

HAYDON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Report to Northumberland County Council of the Independent Examination

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Contents

1.	Executive Summary	3
2.	Introduction	4
3.	Compliance with matters other than the Basic Conditions	8
	Qualifying body	8
	Neighbourhood Area	8
	Land use issues	8
	Plan period	8
	Excluded development	8
4.	Consultation	9
5.	General comments on the Plan's presentation	11
	Vision Statement, Outcomes, Objectives and Policies	11
	Other issues	11
6.	Compliance with the Basic Conditions	14
	National planning policy	14
	Sustainable development	15
	Development plan	15
	Strategic Environmental Assessment	16
	Habitats Regulations Assessment	17
	Other European obligations	17
7.	Detailed comments on the Plan policies	18
	Sustainability and climate change	18
	Built and historic environment	24
	Natural environment	27
	Housing	34
	Vibrant and thriving communities	37
	Local economy	40
	Accessibility and transport	42
8.	Recommendation and Referendum Area	45

1. Executive Summary

1. I was appointed by Northumberland County Council with the support of Haydon Parish Council to carry out the independent examination of the Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan.
2. I undertook the examination by reviewing the Plan documents and written representations, and by making an unaccompanied visit to the Neighbourhood Area.
3. I consider the Plan to be an adequate expression of the community's views and ambitions for Haydon Parish. It is based on an effective programme of public consultation which has informed a 2036 Vision supported by seven sets of Objectives to be achieved through 20 planning policies dealing with issues distinct to the locality. There is also a series of community actions outside the scope of this examination. The Plan is supported by a Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement and Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening opinions. There is good supporting evidence provided and strong evidence of community support and the involvement of the local planning authorities.
4. I have considered the eight representations made on the submitted Plan, including representations from statutory bodies, and representations on the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening opinions. These are addressed in this report as appropriate.
5. Subject to the recommended modifications set out in this report I conclude that the Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan meets all the necessary legal requirements, including satisfying the Basic Conditions. I make a number of additional optional recommendations.
6. I recommend that the modified Plan should proceed to Referendum and that this should be held within the Neighbourhood Area.

2. Introduction

7. This report sets out the findings of my independent examination of the Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan was submitted to Northumberland County Council by Haydon Parish Council as the Qualifying Body.

8. I was appointed as the independent examiner of the Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan by Northumberland County Council with the agreement of Haydon Parish Council.

9. I am independent of Haydon Parish Council, Northumberland County Council and Northumberland National Park Authority. I do not have any interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan. I possess the appropriate qualifications and experience to undertake this role.

10. My role is to examine the Neighbourhood Plan and recommend whether it should proceed to referendum. A recommendation to proceed is predicated on the Plan meeting all legal requirements as submitted or in a modified form, and on the Plan addressing the required modifications recommended in this report.

11. As part of this process I must consider whether the submitted Plan meets the Basic Conditions as set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. To comply with the Basic Conditions, the Plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; and
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in the area; and
- be compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations, including the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

12. An additional Basic Condition was introduced by Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) in 2018 that the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. I am also required to make a number of other checks under paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

13. In undertaking this examination I have considered the following documents as the most significant in arriving at my recommendations:

- the submitted Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan
- the Basic Conditions Statement
- the Consultation Statement
- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening reports
- relevant parts of the development plan for the area comprising Tynedale District Core Strategy (2007), saved policies of the Tynedale District Local Plan (2000) and for part of the area the Northumberland National Park Local Plan (2020)
- the emerging Northumberland Local Plan to 2036, for which the Inspector's report was published during the examination
- representations made on the submitted neighbourhood plan
- relevant material held on the Haydon Parish Council and Northumberland County Council websites
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practice Guidance
- relevant Ministerial Statements

14. The Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan was submitted in November 2021 after a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. The Basic Conditions Statement addresses the previous NPPF (February 2019). I have considered the implications of the revised National Planning Policy Framework during my examination. It

has had no significant impact. My report references the July 2021 National Planning Policy Framework and the Plan will need to be appropriately updated to reflect it.

15. No representations were received requesting a public hearing and having considered the documents provided and the representations on the submitted Plan I was satisfied that the examination could be undertaken by written representations without the need for a hearing.

16. I carried out an unaccompanied visit to the Neighbourhood Area in clear and sunny conditions on a weekday during February. I visited the main locations addressed in the Plan, including the proposed Local Green Spaces and Protected Open Spaces; the identified community facilities; the additional non-designated heritage assets proposed in the Plan; the development site along Ratcliffe Road and the village centre. I visited a selection of the Green Infrastructure and walking and cycling routes, including the proposed link to Hexham. I also visited Langley and explored the exceptional rural setting of Haydon Bridge which includes National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and World Heritage Site designations.

17. Throughout this report my recommended modifications are bulleted. Where modifications to policies are recommended they are highlighted in **bold** print with new wording in “speech marks”. Modifications are also recommended to some parts of the supporting text. These recommended modifications are numbered from M1 and are necessary for the Plan to meet the Basic Conditions. A number of modifications are not essential for the Plan to meet the Basic Conditions and these are indicated by [square brackets]. These optional modifications are numbered from OM1.

18. Producing the Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan has clearly involved significant effort over many years led by the Steering Group. The process began in 2018 and is informed by significant community involvement. There is evidence of collaboration with Northumberland County Council and Northumberland National Park Authority and this will continue to be important in ensuring delivery of the Plan. The evident commitment of all those who have worked so hard over such a long period of time to prepare the Plan is to be

commended and the result is a clearly presented and well-structured neighbourhood plan that should inform planning decisions over the future of the parish for years to come. I would like to thank all those at Northumberland County Council, Northumberland National Park Authority and Haydon Parish Council who have supported this examination process.

