

Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Neighbourhood Plan

2025-2036

Submission Draft

March 2025



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Foreword

I am very pleased that our parish is now a step closer to having a neighbourhood plan to guide new development in our area.

This submission draft Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Neighbourhood plan sets out a vision, objectives and policies for our parish for the period to 2036. Its preparation has been led by the Parish Council, with most of the work being undertaken by a small steering group, supported by an independent planning consultant, paid for by a grant.

The plan has been informed by several early engagement activities which have taken place since 2017. Feedback has informed the preparation of a range of evidence documents, including on housing need, design, and green spaces. The feedback informed a pre-submission draft plan on which comments were invited between September and November 2023.

This version of the plan, the submission draft, has been updated to reflect comments received, where appropriate. It has been submitted to Northumberland County Council for independent examination. As part of this process, Northumberland County Council are undertaking further engagement. The plan will then be assessed by an independent examiner who will consider the feedback and whether the plan meets the various legal requirements.

If the plan passes examination, it will then be subject to a local referendum. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, it will be adopted by Northumberland County Council and used to assess planning applications in the Parish. The plan is more than a planning document as it includes a set of community actions that sit alongside the planning policies and reflect issues identified by local residents during the early engagement.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to thank the members of the steering group who have led the development of the plan. I would also like to thank the residents of our Parish who have attended meetings, completed surveys and made sure that their views are incorporated in the Plan.

Adrian Hinchcliffe
Chair, Longhoughton Parish Council

1. Introduction

Background to neighbourhood planning

- 1.1 Neighbourhood planning is a right for communities introduced through the Localism Act 2011. Neighbourhood plans are community-led, prepared by parish councils and in areas without parish councils they are prepared by neighbourhood forums. Plans set out guidance on how new development will be managed. They do this by creating land use ‘planning policies’. Plans can deal with a wide range of issues like housing, employment, heritage and transport. In some cases, they may only focus on one or two issues that are of particular importance in a local area. Policies within neighbourhood plans cannot block development or support less than already committed in the statutory development plan. What they can do is shape where that development will go and what it will look like.
- 1.2 Neighbourhood plans can also cover issues which are not related to the use and development of land. They can provide a useful document in which a parish council can establish priorities for action to improve their area. These are often referred to as ‘community actions’. However, the main purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to set policies for the use and development of land.
- 1.3 Once a neighbourhood plan has been: examined by an independent examiner, agreed at the referendum stage by the local community and ‘made’ (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority, it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Planning law requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning context

- 1.4 As they are part of the development plan, neighbourhood plans must be prepared in accordance with legal requirements. The way in which neighbourhood plans are prepared and the policies they contain are tested by an independent examiner who assesses whether the plan meets the ‘basic conditions’ to ensure they are legally compliant. Neighbourhood plans must:
- Have regard to national planning policy and guidance;
 - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan;
 - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; and
 - Be compatible with legal obligations.

National planning policy and guidance

- 1.5 National planning policy and guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) respectively.

Development plan

- 1.6 The development plan for Longhoughton Parish comprises the Northumberland Local Plan which was adopted by Northumberland County Council (NCC) in March 2022. The Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Neighbourhood Plan (‘the plan’) has been informed by the local plan and its evidence base.

Sustainable development

- 1.7 The purpose of the planning system is to help achieve sustainable development as defined by the NPPF. This specifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be the basis for every plan and every planning decision. The most recognised definition of

‘sustainable development’ is that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The basic conditions statement, that accompanies this submission plan, explains how the implementation of the plan is expected to contribute to sustainable development.

Legal obligations

- 1.8 Neighbourhood plans must be compatible with legal obligations, specifically strategic environmental assessment regulations and habitats regulations. A strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is a way of ensuring that the environmental implications of policies are taken into account before plans are brought into force. The habitats regulations assessment (HRA) process aims to ensure that the plan will not result in significant damage to internationally important nature conservation sites. Where potential for likely significant effects cannot be excluded, an appropriate assessment (AA) must be undertaken.
- 1.9 NCC provided a screening opinion on whether a SEA and/or AA was required for the plan. The screening opinion is available on the NCC website, and the conclusion was that as the plan supports a net increase in housing or tourist accommodation an AA would be required. This then triggered the need for a SEA. The AA and SEA processes have informed the preparation of the plan. SEA and AA reports are available alongside this submission draft plan.

Background to the Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.10 Longhoughton Parish (figure 1) was designated as a neighbourhood area, for the purposes of neighbourhood planning, on 26 October 2018. Following a formal boundary review, which came into force on 1 April 2021, the boundary of the parish was modified to transfer a small area of land from Craster Parish to Longhoughton Parish. The amended neighbourhood area was approved by NCC on 11 August 2021. Following the initial area designation, the parish council established a steering group to lead the plan preparation process. Membership of the steering group has changed as the work on the plan has evolved and has included: parish councillors; the county council ward member; as well as representatives from Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre Trust, Howick Village Hall, Boulmer Memorial Hall, St Peter and St Pauls Church, the business sector, Royal Air Force (Defence Infrastructure Organisation) and community representatives. The first meeting of the steering group took place in December 2018.
- 1.11 To inform the preparation of the neighbourhood plan several early engagement activities have taken place:
- Boulmer survey and review – 2017;
 - Longhoughton survey and review – 2018;
 - Howick survey and review – 2019;
 - Housing needs survey – June 2019;
 - Draft vision, objectives and planning policy themes – January 2020;
 - Initial evidence, including housing sites, open spaces and design code – June 2021; and
 - Settlement boundaries – December 2021 to January 2022.

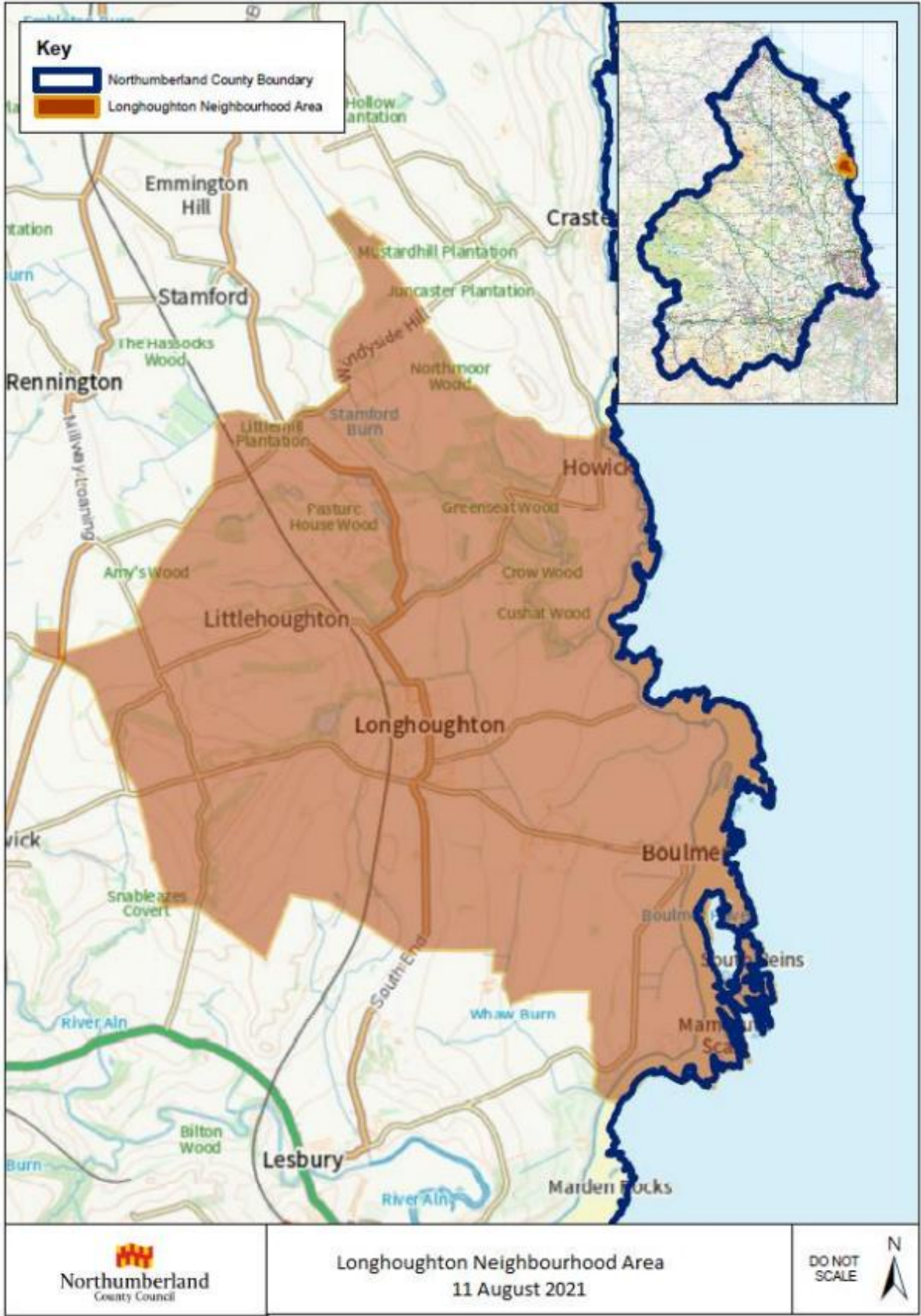


Figure 1: Neighbourhood plan area

- 1.12 The early engagement and evidence work informed the preparation of a pre-submission draft plan, which was subject to consultation from September to November 2023. This document, the submission draft plan is the result of the engagement and evidence work; it identifies:
- The context in which the plan has been prepared – an overview of Longhoughton Parish, the **opportunities and challenges** for the plan to address;
 - A **positive vision** for the future of the parish;
 - How the vision of the plan will be **delivered through planning policies** i.e. the policies that **will be used to determine planning applications** within the plan area – providing a framework for sustainable development; and
 - How the vision of the plan will be **delivered through community actions** i.e. measures which are **intended to encourage action and influence decisions** taken by relevant bodies.
- 1.13 The period covered by the plan is to 2036, this aligns with the Northumberland Local Plan (NLP). During this period, the neighbourhood plan will be reviewed and updated where required. This submission plan is a revised version of the pre-submission draft plan (September 2023). It has been amended to take account of comments received. A consultation statement has been prepared which sets out how engagement has informed the preparation of the plan. This, alongside the background information and other evidence documents that have informed the preparation of the plan are available online at: longhoughtonndp.co.uk

Next steps

- 1.14 The plan must be subject to independent examination to ensure that the legal requirements of plan preparation have been met. NCC will arrange the appointment of an independent examiner and for this submission draft plan to be available for consultation for a period of at least six weeks. It is expected that the examination will be conducted by way of written representations. The examiner may choose to include a public session to inform their report, but this is not a requirement.
- 1.15 Once completed, the examiners report will be published by NCC. The report must contain one of three recommendations:
- Proceed to referendum without modifications;
 - Proceed to referendum with minor modifications; or
 - Not proceed to referendum.

2. Background to Longhoughton Parish

A brief history of our parish

- 2.1 Longhoughton Parish is comprised of the villages of Boulmer, Howick, and Longhoughton, the hamlets of Denwick Lane End, Littlehoughton and Little Mill, and a number of farmsteads. Part of the parish lies within the Northumberland Coast National Landscape (NCNL) an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 2.2 The area has notable geological features such as the Howick Fault, and whinstone outcrops such as Cullernose Point and Ratcheugh Crag. This has been quarried at Howlet Hill in Longhoughton and at Howick Quarry. The area also has produced sandstone, and limestone which was burned at Little Mill and smaller sites at Longbank and Peppermoor. Coal has been mined from the Shilbottle Main seam at Little Mill, Littlehoughton and Dunsheugh. Interesting fossils and reptile footprints have been found at Howick Haven and Iron scars, and galena and other minerals have been found in the parish. A Mesolithic or Neolithic submerged forest was recorded in the mid-19th century and 1930s.
- 2.3 Prehistoric activity shows the area has been inhabited for a long time. Mesolithic and Neolithic flints and axes have been found in several locations. A Mesolithic settlement was discovered at Howick Haven in 2002, with Bronze age burials. These have also been recorded elsewhere, including round barrows at Pasture House and near Peppermoor. Iron age or Roman settlements have been identified near Franks' plantation, Cushat Wood, Howick, and Low Steads. Throughout history occupation was primarily in agriculture and fishing, as well as quarrying.
- 2.4 Religious worship has shaped the villages, with religious buildings being central to their development. Longhoughton parish church of St Peter and St Paul is grade I listed, originally Norman in construction but possibly has earlier Saxon origins. In the medieval period it was a chapel attached to Lesbury church, despite being older, and has been rebuilt and added to. The tower acted as a pele when the villagers required sanctuary. More recently an RAF chapel and hall lies within a 20th century housing development. A chapel of ease, St Andrew the Fisherman, was established in 1961 at Boulmer until its closure in 2010. A Primitive Methodist congregation existed at Boulmer from the 1860s, meeting in members' houses and a herring shed, until a chapel was moved from Bamburgh in 1919, housing the society until its closure and demolition in 1962. Howick's parish church, St Michael and All Angels, was built on the site of the original church in 1746 and enlarged in 1849. A church was first recorded in 1158, but as land here was held by the bishopric of Durham, it likely existed earlier. Aedward the monk, builder of the priory church at Lindisfarne, was perhaps its chaplain. The Church of England parishes of Longhoughton with Boulmer joined with Howick in 1928. 70 years later they joined the neighbouring parishes of St John the Baptist, Alnmouth, and St Mary the Virgin, Lesbury, sharing a vicar and working together.
- 2.5 Schoolmasters are referenced in the parish registers and trade directories from the early 1700s. In 1850 the National School was built in Longhoughton opposite the church and was enlarged in 1875. A new county primary school opened in 1967, and was reorganised as a first school in 1981, before becoming a primary again in 2016. The Grey family supported a free school before the construction of Howick Church School in 1860 for 60 pupils. After its closure in 1961 Howick's 12 pupils were sent to Longhoughton, and the building is now grade II listed. In 1884

a school was held in the mission hall at Boulmer. By 1906 Boulmer County Primary school had 48 pupils, upon closing in 1960 its pupils were also sent to Longhoughton.

