

## Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Wooler Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report to accompany the Submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan

Addendum

January 2020

### **Revision History**

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
V1.0	12 <sup>th</sup> December 2019	Addendum to Environmental Report for client review	18 <sup>2h</sup> December 2019	lan McCluskey	Principal
V1.1	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	Addendum to the Environmental Report (Post client review)	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	lan McCluskey	Principal

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Addendum to the Environmental Report

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## **NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

An addendum to the Environmental Report has been prepared to deal with the following matters:

- The methodology for determining effects with regards to the historic environment
- To clarify / rectify factual and typographical errors in the SA Report.

In response to these issues, a detailed heritage assessment has been undertaken for each of the reasonable site options. The findings can be summarised as follows:

- A handful of sites do not give rise to any issues due to the absence of historic features.
- Some sites could affect the setting of the Conservation Area, but with careful design, effects would be unlikely.
- There are no significant heritage reasons why all but one of the site options could not be taken forward as a site allocation. This site has not been proposed as an allocation.

The addendum also sets out an updated assessment of the Plan (i.e. the individual and cumulative effects of the proposed site allocations). The overall conclusions are the same as those identified in the initial Environmental Report. These are as follows:

- Positive effects on the historic environment are likely as redevelopment of sites should help to better reveal the significance of heritage assets and remove poorly designed development.
- Minor negative effects could occur should there be a loss of locally important buildings associated with site development. However, the accompanying Plan policies seek to avoid this. Some of the allocated sites that involve locally important features are already subject to planning agreements, with enhancement considered likely.

No mitigation or enhancement measures have been identified at this latest stage of the SEA.

It is not necessary to include additional monitoring measures as the conclusions of the assessment remain the same as within the Environmental Report (which already contains an appropriate monitoring framework).

# **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Wooler Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) has been prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2012. The Neighbourhood Plan area, which includes the administrative area of Wooler Parish, is being prepared in the context of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Local Plan with due regard to the emerging Northumberland Local Plan.
- This document is an addendum to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report which accompanied the HNP for Regulation 14 consultation in October 2018.
- 1.3 The Plan (and the Environmental Report) was submitted to Northumberland County Council in July 2019. The Council raised concerns about submitting the Plan for examination, primarily because of comments made by Historic England in relation to the site selection and the corresponding SEA process.
- 1.4 This addendum has been prepared to address these issues.

# 2. This Environmental Report Addendum

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is being developed alongside a process of SEA, a legally required process that aims to ensure that the significant effects of a draft plan (and alternatives) are systematically considered and communicated. It is a requirement that SEA is undertaken in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (the 'SEA Regulations') 2004.
- 2.2 The primary aim of this Environmental Report Addendum is to address issues raised by Historic England in relation to the assessment of site options and proposed site allocations.
- 2.3 It is also considered useful to respond to queries raised in relation to the Environmental Report consulted upon at Regulation 14 stage.
- 2.4 In addition, Northumberland County Council have noted some factual / typographical errors in the SEA Environmental Report. Clarifications have been made to rectify these issues.
- 2.5 There is established case law / practice that states that any 'deficiencies' in the SEA process can be rectified, and the preparation of a report addendum is an appropriate way of achieving this.
- 2.6 The addendum therefore covers the following factors:
  - Updated assessment of heritage assessment criteria for reasonable site options.
  - Updated appraisal of the proposed site allocations in the draft Plan.
  - Clarifications to respond to factual / typographical errors.
  - Response to specific representations related to the SEA process.

# 3. Scoping

3.1 The scoping information as set out in the Scoping Report and main Environmental Report remains valid and has been used to inform the assessments in this addendum.

## 4. Site assessment updates

### Introduction

- 4.1 As part of the SEA for the Wooler Neighbourhood Plan, a high-level assessment of heritage constraints was undertaken for each of the site options identified as reasonable alternatives. This information was presented in the Environmental Reports that accompanied the Regulation 14 version of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.2 In response to representations made by Historic England, a more detailed study into heritage issues and impacts has been undertaken by AECOM. This document sets out the method employed and updates the heritage assessment in relation to a selection of sites.
- 4.3 Essentially, this has identified the heritage issues associated with each site option and the likely impacts of development (and potential for mitigation and enhancement).
- 4.4 The findings of this study have been summarised below and form the basis of the updates to the SEA findings (as presented in this Addendum). **Appendix D** to this Addendum presents this study in full.

### Re-assessing site options

- 4.5 The Heritage Impact Assessment sets out a robust methodology for assessing impacts that identifies and takes account of the significance value of heritage assets when determining the potential impacts. A range of evidence sources have been used to inform the assessments including site visits and the Historic Environment Record.
- 4.6 The full list of sites included in the assessment is set out in table 4.1 below. This summarises the impacts identified for each site within the heritage study.
- 4.7 In the original site assessment document, the assessment identified constraints and provided an overall score in the basis of the impacts that <u>might occur</u>. In the interests of a consistent and fair appraisal of site options, mitigation ensures were not identified at this stage.
- 4.8 The detailed heritage study goes further by identifying the condition of buildings, their contribution towards the character of Wooler, and the potential impacts taking into consideration mitigation measures.
- 4.9 What the detailed heritage study demonstrates is that (broadly speaking), any issues identified can be mitigated through sensitive design.
- 4.10 Therefore, the potential negative effects flagged in the initial Site Assessments can be avoided.

### Table 4.1: Heritage assessment findings for selected site options

The site assessment references in table 4,1 relate to those used within the AECOM site assessment report (February 2018) and which were subsequently used in the SA Report. These sites are illustrated on the map in **Appendix A**, which replicates the map of sites in the AECOM site assessment report.

Aecom site ref	Site name	Initial AECOM site assessment summary	Detailed heritage assessment conclusions
Site 1	Former First School Site	Negative effects that could potentially be mitigated.	The site is in a relatively sensitive location with regards to the setting of nearby heritage assets. However, the site is currently vacant, and does not contribute positively. Development has the potential for both positive or negative effects, but improvements are more likely. There is no reason why a site should not be allocated on the basis of heritage constraints, and so <b>neutral effects are</b> <b>recorded in the site assessment.</b>
Site 2	Land South of Burnhouse Road	Limited impacts likely	Though the site sits outside of the Conservation Area, it is in a location on the approach to the settlement (and Conservation Area). This presents a potential effect on the setting of the Conservation Area. However, with careful design it is unlikely that negative effects would arise. There is no reason why a site should not be allocated on the basis of heritage constraints, and so <b>neutral effects are</b> <b>recorded in the site assessment.</b>
Site 4 & 4a	Land above High Fair, North of Common Road;	Scheduled monument nearby, some impact, but mitigation possible	Visible sight lines between two pillarboxes is important to the setting of these scheduled monuments. Development is unlikely to lead to notable negative effects and could possibly lead to benefits (though this would rely on measures that outwith any standard mitigation). There is no reason why a site should not be allocated on the basis of heritage constraints, and so <b>neutral effects</b> <b>are recorded in the site assessment.</b>
Site 5	Land south of Common Road, near Ward House	Limited impacts likely	There is no reason why a site should not be allocated on the basis of heritage constraints, and so <b>neutral effects are recorded in the site</b> <b>assessment.</b>
Site 6	Land above High Fair	Not assessed – planning permission already granted	Despite the presence of scheduled monuments, there is no reason why a site should not be allocated on the basis of heritage constraints, but <b>minor negative effects are recorded</b> as this is dependent on the type and design of development.
Site 7	Land south of Common Road	Limited impacts likely	The site is within the setting of the Conservation Area, and is important with regards to key views from the Conservation Area. Despite mitigation, it is the principle of development itself that will lead to negative effects. Overall, <b>this could be a significant</b> <b>adverse effect.</b>

Aecom site ref	Site name	Initial AECOM site assessment summary	Detailed heritage assessment conclusions
Site 7a	Land south of Ramsay's Lane	Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation	The site is within the setting of the Conservation Area, and is important with regards to key views from the Conservation Area. With mitigation though, it is likely that adverse effects could be avoided. There is no reason why a site should not be allocated on the basis of heritage constraints, and so <b>neutral effects are recorded in the site</b> <b>assessment.</b>
Site 13	Ferguson/ Redpath's Yard	Directly impact and mitigation might be difficult to achieve.	The site is in an important gateway location and is sensitive in relation to the setting of heritage assets. However, the site has an active planning permission which states that enhancement is likely. Therefore, a <b>neutral effect is recorded in the site assessment</b> .
Site 21	Land at Brewery Farm	Possible negative effects that could potentially be mitigated.	The site does not contribute notably towards the setting of any heritage assets. Therefore, development is unlikely to have any effect upon the historic environment. There is no reason why a site should not be allocated on the basis of heritage constraints, and so <b>neutral effects are recorded in</b> <b>the site assessment.</b>
Site 26	The Auction Mart field	Possible negative effects that could potentially be mitigated	There is a non designated heritage asset that could be affected. However, with appropriate design, significant negative effects are unlikely. There is no reason why a site should not be allocated on the basis of heritage constraints, but <b>minor negative</b> <b>effects are recorded</b> as this is dependent on the type and design of development.
Site 29	The Old Vicarage Field	Not assessed – planning permission already granted	The site has active planning permission for alteration and extension of the listed building and a limited number of new dwellings. Therefore, neutral effects are recorded.