3. Compliance with matters other than the Basic Conditions

19. I am required to check compliance of the Plan with a number of matters.

Qualifying body

20. Being a parish council Haydon Parish Council is a Qualifying Body and the only organisation able to prepare a neighbourhood plan.

Neighbourhood Area

21. I am satisfied that the Plan relates to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area which comprises the area of Haydon Parish Council and was agreed by Northumberland County Council on 5 November 2019 and Northumberland National Park Authority on 11 December 2019. Northumberland National Park Authority agreed Northumberland County Council should act as lead authority. I note that Haydon, Haydon Bridge and Haydon Parish are all used to describe the area in the designation documents. I am content that Plan is named as Haydon Parish Council sees fit.

22. The Plan generally refers to the parish rather than the neighbourhood area and this is appropriate given the wider public understanding of this description.

Land use issues

23. I am satisfied that the Plan's policies relate to relevant land use planning issues.

Plan period

24. The period of the neighbourhood plan to 2036 is stated in the Foreword, Introduction, Vision and Objectives. It aligns with the emerging Northumberland Local Plan. It is a consideration to include the period on the Plan's cover.

Excluded development

25. I am satisfied that the Plan makes no provision for excluded development such as national infrastructure projects.

4. Consultation

26. I have reviewed the extensive Consultation Statement, including its Appendices, and relevant information provided on the Haydon Parish Council website. This provides a clear record of the extensive consultation process that has been undertaken since before designation of the neighbourhood area in 2019.

27. The public consultation process has been wide ranging and used a variety of different engagement methods. These included a website, surveys, parish magazine, social media, local media, banners, posters, an exhibition and multiple consultation events. Three surveys included all households in the neighbourhood area.

28. Participation levels have been good with surveys generating over 300 responses, a response rate of 28% and up to 100 attending events. The consultation also included work on the evidence base, including the Housing Needs Survey. Targeted surveys of local businesses and children and younger people were undertaken.

29. The Plan was subject to Regulation 14 consultation for eight weeks in 2021, respectful of Covid19 restrictions. This was promoted through various channels, including the documents being available and an exhibition being mounted in a local church and a community drop-in event midway through the consultation period. It was promoted on social media, through banners and posters and through the parish magazine among other routes. There is evidence of the consultation including the required statutory and other consultees.

30. 61 responses were received, including from statutory consultees, and there is good evidence in Appendix 29 of considered analysis of the responses from both statutory consultees and the community and subsequent amendments being made to the Plan.

31. Eight separate representations have been made on the submitted Plan including from statutory bodies, the local school and the local authority. I also received a response

from Haydon Parish Council to the representations on the submitted Plan. All the representations have been considered and are addressed as appropriate in this report.

32. I am satisfied with the evidence of the public consultation undertaken in preparing the Plan over three years. The Plan has been subject to wide public consultation at different stages in its development. The participation rates have been good. The process has allowed community input to shape the Plan as it has developed and as proposals have been firmed up. Statutory bodies and other interests have been appropriately involved and the local planning authorities have been engaged through the process. The Plan has been amended through the process of public engagement.

5. General comments on the Plan's presentation

Vision Statement, Outcomes, Objectives and Policies

33. I have reviewed the Plan's Vision for Haydon Parish in 2036 and the desired Outcomes along with the Plan's seven sets of Objectives that inform its 20 policies and numerous Community Actions. The Vision seeks a sustainable community with a distinct identity that offers a great place to live and work and supports the local economy. This approach reflects the feedback received through consultation and is carried through into the Plan's Objectives. It is supportive of sustainable development.

34. The Outcomes and Objectives are appropriate and recognise the need to support development and the local economy, sustain the natural and historic environment, improve accessibility and enhance community facilities and the village centre. The Plan also includes a separate statement relating to its role in helping address the climate and ecological emergency.

35. The policies are distinguished from the rest of the Plan by the use of tinted boxes and unique identifying codes. I am satisfied they are clearly differentiated from other aspects of the Plan.

36. The Plan includes a number of Community Actions in a separate Annex. These are not presented as planning policy and will not form part of the development plan if the Plan is made after a successful referendum. They do not raise any issues relating to the Basic Conditions.

Other issues

37. The Plan includes references to a number of documents which comprise the evidence base. A number of these have been prepared as part of the Plan's preparation. This includes significant evidence on the natural environment green and open spaces, housing and the local economy. It is helpful that this and other evidence and background information is available on the Parish Council website and this access should be sustained.

38. The Plan is supported by a series of Policies Maps at different scales and illustrating different combinations of issues. I address the detail of these maps in my analysis of relevant policies. The Policies Maps are only referenced generically in the Contents and have been submitted as separate documents. This has the advantage of allowing the physical maps to be available at a large scale. A disadvantage is that the Plan itself does not include a map summarising the spatial expression of its policies.

- OM1 – [Include a summary Policies Map in the main body of the Plan and include details for each Policy Map in the Plan’s Contents along with direct links]

39. The Plan is very clearly presented and well structured. There are some minor inconsistencies in titles and page numbers between the Contents and the rest of the Plan and relevant sections of the Contents should read:

- “A brief history of Haydon Parish”
- “Natural, built and historic environment 11”

- OM2 – [Make amendments to the Contents to ensure consistent use of titles and accurate page numbering]

40. The relationship of the Plan’s policies to existing development plan or national planning policy is a recurring issue in my recommended modifications. While understanding the intention to make the Plan as freestanding as possible and to demonstrate it covers the full range of issues which have arisen through public consultation, it is a requirement of national planning policy for development plans to *“serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant)”* (paragraph 16 f), NPPF). It is unnecessary for policies to repeat or reference other policies given they must already be taken into account when making planning decisions and so I recommend a significant number of policy modifications on this issue to comply with the Basic Conditions.

41. The Plan is written as a submitted document to be subject to consultation and examination. If the Plan is to proceed to referendum then this will need to be updated to reflect the more advanced stage.