Boulmer

- 2.6 The Mar Mouth at Boulmer provides a natural harbour, and the focus for a village that based its income on sea going and fishing. The public house is the aptly-named Fishing Boat Inn. In addition to fishing, fish curing and farming, in the 19th century locals manufactured fertiliser from seaweed by burning kelp. These ‘ashes of kelp’ would then be scattered on fields as potash.
- 2.7 Evidence of the deserted medieval village of Seaton has been identified at Seaton Point. Seaton was at one time included with Alnmouth, but later connected with Boulmer, a township in the manor of Longhoughton. Whilst there are a few stone buildings at Seaton, Boulmer village has expanded with some newer bungalows to the south and has become popular with tourists.
- 2.8 Given the dangerous nature of the coast here a Coastguard station has existed at Boulmer since the 1860s, with crews involved in a number of local rescues. Numerous schooners, fishing boats and other vessels have been wrecked nearby, and also a Spitfire which crashed into the sea near the village in 1943.
- 2.9 In 1940 the Royal Air Force (RAF) constructed a decoy airfield at Boulmer, with plywood aeroplanes moved around a false runway to distract the Luftwaffe from RAF Acklington. It saw bombing by the Luftwaffe in 1940 and 1941. By 1943 it had become an active airfield and was used until the close of the Second World War. The base reopened in 1953 as a Radar control and reporting centre across two sites (near Boulmer and at Lesbury), and from 1975 to 2015 housed an RAF rescue helicopter, rescuing over 4000 people. The base also provides accommodation and welfare for employees.
- 2.10 Lots of wartime evidence remains in the village including the tank traps along the beach, pill boxes and slit or fire trenches above Longhoughton steel. Boulmer Memorial Hall was purchased at Berwick and re-constructed here in 1920, as both a village hall and war memorial to villagers killed during the First World War. It houses the village’s Rolls of Honour.

Howick

- 2.11 An early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon cemetery containing 15 skeletons was discovered at Howick Heugh in 1930s. The lands at Howick passed through several families but has belonged to the Grey family for several centuries. It wasn’t however lived in by the family until the late sixteenth century, when Edward Grey of Morpeth purchased land and the medieval tower from his brothers.
- 2.12 The tower was demolished in 1780, and Howick Hall was constructed on the site by Sir Henry Grey in 1782. It was enlarged in 1812 by the Second Earl Grey (Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1830 – 1834), who laid out walks around the grounds. His government introduced the Reform Act (1832) and Slavery Abolition Act (1833), and he is remembered in a large Monument to him in Newcastle, and the Earl Grey blend of tea. The hall is grade II* listed, and many buildings and features on the estate are grade II, including a bathing house at the coast, and an Icehouse converted into a Second World War air-raid shelter. Today the Hall and Gardens are a popular visitor attraction.
- 2.13 In the construction of the hall the village was moved and rebuilt closer to the sea. The 15 vernacular-style houses constructed were occupied by employees of the estate. Howick’s

deserted medieval village was obscured in this process, but evidence of Rigg (or ridge) and Furrow remain in the parkland around the Hall. In addition to the former school and schoolhouse there is also a Village Hall and Rectory. A series of posts at Howick Haven indicate where barges moored to carry timber from the Howick estate.

- 2.14 There have been numerous wrecks reported along the Howick coast. Part of the boiler of the French ship Tadorne is still visible after it was wrecked in 1913, and five of its sailors are buried in the churchyard of St Michael and All Angels. 25 crewmen were rescued in difficult conditions by the lifeboat from Boulmer, whose crew were rewarded by the French government.

Littlehoughton

- 2.15 A deserted medieval village is indicated by earthworks of its lost houses near Littlehoughton Hall. Remains of rigg (or ridge) and furrow and a hollow way on the footpath to Longhoughton also show the age of the settlement here. Littlehoughton Hall had its beginnings as a defensive tower house in the 1700s, with later additions in the 17th and 18th centuries, and is a grade II listed building. The stable is early 19th century and also grade II listed but contains older masonry. The Goslings nearby also dates to the 18th century.
- 2.16 Whinstone was also quarried at Howick Quarry from the 1860s, and the quarry had its own railway connection from 1906. The site is currently mothballed although there is a pending planning application to extend the timescale for working and restoring the quarry.

Littlemill

- 2.17 The grade II listed farmhouse here dates to 1714, though may be a redevelopment of an earlier structure, and bears the initials HB for Hannah Barron. A 18th or 19th century dovecote nearby was demolished in 1988.
- 2.18 Coal and limestone mined nearby was burned in two large Lime Kilns here, now grade 2 listed. The first, 18th century, kiln has three chambers. The second kiln was built in the 19th century and is comprised of eight chambers, creating a huge cathedral-like structure that is one of the largest in the country. The kilns are close to the railway line so the lime produced could be transported by its own wagonway and onwards by rail. The limestone quarry here is now the Evelyn Howick Memorial nature reserve.
- 2.19 Little Mill Railway Station originally opened in 1847 as a private halt for Howick Hall but was open to all passengers from 1861. Queen Victoria used the station when visiting the Grey family at Howick Hall in 1849. The family retained the ability to stop trains there until the death of the 4th Earl Grey. The station closed in the late 1950s.

Longhoughton

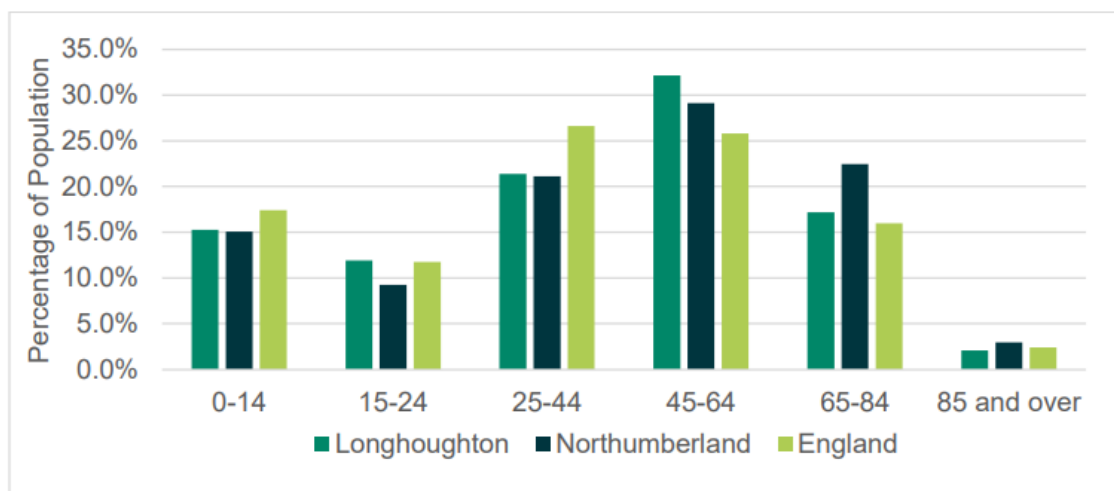
- 2.20 Longhoughton was part of the barony of Alnwick, the manor held mainly by the Percy family and much of it is still owned by the Northumberland Estates. Land was made up of the West, East and South fields. Parcels of these were held from the manor by the blacksmith, the miller (whose mill was on the Aln at Deep Dene, near Lesbury) and strip fields by the villagers as either bonded or cottar (free) holdings. In the 16th century these were re-divided to share good land fairly and split into two to prevent long walks between strip fields.
- 2.21 The village was surveyed in 1567, giving a full account of the area and describing the dyke that had been used to divide these north and south sides of the village. A dyke can be either a bank or a ditch, or combination of the two. This was described as set with 'quick wood' so was probably a hedge, and a wall where hedges wouldn't grow. Longhoughton still used strip fields

into the seventeenth century, though as the village's population shrunk fields were enclosed in 1674, 1726 and 1807.

- 2.22 This formed several farms in the manor, with two in the village itself. Of these Longhoughton Hall Farm still stands, built in the 16th or 17th centuries. It may have an earlier construction, perhaps as a bastle house, but was considerably altered in the 18th and 19th centuries. The farmhouse and outbuildings, former Vicarage Westfield House and the former Blacksmith's workshop are grade II listed buildings. Other stone buildings converted to residential use include a poor house, public houses, and schoolhouse. A signpost at the crossroads, made by Smith, Paterson and Co. of Blaydon, also holds a grade II listing.
- 2.23 The First Duke of Northumberland employed the architect Robert Adam to build an observatory on Ratcheugh crag in the 1770s, created in the style of a ruin. Like other follies on the estate, it includes a keeper's cottage, built by the Second Duke, for an employee to live in. Harlow Hill, then part of Longhoughton Common, was also planted as part of the Duke and Duchess's designed landscape.
- 2.24 Quarrying was a major industry at nearby Howlet Hill. A tileworks existed between 1847 and 1863, and a Blacksmith's workshop was built in the 18th century, though records of Blacksmiths exist long before this. The manor court appointed individuals in the village to provide hospitality and stabling for travellers. Since then, a number of public houses existed, though none remain today. With the construction of the Newcastle and Berwick Railway in 1847 the village gained a railway station with two-story station building accessing the platform. Services were withdrawn in 1941, reopening five years later and boosted by demand as RAF Boulmer grew, until closing again in 1962.
- 2.25 After the construction of RAF Boulmer in 1953, much of the staff and family accommodation was constructed in Longhoughton, greatly expanding the village to the north and west. Since then, developments have broadened the village to the east and south west. Westfield Park, constructed in 2009, provides sporting and social facilities to the community. A number of welfare services exist for RAF employees in addition to civilian ones such as Co-Op store, two cafes, a nursery, and a small surgery, which is under review.
- 2.26 The development of the villages over the centuries has been heavily influenced by factors such as geology and industry and continues to change with the needs of the communities who live here.

Population

- 2.27 Census data shows a large decrease in the population of the parish between 2011 and 2021, from 1,960 to 1,664. This may be because of the level of second homes within the parish, and the census was completed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Figure 2 highlights that there is a similar proportion of people aged 0-14 and 25-44 in the parish and Northumberland, though both are lower than the national average. There is a higher proportion of people aged 15-24 in the parish compared to Northumberland, which is likely linked to the RAF personnel, who generally tend to be younger and are likely to be replaced by people of a similar age over time, rather than remaining and ageing naturally. The 45-64 age group accounts for a higher proportion of residents in the parish than both Northumberland and England and the large number of 45-64 year olds may be expected to translate into faster ageing in the parish in future years.



Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

Figure 2: Age structure (2011) from HNA

- 2.28 Table 1 illustrates that since 2011, the parish has experienced a decline in the number of people aged 0-14 (-39.1%), 15-24 (-29.8%) and 25-44 (-45.1%), with increases in the older age groups. This illustrates that the population is ageing and population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with 61% increase expected in the 65 and over age group.