# **5. Appraisal of the Plan**

### Introduction

- 5.1 Several iterations of the Wooler Neighbourhood Plan have been appraised through the SEA process. This has involved consideration of all the policies in the Plan (in combination) and an assessment of the likely effects. Of particular importance has been the consideration of the effects that will arise as a result of development on sites proposed for allocation.
- 5.2 The Environmental Report sets out a discussion of these effects in relation to a range of environmental objectives. Of particular relevance to this addendum is SEA Objective 3 (Landscape and Historic Environment).
- 5.3 As mentioned earlier, representations from Historic England suggest that the rationale for effects recorded against this objective needs to be strengthened and justified.
- 5.4 To address these concerns, the SEA has been updated.
- 5.5 The section below is reproduced from the Environmental Report (undertaken at Regulation 14 Stage), but changes have been made as deemed necessary to strengthen the justification for predicted effects.

### SEA Objective 3: Landscape and Historic Environment

### Appraisal findings: site allocations

- 5.6 The delivery of housing and employment land within Wooler has the potential to impact the historic environment, landscape character and the visual setting and amenity of the Neighbourhood Plan area if inappropriately located and designed.
- 5.7 Regarding landscape sensitivity, it is important to acknowledge that all the six site allocations proposed through Policy 4 'Sites Allocated for Development' are located outside of the boundaries of the Northumberland National Park. In this context, the WNP seeks to focus development on the allocated sites on the eastern edges of Wooler, and on infill and brownfield sites within and adjacent to the built-up area.
- 5.8 Therefore, the proposed allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan are generally supportive of locating new development away from the most sensitive landscape areas.
- 5.9 Two of the six site allocations are located wholly on greenfield land. In this context, Policy 4.4 'Land at Burnhouse Road '(Site 4) states that any planning application for development at this location must be accompanied by a landscaping gain and a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). Similarly, a LVIA has also been suggested as a requirement for any proposals on Land East of the Auction Mart (Site 5), as per the provisions of Policy 4.5. This will ensure that any potential landscape impacts associated with the development proposals at these locations are appropriately mitigated.
- 5.10 From a heritage perspective, none of the site allocations contain a listed building or a scheduled monument. Therefore, development at these locations is unlikely to directly impact upon the condition of nationally designated sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 5.11 At the local level however, Site 3 'Land on South Road known as Redpath's / Ferguson's Yard' (see Policy 4.3) is located within the boundaries of the Wooler Conservation Area, with Site 1 'Land at the Former First School Site off Burnhouse Road' (see Policy 4.1) and Site 4 'Land at Burnhouse Road' (see Policy 4.4) located adjacent to its boundaries.

- 5.12 Notably, Policy 4.3 is supportive of the reuse and regeneration of underutilised previously developed land within the Wooler Conservation Area providing that the proposal can demonstrate positive impacts to the character and appearance of the site.
- 5.13 Site 1 (AECOM site assessment reference 1) is in a relatively sensitive location in terms of the setting if the Conservation Area, but there are currently vacant buildings on site, and so positive development is more likely to have benefits rather than negative effects. This is backed-up by policy 4.1 which requires a detailed masterplan illustrating how the layout will incorporate positive landscaping. As such, neutral or minor positive effects are predicted.
- 5.14 Site 2 (AECOM site assessment reference 17) is at some distance to the Conservation Area, but along the approach to the settlement. However, it is not visible from the Conservation Area, nor is it visible along the main approach roads. Therefore, , with good design, neutral effects are predicted
- 5.15 Site 3 (AECOM site assessment reference 13) is an important gateway site to the Conservation Area. There are the remains of an old water mill on the site. However, the site has an active planning permission which states that enhancement is likely.
- 5.16 Site 4 (AECOM site assessment reference 2) is adjacent to the Conservation Area in an important approaching location. Reflecting this there is a requirement to prepare a heritage statement through Policy 4.4. It is therefore likely that neutral effects will occur.
- 5.17 Site 5 (AECOM site assessment reference 26) is proposed for employment uses, which is in keeping with surrounding uses, and is in line with previous policy directions for the site in the Northumberland Local Plan. Though there is a non-designated heritage asset nearby, it is considered that with appropriate design negative effects could be avoided.
- 5.18 Site 6 (AECOM site assessment reference 22) is relatively distant from heritage assets, and is adjacent to areas of modern residential development. With this being said, the site is on the settlement edge, and has an open character. The site is proposed for recreational and community uses though, which are likely to be in keeping with open character of this area ad have neutral effects with regards to heritage.

### Appraisal findings: Draft Plan

- 5.19 The allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan area seeks to deliver development in the most accessible locations of Wooler. Additionally, Objective A and B within Policy 5 'Housing Development within the Plan Area' states that proposals will be supported if they are located on brownfield and infill sites within the built-up area of Wooler Town and/or on the built-up edge of the settlement. This will support the limitation of negative effects on the open countryside.
- 5.20 In terms of protected landscapes, Policy 2 'Major Development in Northumberland National Park' will only support major development proposals in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest. In this regard, Objective 'C' and 'D' within Policy 2 implies that the applicant will be required to demonstrate how any potential impacts to the statutory duties of the national park (i.e. protect its special qualities and enhance public enjoyment) will be mitigated, and how positive contributions will be achieved through the proposals.
- 5.21 Objective A within Policy 6 'New Housing Development Design Principles' states that all new housing proposals will be required to demonstrate how the development incorporates landscaping to soften the impact of the development on the wider landscape, particularly on the south western edge of Wooler. Furthermore, Policy 21 'Development on the Western and Southwestern Edges of Wooler Town' recognises the sensitivity of this area of the Parish, due to its proximity to the Northumberland National Park and the special landscapes of Horsdon Hill and Cheviot Street. Within these areas, Policy 21 confirms that small scale proposals for development will only be supported where they can be sensitively accommodated within the

landscape (following a LVIA), with development not supported if the potential impacts cannot be adequately mitigated through design and landscaping.

- 5.22 Objective B within Policy 3 'Locally Distinctive and High Quality Design' also assures that the height, form and external appearance of new developments will give full consideration to important views into and out of the town. Therefore, the provisions of these policies will protect the constrained areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area from high levels of inappropriate development.
- 5.23 Additionally, Policy 10 'Housing Development in the Open Countryside' confirms that isolated dwellings in the open countryside will only be supported if a proposal meets key criteria including (amongst other considerations), if the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset, the development would reuse redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting, and if the design is of an exceptional quality which is sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.
- 5.24 Likewise, Policy 10 states that any proposed conversion should not include any significant alterations or extensions which would detract from the building's character and appearance, or to the wider landscape.
- 5.25 Policy 12 'Business Development' is similar in this regard, affirming that any expansions of employment offer within the open countryside should not detract from the wider landscape character or negatively impact on natural features and heritage assets.
- 5.26 The Neighbourhood Plan area has a rich historic environment, recognised through the diversity of features and areas which are nationally and local designated for their cultural heritage interest. This is reflected by Neighbourhood Plan policies which have a strong focus on conserving and enhancing the significance of buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings.
- 5.27 For example, Objective A within Policy 3 'Locally Distinctive and High Quality Design' affirms that development proposals will be supported providing that it would deliver a design which responds positively to local character and heritage through the use of locally distinctive materials and visually attractive design, with attention to local architectural detail.
- 5.28 Objective C goes on to state that where relevant, proposals should make a positive contribution to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets within the Neighbourhood Plan area. This should ensure that values attributed to assets are fully understood and reflected in design proposals, whilst also positively enhancing features which contribute to the setting of designated heritage assets, as outlined within the latest (and regularly updated) guidance from Historic England.
- 5.29 The Neighbourhood Plan also has a strong focus on enhancing the heritage value and special qualities of the Wooler Conservation Area, addressing some of the key issues within its associated character area appraisal. For example, Policy 18 'South Road, the Peth and the Gateways to Wooler Town' outlines that development proposals within this area should enhance local character and context, improving the appearance of the street scene (Objective A of the policy), and safeguard features which contribute to the special qualities of the conservation area, including the main tree groups.
- 5.30 This is further supported through the provisions of Policy 19 'Landscaping, Hedgerows and Trees' and Policy 20 'Wooler Conservation Area'. Notably, Policy 20 provides a list of features which should be preserved and enhanced through development proposals within the conservation area, including (amongst other considerations) the key views across the Glendale Area, townscape elements such as landmark buildings, the distinct character areas as defined with the appraisal and the setting of listed buildings within the town. Therefore, it is anticipated

that these policies will have positive effects to locally valued and nationally protected heritage assets within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