- OM3 – [Make amendments to the Plan so it reads as if it were a completed document]

42. The Plan makes references to NCC as an abbreviation of Northumberland County Council. This may not be apparent to all readers.

- OM4 – [Amend references to “NCC” to read “Northumberland County Council”]

6. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

43. The Plan is supported by a Basic Conditions statement that assesses the Plan's policies and objectives in relation to the Basic Conditions.

National planning policy

44. The Plan is required to "*have regard*" to national planning policies and advice. This is addressed in the Basic Conditions statement which relates the Plan's policies to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019). A new National Planning Policy Framework was published in July 2021. I have considered the new national planning policy as part of my examination. It has had no material impact. References to the NPPF should be updated to reflect the new document.

- OM5 – [Update references to the National Planning Policy Framework to reflect the content and paragraph numbering of the July 2021 revision]

45. The analysis of each of the policies against relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework identifies no instances where regard has not been had. The overall conclusion is that the Plan "*has regard to national policies and advice*" and "*meets the basic conditions*."

46. I address the relationship of the policies to national planning policy in my consideration of individual policies and recommend some modifications, especially where repetition of national planning policy serves no clear purpose.

47. There are some areas where the drafting of the Plan's policies needs to be amended in order to meet the National Planning Policy Framework's requirement for plans to provide a clear framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made. The policies should give a clear indication of "*how a decision maker should react to development proposals*" (paragraph 16). It is also important for the Plan to address the requirement expressed in national planning policy and Planning Practice Guidance that "*A policy in a*

neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared.” (NPPG Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 41-041-20140306). The Plan’s policies do not always meet these requirements and a number of recommended modifications are made as a result.

48. Generally, I conclude that the Plan has regard to national planning policy and guidance but there are exceptions as set out in my comments below.

49. I am satisfied that the Plan meets this Basic Condition other than where identified in my detailed comments and recommended modifications to the Plan policies.

Sustainable development

50. The Plan must “*contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*”. This is addressed in the Basic Conditions statement by a short statement on how the most relevant objectives and policies align with the three dimensions of sustainable development. No instances of conflict are identified. The overall conclusion is that the Plan “*will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*” and “*meets the basic conditions.*”

51. The analysis only relates the objectives and policies most aligned with each dimension of sustainable development. It also incorrectly numbers Policy H20 and H19. Nevertheless I am satisfied that the overall contribution of the Plan to sustainable development is positive and I am satisfied that the Plan meets this Basic Condition.

Development plan

52. The Plan must be “*in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan*”. The strategic policies in the adopted development plan documents for Tynedale are provided by Northumberland County Council in an Appendix and those of the Northumberland National Park Local Plan are identified within the Local Plan and in representations made by the National Park Authority.

53. The Basic Conditions statement comments on the conformity of each of the Plan's 20 policies with the strategic policies in the development plan, including the National Park. It also considers the emerging Local Plan where relevant. The commentary identifies no instances where the Plan policy does not generally conform with local strategic planning policy. The overall conclusion is that the Plan *"is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area"* and *"meets the basic conditions."*

54. I address the relationship with the development plan in my examination of the individual policies as appropriate and, subject to my recommended modifications, am satisfied the Plan meets this Basic Condition. I also consider the relationship with the emerging Local Plan where relevant and am satisfied in the same way that the Plan meets this Basic Condition in respect of these policies.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

55. The Plan must be informed by a Strategic Environmental Assessment if it is likely to have significant environmental effects. A Screening Opinion was published by Northumberland County Council in November 2021 and concluded that the Plan *"is unlikely to have any significant positive or negative effects on the environment. Therefore, Strategic Environmental Assessment is NOT required"*.

56. Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England agreed with this conclusion when consulted on the Screening Opinion. This was undertaken during the Examination. Historic England concluded that it *"concurs with the conclusions of the report that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required"* and Natural England concluded *"that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan"*. Environment Agency did not offer a separate view but raised no issues in its other representations on the Plan.

57. The Screening Opinion was based on the most up to date version of the Plan and had been revised to reflect changes to the Plan during its preparation.

58. I conclude that the Plan meets this Basic Condition.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

59. The Plan must be informed by an Appropriate Assessment if it is likely to lead to significant negative effects on protected European sites. A Screening Opinion was published by Northumberland County Council in November 2021 which considered the potential effect of the Plan on five Special Areas of Conservation and one Special Protection Area within 10km of the area.

60. The Screening Opinion concluded the submitted Plan *“will not have a likely significant effect on European Sites within 10km of the plan boundary, either alone or in combination.* Natural England agreed with this conclusion.

61. I conclude that the Plan meets this Basic Condition.

Other European obligations

62. The Plan must be compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations. The Basic Conditions Statement asserts that this is the case and I am satisfied that the Plan has appropriate regard to the rights and freedoms guaranteed under the ECHR and to the Equality Act 2010. No contrary evidence has been presented. There has been adequate opportunity for those with an interest in the Plan to make their views known and representations have been handled in an appropriate and transparent manner with changes made to the Plan.

63. I conclude that the Plan meets this Basic Condition.

7. Detailed comments on the Plan policies

64. This section of the report reviews and makes recommendations on each of the Plan's policies to ensure that they meet the Basic Conditions. I make comments on all policies in order to provide clarity on whether each meets the Basic Conditions. Some of the supporting text will need to be amended to take account of the recommended modifications.

Sustainability and climate change

65. **Policy H1** – This supports sustainable development through the application of a range of criteria to be considered in determining planning applications.

66. The Policy is consistent with the purpose of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This is expressed in national planning policy as a *"presumption in favour of sustainable development"* (paragraphs 10 & 11, NPPF). This is repeated in the Policy when national planning policy is for plans to *"serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies"* (paragraph 16, NPPF).