Table 1: Change in age groups between 2011 and 2021 (census)

Age group	2011 (Census)		2021 (Census)		Change
0-14	417	21.3%	254	15.3%	-39.1%
15-24	282	14.4%	198	11.9%	-29.8%
25-44	649	33.1%	356	21.4%	-45.1%
45-64	372	19.0%	535	32.2%	+43.8%
65-84	228	11.6%	286	17.2%	+25.4%
85 and over	12	0.6%	35	2.1%	+191.7%
Total	1,960	100.0%	1,664	100.0%	-15.1%

Source: ONS 2011, ONS 2021, AECOM Calculations

Households and housing

- 2.29 The parish has a high proportion of family households (75.1%, compared to 64.5% in Northumberland and 63.1% in England), with fewer people living alone (23.1% compared to 32.8% in Northumberland and 30.1% in England). In addition, more households have dependent children (24% compared to 22.2% in Northumberland and 25.8% in England).
- 2.30 The current mix of dwelling types in the parish is predominantly made up of semi-detached (39%) detached (34%) and terraced properties (26%). Table 2 illustrates that the dwelling split is roughly the same in 2021 as it was in 2011.

Table 2 - Housing type

Type	2011	2021
Detached	29.5%	34.0%
Semi-detached	38.8%	39.0%
Terrace	26.7%	26.0%
Flat	4.2%	0.9%

Source: ONS 2021 and 2011, VOA 2021, AECOM Calculations

- 2.31 In 2021, 3-bedroom properties account for the largest proportion of properties (39.6%), followed by 4+ bedroom properties (33.4%) and 2-bedroom properties (24.3%). Table 3 illustrates that the parish has a significantly higher proportion of 4+ bedroom properties (33.4%) compared to Northumberland (21.8%) and England (21.1%), and lower levels of smaller properties.

Table 3 - Bedroom numbers

Number of bedrooms	Longhoughton	Northumberland	England
1	2.7%	7.2%	11.6%
2	24.3%	28.1%	27.3%
3	39.6%	42.9%	40.0%
4+	33.4%	21.8%	21.1%

Source: Census 2021, AECOM Calculations

- 2.32 The growing attraction of the area for tourism and second homes is resulting in inflated property prices which are beyond that which local people can afford, resulting in young families having to move away from the area.

The economy and employment

- 2.33 The RAF is a significant employer, with around 1,000 civilian and contracted personnel working at RAF Boulmer. Furthermore, as a result of the reliance on tourism, a large part of the economy of the parish is characterised by low wages, seasonal employment and low skills. The 2011 census illustrated that 45.5% of residents worked in public administration and defence, the next largest employer was human health and social work (11.3% of residents).
- 2.34 Apart from the RAF and tourist accommodation providers there are number of businesses which operate within the parish, including: Longhoughton Quarry, Howick Quarry, Howick Hall and Gardens, Coast and Castles Camping, fishing businesses in Boulmer, agricultural businesses, and other small businesses covering gardening and landscaping services, construction, IT services, civil engineering and joiners.

Services, facilities and accessibility

- 2.35 The majority of services and facilities available within the parish are provided within Longhoughton, including a primary school, community and sports centre, church, Coop and two cafés. At Boulmer there is a restaurant/hotel and at Howick, there is a tearoom. A wider range of services and facilities are available outside the plan area in Alnwick.
- 2.36 As a result of the high quality of the environment, more and more people have been attracted to the area for days out or holidays, many of them by car. During the summer this is causing significant congestion and threatening to damage the special qualities of the National Landscape. The NCNL Partnership is pursuing a sustainable transport strategy, by encouraging people to use public transport. For those who do come by car, the policy is to encourage them to park away from the coast and to walk or cycle to the coast.

Natural, built and historic environment

- 2.37 Longhoughton parish is a rural area with a rich and diverse natural, built and historic environment. This is illustrated through the wealth of international and national designations, which include: The Northumberland Coast National Landscape – which covers around half of

the parish; North Northumberland Heritage Coast; Northumbria Coast Ramsar Site; Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation; Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area; three sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) 51 listed buildings – two of which are grade I, five grade II* and the remaining 44 are grade II; Howick Hall Registered Park and Garden (grade II); and one scheduled monument (defended settlement, 600m south east of Red Stead).

- 2.38 The parish contains several important coastal habitats, including the priority habitats of coastal sand dunes, maritime cliffs and slopes, as well as limestone pavements. There is also ancient and semi natural woodland, as well as woodland on the priority habitat inventory. Important species include: farmland birds, curlew, grey partridge, lapwing, redshank, snipe, tree sparrow, turtle dove, yellow wagtail, waders and wildfowl.

Key issues for our plan

- 2.39 Early engagement and evidence work identified the following key issues for the plan:
- Lack of housing to meet the needs of the local community, including affordable housing and housing that is the right size and type;
 - Impact of tourism, including the increasing numbers of holiday and second homes in Boulmer on house prices and the impact of increasing visitors. Alongside the impact of visitors who travel by car resulting in congestion and negatively impacting on the special qualities of the area;
 - Supporting the growth of small businesses;
 - Protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment;
 - Identifying and protecting important open spaces;
 - Need for new development to reflect the character of the local area and embed green spaces;
 - Protecting and enhancing services and facilities, particularly the GP service, primary school, community and sports centre, church and local store. As well as supporting new provision to reflect the changing population structure;
 - Improving accessibility such as through the creation of greenways;
 - Parking.
- 2.40 These issues have informed the vision and objectives for the plan.

3. Vision and objectives

Vision

- 3.1 The vision sets out what the Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Neighbourhood Plan intends to achieve over the plan period to 2036. It informs all the plan objectives, planning policies and community actions. The vision and objectives were informed by the issues identified through early engagement and there was a separate consultation on the draft vision and objectives in January 2020.

A vision for Longhoughton Parish in 2036

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.

Objectives

- 3.2 To deliver the vision, seven objectives have been developed. These clearly relate to the issues identified through early engagement with the local community and other stakeholders, as well as the evidence base supporting the plan. The planning policies and community actions contained within the plan, should deliver the objectives.

Objectives

Objective 1 – Sustainable Development:

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

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.

Objective 3 – Business:

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

Objective 4 – Environment:

Protecting and improving the natural environment of the parish by: conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Northumberland Coast National Landscape and its setting; protecting the integrity of the internationally designated coastal sites; maintaining and where possible increasing levels of tranquillity, dark skies and sense of rurality; and supporting the creation, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure networks.

Objective 5 – Historic environment:

Protecting and enhancing the distinctive character of the villages and the historic environment of the parish.

Objective 6 – Community:

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

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.

- 3.3 The planning policies and community actions contained within the plan will deliver the objectives.

4. Sustainable development

Background

- 4.1 Plan objective 1 seeks to ensure that 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. This is an overarching objective that applies to all elements of the plan and its policies.

Sustainable development

- 4.2 The NPPF explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development¹. It highlights three overarching objectives, economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways². The NPPF therefore includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development³. This presumption is repeated within the Northumberland Local Plan (policy STP2). The local plan also defines the principles of sustainable development in Northumberland (policy STP3), which include economic social and environmental elements, specifically:
- Building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, including protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres and other important economic sectors;
 - Providing homes to meet local housing needs;
 - Providing opportunities to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing as well as providing the required infrastructure;
 - Contributing to the conservation and enhancement of the natural, historic, water and built environment assets;
 - Minimising the impact of new development on amenity;
 - Contributing to net gains for biodiversity and establishing a coherent and resilient ecological network;
 - Preventing or minimising waste, making prudent and effective use of resources;
 - Making efficient use of land;
 - Demonstrating high quality, sustainable design which is accessible to all;
 - Ensuring sustainable access, reducing the dependence on travel by private car;
 - Making the best use of existing facilities and infrastructure;
 - Effectively managing the impact of new development on the highway network;
 - Maximising energy efficiency and the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources;
 - Locating development in areas which are least vulnerable to climatic impacts, such as flooding and rising sea levels; and
 - Mitigating against the anticipated impacts from climate change.

- 4.3 It is not necessary for the neighbourhood plan to repeat policies contained within the local plan. It is considered that local plan policies STP2 and STP3 provide an appropriate framework against which planning applications can be assessed.

Climate change – embedding energy efficiency and renewable energy

- 4.4 In May 2019, parliament declared a climate emergency, committing the UK to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The parish council is committed to assisting with the delivery of this

¹ Paragraph 7

² Paragraph 8

³ Paragraph 11

target. Whilst the requirement for the planning system to meet the challenge of climate change is identified in the NPPF⁴ and within local plan policy STP4, the parish council considers it is essential to demonstrate the positive commitment to embedding carbon reduction at the heart of the design and construction of new development. Policy LBH1 therefore supports the delivery of development which embeds sustainable design and construction, this will support the delivery of plan objectives 1 and 4.

Policy LBH1: Embedding energy efficiency and renewable energy

1. Development which embeds a commitment to sustainable design and construction will be supported, particularly that which reduces carbon emissions from both the supply chain and the use of the proposed development. Applications must be supported by sufficient information to demonstrate how, where appropriate and relevant to the proposal, they:
 - a. Incorporate passive design measures to improve the efficiency of heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting;
 - b. Include measures to reduce waste generated during construction and ensure there is appropriate storage space and segregation facilities for recyclable and non-recyclable waste;
 - c. Ensure that energy and water efficiency measures are incorporated into the development;
 - d. Are designed to enable charging or plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations;
 - e. Incorporate on-site energy generation from renewable sources; and
 - f. Reduce energy demands of historic buildings, subject to compliance with other relevant policies on historic assets.
2. Where planning permission is required, the sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency measures and the appropriate use of micro-renewables in historic buildings will be supported where this does not result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset.

Location of new development

- 4.5 The local plan seeks to focus new development within sustainable locations. It includes a settlement hierarchy (policy STP1), which identifies that most development across the county will take place within main towns and service centres. Longhoughton is classified as a service village and is 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 identified as small villages, to support a proportionate level of development.

Settlement boundaries

- 4.6 The local plan defines a settlement boundary for the village of Longhoughton (figure 3), however no boundaries are defined for Boulmer and Howick. The purpose of a settlement boundary is to manage the location of new development and protect the countryside from unsuitable development, prevent the merger of settlements, as well as maintaining their character. The NPPF⁵ requires planning policies and decisions to avoid the development of

⁴ Section 14

⁵ Paragraph 84

isolated homes in the countryside, unless specific criteria are met, this is also reflected within local plan policy STP1.

- 4.7 The ability of the current Longhoughton settlement boundary to support the sustainable growth of the village was assessed as part of the consideration of housing needs and the identification of housing sites. The housing site assessment background paper illustrates that land is available within the existing boundary to support the delivery of 20 dwellings⁶, this, in addition to the housing delivered since the start of the plan period and would exceed the minimum housing requirement for the parish of 88 dwellings (see section 5). As a result, it is not considered necessary to amend the Longhoughton settlement boundary as defined within the local plan.

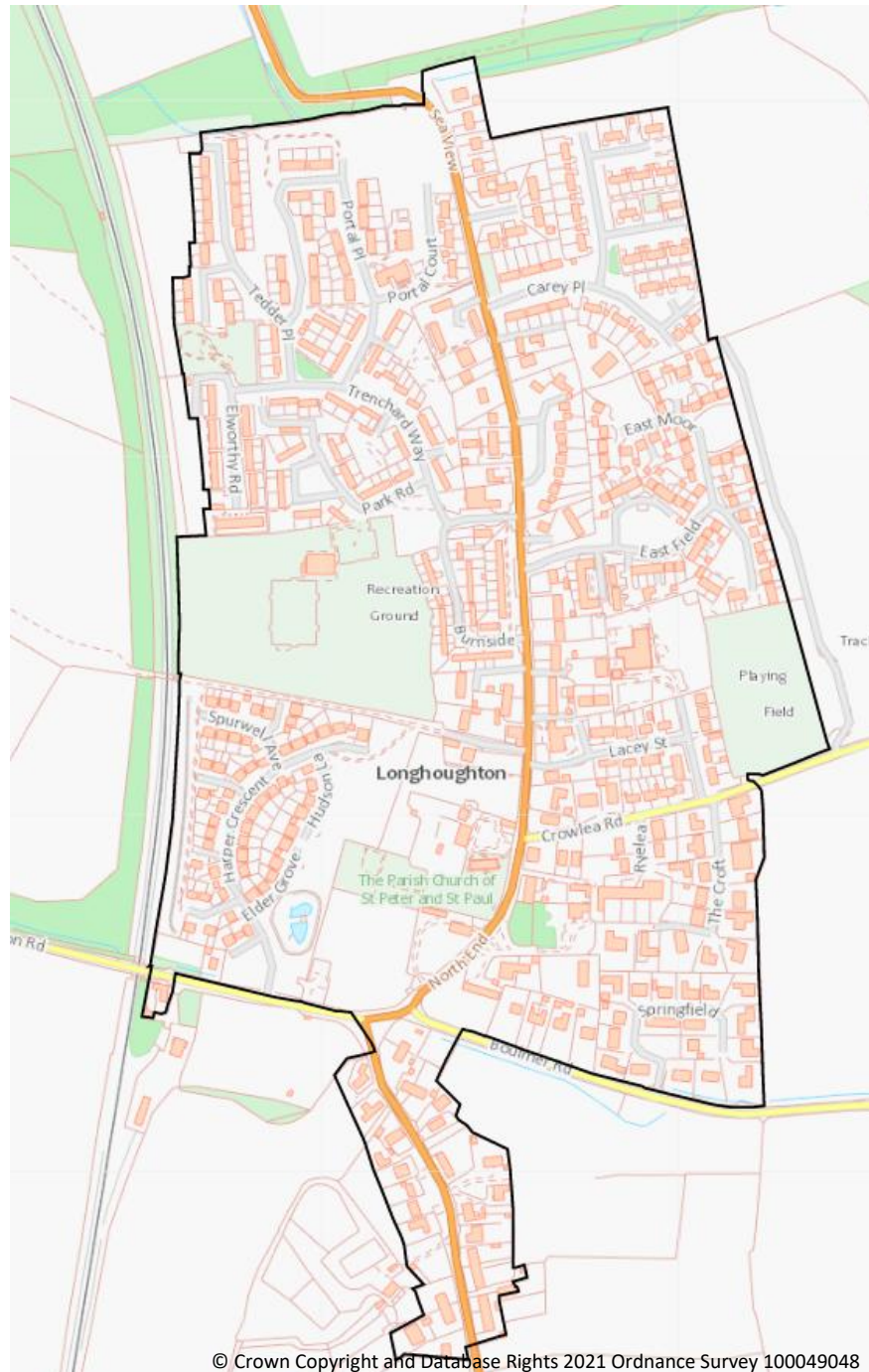


Figure 3 - Longhoughton settlement boundary

⁶ 19 dwellings from new allocations and 1 dwelling from an extant planning permission .

