately, result in an increased risk of pollution to groundwater and surface water. Development will therefore need to have due consideration to the capacity of sewage works.
- 7.2.9 It is unlikely that large amounts of agricultural land would be lost to development, as future development is likely to fall within or adjacent to the built area of Longhoughton and to be proportionate to local housing need and demand. However, it might be possible that higher grades of land are affected with un-planned, ad hoc growth.

## 7.3 Key headline issues

- 7.3.1 The key issues are as follows:
- The NDP area mainly consists of non-agricultural land and Grade 3 agricultural land. Some of this is likely to be best and most versatile land.
  - There are Groundwater NVZs or Groundwater Source Protection Zones in the NDP area.
  - Development could drastically change the land and soil quality and adversely affect water quality, but effects could be avoided.

## 7.4 Scoping outcome

- 7.4.1 The topic of 'Land, Soil and Water Resources' has been **SCOPED OUT** of the SEA, as the Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on land and water quality.
- 7.4.2 There are important soil resources in the NDP area that ought to be avoided. However, the limited scale of development proposed in the NDP is unlikely to exceed 10ha, and so a significant effect upon soil resources is considered unlikely in any event. For this reason, soil is scoped out of the SEA. This does not mean that higher quality agricultural land should not be protected.
- 7.4.3 As the NDP area does not overlap SPZs or NVZ, it is considered unlikely that significant effects upon water quality would occur as a result of the NDP. With regards to waste water treatment and drainage, the NDP is not expected to cause issues to existing and planned infrastructure, and so significant effects in this respect are also unlikely. Consequently, water quality has been scoped out of the SEA

## 8. Population and Housing

### Focus of theme:

- Population size and age structure;
- Housing delivery and needs;
- Housing tenure;
- Housing affordability.

### 8.1 Policy Context

#### 8.1.1 Key messages from the NPPF include:

- One of the three overarching objectives of the NPPF is a social objective to; *‘support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural wellbeing.’*
- To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing, strategic policies *‘should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.’*
- The size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required and expect it to be met on-site where possible.
- Recognise the important contribution of small and medium sized development sites in meeting housing needs. Local Plans should identify land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare, and neighbourhood planning groups should also consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites.
- In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate. Authorities should consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

- Ensure that developments create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion. Places should contain clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high-quality public spaces, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.
- Ensuring that there is a *'sufficient choice of school places'* and taking a *'proactive, positive and collaborative approach'* to bringing forward *'development that will widen choice in education'*.

8.1.2 In February 2017, the Government published a housing white paper entitled 'Fixing our broken housing market'. This establishes the government's plans to reform the housing market and increase the supply of new homes in England through a series of four proposals. These including planning for the right homes in the right places, building homes faster, diversifying the house building market and supporting people in need of housing.

8.1.3 The Northumberland Housing Strategy<sup>53</sup> outlines the Councils commitment to ensure that; 'The population of Northumberland have access to a home that is safe, warm and affordable, and that help and support is available to those that are unable to meet their own housing need'. The report goes on to state the diversity of the Northumberland housing context whereby there is a need for a variety of types and tenures across the area, and an increase in dwelling units to cater to the growing population.

8.1.4 The Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment<sup>54</sup> (2018) provides an update to a review in 2015 of housing requirements in the county and establishes an objective assessment of the need for additional housing provision. The report concludes that an additional 885 dwelling per annum are required within the Northumberland County Council area.

8.1.5 The emerging Northumberland Local Plan classifies Longhoughton as a 'Service Village' in the settlement hierarchy. These are described (para. 4.36 NLP) as generally having *'a school or a shop, and population of a size considered likely to maintain the viability of such services into the future. They have a reasonable level of public transport to enable residents to access some higher level services without the reliance upon private transport.'* Policy STP1 states that such villages *'will provide proportionate level of housing and be the focus for investment in rural areas, to support the provision and retention of local retail, services and facilities.'*

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<sup>53</sup> A Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2016-2021, Available:

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Housing/Housing-Strategy-2013-2018.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> Northumberland County Council (2018) Northumberland SHMA partial update [online] available at:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-and-Building/planning%20policy/Studies%20and%20Evidence%20Reports/Housing%20Studies/2.%20SHMA/NCC-SHMA-June-2018.pdf>

- 8.1.6 The emerging NLP's, Strategic Policy HOU3; Housing requirements for neighbourhood plan areas allocates 88 homes in Longhoughton NP area (over the period 2018-2036).

## 8.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

#### Age Structure

- 8.2.1 In 2019, the population of Longhoughton was estimated to be 1,84155 having declined by around 6% since 2011 (1,960). In comparison, Northumberland has seen a 2% increase in population since 2011<sup>56</sup>.
- 8.2.2 Table 8.1 and figure 8.1 show the age structure of the local population in comparison to that of Northumberland and England. It is apparent that Longhoughton has a higher than average number of residents in the 0-15, 16-24 and 25-44, age groups compared to Northumberland and England as whole. The trend is reversed for 45 and over groups with Longhoughton showing a notably lower proportion of residents in the 45-64 and 65-84 age groups, compared to Northumberland and England.

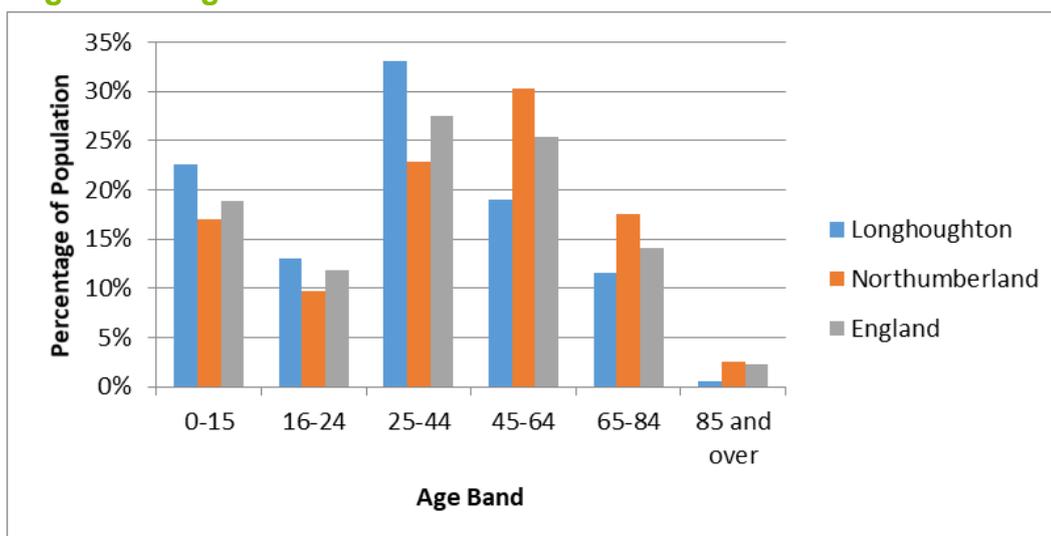
**Table 8.1 Age Structure in 2011 (ONS)**

	Longhoughton	Northumberland	England
<b>0-15</b>	23%	17%	19%
<b>16-24</b>	13%	10%	12%
<b>25-44</b>	33%	23%	28%
<b>45-64</b>	19%	30%	25%
<b>65-84</b>	12%	18%	14%
<b>85+</b>	1%	3%	2%
<b>Total population</b>	1,960	316,028	53,012,456

<sup>55</sup> ONS Population Estimates mid-2019.