67. The Policy expects development proposals to *"have regard to the principles set out within the Haydon Parish Design Code"*. The Code was prepared by AECOM under the Government's neighbourhood planning support program and published in July 2020. It has been subject to public consultation and was informed by a previous Village Design Statement. Northumberland County Council has confirmed the Village Design Statement *"has no planning status"* and so the Design Code is a significant benefit of preparing the Plan. The Code describes the different elements which combine to give the area its character, expresses a Design Vision and introduces Design Codes for different aspects of the development process. The Design Code is an important document and there is an inconsistency in the way in which it is addressed in a number of the Plan's policies:

- Policy H1 – *"Have regard to the principles"*
- Policy H6 – *"Have regard to the requirements"*

- Policy H8 – *“maintain and where appropriate enhance positive elements of the landscape character of the parish, as defined in”*
- Policy H14 – *“been informed by the principles contained within”*
- Policy H19 – *“reflecting the requirements of”*

68. It is national planning policy that plans should *“contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous”* (paragraph 16d), NPPF) and this inconsistency creates ambiguity. My recommended modifications support a more consistent approach. They also support the Plan in meeting Haydon Parish Council’s stated *“intention for the plan to require development proposals to have regard to the relevant part of the design code”*. They include deletion of Annex 2 as a selective reference to the Design Code when the whole document should be considered.

69. The Policy addresses a need for development proposals to have regard to *“other relevant documents such as Building for a Healthy Life and the National Design Guide”*. The scope of *“other relevant documents”* is ambiguous and national planning policy already references the National Design Guide (paragraph 110 c), NPPF). I share Northumberland National Park Authority’s representations that including these documents is unnecessary. There is no reference or link provided to either document and they are more appropriately included in the supporting text.

70. The Policy is unduly restrictive in stating what *“must”* be provided by way of supporting information. It is intended that all the criteria should apply in all circumstances and this is signalled by *“and”* being located at the end of the penultimate criterion rather than criterion g.

71. Policy H1 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M1 – Amend Policy H1 to**
 - **Delete the first sentence**
 - **Replace *“must”* with *“should”***

- Delete “*and*” at the end of criterion g.
 - Replace criterion h. with “Have regard to the Haydon Parish Design Code; and”
- M2 – Delete Annex 2 as drafted and provide clear direction in the Plan to the Haydon Parish Design Code as a complete document
 - OM6 – [Address the role of the National Design Guide and Building for a Healthy Life in the supporting text and provide references and links]

72. **Policy H2** – This supports development in the most sustainable locations within existing settlements, defines land outside them as “countryside” and applies a range of criteria to development coming forward in the countryside.

73. The Plan supports the settlement boundary for Haydon Bridge defined in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan (Policy STP1). This provides the basis for defining the boundary. There has been no questioning of the boundary as proposed in representations on the Plan and it is not raised as an issue in the Inspector’s Report on the emerging Northumberland Local Plan. I am satisfied with the use of the emerging Local Plan as the basis for defining the settlement boundary.

74. The Plan does not define a settlement boundary for Langley and takes the approach of supporting development “*within*” it which will require a judgement to be made on each application. Unhelpfully, Langley does not appear on the Policies Map.

75. The Policy’s references to development which complies or meets existing development plan policies does not serve a clear purpose as all policies in the development plan are considered in relation to all planning applications. It is necessary for the development to be appropriate.

76. The third paragraph sets out a range of criteria to be considered in relation to development in the countryside. Criterion a. supports affordable housing on exception sites

outside Northumberland National Park. Addressing representations from Northumberland County Council I am content that the Policy is consistent with national planning policy for rural exceptions sites and would permit market housing where necessary to facilitate delivery of affordable homes.

77. Criteria b. to f. of the Policy's approach to development in the countryside duplicate paragraph 80 of the NPPF and criteria g. to j. duplicate paragraph 84 of the NPPF. They serve no clear purpose. I note Northumberland County Council's suggestion of a more general wording which supports development compatible with development plan policy but this too would simply duplicate existing planning policy.

78. Overall, I conclude that existing national and development plan policy already addresses the considerations in the Plan for managing development in the countryside and Policy H2 duplicates this. The Policy also repeats national planning policy in the consideration of development proposals in the Green Belt.

79. The drafting is unduly restrictive in stating what "*must*" be recognised in planning decisions.

80. Policy H2 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M3 – Amend Policy H2 to:**
 - Delete "*provided it complies with relevant policies contained within the development plan*" in the first paragraph
 - Replace "*must*" with "*will*" in the second paragraph
 - Delete the third and fourth paragraphs
- OM7 – [Identify Langley on the Policies Map]

81. **Policy H3** – This supports development which is of energy efficient and sustainable design and generates renewable energy.

82. The significance of energy efficient development and renewable energy generation is particularly relevant to Haydon Parish given that gas is not available and there is a high dependence on oil as a fuel source. There is strong public support for the policy approach.

83. The Policy meets the Basic Conditions subject to some drafting changes. It is unduly restrictive in stating what “*must*” be provided by way of supporting information and references to development needing to comply with other policies serves no clear purpose. The Policy’s caveat that retrofitting on energy efficiency measures in historic buildings should not result in harm to their significance is not consistent with national planning policy that also recognises that other public benefits can outweigh this (paragraphs 201-203, NPPF).

84. Planning policy is only relevant where express planning permission is required and referencing this in the Policy serves no clear purpose.

- **M4 – Amend Policy H3 to:**

- **Replace “*must*” with “*should*”**
- **Replace “*ensures*” with “*ensure*” in b.**
- **Delete “, *subject to compliance with other relevant policies on historic assets.*” in criterion e.**
- **Delete “*Where planning permission is required,*” and “*where this does not result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset*” in the final paragraph**

85. **Policy H4** – This supports renewable and low carbon energy generation and applies criteria to their development outside Northumberland National Park.