### **Overall effects**

- 5.31 Overall, Neighbourhood Plan policies take a proactive approach in conserving and enhancing the distinctive character and heritage interests of Wooler which will lead to long term positive effects. This is recognised through its focus on safeguarding protected sites (both designated and non-designated) and their settings, incorporating landscape features into the design and ensuring that development respects the character of the existing townscape and surrounding countryside. It is important to recognise that along with Local Plan policies, the objectives within the Northumberland National Park Management Plan and the positive management strategies located with the Wooler Conservation Area Appraisal provide additional layers of protection and opportunities for the historic environment and sensitive landscape within and surrounding Wooler.
- 5.32 None of the allocated sites are likely to generate negative effects when accompanying Plan policies are taken into account. There are no designated heritage assets on any of the sites, and the setting of the Conservation Area is unlikely to be affected negatively. Development will occur at gateway locations to the settlement, but this should lead to enhancements with appropriate design (which should be achieved in light of policy requirements relating to heritage, landscape, townscape and design).

The overall conclusions remain broadly the same in relation to the historic environment.

## 6. Mitigation and enhancement

- 6.1 Historic England have already provided comments on the draft Plan, with some suggestions for policy wording.
- 6.2 It is not considered necessary to recommend further amendments (particularly as no significant negative effects have been identified as a result of the more detailed heritage assessment).

## 7. Monitoring

7.1 Monitoring measures are set out within the Environmental Report. There is no need to propose additional monitoring measures as the site appraisal findings remain virtually the same (and importantly, no significant effects have been identified).

## 8. Clarifications

This section has been included within the Addendum to respond to any issues raised in relation to the content of the SA Report. The following key points have been identified by Northumberland Council in particular.

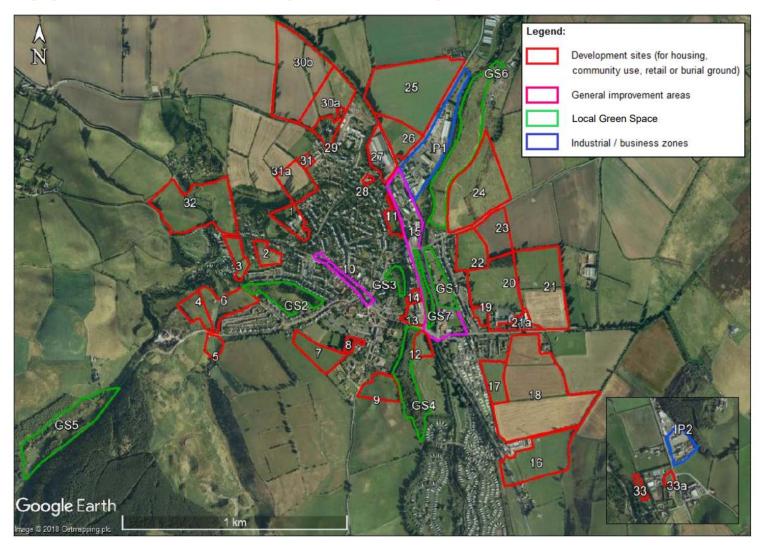
- Throughout the report reference is made to 'five' site allocations rather than six. The reference
  to five sites was in relation to the allocations for housing/employment. The sixth was for
  recreation / community space, which is why it was not grouped with the other five in
  discussions. However, to clarify, all six sites have been considered in the assessment process
  for their proposed uses.
- 2. Table 4.1 shows only five allocated sites highlighted in blue instead of six. One site (Land north of Common Road) is incorrectly highlighted and another site (Site 17 Land South of the Martins) is missing from the table. This site (17) has been allocated for development but has not been assessed in either the Site Assessment Report or the SEA. The table contains graphical errors, meaning that the allocated sites are not highlighted correctly. For clarity, the table is reproduced and presented in Appendix C of this Addendum. Site 17 (Land South of the Martins) was originally deemed to be an unreasonable alternative. However, it was since considered suitable., so an assessment of the site is provided at Appendix B to this Addendum and it is also included in the updated summary table at Appendix C.
- 3. Table 4.2 states incorrectly that Site 22 Land South of Weetwood Road is 'not pursued in the Plan'. Agree; this was a factual / typographical error. The actual plan appraisal section does consider the implications of development at this site though.
- 4. Table 4.1 lists 23 sites, Table 4.2 list 26 sites it is unclear why this is the case. Several sites in table 4.2 were not assessed in the AECOM site assessment report as they were not considered to be reasonable alternatives (Site 17, Site 18, Site 23). A brief discussion of why these sites were discounted was provided in table 4.2 for completeness. Site 17 is now a site allocation, and so discussion was considered necessary at this stage. Sites 18 and 23 are still considered to be unreasonable alternatives for the same reasons.
- 5. Inconsistencies regarding names of allocated sites under policies 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 make it difficult to establish the site in question. Sites have been named consistently in this Addendum.
- 6. Throughout reference is made to the older version of the NPPF (2018). The Environmental Report (particularly the scoping section) was prepared prior to the updates to the NPPF in 2018 / 2019. This does not materially affect the conclusions.
- 7. The Scoping Report is not attached at Appendix B. Uploaded / available on Neighbourhood Plan Website <u>www.woolerneighbourhoodplan.org/reports-and-studies-for-wnp-annex-c.html</u>

# 9. Next Steps

- 9.1 This addendum has been prepared to satisfy Northumberland County Council that the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met.
- 9.2 The next step is for the Council to submit the Plan for independent Examination in light of the updated SEA.
- 9.3 Should further changes be made to the Plan during the Examination stage; the SEA will need to be updated to reflect them (by way of a further addendum).
- 9.4 The Plan can then be put to a referendum so that members of the community can vote on whether or not the Plan will be 'made'.
- 9.5 Once made the Plan will form part of the Local Plan for Northumberland.

Addendum to the Environmental Report

## **Appendix A: Site options map**



# Appendix B: Assessment of Site 17 (Land South of the Martins)

Greenfield/brownfield - The site is entirely greenfield. Near existing built up area - Adjacent Suitable access – Yes – off The Martins Allocated for a particular use – Yes, but not in the emerging Local Plan. SSSI impact zone – Does not trigger potential for significant effects AONB - No impacts likely flood zone – Entirely within Flood Zone 1 Landscape - Medium sensitivity: development of the site would lead to a moderate impact on landscape or townscape character due to visibility from surrounding locations and/or impacts on the character of the location. Agricultural Land – No. The site is a playing field. Heritage Assets - No designated assets or locally important buildings identified nearby. Screened-out of the detailed heritage study as unlikely to generate significant effects Proximity to Town/local centre/shop – 785m to Co-Op Proximity Bus Stop - 620m to nearest stop on South Road Proximity to Primary School - 204m to Wooler First School Proximity to Secondary school – 350m to Glendale Middle School (\*not a full secondary school though) Open space/recreation facilities - Within 300m of playing fields and sports facilities as Wooler First School Proximity to GP Hospital pharmacy 1160m to nearest GP, Nearest hospital at Alnwick and Berwick-Upon-Tweed within 30m drive. Cycle route National route 8 is 670m from site Footpath <400m Key employment site - 770m to town centre Tree preservation orders on site - None Any loss of biodiversity – No designated sites nearby and unlikely to be of notable value given its current use as a football pitch. Public Rights of Way – No routes would be affected Existing community value - Yes, but site would only be released if a new site for Wooler F.C. was found. Ground Contamination – Not likely Significant infrastructure crossing - No Coalescence - No Scale and nature of development - No

#### Addendum to the Environmental Report

Site name NB: Sites shaded in blue are proposed for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan	Greenfield/brownfield	Near existing built up area	Suitable access	Allocated for a particular use	SSSI impact zone, AONB, flood zone	Land Scape	Agricultural Land	Heritage Assets	Proximity to Town/local centre/shop	Proximity Bus Stop	Proximity to Primary School	Proximity to Secondary school	Open space/recreation facilities	Proximity to GP Hospital pharmacy	Cycle route	Footpath	Key employment site	Tree preservation orders on site	Any loss of biodiversity	Public Righs of Way	Existing community value	Ground Contamination	Significant infrastructure crossing	Coalscene	Scale and nature of development
Site 1 - Former First School Site																			?						
Site 2 - Land south of Burnhouse Rd																									
Site 3 - Land on Burnhouse Rd, east of Highburn House																									
Site 4 - Iand north of Common Rd, above High Fair																									
Site 5 - land south of Common Rd																									
Site 7 - Land south of Common Road																							?		
Site 7A - Land south of Ramseys Lane																									
Site 8 - Field behind Horsdonside and the Youth Hostel																									
Site 9 - Horsdon Farm field																									
Site 11 – Land at Victoria Road																									
Site 13 - Ferguson's Yard																						?			
Site 16 - Land on either side of A697, south of Bridgend and Riverside Parks.																									