<sup>56</sup> ONS 2011 Census Table KS101EW

**Figure 8-1 Age Structure**



### Housing Delivery and Tenure

8.2.3 With regards to housing delivery, Table 8.2 shows that over the last 5 years 1,489 dwellings were completed, per annum, on average; which is considerably higher than the target set in the emerging new Northumberland Local Plan. A variation in delivery rates is also apparent with drops in delivery in 2015/16 and 2017/18. The trend in net completions suggests a gradual increase in housing delivery in Northumberland since 2011.

**Table 8.2 Net Housing Completions in Northumberland<sup>57</sup>**

	2011/12	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
<b>Completions (net)</b>	559	1,447	991	1,531	1,376	1,802	1,744
<b>Housing requirement</b>	-	-	-	885	885	885	885
<b>Supply</b>	-	-	-	+646	+491	+917	+859

<sup>57</sup> Source: NCC

8.2.4 With regards to housing tenure, data from the 2011 census shows that the proportion of owner occupation in the NDP area is substantially less than in Northumberland and England (see Table 8.3). The proportion of private rents is substantially higher in Longhoughton than for Northumberland and England. Conversely, the proportion of socially rented accommodation (rented from the Council or a Registered Social Landlord) is smaller in the NDP area than in Northumberland and England.

**Table 8.3 Housing Tenure in 2011 (ONS Housing Tenure)**

	Longhoughton	Northumberland	England
<b>Owned (Total)</b>	44%	66%	63%
<b>Shared Ownership</b>	0.1%	0.4%	0.8%
<b>Socially Rented</b>	13%	19%	18%
<b>Private Rented</b>	40%	13%	17%
<b>Living Rent Free</b>	3%	2%	1.2%

8.2.5 Table 8.4 shows how tenure has changed in the NDP area between the 2001 and 2011 censuses. Private rented housing has seen the largest increase, more than doubling compared to 2001 levels. Whilst the proportion of owner occupiers also rose substantially (84%) in the intercensal period in contrast to the much smaller increase (4.6%) for Northumberland and the 0.6% decrease for England.

8.2.6 The proportion of socially rented accommodation has increased by 8.4% compared to a decrease of 8% for the Northumberland and a decrease of 0.9% for England. The table also shows that shared ownership declined by 66%, however this is starting from a very low base.

**Table 8.4 Trends in tenure between 2001-2011<sup>58</sup>**

	Longhoughton	Northumberland	England
<b>Owned (Total)</b>	84.4%	4.6%	-0.6%
<b>Shared Ownership</b>	0.0%	-0.2%	30.0%
<b>Socially Rented</b>	7.1%	-8.2%	-0.9%
<b>Private Rented</b>	164.4%	93.0%	82.4%

<sup>58</sup> Source: 2001 and 2011 Censuses, AECOM calculations

8.2.7 Table 8.5 replicates data from the Longhoughton Parish Property Analysis Summary<sup>59</sup>. Significantly, the table shows that Boulmer has a far lower rate of full-time occupied households compared to the other wards in the parish. This can be attributed to Boulmer’s higher proportion of second homes and holiday lets, which when combined equal 37.5% of all households in the ward.

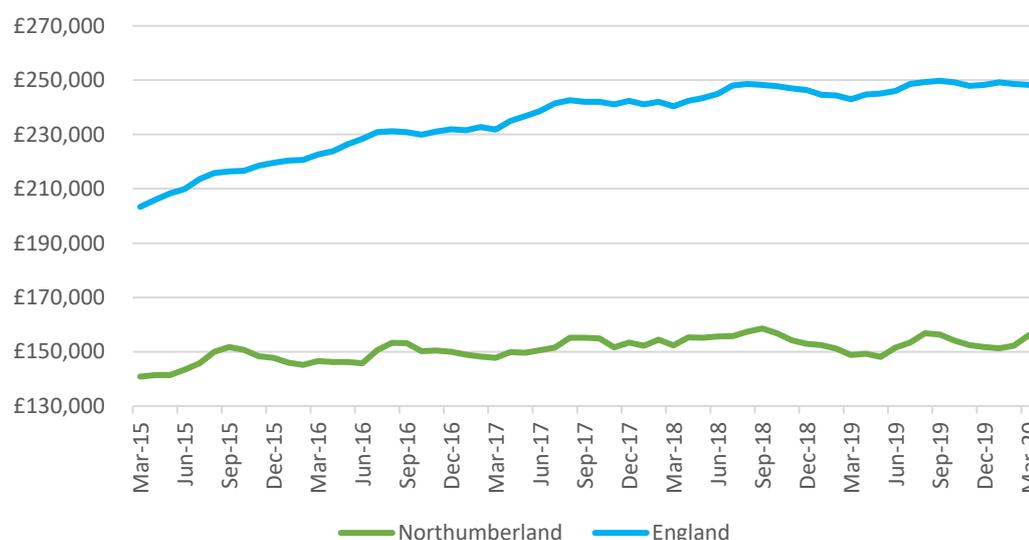
**Table 8.5 Longhoughton parish property analysis summary**

Household Type	Longhoughton Ward		Boulmer Ward		Howick Ward		Parish totals	
Property Numbers	636	100%	80	100%	80	100%	796	100%
Occupied Full time	609	95.8%	49	61.3%	69	86.3%	727	91.3%
Second homes	12	1.9%	10	12.5%	0	0%	22	2.8%
Holiday Lets	14	2.2%	20	25%	10	12.5%	44	5.5%
Unoccupied	1	0.16%	1	1.25%	1	1.25%	3	0.4%

8.2.8 The average house price in Northumberland in March 2020 (£155,568) showed a 4.5% increase on March 2019 (see Figure 8.2). The average property price for England was £249,402. Therefore, the average house prices in Northumberland are significantly lower than the national average.

8.2.9 The average detached house price in Northumberland in March 2020 was £262,209, which is a 4.97% increase on March 2019 (£249,792). The average semi-detached house price was £147,921, and the average terrace was £121,669.