86. The Policy has the same significance as Policy H3 for Haydon Parish given its high dependence on fossil fuels. The Policy takes a positive approach.

87. Given the support for small scale renewable energy schemes in Policy DM13 of the Northumberland National Park Local Plan it is unclear why the Policy’s criteria relate only to development outside the National Park. I raised this issue and was informed that it was

considered appropriate to rely on Northumberland National Park Local Plan Policy DM13 for applications in the National Park. I am content this is a matter for Haydon Parish Council to decide.

88. It is unnecessary for the Policy to reference other development plan policies.

89. Policy H4 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M5 – Amend Policy H4 to delete “*where the proposal complies with other relevant policies in the development plan*”**

90. **Policy H5** – This supports appropriate flood prevention and alleviation schemes and development which is informed by site specific flood risk assessments and has secure arrangements for ongoing maintenance of flood prevention measures.

91. The Policy is supported by evidence of flooding being a significant issue in the area, including major events in recent years.

92. It is stated that the Policy “*does not look to repeat national and local policy*” yet its requirements for site specific flood risk assessment are stated to be “*in accordance with national policy and guidance*”. This serves no clear purpose. The first part of the Policy repeats Policy WAT3 in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan. On raising this issue I was informed that Haydon Parish Council “*considers it is essential to highlight within the neighbourhood plan that the development of flood prevention and alleviation schemes will be supported*”. This is understandable but as drafted the bulk of the Policy is unnecessary and so does not meet the Basic Conditions.

93. The second part of the Policy addresses an issue not directly considered in emerging Local Plan Policy WAT3 and is appropriate for inclusion. This also serves to demonstrate the Plan’s intention to help address flooding considerations. The Plan cannot prescribe how the local planning authority can best secure the intended outcome for flood prevention

measures to be maintained whether through planning condition or legal agreement. This is a matter to be considered in relation to each individual scheme.

94. Policy H5 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M6 – Amend Policy H5 to:**

- **Delete the first two paragraphs**
- **Replace “*it is essential that*” with “provision will be made to ensure” in the final paragraph**
- **Replace “*is set out within a planning condition or legal agreement*” with “for the lifetime of the development” in the final paragraph**

Built and historic environment

95. **Policy H6** – This establishes a series of design considerations for new development.

96. The Policy is supported by evidence of the rich natural and built heritage of the area. This includes the Character Appraisal for the Conservation Area and the Design Code. Given its importance the Design Code should be referenced in a consistent way by the Plan’s policies to avoid any ambiguity.

97. The Policy references “*the International Dark Sky Park*” but provides no further information about this. Further details should be included in the supporting text, recognising that the International Dark Sky Park includes part of the area of the neighbourhood plan and that development has the potential to impact on dark skies.

98. The reference to development needing to demonstrate it meets the Policy criteria “*to the satisfaction of the local planning authority*” serves no clear purpose. I share Northumberland County Council’s view that the drafting of the provisions for car parking and cycle storage can be more effectively drafted and should allow for provision in other locations. I note Haydon Parish Council’s support for this change.

99. Policy H6 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M7 – Amend Policy H6 to:**
 - End the first sentence at “*area.*”
 - Delete “*requirements of the*” before “Haydon”
 - Delete “*to the satisfaction of the local planning authority*”
 - Insert a comma after “*appropriate*” in the fifth line
 - Replace criterion k with “Provides sufficient appropriately sited car parking and cycle storage to serve the needs arising from the development;”

- M8 – Provide details of the International Dark Sky Park in the supporting text, including a map or link to a map showing its boundary.

100. **Policy H7** - This addresses development in the Haydon Bridge Conservation Area, including identifying sixteen locations where historic buildings and structures should receive special consideration.

101. The Policy is informed by the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and identifies appropriate and locally distinctive considerations. It includes 16 locations where special considerations apply and these are located on the Policies Map, although this omits the Conservation Area boundary. 12 of these are identified as “*key buildings*” in the Character Appraisal. Four additional buildings are included after having been identified through the Plan’s preparation. Original shop fronts on three streets are also recognised in the Plan although four streets are named. John Martin Street is included in the Policy but omitted in the supporting text. Shaftoe Street is included in the supporting text but omitted in the Policy. I observed qualifying shop fronts in all four locations.

102. Northumberland County Council’s Strategic Estates service objects to the inclusion of the Haydon Lodge as an identified non-designated heritage asset if it would “*limit the potential redevelopment and use of the building*”. The effect of its inclusion would be to ensure consideration was given to its heritage significance in the Conservation Area. This would not introduce unreasonable limitations and any development proposals would, in

accordance with national planning policy, be able to put forward other public benefits for consideration in a planning decision.

103. As Historic England notes in its representations the opportunity for a neighbourhood plan to identify non-designated heritage assets is an important one that needs to be based on sound evidence. There is limited evidence as to the significance of the four additional buildings and on raising this I was not provided with any further evidence and was informed that the property owners have not been consulted. I agree with Haydon Parish Council's proposed amendments to remove reference to these buildings in the Policy and on the Policies Map while including them in an amended paragraph 5.39. This should include John Martin Street as a location for historic shopfronts.

104. There are a number of structures, including the old bridge, as well as buildings that are addressed by the Policy. As noted in representations from Northumberland County Council not all the entries on the Historic Environment Record are for non-designated heritage assets and the drafting could be clearer on this point.

105. The final paragraph selectively duplicates national planning policy, creates ambiguity and services no clear purpose. The Policy is unduly restrictive in stating what "*must*" be considered.