#### Addendum to the Environmental Report

Site name NB: Sites shaded in blue are proposed for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan	Greenfield/brownfield	Near existing built up area	Suitable access	Allocated for a particular use	SSSI impact zone, AONB, flood zone	Land Scape	Agricultural Land	Heritage Assets	Proximity to Town/local centre/shop	Proximity Bus Stop	Proximity to Primary School	Proximity to Secondary school	Open space/recreation facilities	Proximity to GP Hospital pharmacy	Cycle route	Footpath	Key employment site	Tree preservation orders on site	Any loss of biodiversity	Public Righs of Way	Existing community value	Ground Contamination	Significant infrastructure crossing	Coalscene	Scale and nature of development
Site 17 – Land South of The Martins																									
Site 21 – Land at Brewery Farm																									
Site 22 - Land South of Weetwood Road																									
Site 25 - Land adjacent to Auction Mart fields																							?		
Site 26 - Mart Field																									
Site 27 – Auction Mart																						?	?		
Site 30a - Land north of Fenton Grange																									
Site 30b - Land north west of Old Vicarage																									
Site 31a- Land north of Ryecroft																									
Site 32 - Land along Burnside Road towards Low Humbleton																									
Site 33 - Land adjacent to The Crossing, Haugh Head																									
Site 33a - Land north of Heather View (Haugh Head)																									



# Wooler Neighbourhood Plan

## Strategic Environmental Assessment; Appendix C: Heritage Impact Assessment

Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

December 2019

### Quality information

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### **Revision History**

Revision	<b>Revision date</b>	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
1.0	17 <sup>th</sup> November	Draft for Client Review	Yes	lan McCluskey	Principal Environmental Consultant
1.1	12 <sup>th</sup> December	Minor changes following client review	Yes	lan McCluskey	Principal Environmental Consultant

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned by the Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (WNPSG), as part of Wooler Parish Council (WPC), to produce a heritage impact assessment as part of the wider Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- 1.2 The draft Wooler Neighbourhood Plan includes a number of proposed site allocations. The purpose of this report appendix is to provide a proportionate assessment of likely impacts and significant effects arising from the site allocations (including reasonable alternatives) as pertains to the historic environment. The selection of potential site allocations for assessment has been carried following consultation with Historic England. The potential site allocations forming the focus of this assessment are listed in Section 6.

# 2. Planning Guidance

- 2.1 The draft plan should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including protecting the historic environment (NPPF para 8c). Doing so requires the presentation of sufficient and proportionate evidence on how the draft plan guides development to sustainable solutions (PPG para 41-072-20190509).
- 2.2 The draft plan cannot be in breach of EU obligations, which may include the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to ensure environmental considerations are part of the process of preparing the draft plan (PPG para 41-078-20140306).
- 2.3 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan is allocating sites for development. Screening for SEA showed the draft plan needed SEA, and the topic of cultural heritage (which addresses historic environment issues) was scoped in. In this case, the same evidence can be used both to influence the decision-making process as to which sites to allocate, and for the SEA (PPG para 11-030-20150209 11-032-20140306). This can be achieved through a brief heritage impact assessment, i.e. assessing the impact of potential site allocations on the significance of heritage assets and thus contributing to the draft Plan (firstly, by seeking to avoid harmful impacts and, only secondly, by considering mitigation or compensation). Historic England produces guidance on heritage impact assessment as it applies to site allocations, Neighbourhood Planning and SEA, as set out below:
  - Historic England's Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (2015);
  - Historic England's Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment (2016); and
  - Historic England's Advice Note 11: Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment (2018).

In addition, the following advice published by Historic England has been used in assessing each site:

- Good Practice Advice in Planning 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015); and;
- Good Practice Advice in Planning 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2017).

# 3. Methodology

# Methodology for Assessing Heritage Value (Significance)

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised 2019) defines significance of heritage assets as, 'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest'. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic (NPPF Annex 2, Glossary). Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."
- 3.2 Historic England also produce guidance for assessing significance in Conservation Principles (Historic England 2008). This sets out how heritage assets and places are valued by this and future generations because of their heritage interest. Significance can be described as the sum of the special interest of a historic place, building or area and is derived from an asset's evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value.
- 3.3 The following assessment references the NPPF terms for defining an asset's heritage interest, but it also takes cognisance of the considerations outlined in Conservation Principles (Historic England 2008) where a broader definition of heritage interest is discussed.
- 3.4 The Heritage Impact Assessment has been undertaken in line with the methodology set out below.
- 3.5 The significance of a heritage asset is guided by its designated status but is derived also from its heritage interest which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Each identified heritage asset can be assigned a value in accordance with the criteria set out in Table 1. Using professional judgement and the results of consultation, heritage assets are also assessed on an individual basis and regional variations and individual qualities are taken into account where applicable.

Significance	Asset categories
High	<ul> <li>World Heritage Sites</li> <li>Scheduled Monuments</li> <li>Grade I and II* listed buildings</li> <li>Registered battlefields</li> <li>Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens</li> <li>Conservation areas of demonstrable high value</li> <li>Non-designated heritage assets (archaeological sites, historic buildings, monuments, parks, gardens or landscapes) that can be shown to have demonstrable national or international importance</li> <li>Well preserved historic landscape character areas, exhibiting considerable coherence, time-depth or other critical factor(s)</li> </ul>
Medium	Grade II listed buildings         Conservation areas         Grade II registered parks and gardens         Conservation areas         Non-designated heritage assets (archaeological sites, historic buildings, monuments, park, gardens or landscapes) that can be shown to have demonstrable regional importance         Averagely preserved historic landscape character areas, exhibiting reasonable coherence, time-depth or other critical factor(s)         Historic townscapes with historic integrity in that the assets that constitute their make-up are clearly legible
Low	Locally listed buildings Non-designated heritage assets (archaeological sites, historic buildings, monuments, park, gardens or landscapes) that can be shown to have demonstrable local importance Assets whose values are compromised by poor preservation or survival of contextual associations to justify inclusion into a higher grade Historic landscape character areas whose value is limited by poor preservation and/ or poor survival of contextual associations

#### Table 1: Criteria for assessing the significance of heritage assets

1

	Assets identified on national or regional databases, but which have no archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic value
Not significant	Assets whose values are compromised by poor preservation or survival of contextual associations to justify inclusion into a higher grade
	Landscape with no or little significant historical merit

3.6 Assignment of significance is a value judgement based on research, knowledge and professional expertise of the author of the Heritage Impact Assessment. Ranking significance provides assistance in understanding the relative importance of different elements and assessing the likely impact of a potential site allocation.

## **Methodology for the Assessment of Impact**

- 3.7 Having identified the value of the heritage asset, the next stage in the assessment is to identify the level and degree of impact to an asset that may arise from the principal of development. Impacts can occur to the physical fabric of the asset or affect its setting. The potential impact of allocation on the significance of heritage assets may be adverse, beneficial or neutral.
- 3.8 The level and degree of impact (impact rating) is assigned with reference to a four-point scale as set out in Table 2. If no impact on value is identified, a neutral effect is reported.