**Figure 8-1 Average house prices for all property types 2015 to 2020<sup>60</sup>**



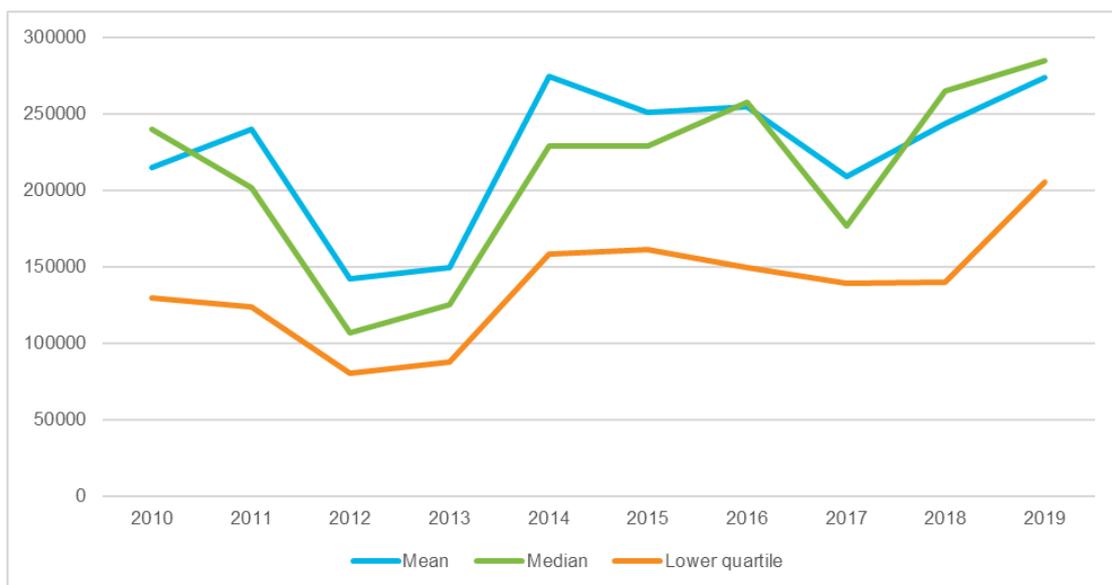
<sup>59</sup> Source: LPC, Longhoughton Parish Property Analysis Summary May 2020

<sup>60</sup> Source: UK HPI

8.2.10 Property prices within the NDP area vary widely depending on exact location. Whilst the HIP data doesn't include Parish level information, Zoopla quotes £292,743 as the average price paid (all property types) in Longhoughton based on sales data over the 12 months to 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The website quotes an average price of £117,000 for terraced properties, £150,000 for Semi-detached and £338,241 for Detached properties within Longhoughton <sup>61</sup>.

8.2.11 The trend in house prices in the NDP area (Figure 8.3) shows that whilst there has been an overall increase, considerable fluctuations in house prices can be observed over the ten-year period. House prices were at their lowest point in 2012 as seen by the decrease in the mean, median and lower quartile house prices. Median and lower quartile prices peaked in 2019. Mean house prices peaked in 2014; however, by 2019 the mean prices had reached a similar level to the 2014 peak.

**Figure 8-2 House prices by quartile in Longhoughton 2010-2019**



<sup>61</sup> Zoopla market activity data; [online] accessed 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021; <https://www.zoopla.co.uk/house-prices/browse/longhoughton/?q=longhoughton%2C%20Northumberland>

8.2.12 A recent housing needs assessment (HNA) carried out by AECOM for LPC calculated the annual income required for different tenures in the NDP area. The 'income required' column (Table 8.6) sets out the annual income needed to support ongoing housing costs, but does not reflect the cost of a deposit (which we have assumed to be 10% of the value to be purchased) or the possibility that households able to access market housing for purchase may already hold equity from an existing property. The HNA concluded that the income required to buy an average market home for sale is higher than those on median household incomes can afford. Likewise, the income required to buy an average entry-level home for sale is also higher than those on median household incomes can afford. Entry-level homes are therefore well out of the price range of those on lower quartile household earnings.

**Table 8.6 Affordability thresholds in Longhoughton (income required, £)**

<i>Tenure</i>	<i>Mortgage Value</i>	<i>Rent</i>	<i>Income required</i>
<b>Market Housing</b>			
Median House Price	£256,500	-	<b>£73,286</b>
LA New Build Mean House Price	£211,313		<b>£60,375</b>
LQ/Entry-level House Price	£185,164	-	<b>£52,904</b>
Average Market Rent	-	£6,816	<b>£22,720</b>
Entry-level Market Rent	-	£6,276	<b>£20,920</b>
<b>Affordable Home Ownership</b>			
Discounted Market Sale (-20%)	£228,000	-	<b>£58,629</b>
Discounted Market Sale (-30%)	£199,500	-	<b>£51,300</b>
Discounted Market Sale (-40%)	£171,000	-	<b>£43,971</b>
Shared Ownership (50%)	£26,452	£8,572	<b>£35,024</b>
Shared Ownership (25%)	£13,226	£12,859	<b>£26,085</b>
<b>Affordable Rented Housing</b>			
Affordable Rent	-	£5,002	<b>£16,675</b>
Social Rent	-	£3,962	<b>£13,208</b>

## Summary of future baseline

- 8.2.13 Population trends in the NDP area show a declining population (6% since 2011). The majority of residents (69%) are in the 0-44 age groups with almost a third in the 64 plus age group. Given the large proportion of younger residents in the NDP area, it is likely that population will grow, or the rate of decline will decrease as younger residents start families. However, this will depend on various factors including provision of local housing and employment. Conversely, the substantial proportion of residents in the 64+ age group is likely to grow with time.
- 8.2.14 Average house prices in Longhoughton are substantially higher than average prices for Northumberland. The income required to buy an average market home for sale is higher than those on median household incomes can afford. Likewise, the income required to buy an average entry-level home for sale is also higher than those on median household incomes can afford. Entry-level homes are therefore well out of the price range of those on lower quartile household earnings. In the long term house prices are likely to continue to increase, though prices may fluctuate in the interim.
- 8.2.15 The emerging Northumberland Local Plan sets out a housing need of 88 dwellings for the NDP area (to 2036).
- 8.2.16 Social and economic changes as a result of COVID-19 are likely to effect housing including but not limited to, housing need, affordable housing need, the type of housing required locally and house prices. However, the impact of COVID-19 on housing need is uncertain at this stage.

## 8.3 Key headline issues

8.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- The population of Longhoughton has declined by around 6% between 2011 and 2020.
- Net housing completions trend in Northumberland currently exceed the local housing need and trends over the last 5 years indicate an increase in housing delivery.
- Average house prices in Longhoughton are considerably higher than the regional average for Northumberland with entry-level homes well out of the price range of those on lower quartile household earnings.
- The emerging Northumberland Local Plan sets out a housing need for the NDP area of 88 dwellings for the period up to 2036.
- It is likely that COVID-19 will have an effect on housing factors, but these are uncertain at this stage.

## 8.4 Scoping outcome

- 8.4.1 The SEA topic ‘Population and Housing’ has been **SCOPED IN** to the SEA. The NDP intends to allocate sites for housing delivery. It includes policies pertaining to affordable housing which will influence the nature of housing delivered within the Plan area, associated infrastructure and services required to support sustainable communities.

## 8.5 What are the SEA objectives and appraisal questions for the Population and Housing SEA theme?

- 8.5.1 The SEA topic ‘Population and Housing’ has been scoped in to the SEA. Table 8.7 presents the SEA objective and appraisal questions that will be used to assess the plan in relation to this theme.

**Table 8.7: SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions: Population and Housing**

<b>SEA Objective</b>	<b>Supporting Questions</b>
Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the provision of a responsive range of house types and sizes to meet identified needs of different community groups?</li> <li>• Support the provision of affordable housing in the NP area.</li> <li>• Create sustainable new communities with good access to a range of local services and facilities?</li> </ul>

## 9. Health and Wellbeing

### Focus of theme:

- Health indicators and deprivation; and
- Influences on health and wellbeing.