106. There is a drafting error in paragraph 5.32.

107. Policy H7 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M9 – Amend Policy H7 to**
 - **End consideration a. at "*shopfronts*" in the second paragraph**
 - **Replace "*must*" with "*should*" in the third paragraph**
 - **Add "*and structures*" after "*buildings*" at the end of the first line of the third paragraph**
 - **Delete CA13, CA14, CA15 and CA16 [including from the Policies Map]**
 - **Delete the final paragraph**

- OM8 – [Replace paragraph 5.39 of the supporting text with:
 “There are many examples of high quality mid to late nineteenth and early twentieth century developments within the Conservation Area which have contributed to its character, including:
 - Selwood House, Haydon Lodge and Haydon Park House – which are fine examples of mid to late 19th century properties associated with the increasing prosperity of the time;
 - Original shop fronts on Ratcliffe Road, Church Street, John Martin Street and Shaftoe Street; and
 - Alexandra Terrace – a good example of the Edwardian architectural rhythm and scale within the village.”]
- OM9 – [Add the Conservation Area boundary to the Conservation Area Assets Map and amend the supporting text to be clear that the entries on the Historic Environment Record for Haydon Parish do not all relate to non-designated heritage assets.]

Natural environment

108. **Policy H8** – This requires development to maintain and enhance landscape character against a range of considerations.

109. The Policy is supported by evidence as to the area’s landscape character provided in landscape character assessments and the Design Code.

110. Criterion a. repeats the first part of the Policy and serves no clear purpose.

111. Criterion d. seeks development “*which is graduated towards the village centre*”. I sought clarification as to the meaning of this phrase and was informed it was part of the Design Code and reflects “*a desire for development to lower density where it adjoins the countryside, with a higher density of development towards the centre of the village. An example of an inappropriate ‘hard edge’ would be the Showfield development – the density*

of the development is the same at the rural edge as it is in the centre of the development". I suggest this explanation is provided in the supporting text.

112. As drafted it is unclear that all the criteria should apply. The scope of "*other relevant documents*" is ambiguous although it is important the Policy relates to the most up to date versions of those referenced.

113. Policy H8 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M10 – Amend Policy H8 to:**
 - **Replace "*other relevant*" with "*successor*"**
 - **Delete criterion a.**
 - **Add "*and*" to the end of criterion f.**
- OM10 – [Provide an explanation of "*graduated towards the village centre*" in the supporting text]

114. **Policy H9** – This addresses development proposals in relation to their impact on biodiversity.

115. The Policy is supported by evidence, including a background paper, of the rich range of species and habitats in the area, including designated sites and priority habitats. There is evidence of strong public support for protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

116. National planning policy supports the "*conservation, restoration and enhancement*" rather than "*preservation, restoration and recreation*" of priority habitats (paragraph 179b), NPPF). Addressing representations made by Northumberland National Park Authority I am content that the Policy does not only apply to sites identified on the Policies Map.

117. The third paragraph largely repeats national planning policy (paragraph 180a), NPPF) and the reference to applicants demonstrating the suitability of their approach "*to the satisfaction the local planning authority*" is unnecessary. It serves no clear purpose.

118. The fourth paragraph duplicates “*where appropriate*”.

119. It is more appropriate for examples of how the policy might be delivered, such as through provision of swift bricks, to be included in the supporting text and I note Haydon Parish Council’s agreement with this.

120. Policy H9 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M11 – Amend Policy H9 to:**
 - Replace “*preservation, restoration and recreation*” with “**conservation, restoration and enhancement**” in the first paragraph
 - Delete the third paragraph
 - Delete the second “*where appropriate*” in the fourth paragraph
- OM11 – [Provide examples of how schemes can embed proposals to increase biodiversity, such as swift bricks, in the supporting text and remove from the Policy]

121. **Policy H10** – This seeks to protect, improve and extend the green infrastructure network in the area and introduces a range of policy considerations.

122. The Policy is supported by evidence as to the significance and location of green infrastructure. This includes an assessment for Haydon Bridge in the Design Code informed by mapping undertaken for the emerging Northumberland Local Plan (Policy INF5) although this relates only to Protected Open Space, water bodies and woodland. The supporting text (paragraph 5.64) extends the definition of Green Infrastructure to include six defined categories plus a general category of “*Other Green Infrastructure*” which includes significant areas of woodland. The Plan could be clearer in its approach to defining green infrastructure and its scope is not clear when just reading the Policies Map where it includes all land related to Policies H9, H10, H11 and H12.

123. As noted by Northumberland County Council consideration b. on *“rural character”* is imprecise and I agree with Haydon Parish Council’s alternative drafting.

124. Criterion b. and e. include examples which should be provided in the supporting text and I agree with Haydon Parish Council’s more precise drafting of criterion e. while recognising it is national policy to support a biodiversity network allowing species to adapt alongside the use of locally native species.

125. The Policy’s reference to applicants demonstrating the suitability of their approach *“to the satisfaction the local planning authority”* is unnecessary. It serves no clear purpose. The drafting is unduly restrictive in stating what *“must”* be demonstrated by applicants and there are other minor drafting changes needed to ensure full clarity. As drafted it is also unclear that all the criteria should apply when appropriate. I share Northumberland County Council’s view that the drafting is also imprecise in referencing the determination of planning applications and *“relevant”* development proposals.

126. Policy H10 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M12 – Amend Policy H10 to:**
 - **Delete *“When determining planning applications”* in the second and third lines**
 - **Replace *“must”* with *“should”* in the third line**
 - **Replace *“to the satisfaction of the local planning authority”* with *“as appropriate”* in the third line**
 - **Delete *“relevant”* in the fourth line**
 - **Replace criterion b. with *“Contribute new elements of green infrastructure appropriate to the location;”***
 - **Replace criterion e. with *“Allow the movement of wildlife and provide habitats for species in the design of gardens, boundary treatments and other relevant features;”***
 - **Add *“and”* to the end of criterion f.**
 - **Replace *“include”* with *“result in”* in the final paragraph**

- M13 – Make the scope and location of green infrastructure clearer in the supporting text and Policies map

127. **Policy H11** – This designates nine areas of Local Green Space.