Impact rating	Description of impact
High	Changes such that the heritage value of the asset is totally altered or destroyed. Comprehensive change to elements of setting that would result in harm to the asset and our ability to understand and appreciate its heritage significance.
Medium	Change such that the heritage value of the asset is significantly altered or modified. Changes such that the setting of the asset is noticeably different, affecting significance and resulting in changes in our ability to understand and appreciate the heritage value of the asset.
Low	Changes such that the heritage value of the asset is slightly affected. Changes to the setting that have a slight impact on significance resulting in changes in our ability to understand and appreciate the heritage value of the asset.
Very Low	Changes to the asset that hardly affect heritage value. Changes to the setting of an asset that have little effect on significance and no real change in our ability to understand and appreciate the heritage value of the asset

#### Table 2: Factors influencing the assessment of magnitude of impacts

1

- 3.9 This assessment uses the 5-step site selection methodology as set out in Historic England's Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (2015) which suggests:
  - 1. Identify which heritage assets are affected by the potential site allocation;
  - Understand what contribution the site (in its current form) makes to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
  - 3. Identify what impact the allocation might have on that significance;
  - 4. Consider maximising enhancements and avoiding harm;
  - 5. Determine whether the proposed site allocation is appropriate in a policy context.
- 3.10 The impacts predicted in step 3 are prior to the application of appropriate design mitigation and therefore reflect a reasonable worst-case scenario. Where adverse impacts are identified, and subject to the nature of the asset and the potential impact, consideration has been given to mitigation with a view to removing or reducing potential harm to the heritage asset. The effectiveness of any proposed mitigation has been evaluated with regard to the site's (and the assets') situation, topography, key views, wider landscape characteristics etc. and is also a value judgement based on observations and expertise of the author. Further details will also need to be assessed at planning application stage. Not all impacts will require mitigation; some may offer opportunities for enhancement which is made clear in the assessment. This

reasonable mitigation is applied at step 4, when the residual impacts of the proposed allocation are reported.

3.11 In order to ensure that the development of allocated sites takes place in a manner consistent with the conservation of the heritage assets in their vicinity, it is recommended that the mitigation measures set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment are incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Evidence base reference material**

- 3.12 The following sources were consulted:
  - Site visit by Gillian Scott on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2019. Conditions overcast with occasional light rain;
  - The Northumberland Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA; February 2017) (see SEA Appendix A);
  - SEA Appendix C: Wooler Site Proformas;
  - Historic OS Maps;
  - Historic England Register of Listed Buildings (NHLE);
  - The Wooler Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2005); and
  - Design, Access and Heritage Statement submitted for Site 13 Ferguson's Yard (Elphick Associates 2018).

## 4. Significance of Wooler

- 4.1 The following description is taken from the Wooler Conservation Area Appraisal (2005).
- 4.2 Wooler evolved from a medieval hamlet which probably developed around the church and Tower Hill, and soon encompassed the town's main streets at High Street, Church Street, Cheviot Street, Ramsey's Lane and The Peth. These formed the core of the medieval settlement and are still the town centre and the core of the conservation area. The town was a commercial centre of the woollen industry and High Street became the centre of trade focused on The Market Place.
- 4.3 The residential areas in the centre of the town are characterised by densely packed terraces, sometimes fossilising medieval burgage plots. This area has a distinctive organic character with variation in building heights and styles. Peripheral areas have a lower settlement density, but there is a general preponderance of sandstone as the building material across both areas. Significant development took place in the town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century after a series of catastrophic fires. Many buildings were then rebuilt in stone with slate or pantile roofs.
- 4.4 The late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries saw new areas of speculative housing development to the north, including Glendale Road, generally of terraces and semi-detached houses in standardised styles. These properties contrast with the organic character of the town centre and this distinction between the old and new areas of the town contributes to the historic character. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century further modern housing developments have been added to the town, again using standardised, repetitive designs.
- 4.5 The conservation area comprises four main character areas based on its historic development including;
  - the commercial centre (including High Street and Market Place) as the core of the town and source of its historic importance. This area contains many listed buildings and includes fossilised burgage plots to the north of High Street which are of particular historic significance;
  - the Victorian and Edwardian suburbs to the north and west include stone-built properties of high townscape quality and attractive streets. A significant landmark in this area is the grouping of St Ninian;s Church and Loreto's guesthouse behind fine stone walls with mature trees;
  - Church Street, Tender Hill and environs the historic core of the settlement where it is likely that the early development of Wooler took place around the church. The area is characterised by its

dramatically steep topography with visually exciting vistas and panoramas of the complex juxtapositions of buildings and landscape; and

- Ramsey's Lane and Cheviot Street comprising roads snaking up and out of Wooler, being transitional between the settlement and countryside, and containing important 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings.
- 4.6 Wooler's topographic siting in the river valley of Wooler Water, on the edge of the Cheviot Hills provides an attractive setting of hills to the east and west of the settlement with the open valley to the north. The hills rising through the settlement also provide dramatic vistas from many of the settlement's buildings and allow for attractive views from higher ground across the settlement's roofscapes. Roofs are particularly important to Wooler's character because of its hilly topography. Although the settlement encroaches onto the lower slopes of the of the western valley side, the natural hilltops are exposed and provide a dramatic backdrop in views across the town, that include open fields and wild moorland above.

## 5. List of Sites

- 5.1 The following list of sites have been developed following consultation with Historic England and reflect those sites assessed within the SEA where there is the potential for impacts to heritage assets as a result of development. There are several sites that have been appraised in the SEA that have not been included for further consideration in terms of heritage constraints as effects are unlikely and further work is considered unnecessary. This is a proportionate, appropriate approach.
  - Site 1 Former First School Site;
  - Site 2 Land South of Burnhouse Road;
  - Site 4 & 4a Land above High Fair, North of Common Road;
  - Site 5 Land south of Common Road, near Ward House;
  - Site 6 Land above High Fair;
  - Site 7 Land south of Common Road;
  - Site 7a Land south of Ramsay's Lane;
  - Site 13 Ferguson/Redpath's Yard;
  - Site 21 Land at Brewery Farm;
  - Site 26 The Auction Mart field; and
  - Site 29 The Old Vicarage Field.

## 6. Heritage Impact Assessment

### Site 1 – Former First School Site

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 1 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: Site 1 SHLAA Reference Number: 1129 Site Address: Wooler First School, Ryecroft Way, Wooler, NE71 6EB Site Area: 1.36 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing or expansion to neighbouring burial ground

Step 1	Heritage Assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	Wooler Conservation Area – Moderate significance	
		Grade II listed Roman Catholic Church of St Ninian [NHLE: 1304105] – Moderate significance	
		Grade II listed Loreto Guest House [NHLE: 1042296] – Moderate significance	
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	The site falls within the setting of Wooler Conservation Area and two listed buildings (Roman Catholic Church of St Ninian and Loreto Guest House). The present school building within the site is of not of heritage significance.	
		The site is in a sensitive location with regards to the settings of nearby heritage assets.	
		The site slopes downward to the north and the school building is a low-profile structure situated at the base of the slope. It is set back from the lane by approximately 65m. Due to this site configuration the present school building does not appear in any key views of the conservation area, and it makes a neutral contribution the settings of the nearby listed buildings, neither positive nor negative. The site is currently vacant and therefore at risk of deterioration, which would negatively impact upon the heritage value of the conservation area.	
Step 3	Potential impact of development on Significance?	The site is in a sensitive location with regards to the setting of nearby heritage assets. It is currently vacant and therefore at risk of deterioration which would negatively impact upon the heritage value of the conservation area. Opportunities to bring sustainable development to the site should therefore be encouraged. The site's surroundings are predominantly residential, so a residential development would	

	N in Ti	be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. Likewise, the site lies between the Church of St Ninian and the burial ground so allocation as an extension to the burial ground would also be appropriate in terms of the setting of the Church of St Ninian.
		The use of the site as an extension to the burial ground is not considered likely to affect the value of surrounding heritage assets. <b>Neutral</b>
		The current neutral contribution of the site to the heritage value of surrounding heritage assets offers the opportunity for positive enhancement through the use of appropriate design in terms of character, scale, density and materials in any new scheme. <b>Low Beneficial</b>
		Inappropriate design would introduce the potential for harm to heritage assets as a result of detracting development within their settings. <b>Medium Adverse</b>
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance Significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	
		Residential development should seek to integrate new buildings into the streetscape and be mindful of existing building styles, scale, mass, materials, layout and roofscapes in the surrounding area. The site's surroundings are characterised by changes in level and a pleasing mix of materials and architectural styles. The Church of St Ninian dominates the area and its churchyard with mature trees and high stone walls make a strong statement in the streetscape, to the south-east these walls are separately Grade II listed [NHLE: 1370941]. New development should respect the asset's dominance and, if possible, seek to channel views towards to the church from the surrounding area. Development should make use of the existing slope within the site to add interest in terms of building heights and levels and a range of materials should be used, particularly at roof level, to integrate the new development with the existing. A range of tiles, slates and timber barge boards can be seen in the immediate surroundings. There is the opportunity to create a strong frontage along the lane to the north of the church. Houses along this frontage should be afforded front gardens with hedged boundaries. <b>Low Beneficial</b>
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	allocated for housing or burial ground extension subject to a policy in the plan that reflects local and national policy including:
		-gives special regard to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area;
		-gives special regard to the desirability of preserving heritage assets and their settings; and