### 9.1 Policy Context

9.1.1 There are numerous links between planning and health highlighted throughout the NPPF. Paragraph 69 of the NPPF states that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that Local Planning Authorities should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in Local Plans and in planning decision-making.

9.1.2 Key messages from the NPPF include:

- One of the three overarching objectives of the NPPF is a social objective to; *‘support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural wellbeing.’*
- *‘Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.’*
- Policies and decisions should take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community.
- Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of communities. Development should avoid building on existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields.
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

9.1.3 Fair Society, Healthy Lives ('The Marmot Review')<sup>62</sup> (2011) investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is: 'overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities.

9.1.4 Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On (2020) has been produced by the Institute of Health Equity and commissioned by the Health Foundation to mark 10 years on from the landmark study Fair Society, Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review)<sup>63</sup>.

The report highlights that:

- people can expect to spend more of their lives in poor health;
- improvements to life expectancy have stalled, and declined for the poorest 10% of women;
- the health gap has grown between wealthy and deprived areas; and
- place matters – for example living in a deprived area of the North East is worse for your health than living in a similarly deprived area in London, to the extent that life expectancy is nearly five years less.

9.1.5 Public Health England (PHE) has a key role in shaping health policy and practice across the country. In 2017 the organisation published 'Spatial Planning for Health: An evidence resource for planning and designing healthier places'<sup>64</sup>. The review provides guidance on the role of the built and natural environment in shaping health impacts. The review also explores the impacts of neighbourhood design, provision of housing, transport and the natural environment on public health. Additionally, in 2018 PHE produced a 'Healthy High Streets'<sup>65</sup> briefing which highlights how health inequalities can be addressed in the design of the built environment.

9.1.6 The emerging NLP's policy STP5, Health and Wellbeing, supports development which promotes the health and wellbeing of residents. It states that development proposals will be required to demonstrate;

- they are safe, inclusive and prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement
- encourage community cohesions and social interaction

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<sup>62</sup> The Marmot Review (2011) The Marmot Review: Implications for Spatial Planning [online] available at: <http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/12111/53895/53895.pdf>

<sup>63</sup>Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years on (2020) [online] available to access via <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/reports/the-marmot-review-10-years-on>

<sup>64</sup> Public Health England (2017) Spatial Planning for Health An evidence resource for planning and designing healthier places [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/729727/spatial\\_planning\\_for\\_health.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729727/spatial_planning_for_health.pdf)

<sup>65</sup> Public Health England (2018): 'Healthy High Streets: Good Place-Making in an Urban Setting', [online] available to access via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-high-streets-good-place-making-in-an-urban-setting>

- provide access to a range of facilities including public transport, health, education, green spaces and leisure facilities
- include green space and blue infrastructure where appropriate and contribute towards urban greening
- they are designed to promote and facilitate physical activity and healthy lifestyles

9.1.7 Policy STP6 of the emerging NLP, Green infrastructure; seeks to protect and enhance GI, stating that; '*development proposals should seek to protect, improve and extend green infrastructure*'. It requires that several criteria be taken into consideration when assessing development proposals, including how these;

- protect/ enhance strategic and/or local GI, link existing assets and GI networks within adjacent authority areas and,
- improve access to GI, rights of way and cycling routes
- secure biodiversity net-gains through ecological networks
- provide opportunities for growing healthy food, including through community schemes
- comply with national standards for GI

## 9.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

#### Health indicators

- 9.2.1 According to the Northumberland Health Profile 2019<sup>66</sup>, the health of people in the Borough is varied compared with the England average.
- The life expectancy for both males (79.5) and females (82.8) and the under 75 mortality rates is significantly better than the regional average and similar to the England average.
  - People in Northumberland are significantly more likely to self-harm or be admitted to hospital due to alcohol or violent crime related incidents than those across England.
  - The percentage of physically active adults (72.1%) is significantly greater than regional (64.9%) and national (67.2%) averages.
- 9.2.2 In terms of healthcare facilities, the nearest hospital is Alnwick Infirmary, which is around 5-6 miles from the centre of Longhoughton. There are three GP surgeries within a 3.5 mile radius, four Dentists within a 4 mile radius and 2 pharmacies within a 4 mile radius.
- 9.2.3 There are several Leisure centres within a 5 miles radius at Alnwick. The Longhoughton Community & Sports Centre at Westfield Park is a community venue providing outdoor football pitches. The venue also runs fitness and slimming classes.
- 9.2.4 Access to open space and green infrastructure is widely recognised to have a positive effect on health by encouraging and facilitating outdoor activity. Longhoughton has several green open spaces such as fields and meadows, including Pond Field, Old Recreation Field. To the east of the NDP area there are a number of publicly accessible beaches and coastal paths for leisure and recreational use.
- 9.2.5 Longhoughton is surrounded by open countryside, featuring woodland, rivers, ponds, fields, footpaths and bridleways. The NDP area further includes numerous formal and informal walking and cycle routes.

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<sup>66</sup> Public Health England (2019) Northumberland Local Authority Health Profile 2019 [online] available at: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles>

## Deprivation

9.2.6 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD) 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:

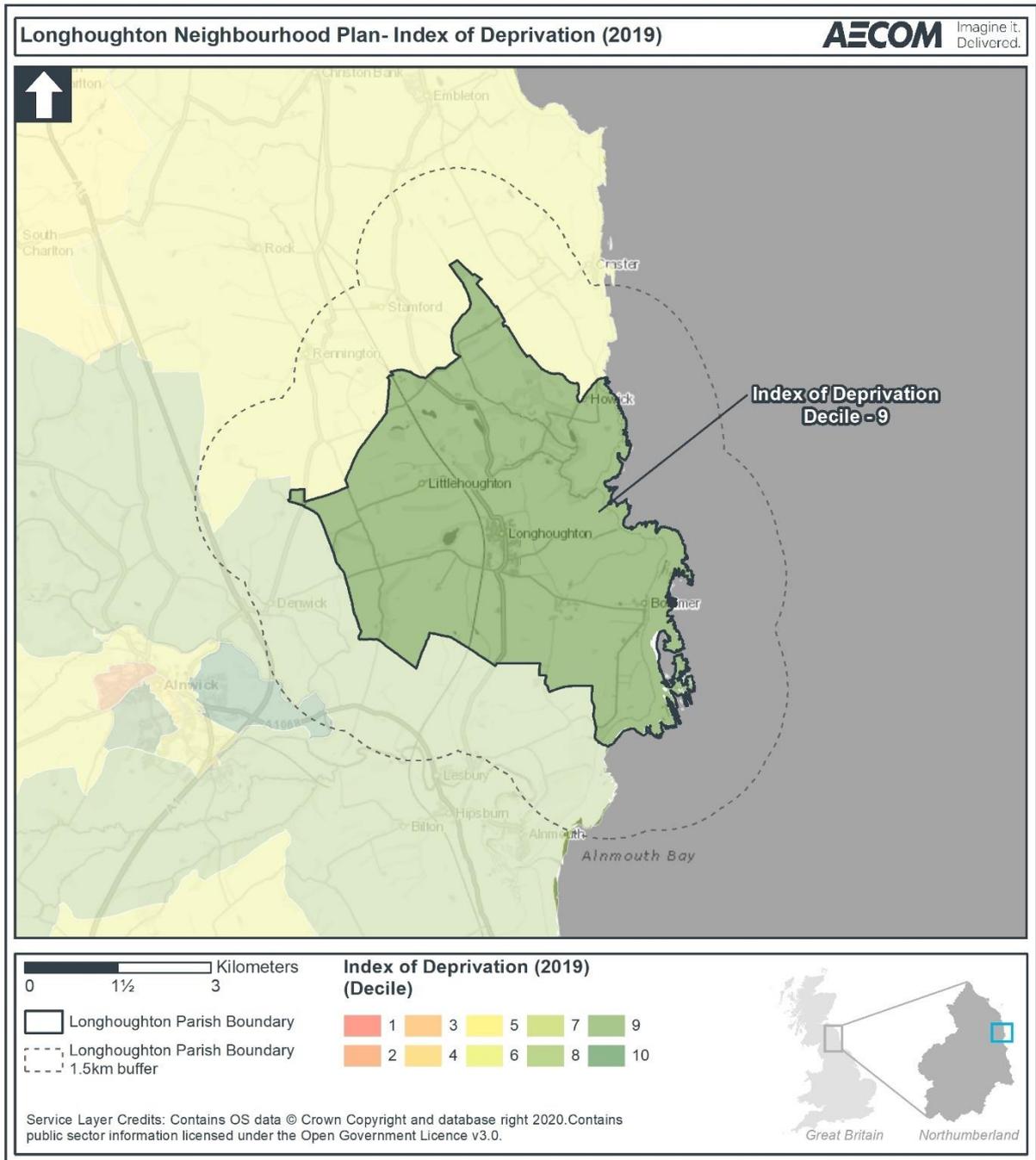
- **Income:** The proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income, including those individuals that are out-of-work and those that are in work.
- **Employment:** The proportion of the working-age population in an area involuntarily excluded from the labour market, including those who would like to work but are unable to do so due to unemployment, sickness / disability, or caring responsibilities.
- **Education, Skills and Training:** The lack of attainment and skills in the population.
- **Health Deprivation and Disability:** The risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health. Morbidity, disability and premature mortality are also considered.
- **Crime:** The risk of personal and material victimisation at local level.
- **Barriers to Housing and Services:** The physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services.
- **Living Environment:** The quality of the local environment, including the quality of housing stock, air quality and road traffic incidents.

Two indices, subsets of the Income deprivation domain, are also included:

- **Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index:** The proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.
- **Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index:** The proportion of all those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation.

9.2.7 As illustrated in Figure 9.1 below, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019) data for the NDP area show the majority of the area to be in the 9th decile (decile 1 is the most deprived and decile 10 is the least deprived); representing 20% of the least deprived areas in England.

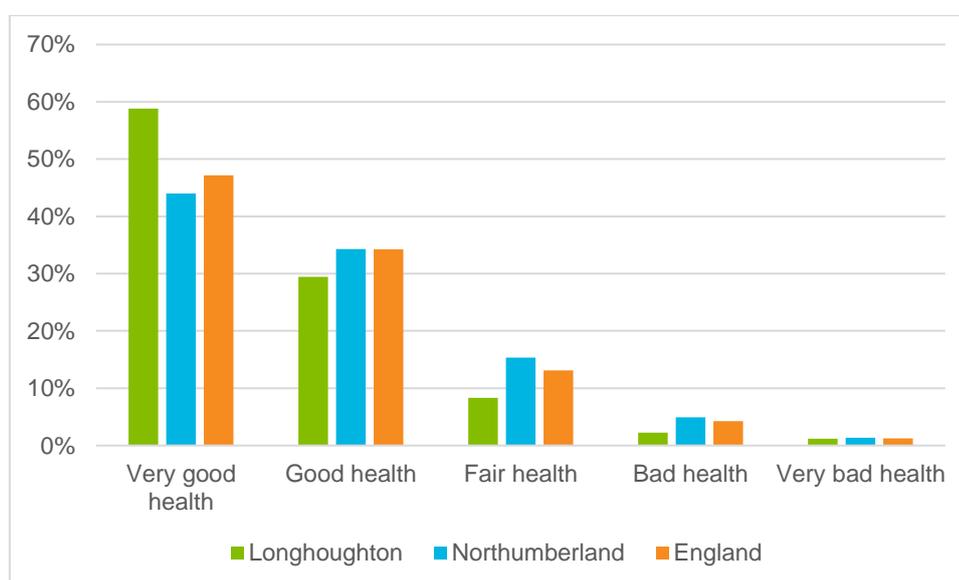
**Figure 9-1 Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 in and around the NDP area**



9.2.8 A self-assessment of health by residents in the NDP area indicated that most residents in Longhoughton consider themselves to be in very good health (59%), followed by good health (29%), and that only 3% of residents consider their health to be bad or very bad (Figure 9.2).

9.2.9 These trends are similar to the national pattern with the key difference being that Longhoughton has a notably larger proportion of residents that consider themselves to have very good health (59%) compared to the regional (44%) and national average (47%). Those considering themselves to be in Bad health are also lower in Longhoughton (2%) compared to regional (5%) and national (4%) average.

**Figure 9-2 Residents General Health (Census 2011: KS301EW)**



### Summary of future baseline

9.2.10 It is likely that with time the growth in the 65+ age group is likely to increase pressure on health and social care services and facilities in the NDP area. Conversely, there is a larger proportion of residents within the younger age groups (compared to regional and national averages). Therefore, the resident population may increase as younger residents (if they choose to remain in the NDP area) start families.

## 9.3 Key headline issues

### 9.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- Longhoughton has a broadly healthy population with life expectancy on average higher than the rest of the region and on par with the national average.
- The NDP area is within the 20% least deprived category with no pockets of deprivation.
- There are several health and recreational facilities within the NDP area.
- With time, the older age groups (currently about a third of the population) will increase and this may place additional pressures on health and social services.

## 9.4 Scoping outcome

9.4.1 The Plan has the potential to engender effects on health and wellbeing, as development on allocated sites could lead to benefits with regards to affordable housing access, or negatives in terms of amenity disturbance. However, given the small scale of development proposed within the draft LNP; this is unlikely to produce significant effects on health and wellbeing.

9.4.2 With this in mind and given the good levels of health enjoyed by residents of the NP area (and low levels of deprivation) the SEA topic 'Health and Wellbeing' has been **SCOPED OUT**.

## 10. Transportation

### Focus of theme:

- Transportation infrastructure;
- Accessibility; and
- Modes of travel.

### 10.1 Policy Context

#### 10.1.1 Key messages from the NPPF (2019);

- *‘Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:*
- *The potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
- *Opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised;*
- *Opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
- *The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account; and*
- *Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.’*
- *‘Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.’*

10.1.2 The Transport for the North Strategic Transport Plan<sup>67</sup> (2018) sets out a plan for transport infrastructure investment in the North of England with an aim of supporting economic growth through enhanced connectivity and higher productivity.