128. The emerging Northumberland Local Plan states that *“Whilst the opportunity to create Local Green Space through the Local Plan exists, the County Council considers that, given the need to show that any such designation is demonstrably special to a local community, the most appropriate mechanism for designating Local Green Space is at the parish or neighbourhood level through a neighbourhood plan. It is therefore not proposed to designate any Local Green Space in the Northumberland Local Plan”* (paragraph 14.37, as amended). This means the role of the Plan in designating Local Green Space is particularly important.

129. The Policy is supported by a background paper that describes the methodology used to identify, assess, consult and confirm the proposed Local Green Spaces. This includes an assessment of local green spaces against the criteria set out in national planning policy (paragraph 102, NPPF) in Appendix C. 22 locations have been assessed and nine are considered to meet the criteria for Local Green Space designation. Other locations have not been taken forward as they already have protection or are not considered to be close to the community. A detailed assessment of each of the nine proposed Local Green Spaces provides further information, including ownership and images. Detailed maps are provided in the background paper and the boundaries of each Local Green Space are also provided on the Policies Map.

130. The evidence supporting designation of each of the Local Green Spaces is of a high standard. I have carefully considered the merits of each location including through a visit. I am confident that each proposal is reasonably close to the local community and none of them comprise an excessively extensive tract of land. Their value has a clearly local feel. I am satisfied by the evidence presented and the suitability of each of the Local Green Space designations.

131. Addressing representations from Haydon Bridge High School and Northumberland County Council's Strategic Estates and Education and Skills services, designation as Local Green Space confers no additional right of public access to the land.

132. To be afforded a level of protection consistent with them being Green Belt, Local Green Spaces need only be designated by the Plan. This follows a Court of Appeal case with relating to a Local Green Space policy in a neighbourhood plan (*Lochailort Investments Limited v. Mendip District Council and Norton St Philip Parish Council*, [2020] EWCA Civ 1259) which means it is inappropriate to include any wording that sets out how development proposals should be managed.

133. Policy H11 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M14 – Amend Policy H11 to delete “*which will be protected from development in a manner consistent with the protection of local within the Green Belt*” and the second paragraph**

134. **Policy H12** – This identifies seven locations to be recognised as “*protected open space*” where evidence of them being surplus or alternative provision being made is needed before permitting their loss.

135. The Policy is supported by a background paper which assesses the merits of each of the proposals. The sites are clearly identified on the Policies Map. Some sites (or parts of sites) are protected in the existing Local Plan as Strategic Green Spaces (Policy NE2) and in all cases this continues as Protected Open Space under the emerging Local Plan (Policy INF5). Other sites are not recognised in the Local Plan and have been identified through the preparation of the Plan. Additional sites are also designated in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan.

- POS01 – extends area designated in existing and emerging Local Plan
- POS02 – matches area designated in existing and emerging Local Plan

- POS03 – applies to a smaller area than designated in existing and emerging Local Plan
- POS04 – part of area allocated for housing development in existing Local Plan (since completed) and not identified in emerging Local Plan
- POS05 – not identified in existing Local Plan and extends the area designated in emerging Local Plan to include the play equipment
- POS06 - applies to a smaller area than designated in existing or emerging Local Plan
- POS07 – not identified in existing and matches area designated in emerging Local Plan

136. I visited each of the locations and am satisfied they perform an important open space function. The boundaries can embrace more than the single open space function identified in some names, such as POS02 which includes small areas of woodland as well as playing fields. I noted that an area of the eastern part of POS07 was fenced off but am satisfied it continues to provide an amenity function as green space.

137. I have considered whether the differences between the neighbourhood plan and the existing and emerging Local Plan have the potential to impact negatively on the Policy's clarity. I note that the Northumberland Local Plan recognises that earlier assessments on which the Local Plan is based are "*somewhat dated*" and includes a commitment to carry out a new assessment of Open Space. Recognising and protecting open space is an important role of a neighbourhood plan whether or not it meets the criteria required to be designated as Local Green Space. The existing Local Plan is dated and the emerging Local Plan is not yet adopted meaning the Plan provides the most up to date and locally informed assessment. Policy H12 also includes areas of open space considered important but not recognised in the existing or emerging Local Plan. I am satisfied with the approach.

138. Northumberland County Council's Strategic Estates service objects to the inclusion of the High School Playing Fields as protected open space because there are open field nearby and it may limit development of future facilities. These representations do not recognise that the Playing Field is already designated in the existing Local Plan and also included in a

designation in the emerging Local Plan. The Policy makes provision for appropriate development providing it meets defined criteria. In addressing representations from Northumberland County Council's Education and Skills service, designation has no impact on the need for access to playing fields being controlled by the school.

139. The Policy's reference to applicants "*robustly*" demonstrating the suitability of their approach "*to the satisfaction of the local planning authority*" is unnecessary. It serves no clear purpose. By requiring development to meet standards defined by the local planning authority the final paragraph duplicates existing provisions and also serves no clear purpose.

140. Policy H12 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M15 – Amend Policy H12 to:**

- **Delete "*robustly*" and "*to the satisfaction of the local planning authority*" in the second paragraph**
- **Delete the final paragraph**

Housing

141. The Plan is based on assessment of housing requirements based on the emerging Local Plan to 2036. It concludes that no additional sites need be identified through the Plan. This has not been questioned in any representations on the Plan and Northumberland County Council informed me it did not consider there have been any material changes since the Plan was written. A community priority is to ensure a mix and scale of housing that meets local needs and the Plan is informed by a housing needs survey and a housing needs assessment (provided as part of the technical support under the Government's programme for neighbourhood planning). The results are considered to support the approach of the emerging Local Plan.

142. **Policy H13** – This supports a mix of housing types and tenure that meets identified needs, including for two and three bedroom homes and particularly two bedroom bungalows.