-the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

### Site 2 – Land South of Burnhouse Road

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 2 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: Site 4 SHLAA Reference Number: 1093 Site Address: Land between 53a and 45 Burnhouse Road, Wooler, NE71 6EE Site Area: 0.93 ha

Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing / community facility / burial ground

Step 1	Heritage assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	Wooler Conservation Area – Moderate significance
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	The site falls within the setting of Wooler Conservation Area on the approach to the conservation area along Burnhouse Road.
		The approach along Burnhouse Road is rural in character with important green space provided along the route demarcating the edge of the settlement. It therefore also announces arrival within the bounds of the settlement and, as an extension of that, the conservation area.
		The site represents a pocket of green space between and behind existing buildings on Burnhouse Road, with a steep rise southward. Whilst this contributes to the rural character of the approach to the site, as outlined above, a more important area of green space in this respect is the field to the east of Highburn House (Site 3), further west along Burnhouse Road. For this reason, the contribution that the site makes to the setting of the conservation area is considered to be low.
Step 3	Potential impact of development on significance?	The site's surroundings are predominantly residential, so a residential development would be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. Likewise, the site lies to the south-west of the burial ground so allocation as an extension to the burial ground would also be appropriate to the local area. Development as a community facility would not be consistent with the predominant character of the area.

The use of the site as an extension to the burial ground is not considered likely to affect the significance	
of surrounding heritage assets. Neutral	

		The current low contribution of the site to the setting of the conservation area is based on its assisting in providing a rural character to the approach to the conservation area. Residential development of an appropriate design in terms of character, scale, density and materials could be achieved within the site without affecting the value of the conservation area. Although the boundary of the settlement would be pushed out to the field to the east of Highburn House (Site 3), the character of the approach to the conservation area would still be rural in character with limited built form between the settlement edge and the boundary of the conservation area. <b>Neutral</b>
		Likewise, development of a community facility on the site using appropriate design in terms of character, scale, density and materials could be achieved within the site without affecting the <b>significance</b> of the conservation area. <b>Neutral</b>
		Inappropriate design would introduce the potential for harm to the conservation area as a result of detracting development within its setting, this is considered to be more likely in the case of an allocation for a community facility on the site due to the greater range of building forms and types that this allocation could facilitate. <b>Low Adverse</b>
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	Residential development should seek to integrate new buildings into the streetscape and be mindful of existing building styles, scale, mass, materials, layout and roofscapes in the surrounding area. The site's surroundings are characterised by changes in level and a mix of materials and architectural styles. The predominant housing type in the immediate surroundings is the bungalow, two-storey houses are also present on the opposite side of Burnhouse Road. Development should make use of the existing slope within the site to add interest in terms of building heights and levels and a range of materials should be used, particularly at roof level to integrate the new development with the existing. There is the opportunity to create a low-density frontage along Burnhouse Road, but houses in this part of the site should be set back from the road with front gardens with either stone walls or hedged boundaries. <b>Neutral</b>
		Mitigation for the potential community facility option should follow the advice above in terms of integrating new buildings into the streetscape, being mindful of existing building styles, scale, mass, materials, layout and roofscapes in the surrounding area. Development should make use of the existing slope within the site to add interest in terms of building heights and levels and a range of materials should be used, particularly at roof level to integrate the new development with the existing. Care should

Step 5

	be taken to ensure that the massing and density of the development responds to the rural character of the approach to the conservation area. Low Adverse
Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	With regard to the preceding 4 steps, there are no heritage reasons why this site should not be allocated for community use / housing / burial ground subject to a policy in the plan that reflects local and national policy including:
	-gives special regard to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area;
	-the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Nevertheless, an allocation for either housing or burial ground extension would be preferable in this
location to avoid the risk of inappropriate development within the setting of the conservation area that is
considered to be more likely with an allocation for community use, due to the greater range of building
forms and types that this allocation could facilitate.

### Site 4 & 4a - Land above High Fair, North of Common Road

Wooler Nei SHLAA Ref Site Addres Site Area: 1	AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 4 and 4a Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: N/A not allocated SHLAA Reference Number: 1108 Site Address: Land north of common road east of High Fair Wooler, NE71 6EE Site Area: 1.17 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing		
Step 1	Heritage assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	Two Pillboxes near Green Castle Scheduled Monument [NHLE: 1006438] – High significance	
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	NB. The location of the northernmost pillbox in the scheduled monument of Two Pillboxes near Green Castle is incorrect in the NHLE database. Its correct NGR is 398388, 628027, which places it outside the site boundary.	
		The two pillboxes forming the scheduled monument appear to have been constructed as part of a linear defensive system. The northernmost pillbox is located a short distance to the north of the site. The second pillbox is outside the site to the south-west, adjacent to a scrap yard and next to the road. The pillboxes were designated due to their degree of survival and their significance as good examples of their type. The scheduling description also notes that their proximity to Green Castle adds to their significance through demonstrating the changing style of defensive systems from the medieval to modern period.	
		The site is sensitive to development in terms of the settings of the two pillboxes which were probably intended to be inter-visible. The pillboxes are no longer inter-visible with each other due to intervening planting and apparent bunding created around the scrap yard to the south-west of the site.	
		Although the scheduling description notes the relationship between the pillboxes and Green Castle, inter-visibility is not necessary to appreciate this relationship.	
Step 3	Potential impact of development on significance?	Residential development of the site has the potential to affect the settings of the pillboxes.	
		An impact to the significance of the pair of pillboxes could arise through development within their setting blocking any potential lines of sight between the two pillboxes (that could potentially be restored in the	

		future) and through blocking/truncating other intended lines of fire from the pillboxes. These impacts would erode understanding of their military effectiveness and purpose. <b>Low Adverse</b>
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	part of the scheme design. This line of sight could, for example, take the form of an access route through the development, an area of open space, or part of the site's drainage scheme. The reinstatement of a complete line of sight between the two pillboxes would require offsite works that would fall outwith the mitigation measures for any housing scheme on the site, but the site development can still seek to maintain the possibility of creating one in the future. Likewise, other fields of fire from the pillboxes could be articulated within the development design to limit the degree to which the development erodes understanding of the monument's former purpose, simplicity of design and effectiveness. <b>Very Low Adverse</b> Should provision be made to restore a complete line of sight between the two pillboxes, this would provide enhancement of the significance of the asset through allowing better appreciation of the
		pillboxes and their interconnected function as part of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century defence landscape. <b>Low</b> Beneficial
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	With regard to the preceding 4 steps, there are no heritage reasons why the site should not be allocated for housing subject to a policy in the plan that reflects local and national policy including:
		-gives special regard to the desirability of preserving heritage assets and their settings; and -the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

### Site 5 - Land south of Common Road, near Ward House

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 5 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: N/A not allocated SHLAA Reference Number: 1111 Site Address: Land south of Common Road, Wooler, NE71 6PA Site Area: 0.61 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing

Step 1	Heritage assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	None
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	-
Step 3	Potential impact of development on significance?	-
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	-
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	With regard to the preceding 4 steps, there are no heritage reasons why this site should not be allocated for housing.