- 4.8 The popularity of Boulmer village as a tourist destination continues to have a significant impact on the community. There is a large concentration of dwellings, almost 40%, that are not occupied as a principal residence, they are used as second and holiday homes⁷. Through early engagement the local community has highlighted concerns regarding the impact of this on the future sustainability of Boulmer. Because planning permission is not required to change the use of existing dwellings to second or holiday homes, there is a need to allow a small number of additional dwellings to be constructed in Boulmer to support its sustainability. The plan therefore proposes a settlement boundary for Boulmer which would accommodate sustainable growth but also prevent development that would impact on its character. The identification of the draft settlement boundary was informed by engagement with the local community during December 2021 and January 2022. The settlement boundary background paper provides more details on the approach to its identification.
- 4.9 As part of the consultation on a draft settlement boundary for Boulmer, the local community were also asked for views on whether Howick should have a defined boundary. Feedback supported the proposed approach that due to the dispersed nature of the existing development within Howick it would not be appropriate to seek to define a settlement boundary and that local plan policy STP1 would effectively manage development proposals.

Northumberland Coast National Landscape

- 4.10 Approximately half of the plan area lies within the Northumberland Coast National Landscape, a designated Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB) (figure 4). As a result, development should aim to enhance the character of settlements and wider landscapes in the national landscape and ensure that all adverse effects on the natural and cultural heritage of the national landscape are avoided, remedied or mitigated. National planning policy states that: “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues”. Case law shows that giving ‘great weight’ means placing the conservation of the landscape and scenic beauty of a national landscape in to a special category of material consideration, rather than simply weighing it in the planning balance.
- 4.11 Local plan policy ENV5 relates specifically to development within the Northumberland Coast AONB, now the Northumberland Coast National Landscape. It requires the special qualities to be conserved and enhanced having regard to the management plan and locally specific design guidance. The policy specifies criteria that are to be considered when assessing development proposals. It also highlights the need to recognise that the national landscape is a living, working area by allowing small scale

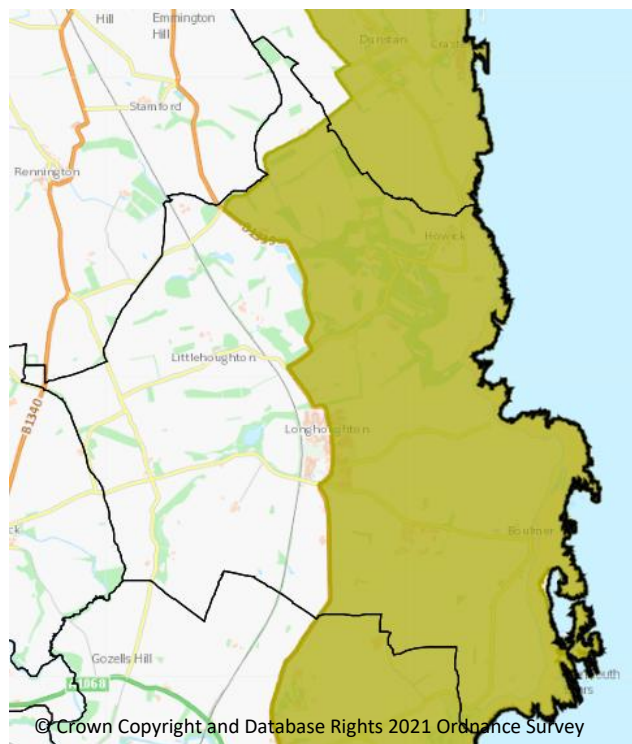


Figure 4: Northumberland Coast National Landscape

⁷ Full details contained within the principal residency background paper.

development where it does not impact on its special qualities. Furthermore, consideration is required to be given to the extent to which the development: adds to the availability of permanently occupied and affordable housing to meet local needs; supports the growth and diversification of the rural economy, including tourism. The policy also supports the conversion of redundant farm buildings where the scale and form of the farm steading would be protected. With regard to major development, it highlights that in accordance with national planning policy that major development will not be supported, except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. In accordance with national planning practice guidance, the supporting text explains that NCC, as the local planning authority, has discretion to vary the definition of major development within national landscapes, taking into account the development proposed and the local context.

- 4.12 Policy LBH2 therefore seeks to focus the majority of new development within the Longhoughton settlement boundary, whilst also supporting more limited development within the Boulmer settlement boundary. Local plan policy STP1 provides detailed policy criteria which will be used to assess proposals for development outside the settlement boundaries and policy ENV5 includes detailed guidance regarding development in the national landscape. These are therefore not repeated in policy LBH2.
- 4.13 As part of the appropriate assessment process, as the plan is supporting new housing development, it was recommended that it should include a policy requirement to ensure that impacts arising from increasing levels of recreational disturbance on environmental assets as a result of new residential or tourist accommodation could be mitigated against. These adverse effects could be avoided where developers agree to contribute to the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service. Policy LBH3 therefore requires financial contributions from all relevant development in the parish, as it all lies within 7km of the coast.

Policy LBH2: Location of new development

1. Development within the Longhoughton and Boulmer settlement boundaries, as identified on policies map, will be supported.
2. Outside the settlement boundaries and the village of Howick development will be treated as open countryside, whose intrinsic character will be recognised in all decisions on planning applications on land in the countryside.

Policy LBH3: New residential and tourist accommodation

To ensure that the impacts arising from increasing levels of recreational disturbance on coastal Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European Sites can be addressed, all development that would result in a net increase in the number of residential units or tourist accommodation will be required to contribute to the Northumberland Coastal Mitigation Service or provide alternative mitigation of demonstrable effectiveness. All financial contributions required in accordance with this policy will be secured by way of a planning obligation under section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990, or any subsequent amending legislation.

Design

- 4.14 Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. It creates better places in which people live and work. It is fundamental to what the planning and development process should deliver and ensures that new development contributes positively to the local environment and therefore, enhances the quality of life for residents.
- 4.15 The NPPF highlights the importance the government attaches to good design and the important role that neighbourhood plans⁸ can play in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in new development. In addition, the national design guide⁹ sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It forms part of national planning practice guidance. The national model design code provides further detailed guidance to promote successful design. There are several good practice guidance documents that can help inform the design of development, such as Building for a Healthy Life¹⁰, which is a government endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use it to guide discussions about creating good places to live.
- 4.16 As part of the evidence base supporting the plan, a design code was prepared to inform policy development. The document describes the plan area and defined design codes which are included as annex 2 to this plan (separate document). The design code provides an analysis of the special characteristics of the parish and describes practical design approaches to show how future developments can preserve and enhance local distinctiveness. It has been informed by the Northumberland Coast Design Guide for the Built Environment and the Northumberland Coast Design Guide for Highways and Public Realm.
- 4.17 Policy LBH4 therefore encourages high quality and sustainable design and sets out the key principles that should be addressed as part of proposals for new development, whilst seeking to ensure that the plan does not place unnecessary restrictions on new development. The policy is cross cutting and will help to deliver all the plan objectives.

Policy LBH4: Design

1. Development should conserve and enhance local distinctiveness by demonstrating high quality design which respects both existing character and responds to the distinctive character of the area. Proposals should be informed by the Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Design Code (annex 2).
2. Development will be supported where it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the local planning authority that, where appropriate and relevant to the development, it:
 - a. Maintains and where possible enhances the character of the locality, paying particular attention to the appearance, size, scale and density of the proposed development;
 - b. Uses materials which complement those of adjoining and surrounding buildings;
 - c. Sustains and enhances the significance of heritage assets including that generated by the relationship with their setting;
 - d. Takes account of the site character and context;

⁸ Paragraph 132

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

¹⁰ https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Building-for-a-Healthy-Life-July-2020.pdf

- e. Respects established building lines and introduces boundary treatments and roof lines that are in keeping with the street scene;
 - f. Incorporates appropriate green and blue infrastructure which connects with existing networks;
 - g. Protects and enhances existing habitats and wildlife corridors;
 - h. Demonstrates a commitment to sustainable design and construction to minimise energy use;
 - i. Provides adequate refuse and recycling storage, which is incorporated into the scheme to minimise visual impact;
 - j. Adopts the principles of sustainable drainage;
 - k. Ensures the development would not prejudice the amenity of its future occupiers or that of adjacent properties in terms of overshadowing, loss of light, dominance, loss of privacy, noise or general disturbance;
 - l. Provides sufficient appropriately sited car parking and cycle storage to serve the needs arising from the development;
 - m. Encourages cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel;
 - n. Ensures that lighting associated with the development would not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity, wildlife or the level of dark skies where these can be experienced within the area;
 - o. Would not result in unacceptable levels of noise, air or water pollution; and
 - p. Creates a safe, accessible and well-connected environment that meets the needs of its users.
3. Where a design and access statement is required as part of a planning application, this must demonstrate how the proposal has responded to the above principles and the Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Design Code as an integral part of the design process.

5. Housing

Background

- 5.1 The NPPF highlights the government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes¹¹. Neighbourhood plans have an important role in supporting the delivery of the number, type and mix of homes that are required in an area. They must support the strategic development needs that are set out in local plans and not promote less development. The NPPF also highlights that neighbourhood planning groups should consider opportunities for allocating sites for housing in their area¹².
- 5.2 Local plan policy HOU3 requires the neighbourhood plan to support the delivery of at least 88 new dwellings between the period 2016-2036. Since the start of the local plan period, 1 April 2016, to 31 March 2024, 74 new homes have been built within the parish, of these 10 were delivered as affordable housing. At the end of March 2024, there were also outstanding planning permissions for an additional 8 dwellings.
- 5.3 Whilst the completion figures demonstrate that most of the dwelling requirement identified for the parish to 2036 has been met, it is important to note that this is a minimum figure. Furthermore, both the Longhoughton Parish Housing Needs Survey (2019 - HNS)¹³ and the Longhoughton Parish Housing Needs Assessment (2024 - HNA)¹⁴, identify a need for further housing development within the parish. The HNS highlighted that the most common reasons expressed for housing need were that: no suitable homes were available locally, the current home was too large, or that the current home was too small. The highest demand was identified for two-bedroom bungalows, as well as two and three bedroom homes. Feedback also referred to the cost of homes in the parish.
- 5.4 The HNA focused on the affordable housing needs, as well as the type and size of housing needed¹⁵. It considered the impact of the high level of RAF properties within the parish and also the increasing numbers of second and holiday homes, particularly in Boulmer. It concluded that local households, on average incomes, were unable to access even entry level homes¹⁶ unless they have the advantage of a very large deposit. Market housing, even with the benefit of a higher than average income, is therefore likely to remain out of reach to most, with the median house price requiring an annual income 140% higher than the average. The HNA concluded that there was a need for around 15 new affordable rented homes and around 43 affordable homes to buy to 2036. Whilst it is acknowledged that there can be uncertainty in estimates for establishing the need for affordable homes, the HNA clearly demonstrates that there is a need for affordable housing to be met over the plan period.
- 5.5 Consideration of the size of homes required was informed by the current dwelling mix (predominantly semi-detached and detached) and the size of dwellings (predominantly 3 and 4

¹¹ Paragraph 61

¹² Paragraph 74

¹³ <https://longhoughtonndp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Housing-Needs-Survey-Final-Report.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-and-Building/planning%20policy/Studies%20and%20Evidence%20Reports/Housing%20Studies/4.%20Housing%20Needs%20Survey/Longhoughton-Housing-Needs-Assessment-Final-July-2024.pdf>

¹⁵ Note – affordable housing is defined within national planning policy, it includes affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership. Affordable housing is also retained in perpetuity.