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<sup>67</sup> Transport for the North (2018) Strategic Transport Plan [online] available at: <https://transportfornorth.com/stp/>

- 10.1.3 Northumberland County Council has produced a Northumberland Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2026 to support the national agenda, and establish the Councils vision, aims and objectives for transport over this period. It outlines the commitment to deliver reliable, resilient and efficient transport networks, reduce carbon emissions, increase accessibility and safety, and to use transport as a tool to improve the quality of life for those within the Northumberland area.
- 10.1.4 The Walking and Cycling Strategy<sup>68</sup> which derives from the LTP aims to develop a well maintained network using Good design combined with the right encouragement and promotion to provide the right environment for walking and cycling to flourish.
- 10.1.5 The emerging Northumberland Local Plan seeks to create a sustainable pattern of development which will result in a reduction in the need to travel, with the majority of development focused in the most sustainable locations. Alongside reducing the need to travel, the critical importance of ensuring connectivity is fully recognised. The emerging local plan seeks to maintain and support a local transport system with connections that are resilient and responsive to changing needs.

## 10.2 Baseline Summary

### Summary of current baseline

- 10.2.1 The NDP area is served by a network of highways that run through and connect Longhoughton to settlements across north east England and Scotland. The A1 runs parallel to the western boundary of the NDP area. The B1339 runs through the parish (north to south) linking it to the A1068 at Lesbury in the south then joining the B1340 near Embleton to the North. The B1340 joins the NP area to Alnwick and the A1.
- 10.2.2 The nearest railway station is at Alnmouth around 4 miles from Longhoughton village. This is on the East Coast Mainline which runs between London King's Cross and Edinburgh Waverley. The station is served by a number of services to Edinburgh, Newcastle and London.
- 10.2.3 The NDP area is served by a limited number of local bus routes (service 418) that connect it to Alnwick, Craster, Seahouses, Bleford. However, these are infrequent (around 2 hourly during weekdays) and no services run on Sundays. Express services (X18Max) link the area to Newcastle upon Tyne in the south to Berwick-upon-Tweed in the north. National Express coach services run from Alnwick, linking the area to Newcastle-upon-Tyne via (Morpeth) to the south and Berwick-upon-Tweed to the north.

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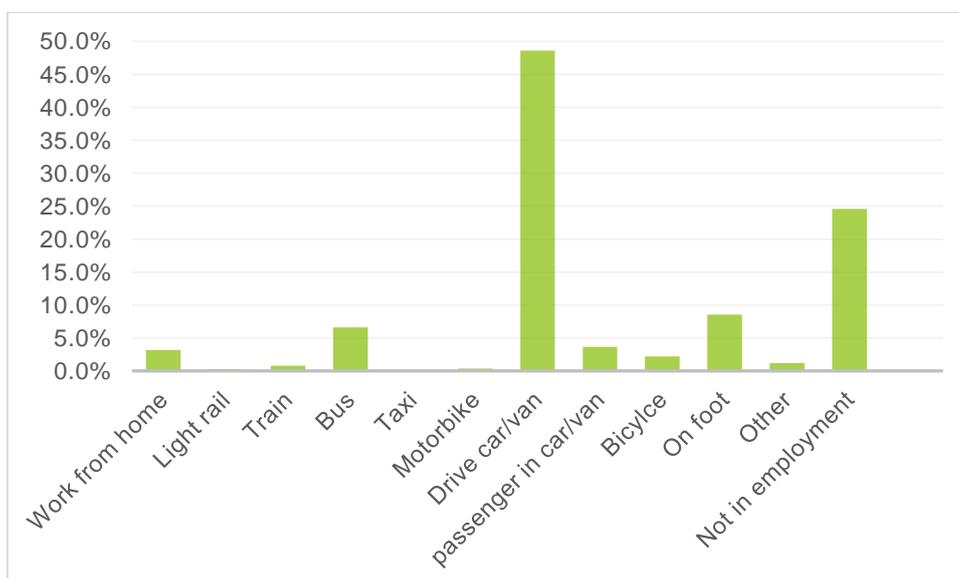
<sup>68</sup> Northumberland County Council Draft Walking and Cycling Strategy 2016.

10.2.4 There are several Public Right of Ways (PRoWs) surrounding and within the NDP area. A number of PRoWs run along the Coast collectively forming a coastal path.

### Modes of travel

10.2.5 According to Census data, almost half of local residents are likely to travel into work driving a car or a van (figure 10.1). Walking (8.6%) is the next most popular method of travelling to work followed by and Bus (6.6%). Less than 1% of residents travel to work on the train in comparison to 5.2% for England and Wales.