## Site 6 - Land above High Fair

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 6 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: N/A not allocated SHLAA Reference Number: 1112 Site Address: Land north of High Fair, Wooler, NE71 6PA Site Area: 2.21 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing

Step 1	Heritage Assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	Two Pillboxes near Green Castle Scheduled Monument [NHLE: 1006438] - High significance
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	NB. The location of the northernmost pillbox in the scheduled monument of Two Pillboxes near Green Castle is incorrect in the NHLE database. Its correct NGR is 398388, 628027.
		One of two pillboxes forming the scheduled monument of Two Pillboxes near Green Castle lies close to the northern boundary of the site. The two pillboxes appear to have been constructed as part of a linear defensive system. The northernmost pillbox is in proximity to the north-west corner of the site. The pillboxes were designated due to their degree of survival and their significance as good examples of their type. The scheduling description also notes that their proximity to Green Castle adds to their significance through demonstrating the changing style of defensive systems from the medieval to modern period.
		The site has some sensitivity to development in terms of the setting of the pillbox nearest the site and its intended lines of fire.
		The northernmost pillbox is currently overgrown and intervening planting between it and the site precludes any views between the pillbox and the site at present. Nevertheless, the site has potential to lie within the former field of fire of the pillbox.
		The site does not contribute to the relationship between the two pillboxes, or between the pillboxes and Green Castle.
Step 3	Potential impact of development on Significance?	Residential development of the site has the potential to affect the setting of the northernmost pillbox of the pair.

		Impacts could arise through development within the asset's setting blocking/truncating intended lines of fire from the pillbox and therefore eroding understanding of its military effectiveness and purpose. Low Adverse
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance Significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	The former fields of fire from the pillbox can be investigated and understood as part of the development of detailed designs and any lines of fire that run through the site could be articulated in the layout of the new development to limit the degree to which the development erodes understanding of the monument's former purpose, simplicity of design and effectiveness. This could, for example, take the form of access routes, open spaces and other linear schemes like drainage design, being aligned with former lines of fire to retain open views. <b>Neutral</b>
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	With regard to the preceding 4 steps, there are no heritage reasons why the site should not be allocated for housing subject to a policy in the plan that reflects local and national policy including: -gives special regard to the desirability of preserving heritage assets and their settings; and -the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

#### Site 7 - Land south of Common Road

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 7 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: N/A not allocated SHLAA Reference Number: 1077 Site Address: Land south of Common Road, Wooler, NE71 6LW Site Area: 1.75 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing

Step 1	Heritage Assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	Wooler Conservation area – Moderate significance
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	The site falls within the setting of Wooler Conservation Area.
		The site is in a sensitive location with regards to the setting of the conservation area and features in key views from within and across the conservation area towards the hills. It also provides a location from which to obtain a key view over the conservation area from higher ground on the public footpath running along the north-east boundary of the site.
		The site contributes to views from within the conservation area towards the hills by forming part of the dramatic backdrop to the settlement which is a key aspect of its character, where the green fields of the lower slopes change to the wild moorland above. The views are possible from several locations within the conservation area, but notably from Glendale Road where the site forms a key part of the backdrop to views along the street and down to Market Place from higher ground. Here the built-form on either side of the street funnels the view towards to the hills (including the site) beyond.
		The public footpath along the north-eastern boundary of the site provides a location from where a key view over the conservation area can be achieved. This allows the topographic position of the settlement to be appreciated, including the changing topography within the settlement and how the built form relates to changes in level. It also allows for views over the settlement to the open valley to the north.
Step 3	Potential impact of development on Significance?	Development within the site would change the character of a key view (e.g. from Glendale Road) from within the conservation area through removing a view of the green open fields on the lower slopes of the hill and replacing this with a view towards housing. This will erode understanding of the site's

		topographical setting which is a key aspect of its character and appearance as well as removing an aspect of its rural character. <b>Medium Adverse</b>
		Views from the public footpath along the north-eastern boundary of the site towards the conservation would be unaffected by development within the site.
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance Significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	The source of the potential impact to the character and appearance of the conservation area is the principle of development within the site. Design mitigation in the form of layout, materials height, massing and density does not have the capacity to mitigate this source of impact. Whilst good design, that responds to the character and appearance of the conservation area, is of course encouraged in any scheme brought forward for the site, this is therefore not considered likely to reduce the degree of impact of a development. <b>Medium Adverse</b>
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	With regard to the preceding 4 steps, the allocation of the site is considered likely to result in significant adverse effects to the Wooler Conservation Area that cannot be mitigated through good design. Therefore, it is recommended that the site should not be allocated for housing for heritage reasons.
		Should the site be allocated for housing there should be policy in the plan that reflects local and national policy including:
		-gives special regard to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area; and
		-the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

#### Site 7a - Land south of Ramsay's Lane

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: 7a Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: N/A not allocated SHLAA Reference Number: Site Address: Land south of Ramseys Lane, Wooler, NE71 6NR Site Area: 1.19 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing

Step 1	Heritage Assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	Wooler Conservation area – Moderate significance
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	The site falls within the setting of Wooler Conservation Area
		The site is in a sensitive location with regards to the setting of the conservation area and features in key views from within and across the conservation area towards the hills and in a key view over the conservation area from higher ground on the public footpath running to the south-west of the site.
		The site contributes to views from within the conservation area towards the hills by forming part of the dramatic backdrop to the settlement which is a key aspect of its character, where the green fields of the lower slopes change to the wild moorland above. The views are possible from several locations within the conservation area, but notably from Glendale Road where the site forms part of the backdrop to views along the street and down to Market Place from higher ground. Here the built-form on either side of the street funnels the view towards to the hills (including the site) beyond.
		The public footpath along the south-western boundary of the site provides a location from where a key view over the conservation area can be achieved. This allows the topographic position of the settlement to be appreciated, including the changing topography within the settlement and how the built form relates to changes in level. It also allows for views over the settlement to the open valley to the north.
Step 3	Potential impact of development on Significance?	Although the site features in a key view from within the conservation area towards the hills, the relatively low level of the site within this view, means that it has capacity for development without harming the key view. Built form within the site would largely sit behind existing buildings in the view, with minimal

		additional built form visible. The green open character of the hills in the view and their contribution to the character of the conservation area would be retained (provided Site 7 is remains undeveloped)
		Views from the public footpath along the south-western boundary of the site towards the conservation would be changed by development within the site which is likely to block the view such that the it is no longer achievable. <b>Very Low Adverse</b>
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance Significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	Mitigation of the harm caused by the loss of the view over the conservation area from the public footpath along the south-west boundary of the site could be achieved through limiting built form within the site to the low ground along its north-eastern boundary. Due to the sloping nature of the site this would allow for the views from the footpath to over sail the new development, retaining the ability to appreciate the topographical setting of the conservation area from the footpath. This would also have the effect of maintaining the view towards the site from within the conservation area unchanged. <b>Neutral</b>
		Residential development should seek to integrate new buildings into the streetscape and be mindful of existing building styles, scale, mass, materials, layout and roofscapes in the surrounding area. The site's surroundings are characterised by changes in level and a mix of materials and architectural styles. Should the above mitigation be carried out, the new development will fall within the view across the conservation area from the footpath and it should therefore respond to the character and appearance of the conservation area and be mindful of how the development appears in this view.
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	With regard to the preceding 4 steps, there are no heritage reasons why this site should not be allocated for housing subject to a policy in the plan that reflects local and national policy including:
		-gives special regard to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area; -the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

#### Site 13 – Ferguson/Redpath's Yard

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 13 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: Site 3 SHLAA Reference Number: 1110 Site Address: 30 South Road, Wooler, NE71 6NJ Site Area: 1.03 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Commercial / business / leisure and / or housing

Step 1	Heritage Assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	Wooler Conservation area – Moderate significance
		Late-19 <sup>th</sup> century steam laundry and dye mill non-designated heritage asset [N24055] – <b>Low</b> significance
		Ruinous 18 <sup>th</sup> century mill non-designated heritage asset [N1679] – Low significance
		1960s good haulage sheds – <b>No significance</b>
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	The site falls within Wooler Conservation Area and contains two non-designated heritage assets of low significance alongside later buildings of no heritage significance.
		The site is in a sensitive location with regards to heritage assets.
		The site is an important gateway site into Wooler Conservation Area located at the junction of The Peth, Wooler Bridge and the A697 (South Road). It forms the south-east corner of the conservation area, and although its location is peripheral to the main focus of the conservation area, in centre of the village, its location means that it performs a key role in first impressions of the settlement on approach from the south.
		The site contains the ruinous remains of an 18 <sup>th</sup> century mill at the south-west corner. Its associated mill race has been infilled and the building is now a roofless ruin. To the east of that building a large sandstone, late-19 <sup>th</sup> century, former steam laundry and dye mill building is present. This structure has been reduced in height from its original three storeys to two storeys. This took place in the early 20 <sup>th</sup> century when the building was converted for use as a rehabilitation centre for fallen women run by the Salvation Army. A fire in 1927 caused significant damage and the building's eastern gable was rebuilt with