¹⁶ Those suitable for first time buyers

bedroom, with recent increases in dwellings with 4+ bedrooms) compared to the population structure. The HNA concluded that as population growth is expected to be driven by the oldest households (with a 61% increase expected in the 65+ age group), priority should be given to 2 and 3 bedroom homes. Although it did acknowledge that there should be some continued provision of 4+ bedroom homes, to allow for greater choice.

- 5.6 Plan objective 2 therefore seeks to ensure that the location, quantity and type of housing built in the plan area is appropriate to its sustainability. Also, that it reflects the distinct character and needs of the villages of Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick.

Supporting the sustainability of our community

- 5.7 There is no requirement for neighbourhood plans to allocate land for housing development. As explained above, the housing delivery figures demonstrates that the local plan housing target has almost been met, with 11 years of the local plan period remaining. The local plan also includes policies which would support the delivery of affordable housing schemes on sites not allocated for development, particularly:

- Policy HOU6 requires development proposals of 30 or more houses or on sites of 0.5 hectares or more (or for proposals of 5 units or more in the national landscape) to provide 15% affordable housing. The policy includes an expectation that the affordable housing is provided on site, unless it can be robustly justified that an equivalent financial contribution can be made to support off-site provision. The level of affordable housing to be provided has been informed by both the need and the viability of delivering affordable housing;
- Policy HOU7, which supports the delivery of housing on rural exception sites - these are small sites (less than 0.5 hectares or comprising less than 10 dwellings), that are not allocated for housing and are adjacent, or well-related to existing settlements. Some market housing may be allowed on rural exception sites where it is clearly shown to be essential to support and facilitate the delivery of the predominant affordable element, but the presumption is that the development is either wholly or predominantly for affordable housing.

- 5.8 As a result of the compelling evidence identified within the HNS and HNA, that there is a need for further housing, particularly affordable, to support the sustainability of our local community, the steering group considered the opportunities to deliver both affordable and market housing within the parish¹⁷. The interim results from this work were subject to engagement with the local community in June 2021 and alongside the consultation on the pre-submission draft plan.

- 5.9 The site assessment work identified that within the existing Longhoughton Settlement Boundary (as defined within the local plan) there was only one site that could deliver housing without a specific allocation within the plan – the former Johnnie Johnson Sheltered Housing Site (up to 6 dwellings¹⁸). Two other sites were considered suitable, but had other constraints:

- L2 – Portal Place: Whilst this was considered an appropriate location for housing development, the landowner (Defence Infrastructure Organisation) confirmed that the land would not be released for housing development. The site is also allocated as protected open space within the local plan; and
- L8 – Old Recreation Field: Considered an appropriate location for housing development, however the site is allocated as protected open space within the local plan. As a result,

¹⁷ See housing site assessment background paper

¹⁸ The initial site assessment work identified a potential for 6 dwellings, however this was reduced to 4 following feedback and updated master planning

the acceptability of the principle of development of the site be dependent on satisfying the requirements of local plan policy INF5. This requires applicants to demonstrate a local surplus of open space, or where equivalent quantity and quality of open space is provided elsewhere.

- 5.10 The site assessment process did not identify any potential infill sites within Boulmer. Any proposals for limited housing development would therefore need to come forward on the edge of the village and would therefore be considered against the requirements of local plan policy STP1.
- 5.11 In order to inform the approach of the neighbourhood plan, discussions took place to seek to establish whether it would be possible to deliver affordable housing on the suitable sites identified through the site assessment process without the need for allocations within the neighbourhood plan. The conclusion was that the former Johnnie Johnson Sheltered Housing Site, may be too small for an affordable housing provider as a single site. The allocation of the Old Recreation Field as protected open space was considered a strong barrier to a housing development. In addition, the potential restrictions on the size of development allowed on the edge of Boulmer was considered a viability constraint to the delivery of housing.
- 5.12 As a result, it was concluded that if much needed affordable housing is to be built in the parish that this would need to be supported by a pragmatic planning policy approach within the neighbourhood plan – specifically housing land allocations and the identification of a settlement boundary for Boulmer. Acknowledging that viability is a key consideration in the delivery of affordable housing, discussions took place with Northumberland Estates, as the landowner of the Old Recreation Field and Boulmer South sites. The main purpose was to understand the level of affordable housing provision that could be delivered on potential sites, as there was concern that the existing policy requirements within the local plan would not deliver sufficient affordable housing to begin to meet the needs of the local community. The outcome of the discussions was that the delivery of at least 30% affordable housing would be possible without undermining the overall viability of the proposed developments. The plan therefore proposes to allocate three sites for housing development, the Former Johnnie Johnson site to deliver 100% affordable housing and the Old Recreation Field and Boulmer South sites to both deliver a minimum of 30% affordable housing.

Former Johnnie Johnson sheltered housing site, Longhoughton

- 5.13 The site was formerly occupied by sheltered housing and is now owned by Northumberland County Council. It is a previously developed site within the centre of the village. The residential redevelopment of the site was supported by the local community through early engagement. A masterplan has been developed to illustrate how the principles set out within the Longhoughton Boulmer and Howick Design Code could be applied to the site (the design code is included as annex 2 to this plan). The master planning work identified a number of constraints and opportunities. Constraints included the proximity to public car parking at the Co-op and community centre, that two sides of the site are bounded by roads as well as the existing vegetation. Opportunities from the redevelopment of the site included: the ability to strengthen the urban form along Park Road and Trenchard Way, improving the streetscape quality along Park Road as well as the creation of a community park and pedestrian linkages.
- 5.14 The masterplan layout (figure 5) identifies that the development would result in the creation of 4 semi detached dwellings, reflecting the prevailing style of the surrounding area. Also that it should include: pedestrian connections through the site to connect with the wider greenway network and the community centre; planting for both screening and improved setting of the

parkland, as well as feature trees. No changes are proposed to the parking outside of the Co-op.

- 5.15 As a result of the small size of the site it is acknowledged that it may be difficult to attract a registered provider to develop the site. The parish council therefore commits to explore opportunities to enable the delivery of the site, including the potential of community-led housing.



Figure 5: Masterplan - former Johnnie Johnson sheltered housing site

Old recreation field, Longhoughton

- 5.16 The Old Recreation Field is located on the eastern edge of Longhoughton village. It is a greenfield site which is bounded by residential dwellings on East Moor to the north and agricultural land to the east. Longhoughton Primary School and residential dwellings on Lacey Street and Lacey Court lie to the west. The southern boundary of the site is to Crowlea Road, with agricultural land beyond.
- 5.17 Prior to 2009, the site was the only recreation area, incorporating a football pitch, in Longhoughton. However, the quality of the pitch was poor and there were no changing facilities. In 2003/04 a group of residents developed a project to provide better football facilities for the Longhoughton Rangers Football Club alongside a venue for a village hall/community centre. Northumberland Estates provided a 3.7ha site – Westfield Park, only 400m from the Old Recreation Field, with the intention that the Old Recreation Field, also within the ownership of Northumberland Estates, could be developed for housing in the future. The Football Foundation gave £981,744 towards the development of Westfield Park, which has two full sized turf pitches, a floodlit astro-turf pitch, children’s adventure area and community building (which comprises a community centre and has changing facilities). The total cost of the project was £1,533,142. Following the completion of the Westfield Park development in 2009, all formal football activities transferred there from the Old Recreation Field. The site is currently used for informal recreation, including by people walking their dogs.
- 5.18 The feedback from early engagement identified support for a mixed development of the site including housing, recreation and car parking. However, there were concerns identified through consultation on the pre-submission plan, which have informed a revised masterplan.

- 5.19 The master planning work identified a number of constraints to the development of the site: it is existing greenspace used for dog walking and play, the current access is poor, it lies within the Northumberland Coast National Landscape, is close to the primary school and existing trees. The following opportunities were identified: provision of green linkages through the site, provision of housing with high quality open space, creation of a new village car park and possible new access to the primary school.
- 5.20 The masterplan layout (figure 6) illustrates the delivery of 15 new dwellings, open space and a village car park. It would include:
- A community green with the potential for seating and play equipment;
 - Pathways connecting the adjacent residential development and linkages with the wider greenway network;
 - Planted wetland with viewing and seating area overlooking the National landscape;
 - Vehicular access to the new dwellings via East Moor;
 - New recreation area to the west of the residential development;
 - A village car park, with reinforced grass and central hedgerow; and
 - Potential access to Longhoughton Primary School.



Figure 6: Masterplan layout – Old recreation field

Boulmer south

- 5.21 Boulmer south is located on Beach View to the south of the village. Immediately to the north east are residential dwellings (Bowmere). The south east of the site has its boundary with Beach View and agricultural land and Boulmer Beach beyond. The north west and south west of the site are bounded by agricultural land. The identification of this site was supported by the local community through early engagement, although there was concern that the dwellings should be for permanent occupation and not used as second or holiday homes.
- 5.22 The master planning process identified that there was the potential for the inappropriate development of the site to result in a negative visual impact, which is a key constraint as a result of its location within the Northumberland Coast National Landscape. Opportunities that were

identified were that the development could provide connectivity with Bowmere, the character, scale and arrangement of development could be extended a long Beach View and also the provision of open space for residents.

5.23 The masterplan layout (figure 7) illustrates the delivery of 15 new dwellings (1.5 storey), open space and appropriate landscaping. It would include:

- A central open space with the potential to include seating and play equipment;
- Connection with Bowmere – utilising the existing access;
- Woodland buffer to the periphery of the site;
- Existing buildings and front gardens continued along Beach View.



Figure 7: Masterplan layout Boulmer South

Policy LBH5: Housing

1. The following sites, as defined on the policies map, are allocated for development:
 - a. Former Johnnie Johnson Sheltered Housing Site – to deliver 4 affordable dwellings and open space;
 - b. Old Recreation Field - to deliver approximately 15 dwellings - at least 30% of which should be affordable, a community green and a public car park; and
 - c. Boulmer South – to deliver approximately 15 principal residence dwellings – at least 30% of which should be affordable and open space.
2. The size, type and mix of housing delivered on all sites should meet local needs identified within the Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Housing Needs Assessment (2024), the Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2018) and subsequent updates.

3. The development of all sites will be expected to delivery high quality design which has regard to the principles contained within the Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Design Code and Residential Masterplan, in particular:
 - a. The provision of pedestrian linkages through the sites to the wider greenway network;
 - b. Design and layout which is in keeping with the prevailing style of the adjacent dwellings;
 - c. Landscaping which provides appropriate screening for privacy;
 - d. Safe access for all, ensuring sufficient off-street car and cycle parking which is appropriately sited within the development;
 - e. Appropriate surface and foul water infrastructure; and
 - f. A net gain for biodiversity, reflecting the latest national policy and guidance.

New housing within Boulmer

- 5.24 The local plan and its evidence base highlights that the proliferation of second and holiday homes along the north Northumberland coast are impacting on the sustainability of the community in certain villages. As a result, local plan policy HOU10 supports only the development of new market dwellings to be occupied as principal residences in parishes where 20% or more of household spaces are identified as having no usual residents.
- 5.25 In 2021, whilst the number of dwellings in the parish had increased to 772, however 110 had no usual residents (14.2%). The HNA considered the number of properties within the parish registered for business rates, specifically self-catering holiday units, this identified within 2024 there were 51 commercial holiday lets. This accounts for 46.4% of dwellings with no usual residents in 2021. Council Tax data for the start of April 2024 illustrated that the parish as a whole had 26 second homes (3.4% of residential dwellings), with Business Rates information recording a further 34 (4.2%) registered as commercial holiday lets (those let out for more than 140 days per year). This suggests an overall combined total of 60 second/holiday homes and holiday lets, 7.4% of the total residential properties.
- 5.26 A local survey undertaken by the steering group in 2020 illustrated that across the parish as a whole, 91.3% of properties were permanently occupied. However, the information for Boulmer Ward alone (updated in August 2024) identified a much greater percentage of properties with no usual residents: 38% were identified as second homes and holiday lets.
- 5.27 The level of second and holiday homes is increasing house prices, thereby further reducing the availability of housing for local people. It is also impacting on the vitality of the local community, particularly during the winter months, when properties are empty. Further information is contained within the principal residency background paper¹⁹.
- 5.28 Whilst the parish council supports the approach contained within the local plan, as this only applies at a parish level, it would not assist in resolving the issue of second and holiday homes in Boulmer. Therefore, policy LBH6 requires all occupancy of all new open market housing development located within Boulmer Ward to be restricted to ensure its first and future occupation is limited to only use as a principal residence. With unrestricted open market housing not supported. This policy approach will support the delivery of plan objectives 1 and

¹⁹ <https://longhoughtonndp.co.uk/>

2. It should be noted that this policy will only apply to new housing development, it would not prevent new, purpose built holiday accommodation.