**Figure 10-1 Methods of Travel to Work**

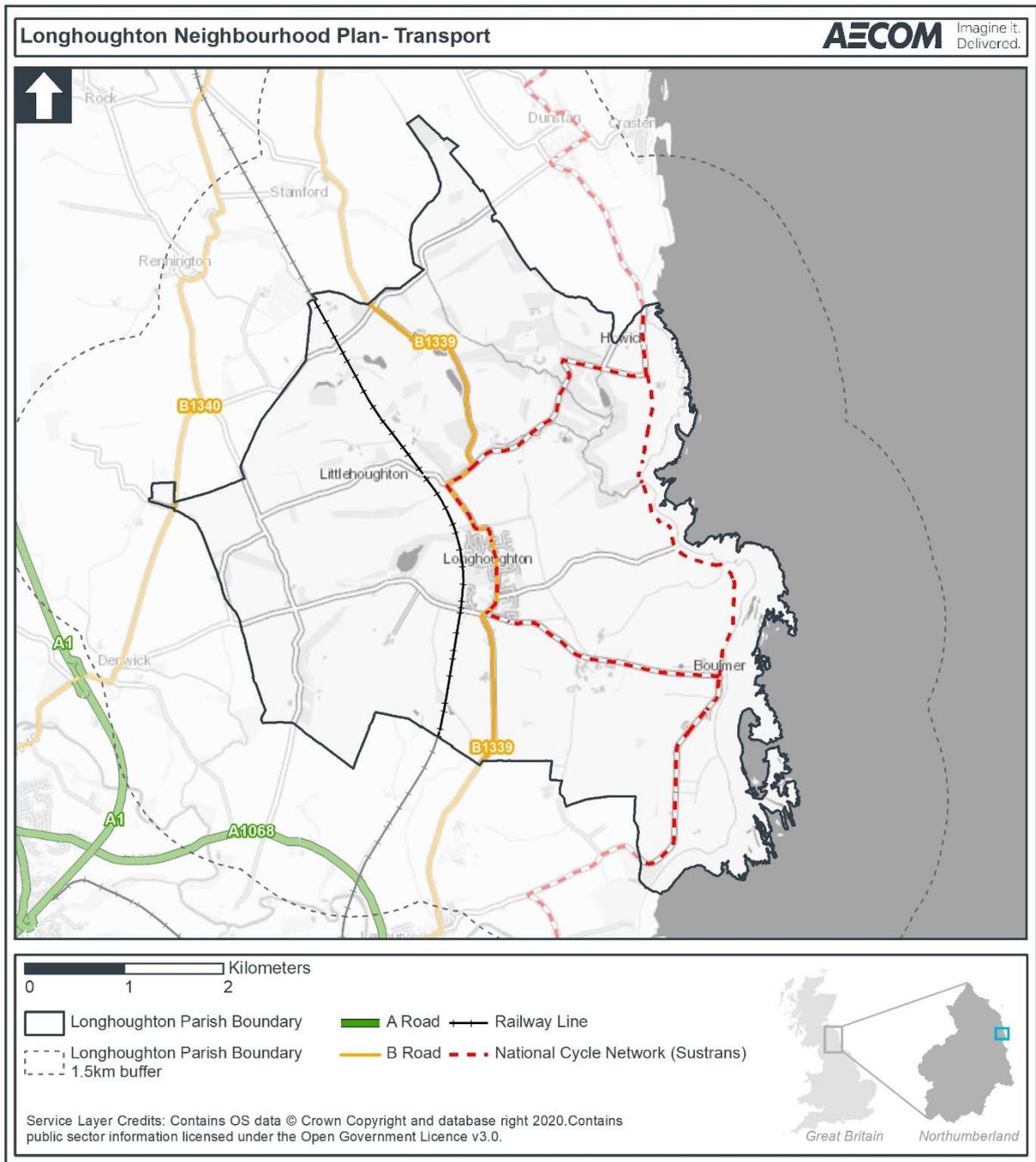


**Figure 10-2 Methods of travel to work (Census 2011)**

### **Longhoughton England and Wales**

Work mainly from home	3.2%	5.4%
Underground, metro, light	0.3%	3.9%
Train	0.9%	5.2%
Bus, minibus or coach	6.6%	7.3%
Taxi	0.1%	0.5%
Motorcycle, scooter or	0.4%	0.8%
Driving a car or a van	48.6%	57.5%
Passenger in a car or a van	3.7%	5.1%
Bicycle	2.2%	2.9%
On foot	8.6%	10.7%
Other	1.2%	0.7%

**Figure 10-3 Public Transport Connectivity and Road Network across the NDP area**



## Summary of future baseline

10.2.6 New development is likely to result in higher amounts of traffic and congestion on the local road network. A greater local population through the delivery of Local Plan housing allocations and other developments and subsequent demand for public transport could provide opportunities to increase bus provision. However, Longhoughton is unlikely to experience the scale of growth that would be likely to add significant congestion to the local road network or make major improvements to public transport viable.

## 10.3 Key headline issues

10.3.1 The key issues are as follows:

- The Neighbourhood Plan area is well served by the highway network and benefits from good railway and bus connectivity.
- The majority of residents are likely to travel to work by car/ van, but trends could change as a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic and the changing role of town centres.
- Development can potentially lead to increased traffic and improve the viability of public transport, but this is unlikely to be significant.

## 10.4 Scoping outcome

10.4.1 The SEA topic 'Transportation' has been **SCOPED OUT** of the SEA, as the scale of growth proposed in the NDP is unlikely to generate significant additional traffic and movement in the NDP area.

## 11. The SEA Framework and Methodologies

### 11.1 The SEA Framework

- 11.1.1 The SEA framework has been established through the identification of key issues as part of the scoping exercise. This draws upon the baseline position and policy context that has been prepared for a range of SEA topics (as set out in Chapters 2-10).
- 11.1.2 The framework consists of a set of headline objectives and ancillary questions, which will be used to appraise the environmental effects of the draft Development Plan Document (and any reasonable alternatives).
- 11.1.3 Table 11.1 below outlines the full SEA Framework, which brings together the objectives and questions that have been set out at the end of each SEA topic chapter. The Framework focuses on those issues that have been identified as the most important to consider in the preparation of the Plan; but acknowledging the limited influence that the Plan can have in some areas.

**Table 11.1: The SEA Framework**

SEA Objective	Supporting Questions (Will the option/proposal help to... )
Protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity habitats and species; achieving a net environmental gain and stronger ecological networks.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support connections between habitats in the Plan area?</li> <li>• Avoid significant impacts on designates sites within and in the vicinity of the NP area including; the Northumberland Shore, Howick to Seaton Point and Longhoughton SSSIs and Northumberland Coast AONB?</li> <li>• Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area?</li> <li>• Achieve a net gain in biodiversity?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the effects of climate change?</li> </ul>

## SEA Objective

## Supporting Questions (Will the option/proposal help to... )

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Avoid and manage flood risk and support the resilience of the Longhoughton Neighbourhood Plan area to the potential effects of climate change.

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change?
- Sustainably manage surface water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased (either within the plan area or downstream) and where possible reduce flood risk?
- Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area?
- Avoid placing development in areas that are at the greatest risk of flooding?

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Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and setting of heritage assets and the built environment.

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment?
- Contribute to better management of heritage assets?
- Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance?
- Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?
- Consider the impact on a setting in a manner proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected.
- Promote heritage-led regeneration?
- Lead to the repair and adaptive re-use of a heritage asset and encourage high quality design?

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Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of landscapes.

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance landscape assets including the Northumberland Coast AONB?
  - Contribute to better management of landscape assets?
  - Identify and protect/enhance features of local importance?
  - Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the surrounding landscape?
-

## SEA Objective

## Supporting Questions (Will the option/proposal help to... )

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- Improve linkages to open space and the countryside?

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Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing which meets the needs of occupiers throughout their life.

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Support the provision of a responsive range of house types and sizes to meet identified needs of different community groups?
  - Support the provision of affordable housing in the NP area.
  - Create sustainable new communities with good access to a range of local services and facilities?
-

## 12. Next Steps

### 12.1 Subsequent stages for the SEA process

12.1.1 Scoping (the current stage) is the second stage in a six-stage SEA process:

- Screening (NPPG Stage A)
- Scoping (NPPG Stage B)
- Assess reasonable alternatives, with a view to informing preparation of the draft plan (NPPG Stage C)
- Assess the draft plan and prepare the Environmental Report with a view to informing consultation and plan finalisation (NPPG Stage D/E)
- Publish a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption in order to 'tell the story' of plan-making/SEA (and present 'measures decided concerning monitoring') (NPPG Stage F)

12.1.2 The next stage will involve establishing and appraising reasonable alternatives for the Plan. This will involve consideration of strategic issues such as the growth and distribution of housing, and site options. The findings of the appraisal of these alternatives will be fed back so that they can be considered when preparing the draft plan.

### 12.2 Consultation on the Scoping Report

12.2.1 Involvement through consultation is a key element of the SEA process. At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies. The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. The Scoping Report has been released to these three statutory consultees.

12.2.2 Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this Scoping Report, in particular the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues and the proposed SEA Framework.

12.2.3 Comments on the Scoping Report should be sent to the below contacts;

Omar Ezzet,	AECOM	omar.ezzet@aecom.com
Adrian Hinchcliffe,	Longhoughton Parish Council	adrian.hinchcliffe@btopenworld.com

12.2.4 All comments received on the Scoping Report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.

## 13. Glossary

**Agricultural Land** - Agricultural land is classified into five grades. Grade one is best quality and grade five is poorest quality. A number of consistent criteria are used for assessment which include climate (temperature, rainfall, aspect, exposure, frost risk), site (gradient, micro-relief, flood risk) and soil (depth, texture, stoniness).

**Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)** – This is a measure of deprivation in England, for every local authority and super output area seven domains of deprivation are measured: (Income, Employment, Health deprivation and Disability, Education Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Services, Crime the Living Environment). This allows all 32,482 SOAs to be ranked according to how deprived they are relative to each other. This information is then brought together into one overall Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004.

**LNR** – Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.

**NNR** - Many of the finest sites in England for wildlife and geology are National Nature Reserves (NNR). There are currently 224 across the country and almost all are accessible and provide great opportunities for people to experience nature.

**Objective** – A statement of what is intended, specifying the desired direction of change in trends Option For the purposes of this guidance option is synonymous with 'alternative' in the SEA Directive Plan For the purposes of the SEA Directive this is used to refer to all of the documents to which this guidance applies, including Development Plan Documents. Supplementary Planning Documents are not part of the statutory Development Plan but are required to have a sustainability appraisal.

**RAMSAR** – Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

**Locally Important Geological Sites** – LIGs are designated by locally developed criteria and are currently the most important designated sites for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected areas such as SSSIs.

**SAC** – Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. Article 3 of the Habitats Directive requires the establishment of a European network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive

**Scheduled Monument** - A 'nationally important' archaeological site or historic building, which is given protection against unauthorised change.

**Scoping** – The process of deciding the scope and level of detail of a Sustainability Appraisal.

**Screening** – The process of deciding whether a document requires a SA.

**SEA Directive** – European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment

**SEA Regulations** – The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (which transposed the SEA Directive into law).

**SPA** – Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive, which came into force in April 1979. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds (as listed on Annex I of the Directive), and for regularly occurring migratory species.

**SSSI** – SSSIs are the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. They include some of our most spectacular and beautiful habitats - large wetlands teeming with waders and waterfowl, winding chalk rivers, gorse and heather-clad heathlands, flower-rich meadows, windswept shingle beaches and remote uplands moorland and peat bog.

**Super Output Area (SOA)** – SOAs are a new geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. Three layer of SOA have been devised: Lower Layer - Minimum population 1000; mean 1500. Built from groups of SOAs (typically 4 to 6) and constrained by the boundaries of the Standard Table (ST) wards used for 2001 Census outputs. Middle Layer - Minimum population 5000; mean 7200. Built from groups of Lower Layer SOAs and constrained by the 2003 local authority boundaries used for 2001 Census outputs. Upper Layer - To be determined; minimum size c.25, 000.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** – Generic term used internationally to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. In the UK, SEA is increasingly used to refer to an environmental assessment in compliance with the 'SEA Directive'

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** – Generic term used to describe a form of assessment which considers the economic, social and environmental effects of an initiative. SA, as applied to Local Development Documents, incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive.

**Sustainability Issues** – The full cross-section of sustainability issues, including social, environmental and economic factors.

## Appendix A – Site Assessment Criteria

SA Topic	Relevant Criteria (i.e. location in relation to..)	Comments
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SAC, SPA, SSSI and SSSI Impact Risk Zones. Ramsar sites</li> <li>Ancient Woodland</li> <li>BAP habitat</li> <li>Local wildlife Sites</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential for significant negative effects upon biodiversity</b></p> <p>Potential for negative effects upon biodiversity</p> <p>Neutral effects likely / offsite net gain</p> <p>Good opportunity to achieve net gain on site</p>	<p>Consider intersect and also proximity, given the risk of impacts e.g. from recreational pressure, disturbance from noise and light, construction activities etc.</p> <p>There will be a need to determine how biodiversity value and potential for net gain can be established consistently.</p>
Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flood Risk Zones (all sources) Is site within an area identified as being at risk of flooding?</li> </ul> <p><b>None or limited developable land falling outside of Flood zone 2 / 3 (Housing)</b></p> <p>None or limited developable land falling outside of Flood zone 2 / 3 (Employment)</p> <p>Partial overlap with flood zone 2/3 (any use)</p> <p>Majority of site within flood zone</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Degree of constraint to be determined based on degree of overlap with Flood Zones 1,2 and 3 and potential for on-site mitigation.</p> <p>Zone 1-low risk Zone 2-medium risk Zone 3-high risk</p>
Historic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered park or garden</li> <li>Scheduled Monument</li> <li>Listed building</li> <li>Conservation area</li> <li>Locally listed building</li> </ul> <p><b>Potential for significant negative effects</b></p> <p>Potential for minor negative effects</p> <p>Neutral effects</p> <p>Potential for enhancement</p>	<p>Consider intersect and also setting for all of these constraint features to establish the potential for negative or positive effects.</p>

SA Topic	Relevant Criteria (i.e. location in relation to..)	Comments
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Character Areas</li> <li>• Local Character Area</li> <li>• Local landscape designations/ areas of known sensitivity</li> </ul> <p><b>High sensitivity</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>  <b>Low sensitivity</b>  <b>Enhancement of poor quality environment likely</b></p>	<p>Useful to have; however, limited potential to use for analysis, unless areas are classified according to capacity/sensitivity. It is presumed that a landscape sensitivity study will be commissioned to allow for the sensitivity of difference land parcels / sites to be established.</p> <p>Need to ensure that they are extant / evidenced and identified on a consistent basis across the plan area.</p>
Population and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proximity to Primary School  <b>More than 1200m</b>  <b>Within 1200m</b>  <b>Within 800m</b>  <b>Within 400m</b>  <b>Within 200m</b></li> <li>• Proximity to Secondary School  <b>More than 3km</b>  <b>Within 3km</b>  <b>Within 1200m</b>  <b>Within 800m</b>  <b>Within 400m</b></li> <li>• Designated green space/ open space</li> </ul> <p><b>No access to natural greenspace within 400m</b>  <b>Access to sufficient natural greenspace within 400m</b>  <b>Access to sufficient natural greenspace within 200m</b>  <b>Provision of new greenspace likely due to scale of site</b></p>	<p>A large site should not be assumed to perform better than a small site simply because there is the potential to deliver more homes. Housing objectives could potentially be met through the delivery of numerous small sites, or through delivery of a smaller number of large sites (albeit it is recognised that financial viability, and hence the potential to deliver affordable housing, can be higher at large sites).</p> <p>Will it help to ensure that new housing is built in the best locations with good access to a range of services?</p>

SA Topic	Relevant Criteria (i.e. location in relation to..)	Comments
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## Appendix B – Schedule of post consultation amendments

### Scoping Consultation

- 13.1 The draft SEA scoping report was sent to the statutory consultees (Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency) for a 5 week consultation period (commenced 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021). The below amendments/ additions were subsequently made to this report to take into account the consultation responses received from Historic England. Natural England agreed with the extent of issues considered and their response did not require amendments to the report. No response was received from the Environment Agency.

Post consultation amendments made in response to Historic England's comments	Location in report
Added reference to HE Advise Note 3	5.1.5
Removed reference to the protection of Wrecks Act	5.1.1
Expanded para. 5.2.1 and added para 5.22 pertaining to Registered Parks and Gardens and amended Table 5.1 to reflect change	5.2.1, 5.2.2, Table 5.1
Added Heritage at Risk paragraph	5.2.4
Added 'promote heritage-led sustainable tourism to SEA objectives	Table 5.1



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