		windows and doors reset from elsewhere. The dye works contributes to understanding of Wooler's place in the wool trade. To the north of the dye mill building there are 1960s goods haulage sheds, constructe of profiled metal sheeting to the walls and asbestos sheet roofs. These relate to the later use of the site as a haulage yard and station by the Redpath family. They are of no heritage significance. The site has active planning permission for development as Ad Gefrin Distillery and a meaningful start
		has been made on this scheme.
Step 3	Potential impact of development on Significance?	The site has active planning permission for development as Ad Gefrin Distillery and a meaningful start has been made on this scheme.
		The 19 <sup>th</sup> century steam laundry and dye mill will be demolished as part of the permissioned scheme and the ruinous 18 <sup>th</sup> century mill will be consolidated and lit as a heritage landscape feature within the new development. The new development comprises two large rectangular buildings, side by side, styled to evoke Ad Grefin, the 7 <sup>th</sup> century palace of King Edwin of Northumbria and his successors that was excavated in the 1950s and 1960s near Kirknewton.
		The Design, Access and Heritage Statement (2018) submitted alongside the application for planning permission for the site's redevelopment concludes that the scheme will offer enhancement to the conservation area and create an attractive gateway development.
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance Significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	The site has active planning permission for development as Ad Gefrin Distillery and a meaningful start has been made on this scheme.
		Enhancement offered within the scheme design includes the consolidation of the ruinous 18 <sup>th</sup> century mill building and its celebration as a heritage landscape feature within the new scheme, and the development of a new landmark structure on the site that will contribute to a sense of place on entering Wooler, providing an attractive gateway into the Wooler Conservation Area.
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	The site has active planning permission for commercial development as Ad Gefrin Distillery and a meaningful start has been made on this scheme.

Wooler NeighbourHood Plan

## Site 21 – Land at Brewery Farm

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 21 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: N/A not allocated SHLAA Reference Number: 1063 Site Address: Land at Brewery Farm, Wooler, NE71 6QQ Site Area: 7.25 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing

Step 1	Heritage Assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	House at former Wooler Brewery non-designated heritage asset [N1700] – Low significance
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	Wooler Brewery appears on the first edition map of 1866 to the north side of Brewery Lane, which must take its name from the presence of the brewer. It is depicted as a large U-shaped courtyard of buildings with gardens and a well to the west side. The site of the brewery has been redeveloped and it is now a working farm. The U-shaped building ranges have largely been rebuilt with structures of no heritage value, however, a house at the south-east corner of the plot, aligned end on to the road, may be a standing building remaining from the brewery complex. This is now the farmhouse. It is of two storeys, rendered with incised blockwork decoration, and with a slate roof with brick ridge and end stacks. Two four-paned sash windows remain on the east elevation, but all other windows have been replaced. To the west side of the house a stone and brick boundary walls defines the gardens to that side, as per the arrangement on the first edition map.
		The setting of the house is defined by the working farm to its east side, which although rebuilt, mirrors its original setting as part of the brewery. The gardens to its west side, defined by their garden wall, also preserve something of its original setting, reflecting the domestic use of the house and its outlook westward, away from the working buildings. The site lies to the east of the building complex. It forms part of a farmland setting and functional rural context for the now working farm. The flat green fields to the south of the house, backed by the hill to its east side, provide pleasant surroundings in which to appreciate the house from Brewery Lane to its west side. The site sits behind the house and farm in this view and therefore does not contribute to the setting of the house.
		The site does not contribute to the significance of the house.

Step 3	Potential impact of development on Significance?	The site does not contribute to the significance of the house, so development of the site for housing will not alter the asset's significance. <b>Neutral</b>
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance Significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	No mitigation is necessary.
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	With regard to the preceding 4 steps, there are no heritage reasons why this site should not be allocated for housing subject to a policy in the plan that reflects local and national policy including:
		-the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

## Site 26 – The Auction Mart field

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 26 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: Site 5 SHLAA Reference Number: Site Address: Land east of Auction Mart, Berwick Road, Wooler, NE71 6SL Site Area: 2.1 Site Allocation/Capacity: Employment or Housing

Step 1	Heritage Assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	Wooler Haugh Crossing Keeper's House N1666 non-designated asset – Low significance
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	The crossing keeper's house was constructed for the keeper of a level crossing on the Alnwick to Cornhill Railway line in c.1887. The line closed in 1965, but it is perpetuated in the landscape east of Wooler Water where the line of the former railway can still be traced in modern development. The former railway station building is to the south of the crossing keeper's house, within Wooler Industrial Estate. It has an associative setting relationship with the crossing keeper's house, but there is presently no inter-visibility between the two due to intervening development. The setting of the crossing keeper's house is also informed by its relationship with the road, Berwick Road, to its south side where the level crossing used to be, and the line of the former railway. A c.2.5km length of the railway line is still present in the landscape (track removed) running to the north-west of the building, beginning at Berwick Road, and the enlargement of the Auction Mart to the west of the house have created a commercial character to the house's surroundings, and the surrounding buildings dwarf the house in terms of their massing.
Step 3	Potential impact of development on Significance?	The site's surroundings are predominantly commercial, but this development dwarfs the house and is identified as out of scale and out of character with the house, therefore an allocation for employment use on the site could exacerbate this existing detracting feature of the asset's setting. The asset is a domestic

building of modest scale and proportions, so a residential development on the site would be in keeping with its character.

Residential development of an appropriate design in terms of character, scale, density and materials could be achieved within the site without affecting the value of the crossing keeper's house. This type of development would not affect the key setting relationship between it and former railway line, Berwick Road and the former station, and it would provide a further residential context for the cottage, which is currently isolated in an area of commercial development. **Neutral** 

A sensitively-designed employment use within the site using appropriate design in terms of character,
scale, density and materials could be achieved within the site without affecting the value of the crossing
keeper's house. This type of development would not affect the key setting relationship between it and
former railway line, Berwick Road and the former station. Neutral

Inappropriate design would introduce the potential for harm to the crossing keeper's house as a result of the exacerbation of existing detracting forms of development within the asset's surroundings, and the furthering of its isolation as a single residential property in a commercial area. This could affect the long-term viability of the asset and risk its future conservation. Detracting development is considered to be more likely in the case of an allocation for an employment use on the site due to the greater range of building forms and types that this allocation could facilitate. **Medium Adverse** 

Step 4 Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance Significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation? Mitigation for employment allocation can be provided by good design in terms of integrating new buildings into the streetscape, being mindful of the existing crossing keeper's house in terms of scale, massing and materials. The development should take its design que from the domestic crossing keeper's house, rather than the prevailing character of the commercial developments currently present in the asset's surroundings. Care should be taken to ensure that the massing and density of the development. Provided that a sensitive approach to the design and materials is taken, an employment use could be accommodated within the site without affecting the value of the crossing keeper's house. Neutral

Step 5 Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?

need With regard to the preceding 4 steps, there are no heritage reasons why this site should not be allocated for employment or housing subject to a policy in the plan that reflects local and national policy including:

-gives special regard to the desirability of preserving heritage assets and their settings; and -the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness Nevertheless, an allocation for housing use would be preferable in this location to avoid the risk of exacerbating existing detracting forms of development within the asset's surroundings, and the furthering of its isolation as a single residential property in a commercial area, risking its long-term viability and future conservation.

## Site 29 – The Old Vicarage field

AECOM Housing Site Assessment Reference Number: Site 29 Wooler Neighbourhood Plan Site Reference Number: N/A not allocated SHLAA Reference Number: 1231 Site Address: Land east of 23 & 25 Cottage Road, Wooler, NE71 6AD Site Area: 1.13 ha Site Allocation/Capacity: Housing

Step 1	Heritage Assets - designated and non-designated potentially affected:	The Old Vicarage Grade II listed building [NHLE: 1042334] – Moderate significance
Step 2	What contribution does the existing site make to the significance of the heritage asset (s)?	Situated on the northern edge of Wooler, adjacent to a modern housing development to the south-east, this site gained planning permission on 19 July 2016 for an extension to the existing listed building to create additional bedrooms, activity areas and laundry facilities, in addition to 7 detached independent dwellings (planning reference 15/04262/FUL). It is therefore not assessed within the SEA.
Step 3	Potential impact of development on Significance?	-
Step 4	Any mitigation for potential harm identified or opportunities to enhance Significance? How does the harm change as a result of the mitigation?	-
Step 5	Should the site be allocated or how might the plan need to be changed?	The site has active planning permission for alteration and extension of the listed building and a limited number of new dwellings.

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SEA for the Wooler Neighbourhood Plan

Addendum to the Environmental Report