Policy LBH6: New housing development within Boulmer

1. Within the Boulmer Parish Ward boundary, as defined on the policies map, proposals for new housing, including that created by change of use and by sub-division of existing dwellings, but excluding replacement dwellings, will only be supported where occupation is restricted in perpetuity to ensure that each new dwelling is occupied only as a principal residence. A principal residence is that which is occupied as the residents' sole or main residence, where the resident spends the majority of their time when not working away from home.
2. This restriction will apply unless the percentage of second homes, holiday homes and commercial holiday lets within Boulmer Parish Ward falls below 20%. This restriction will be secured through a Section 106 agreement.

Small scale rural exception sites

- 5.29 As explained above, the HNA has identified a significant need for affordable homes within the parish. The local plan contains detailed policies to support the delivering of affordable and market housing. Policy HOU5 requires a range of types and tenures of homes to be provided and states that proposals will be assessed according to how well they contribute to meeting local needs, informed by local HNAs and other evidence. Policy HOU6 specifies how new affordable homes for sale or rent to meet identified needs will be provided. Policy HOU7 supports the delivery of affordable housing on exception sites, which are sites not allocated for housing and are adjacent or well related to existing settlements. Some market housing may be allowed on exception sites where it is clearly shown to be essential to support and facilitate the delivery of the predominant affordable element.
- 5.30 Evidence at both county and parish levels identifies the need to support the provision of smaller homes to support young families and meet the needs of an ageing population, in particular older households looking to downsize. As local plan policy HOU5 includes a requirement for new market homes to meet identified local need, informed by local housing needs information, it is not necessary to repeat this within the neighbourhood plan. With regard to the provision of homes for older and vulnerable people, local plan policy HOU11 supports the delivery of appropriate accommodation in accessible and sustainable locations that are well-served by local health, leisure, education and transport facilities. Integrated sheltered residential retirement and extra care accommodation with support for older people and vulnerable adults is focussed on main towns and service centres.
- 5.31 As a result of the need for affordable housing and reflecting the feedback from the local community, particularly from the housing needs survey, the parish council considers it is important for the neighbourhood plan to provide additional detail to that contained within the local plan. Policy LBH7 therefore seeks to support the limited development of rural exception sites where they would deliver housing that meets locally identified needs. This provides additional detail to supplement local plan policy HOU7. Policy LBH6 would support the delivery of plan objective 2 by providing the types of homes that meet locally identified needs.

Policy LBH7: Small scale rural exception sites

The development of affordable housing will only be permitted outside the Longhoughton and Boulmer settlement boundaries as an exception to meet locally identified housing need, where all the following criteria are met:

- a. It should be demonstrated, through the submission of a detailed site options appraisal, that the site is suitable and that no other suitable and available sites exist or are developable within the relevant Longhoughton or Boulmer settlement boundary
- b. The site should be adjacent to the Longhoughton or Boulmer settlement boundary;
- c. The development should be small scale (less than 0.5 hectares in size or comprising fewer than 10 dwellings) and be appropriate in scale, design and character to the immediate surrounding area;
- d. There must be a proven and unmet local need within the parish for affordable housing. All proposals should be supported by an up-to-date housing needs survey which takes account of the findings of the Longhoughton Housing Needs Survey (2019), Boulmer, Howick and Longhoughton Housing Needs Assessment (2024) and the Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2018) and any subsequent updates;
- e. Occupancy will, in perpetuity, be restricted to a person in housing need who is a resident of the parish, who works in the parish, or who has other strong links with the parish in accordance with the rural allocations criteria as set out by the Northumberland Homefinder Common Allocation Policy;
- f. Proposals should comprise 100% affordable housing, that will be retained in perpetuity. Where viability for a development providing 100% affordable housing cannot be achieved, a small element of market housing – which meets identified needs within Longhoughton Parish – may be included within a rural exception scheme to provide sufficient cross-subsidy to facilitate the delivery of affordable homes. In such cases, a viability assessment will be required to be submitted to demonstrate that cross-subsidy is necessary and the housing provided should still be predominantly be affordable homes. In such cases, a viability assessment will be required to be submitted to demonstrate that cross-subsidy is necessary. This assessment will be independently verified at the cost of the applicant.
- g. The type and tenure should reflect the local and affordable needs of the community, particularly through the provision of one, two and three bedroom affordable homes.

6. Business

Background

- 6.1 National planning policy requires significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. The RAF is the most significant employer in the parish, but there are several other businesses which operate, including tourist accommodation, Howick Hall and Gardens, Coast and Castles Camping, fishing businesses in Boulmer, agriculture and other small businesses. The economy of the plan area is an essential element of the area and especially important to the local community. Plan objective 3 therefore supports and encourages appropriate and sustainable levels of business growth and development across the parish.

Rural economic development

- 6.2 The parish council strongly believes that existing businesses must have the facilities, expertise, skills and information to be successful and develop. Furthermore, the conditions should be right to support new businesses. Many of these support mechanisms lie outside the planning process. The local plan includes several policies which will ensure, where planning permission is required, the retention and growth of local businesses. Policies identify: the need to deliver economic growth, whilst safeguarding the environment and community wellbeing; support for home working; support for employment uses within built-up areas; and support for the growth in the rural economy, including diversification. As a result, it is considered that the neighbourhood plan could not add any further detail to that contained within the local plan.

Tourism

- 6.3 Tourism in Northumberland is a significant opportunity, the county is growing in popularity because of its natural beauty, unspoiled beaches and heritage. Tourism in Longhoughton Parish is also growing. The impact of increasing visitor numbers, whilst positive to the local economy can have a negative impact on the environment and on the quality of life of people, particularly those that live in the national landscape. The Northumberland Coast Management Plan 2020-2024 sets out a sustainable model for tourism. This identifies the need to:
- Move to a lower volume, higher value tourism product;
 - Presume against large scale, high volume, low value tourism developments, particularly in the self-catering sector, that could be detrimental to the special qualities of the area;
 - Understand the impact of tourism on the environmental and cultural assets of the national landscape and on the lives of local people;
 - Move towards a low-carbon, low waste tourism economy;
 - Significantly reduce the use of the private car; and
 - Invest in infrastructure to protect the environmental and cultural assets of the national landscape.
- 6.4 The NPPF requires planning policies to support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. Local plan policy ECN15 identifies that Northumberland will be promoted and developed as a destination for tourists and visitors, whilst recognising the need to sustain and conserve the environment and local communities. It seeks to focus most tourism development within main towns and service centres. Outside these areas, it requires that the development of new build, permanent buildings for holiday accommodation of any sort, should be small scale and form part of a recognised village or

hamlet. Outside villages or hamlets, accommodation development should be limited to the reuse of buildings, unless they would demonstrably improve and diversify the tourism offer within the county or provide accommodation along an established tourist route. Camping, caravans and chalet development is supported in accessible locations outside the national landscape. This policy, alongside local plan ENV5, which requires the special qualities of the national landscape to be conserved and enhanced, are considered to provide an appropriate planning policy framework that would ensure that sustainable tourism development would be supported.

7. Natural and historic environment

Background

- 7.1 The residents of the parish benefit from a rich and diverse natural, built and historic environment. This is illustrated through the wealth of international and national designations, including: the Northumberland Coast National Landscape; North Northumberland Heritage Coast; Northumbria Coast Ramsar Site; Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast Special Area of Conservation; Northumbria Coast Special Protection Area; three sites of special scientific interest (SSSI); 51 listed buildings – two of which are grade I, five grade II* and the remaining 44 are grade II; Howick Hall Registered Park and Garden; and one scheduled monument.
- 7.2 As a result of the valuable natural environment, plan objective 4 seeks to protect and improve the natural environment of the parish by: conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the national landscape and its setting, protecting the integrity of internationally designated coastal sites, maintaining and where possible increasing levels of tranquillity, dark skies and sense of rurality, and supporting the creation, protection and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure networks. Plan objective 5 seeks to protect and enhance the distinctive character of the villages and the historic environment of the parish.

Green infrastructure and the natural environment

- 7.3 The parish has many natural environment designations, including those of international and national importance (international natural environment designations are Ramsar Convention Wetlands, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation, national designations area sites of special scientific interest, marine conservation zones and the national landscape/AONB - see figure 8). It also contains a number of important coastal habitats, including the priority habitats of coastal sand dunes, maritime cliffs and slopes, as well as limestone pavements. There is also ancient and semi natural woodland, as well as woodland on the priority habitat inventory. Important species include: farmland birds, curlew, grey partridge, lapwing, redshank, snipe, tree sparrow, turtle dove, yellow wagtail, waders and wildfowl. Further information is contained within the natural environment background paper²⁰, which is available on the neighbourhood plan website.
- 7.4 Early engagement highlight that the local community feel strongly that the natural environment and green infrastructure of the parish should be protected and enhanced.
- 7.5 The NPPF defines green infrastructure as: *‘A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity’*. Green infrastructure can include: parks, open spaces, playing fields, wildlife corridors, woodlands, street trees, allotments and private gardens. It can also include streams, canals and other water bodies, which are sometimes referred to as blue infrastructure. As green and blue infrastructure is close to where people live, it can play a key role in supporting the health of the local community. It also supports wildlife, climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as helping to improve air quality. It provides important linkages from the built up area to the wider countryside.

²⁰ <https://longhoughtonndp.co.uk/>

- 7.6 The local plan includes policies to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural environment as well as the green infrastructure network, particularly policies ENV1 and ENV2. It is not necessary for the neighbourhood plan to repeat these policies. Policy ENV2 also requires developer contributions to the coastal mitigation service relating to potential impacts on international protected sites from new housing and tourism development.

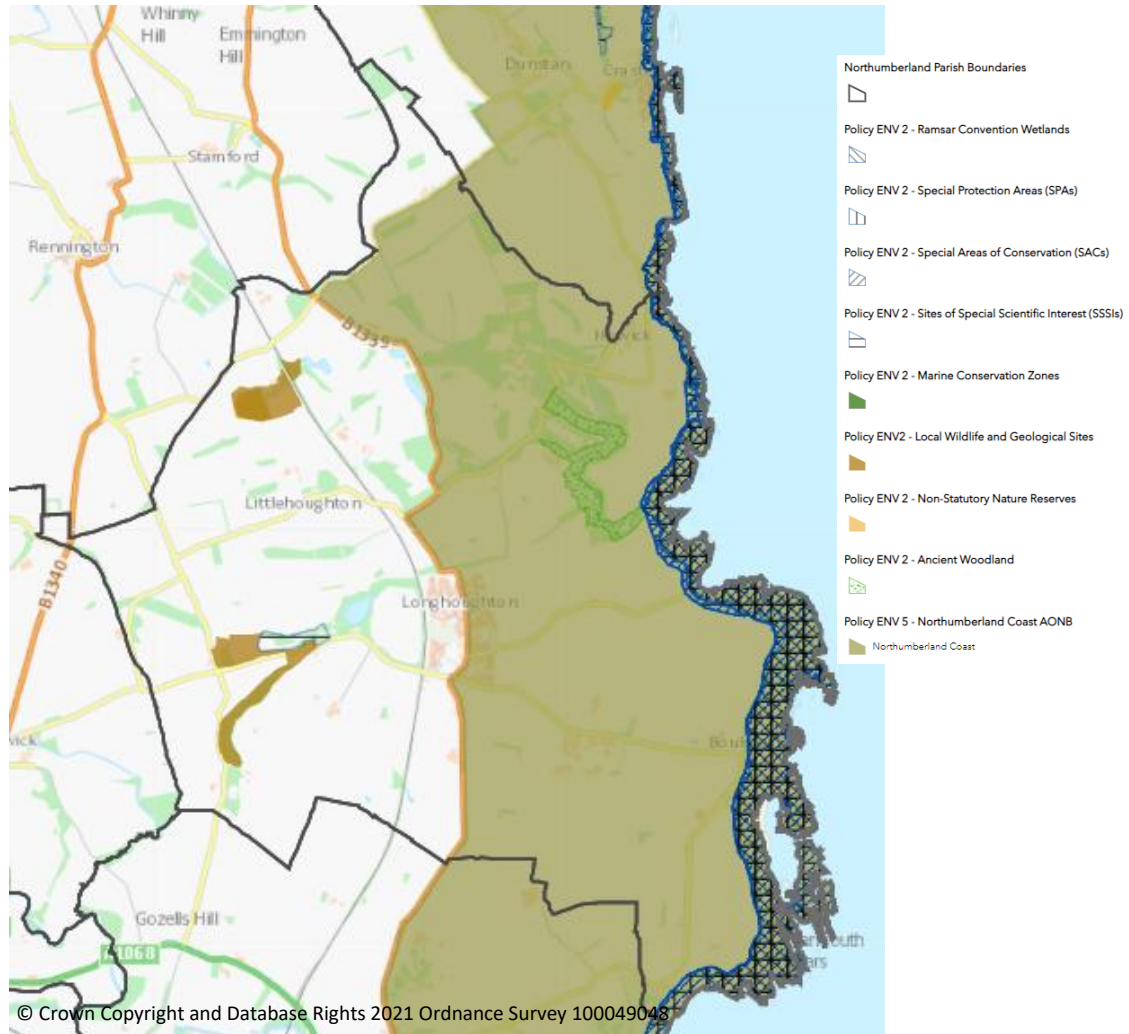


Figure 8: Natural environment designations

Landscape

- 7.7 The Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment (LCA – 2010) describes the essential landscape characteristics of the county. The underlying landscape character is broadly divided into the ‘Farmed Coastal Plain’ Landscape Character Type (LCT) which lies within the western part of the parish and the ‘Rocky Coastline’ LCT to the east. Parts of both LCTs fall within the Northumberland Coast National Landscape.
- 7.8 The key characteristics of the ‘Farmed Coastal Plain’ are described as:
- Open, coastal location, although sea views are not always possible;
 - Gently rolling or almost flat farmland, dominated by large arable fields;
 - Generally low-lying, with some small hills and raised plateaux;
 - Intensive farmland, often with weak field boundary pattern;
 - Occasional wooded estates; and
 - Large farmsteads comprising traditional and modern buildings.

- 7.9 The character description notes that the 'Farmed Coastal Plain' is predominantly a gently rolling landscape or mainly arable farmland, well settled and with a coastal influence. It identifies localised high points around Longhoughton, which typically take the form of small rounded hills. Historic features are identified around Howick, notably Howick Hall Registered Park and Garden.
- 7.10 In the more detailed landscape character area description 3c: Rock, the assessment notes the characteristic shelterbelts and woodland that are found across parts of the parish landscape, as well as frequent hedgerow boundaries. The character description identifies that the landscape is well settled, albeit with no large settlements. Larger villages, including Longhoughton, are noted as having traditional stone buildings as well as other buildings that are less reflective of local character.
- 7.11 The key characteristics of 'Rocky Coastline' are described as:
- Rocky coast of cliffs and headlands;
 - Dramatic shoreline with offshore rocks and islands;
 - Prominent coastal landforms offering views;
 - Small former fishing villages now centres of tourism;
 - Exposed coastal landscape of windblown hedges;
 - Major historic features are popular tourist attractions.
- 7.12 The character description notes that 'Rocky Coastline' is defined by the narrow coastal strip that is dominated by the shore, and inland sections that are farmed mainly for pasture due to exposed context. It identifies the influence of the sea and maritime character, in particular the extensive views along the coast and out to sea. The description also highlights the accessibility through the area through an extensive network of coastal footpaths, foreshore, and beaches – reflected in its popularity as a tourist destination.
- 7.13 In the more detailed landscape character area description 4c: Craster Coast, the assessment notes that the parish is host to a straight section of coast, has few bays and little sand, the exception being the natural harbour of Boulmer Haven.
- 7.14 The design code highlights the importance of working with the site character and its context and identifies a number of important landscape features such as hedgerows and field trees. It explains that locally important landscape features add structure to the landscape and can make an important contribution to the visibility of development and/ or its 'fit' within its context. The code also considered important views within the plan area, as illustrated in figures 9 to 11. Further information is contained within the natural environment background paper²¹.
- 7.15 Informed by the Northumberland LCA and the Longhoughton, Boulmer and Howick Design Code, policy LBH8 seeks to ensure that new development will maintain and where appropriate enhance important elements of the landscape of the plan area. It has been developed within the context of the NLP which contains a number of policies to ensure that special qualities of the national landscape will be conserved and enhanced.

²¹ <https://longhoughtonndp.co.uk/>

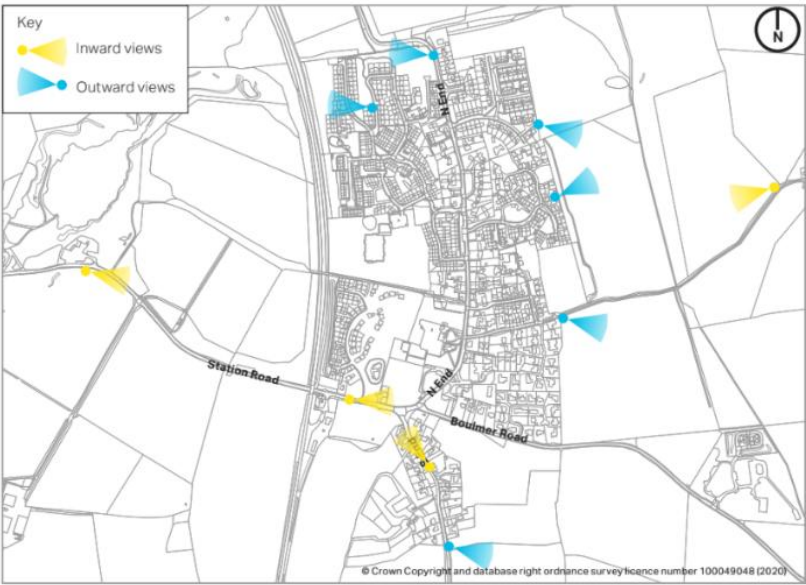


Figure 9 - Important views - Longhoughton

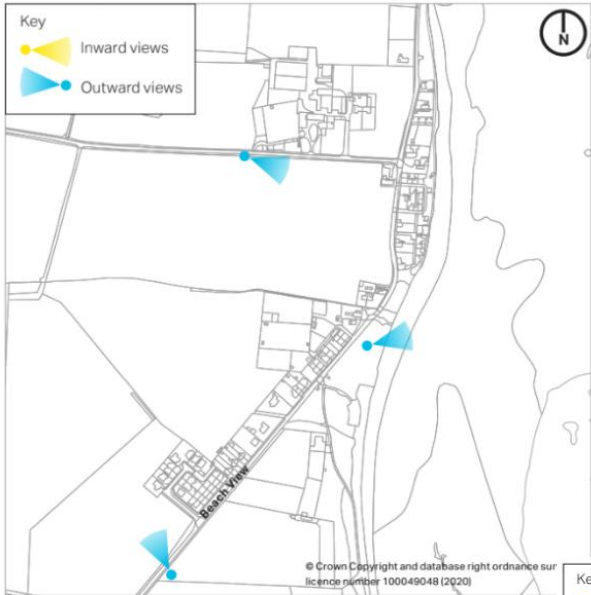


Figure 10 - Important views - Boulmer

Figure 36: Location of some of the notable views within Boulmer.



Figure 11 - Important views - Howick

Policy LBH8: Landscape

1. New development should maintain and where appropriate enhance positive elements of the landscape character of Longhoughton Parish, as described in the Northumberland Landscape Character Assessment, Longhoughton Boulmer and Howick Design Code, and the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.
2. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how, where appropriate and relevant, the development:
 - a. Would preserve, enhance and positively contribute to the character of the landscape of Longhoughton Parish;
 - b. Has been informed by the context of the site and its surrounding landscape in terms of: height; scale; massing; orientation; and position;
 - c. Has considered the impact of the development on important views, as identified in figures 9-11. Views that contribute to the character of the settlement should be retained;
 - d. Seeks to conserve important local landscape features such as mature hedgerows and boundaries. Mature and established trees should be protected and incorporated into the development wherever possible;
 - e. Sits comfortably within the landscape, by taking account of the topography and natural features of the development site; and
 - f. Creates new landscape features, including trees, shrubs and water features.

Heritage assets

- 7.16 Heritage assets can either be designated or non-designated. Designated assets have statutory status and include listed buildings and conservation areas. A non-designated asset is a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.
- 7.17 The NPPF defines a heritage asset as:
'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'
- 7.18 The historic assets of Longhoughton Parish are a vital part of its character. There are 51 listed buildings/ structure, two of which are grade I, five grade II* and 44 grade II. There is one scheduled monument and one registered park and garden (grade II).
- 7.19 There are currently 142 entries on the Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER) listed for Longhoughton Parish. Further entries could be added in future as a result of further research. Additional information, including details of all of the designated heritage assets and current entries on the HER, is contained within the heritage background paper²².
- 7.20 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and the NPPF requires them to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Also, that planning decisions affecting a heritage asset

²² <https://longhoughtonndp.co.uk/>

are required to be based on a sound understanding of the significance of the asset and the impact of the proposal on that significance. Local plan policy ENV7 provides protection to designated and non-designated assets across Northumberland, the significance of which could be affected by new development. It is not necessary to repeat this protection within the neighbourhood plan.

8. Community

Background

- 8.1 The NPPF identifies that the planning system has an important role to play in creating healthy, inclusive communities. NPPG defines a healthy community as a good place to grow up and grow old in, a community which supports healthy behaviours and supports reductions in health inequalities. It should enhance the physical and mental health of the community and where appropriate encourage active healthy lifestyles and healthy living environments for all.
- 8.2 The sense of community, the range of services and facilities as well as access to green and open spaces are very highly valued by the local community. Plan objective 6 seeks to protect and support the development of key community facilities and infrastructure to ensure that the community is inclusive and sustainable.

Community services and facilities

- 8.3 Community facilities are identified in the NPPF as: local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. These facilities enhance the sustainability of local communities and residential environments.
- 8.4 There are a variety of community facilities available across the plan area. The majority of services and facilities are provided within Longhoughton, including a primary school, community and sports centre, church, Co-op, the RAF Families Centre and two cafés. There is also a visiting post office and occasional visiting fish and chip van as well as other mobile food traders. At Boulmer there is a memorial hall, restaurant/ hotel and at Howick, there is a village hall and a tearoom. A wider range of services and facilities are available in Alnwick.
- 8.5 There are a number of community groups that provide social, educational and sporting facilities and opportunities. At Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre there are groups that offer: indoor bowling, loose needles, matting, community lunch and film nights, football, yoga, pilates, boxercise and scouting. There are also community groups offering footpath maintenance, planting, heritage, WI and social nights. At Howick there is an art club, film club and WI. At Boulmer the Memorial Hall periodically opens for refreshment and socialising. There are however gaps in provision for personal services and many residents have asked for the services of a public house and restaurant plus a permanent post office.
- 8.6 The NPPF is clear that the planning system should support the development of new community facilities and that valued community facilities should be retained where appropriate. Policy INF3 of the local plan provides protection against the loss of local village convenience shops and public houses. It is acknowledged that planning permission is not always required to change the use of a building or land and this restricts the ability to secure the continued use of an important facility.
- 8.7 The availability of the current level of facilities within the plan area are essential to support the strong sense of community that exists. Policy LBH9 therefore seeks to retain, enhance and protect important community services and facilities, this will assist with the delivery of plan objective 6.

Policy LBH9: Community services and facilities

1. The following facilities are identified as having great importance to the local community and are identified on the policies map:
CF1 St Peter and St Paul's Church
CF2 Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre
CF3 The Primary School and Nursery
CF4 The RAF Families Centre and Nursery
CF5 Car parking facilities at School Green
CF6 Boulmer Memorial Hall
CF7 Howick Village Hall
CF8 Howick Church
2. The following commercial services are identified as being essential to the future sustainability of the parish: in Longhoughton: retail store, café and post office service; in Boulmer: public house; in Howick: tea room.
3. Where planning permission is required for a development that would result in the loss of buildings or land for public or community use it will need to be demonstrated that:
 - a. It is no longer needed in its current form;
 - b. A replacement service or facility of sufficient size, layout and quality is to be provided in an alternative suitable location; or
 - c. It would not be economically viable or feasible to retain the service or facility and there is no reasonable prospect of securing an alternative community use of the land or building.

Local green space

- 8.8 Green spaces are a vital part of a vibrant and healthy community and are of great importance to the character and identity of a place. They are valued for a wide range of reasons including: visual amenity; historic significance; recreational value; tranquillity; and richness of wildlife. Uncontrolled changes to green spaces can irrevocably alter their special character or intrinsic value.
- 8.9 The NPPF enables neighbourhood plans to designate areas of local green space for special protection, thereby preventing development on these sites other than in very special circumstances. These spaces do not need to be publicly accessible but must be in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve as well as being demonstrably special to them, holding a particular local significance. The designation cannot be applied to an extensive tract of land.
- 8.10 The sites listed in policy LBH10 and shown on the policies map are proposed to be designated as local green spaces as they meet the criteria set out within national policy and guidance. A local green space and protected open space background paper²³, has been prepared to outline the reasons why the sites are of particular importance to the local community and to explain the process that led to their proposed designation. The designation of the sites will assist with the delivery of plan objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6.

²³ <https://longhoughtonndp.co.uk/>

Policy LBH10: Local green space

The following areas, as defined on the policies map, are designated as local green space which will be protected from development in a manner consistent with the protection of land within the Green Belt:

- LGS01 Evelyn Howick Memorial Nature Reserve;
- LGS02 Woodland to the north and east of the B1339, Longhoughton;
- LGS03 Woodland to the north of Tedder Place, Longhoughton;
- LGS04 St Peter and St Pauls Church and Churchyard, Longhoughton;
- LGS05 Boulmer Links;
- LGS06 Boulmer Hall Farm;
- LGS07 Pasture to the south of Station Road; and
- LGS08 The Pondfield.

Protected open space

8.11 There are many areas of open space which are valued for their local amenity value and for formal and informal recreational purposes, but which do not meet the detailed allocation criteria for designation as local green space.

8.12 The sites listed in policy LBH11 and shown on the policies map are proposed to be designated as protected open space as they are important to the local community. The local green space and protected open space background paper²⁴, outlines the reasons why the sites are important and explains the process that has led to their proposed designation. The assessment takes account of the areas that are identified for inclusion within the local plan as protected open space (see figure 12) and does not repeat this designation.

8.13 The policy requires that any loss of protected open space resulting from new development should be replaced by at least equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, including



Figure 12: Sites identified as protected open space within the local plan

²⁴ <https://longhoughtonndp.co.uk/>

amenity value. Importantly, the new provision should be in a suitable location. It is expected that when considering whether a location for the replacement open space is 'suitable', that a key consideration is whether the new space is easily accessible by the local community. It should therefore be in the near vicinity of the protected open space that it will be replacing. The designation of the sites will assist with the delivery of plan objectives 1 and 6.

Policy LBH11: Protected open space

1. The following areas, as defined on the policies map, have been identified as contributing to local amenity and character and will be protected from development:

- POS01 Tedder Place Playground;
- POS02 Sea View;
- POS03 Cunningham Road;
- POS04 Carey Place/ North End;
- POS05 Carey Place;
- POS06 East Moor (1);
- POS07 Bader Crescent;
- POS08 Park Road;
- POS09 East Moor (2);
- POS10 East Moor (3);
- POS11 North of Westfield House;
- POS12 Chancel Place;
- POS13 Springfield;
- POS14 South End.

2. Development that will result in the loss of protected open space will only be supported where the applicant has robustly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, that the:
 - a. Open space is surplus to requirements; or
 - b. Loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by open space of equal or better value in terms of quantity and quality, including amenity value, in a suitable location as close as possible to the open space to be lost; or
 - c. Development is for alternative open space provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

9. Transport and access

Background

- 9.1 The NPPF encourages a reduction in congestion and greenhouse gas emissions through the introduction of measures which promote a decrease in the number of journeys made by car. Whilst the preparation of transport policy at a local level is primarily a matter for the local planning authority, there are areas where the plan can have an influence on accessibility including supporting the protection and enhancement of routes for non-motorised travel and recreation.
- 9.2 The local plan contains several policies which seek to create a sustainable pattern of development to reduce the need to travel. It includes policies to promote sustainable connections (TRA1), manage the effect of development on the transport network (TRA2), improve the core road network (TRA3) and to ensure sufficient parking is provided in new development (TRA4).
- 9.3 Early engagement identified that there is a need for improved public transport, car parking and safer roads. The community also strongly support the need to create greenways across the parish, with the long-term aspirations for these routes to link to key destinations outside the parish, particularly Lesbury and Alnwick. Greenways are traffic free routes for walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders.
- 9.4 Plan objective 7 therefore promotes access to facilities and services for all residents and seeks to create safe and high-quality roads, pavements and green routes, including footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways.

Walking and cycling network

- 9.5 The walking and cycling network include those routes that are used by pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders. They provide recreation and leisure opportunities and promote healthy living. Routes can include established pathways and cycle routes, public rights of way, bridle paths and paths of a more informal nature. Important routes in the area are identified on the policies map and include the King Charles III England Coast Path, the St Oswald's Way and National Cycle Route 1.
- 9.6 Lesbury and Longhoughton Parish Councils alongside the RAF have been working together to establish a greenway that runs from Longhoughton to Lesbury, linking to the existing National Cycle Network Route 1 at Lesbury and to the railway station at Hipsburn. Discussions have also taken place with Northumberland Estates, Northumberland County Council, Sustrans and the NCNL Partnership. This route is only one part of the parish council's wider aspirations for a network of greenways. Other important potential routes include:
- Longhoughton village – new greenways on the west and east side of the village linking to the important destinations such as the church, Co-op and primary school. This would enable residents, especially children, to move about the village without having to use the narrow pavements on the B1339;
 - Longhoughton to Lesbury – a potential route would run east of the RAF Lesbury Site, utilising an existing bridleway. In Lesbury the route could link to the existing National Cycling Network Route 1 and there could also be a link to Alnmouth railway station at Hipsburn;
 - Longhoughton to Alnwick – the route could follow the existing bridleway from South End, Longhoughton to Dunsheugh before crossing the unclassified road north of

Stableazes and taking an existing trackway that leads to Denwick. From Denwick a safe route would need to be identified into the centre of Alnwick and to the Lionheart area where it could link to the existing greenway that runs alongside the Aln Valley Railway Line towards Lesbury;

- Lesbury to Alnwick – there is an existing greenway that runs from the Lionheart Station alongside the Aln Valley Railway for approximately two miles to the point at which the railway discontinues. From here the existing route follows a track to Greenrigg and then a metalled road to Bilton and Hipsburn. It is the intention of the Aln Valley Railway to extend the line to link to the East Coast main line at Alnmouth Station. This is a distance of approximately one mile and this extension could include the greenway which would provide a very effective link from Alnwick to Alnmouth Station. It may be possible to create the greenway before the extension of the Aln Valley Railway;
- Possible Circular routes – from Denwick there is a Byway open to all traffic (BOAT) which leads south east to connect to the A1068. A further BOAT starts a short distance to the east opposite the junction with the Stableazes lane where it meets the A1068. This BOAT leads south crossing the river Aln before linking with the existing Aln Valley greenway mentioned above. It is an aspiration to have a short off-road greenway linking the two BOATS. This would run alongside the A1068 for a short distance. This would allow a number of safe circular routes to become available.

- 9.7 Policy LBH12 supports proposals to improve or extend the walking and cycling network within the plan area, particularly the creation of new greenways, as well as protecting existing routes, helping to deliver plan objectives 1 and 7.

Policy LBH12: Walking and cycling network

1. Support will be given to development that will improve or extend the walking and cycling network within the plan area where it allows greater access for all to important local services and facilities, green spaces and neighbouring areas. The Public Rights of Way network, identified on the policies map will be protected from development, unless:
 - a. There is a clear and demonstrable justification for the loss of the route; and
 - b. A suitable alternative route will be provided within an agreed timescale.
2. Support will be given to the creation of greenways within the parish which enable the delivery of the following traffic free routes:
 - i. Within Longhoughton, particularly on the west and east sides of the village;
 - ii. Between Longhoughton and Lesbury;
 - iii. Between Longhoughton and Alnwick;
 - iv. Between Lesbury and Alnwick;
 - v. Other circular routes.

Annex 1: Community actions

As part of the process of developing the neighbourhood plan, some areas of community concerns were identified that cannot be addressed through the planning system. However, as part of the neighbourhood planning process they can become ‘community actions’, which are supported by Longhoughton Parish Council. These proposals can be delivered in conjunction with other local organisations.

Objective 1 – Sustainable development

Important actions which could assist in the delivery of the sustainable development objective include:

- Establishing a climate change group which would develop community projects to seek to meet the net zero carbon emissions target.
- Encourage the trustees of the Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre Trust to become an ‘exemplar’ in the future use of renewable energy by adding to the new solar and battery system by planning to replace the gas heating system with a renewable source, in moving to zero emissions.
- Seek opportunities to work more closely with the Northumberland Coast National Landscape Partnership in developing further opportunities for joint projects.
- To establish regular liaison arrangements with Northumbria Police and RAF Boulmer.
- Encourage the creation of groups of residents to undertake tasks in the community or to form meaningful groups that encourage participation in the arts, exercise or sport.

Objective 2 – Housing

Important actions to assist with the delivery of the housing objective are:

- A commitment to work with Northumberland County Council with a view to the possible delivery of community-led housing on the former Johnnie Johnston site.
- To organise a Housing Needs Survey from time to time to update the evidence of need.
- To continue to monitor the level of second homes and holiday lets in Longhoughton and Howick Wards.

Objective 3 – Business

To support the local economy across the parish the parish council will seek to develop opportunities for employment growth, it will:

- Continue to maintain a Quarry Liaison Group.

Objective 4 – Environment

The parish council is working on/ investigating several projects to seek to protect and improve the natural environment of the parish, including:

- Establishing a litter picking group;
- Planting at least 20 new trees each year, including encouraging residents to join the Longhoughton Community Gardeners Group;
- Working with the Longhoughton Quarry operators and Northumberland Estates regarding the creation of a nature reserve in the disused western quarry;
- Encourage the Longhoughton Community Gardeners to establish a community orchard and continue maintaining planters and seats throughout the village of Longhoughton.

Objective 5 – Heritage

To support the delivery of objective 5 the parish council will:

- Seek to celebrate the diverse heritage of the area and encourage the heritage group to research and publish more information about the heritage of the parish.
- Encourage the management and use of the public footpath and the bridleway network by the 'Footpaths Group' of residents.

Objective 6 – Community

To support the sustainability and vibrancy of the local community, the parish council will support the delivery of the following actions:

- Creation of a community trust to be part of the charity infrastructure of the parish;
- Development of a community hub, based on the Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre and the RAF Families Centre;
- To provide 'extended Warm Hub' facilities for residents due to the escalation in energy prices and the increase in the cost of living by the development of the 'Thursday Together' concept;
- To improve communications within the parish by: the continued publication of the newsletter and leaflets on specific topics, developing greater use of social media, developing a dedicated website and use of a community noticeboard at the Running Fox;
- To follow up the signing of the 'Armed Forces Covenant' by finding ways to work together with the RAF in support of the principles of the Covenant;
- Joint working with the RAF to promote joint celebrations with the objective of bringing the military and civilian populations closer together;
- The creation of a strategy group to take forward an overview of children's and young person's activities and facilities in the parish;
- Ensure that the services and facilities for young people are of a high standard and are used by them; continue to develop joint working with the RAF Families Centre to meet the needs of the community and achieve the effective use of resources and sustainability;
- Continue to establish medical services in Longhoughton including the involvement of the County Council Health and Wellbeing Service along with outreach services;
- To assist in finding ways for St Peter and St Paul's Church in Longhoughton to be sustainable;
- Work with the Trustees of the Longhoughton Community Centre towards the successful replacement of the Astro Turf pitch;
- To consider whether to request voluntary contributions towards the Parish Precept from holiday let properties where they pay no business rates;
- Carry out a survey of all young people under the age of 18 to identify their needs and aspirations with view to a programme of delivery where appropriate;
- Pursue the possibility of new sports being promoted for the parish along with keep-fit facilities, including wellbeing walks;
- Continue to promote a scheme for the recognition of volunteers;
- Encourage the continuation of the Longhoughton Film Club, book exchange and new social activities at the Community and Sports Centre.

Objective 7 – Transport and access

To promote access to facilities and services for all residents the parish council will:

- Continue to work with others to develop the greenways project and encourage the creation of a group of residents aimed at maintaining walking routes.
- To assist the rural properties that do not have access to super-fast Broadband and follow this up with NCC.

- Work with NCC Highways Department and the Northumberland Coast National Landscape Team on the Longhoughton traffic and road safety review including the seeking of a changed status from the road to Longhoughton Beach that benefits sustainable travel;
- Continue to promote driving within the speed limits by the use of the Speedwatch team and liaison with the Police;
- Continue to make the case for a new village car park on the old recreation field;
- Continue to be aware of parking congestion in Lacey Street and to find ways to minimise it in the short term and resolve it in the longer term;
- Work with NCC for the creation of a new car park in Boulmer and for an overall parking strategy to be agreed for the village.
- To help promote the permissive circular walking route from Longhoughton to the Burn mouth via the new bridge and back via the coastal path and Low Steads.

Annex 2: Design Guidance and Code

Separate document