143. There is support for the preferences identified in the Policy from the Housing Needs Assessment, informed by the Housing Needs Survey. This is despite three bedroom homes being well represented in the existing housing type and being a focus of recent development.

144. Policy H13 establishes priorities which are locally relevant. The Policy drafting can be improved but it meets the Basic Conditions.

- OM12 – [Amend Policy H13 to:
 - Insert a comma after “*affordable housing*” in the second line
 - Replace “*will be assessed according to how well it contributes*” with “proposals should contribute”]

145. **Policy H14** – This establishes a range of development criteria for the area’s largest site proposed to be allocated in the emerging Local Plan.

146. The site is allocated by Policy HOU4 of the emerging Local Plan which provides an indicative capacity of 35-50 dwellings and supports their development being guided by a masterplan or development brief. I visited the site which is appropriate for residential development subject to normal planning considerations.

147. A masterplanning exercise has been carried out and details were provided to me on request. It was undertaken by members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with relevant experience and was shared with the site owner and agent at a formative stage. The masterplanning exercise is not referenced or available online with the other documents supporting the Plan.

148. The supporting text addresses 13 considerations identified through the masterplanning exercise and supports this with an illustrative approach how this could inform development of the site in Figure 3. The relationship between the 13 considerations, Figure 3 and the 10 considerations in Policy H14 is unclear and this is a potential source of

confusion. This can be addressed by providing further details of the masterplanning exercise and confirming in the supporting text that it has informed Policy H14.

149. The Housing Needs Assessment concludes that *“The relationship between the estimated need for affordable rented properties and the potential demand for affordable home ownership properties suggests that the latter should be prioritised in future development”* (page 58) while the supporting text to Policy H14 states that *“In accordance with the findings of the housing needs assessment the priority will be affordable housing for rent rather than affordable housing for sale”* (paragraph 5.94). I raised this inconsistency with the parish council and was informed that the summary of the Housing Needs Assessment *“sets out the case for additional social rented housing”*. The summary confirms a level of housing need in the area and that 15 households are on the waiting list for affordable rented housing. It also confirms the conclusion of the Housing Needs Assessment that *“there is likely to be enough accommodation of this type going forward”* while challenging the assumption of a turnover in stock that underpins this. The Housing Needs Assessment concludes that provision of social rented housing is needed but that this need not deviate from the Local Plan. No evidence is presented of the potential impact of a priority on affordable rented housing on development viability. I do not, therefore, find there is sufficient evidence to place a priority on providing affordable housing for rent and housing needs on the site should be met in accordance with Policy H13, informed by evidence of needs.

150. The Policy seeks *“at least”* 15% affordable housing. Northumberland County Council’s representations state that the evidence base for Policy HOU6 in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan supports 15% affordable homes and any increase may impact on viability and hence deliverability of the Plan. The supporting text recognises that the Plan’s assessment of housing needs does not provide evidence to deviate from the Local Plan (paragraph 5.87) and I note Haydon Parish Council’s support for an amendment to delete *“at least”*.

151. The Policy drafting relating to evidence on housing needs and the Design Code should be consistent with other policies and the requirement for the local planning authority to be satisfied with the proposals serves no purpose.
152. The Policies Map Village Inset incorrectly identifies the site as relating to Policy H15.
153. Policy H14 does not meet the Basic Conditions.
- **M16 – Amend Policy H14 to:**
 - Insert “and the Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2018) and any subsequent updates” after “*Survey (2020)*”
 - Delete “*at least*” and “*, the priority being affordable housing for rent*” in criterion a. i.
 - Replace “*been informed by the principles contained within*” with “regard to” in criterion c.
 - Delete the colon and replace the first semi-colon with a comma in criterion g.
 - Delete “*to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, which should*” in criterion h.
 - M17 – Include a reference and link to the masterplanning exercise within the Plan and a statement in the supporting text that the masterplanning exercise has informed the considerations in Policy H14
 - M18 - Correct the Policies Map Village Inset to relate the site to Policy H14

Vibrant and thriving communities

154. **Policy H15** – This supports development which enhances community services and facilities subject to relevant criteria and identifies nine facilities considered to have great importance for protection subject to relevant criteria. Types of valued commercial services are also identified as essential.

155. The Policy is based on an audit of community services and facilities and those identified as having great importance are included on the Policies Map. I visited each of the facilities identified and am content they are of value to the community.

156. Northumberland County Council's Strategic Estates service objects to the inclusion of the High School as a community service and facility on the grounds that its use by the public should be based on agreement with the school. This is not at question and the school can be considered a valued community facility for its educational role alone.

157. Policy H15 performs two roles. It supports development which enhances community services and identifies specific facilities for protection. While not a matter for the Basic Conditions it would aid clarity if these two roles were addressed in separate policies. The second part includes commercial as well as community services and facilities and so the subsection and Policy should be titled accordingly.

158. The first part of the Policy addresses policy considerations already dealt with elsewhere in the Plan, as noted by Northumberland County Council. Haydon Parish Council agrees that the first paragraph can be removed. This obviates the consideration to create two policies.

159. The Policy additionally identifies six "*commercial services*" considered "*essential*". This assessment is informed by the survey of all households which received a very high positive response to sustain and protect current services.

160. The Policy is unclear whether it relates to existing commercial services or future provision. Permitted development rights also mean that the loss of many of these services through a change of use can occur without the need for a planning application. As drafted the Policy simply identifies types of commercial services considered essential and lacks clarity. As noted in representations from Northumberland County Council it is national planning policy to retain "*established*" facilities (paragraph 93d), NPPF). By identifying the specific services to be protected the Policy can respond to community wishes and amplify Policy INF3 relating to the protection of local village convenience shops and public houses in

the emerging Local Plan. I note Haydon Parish Council's view that the Policy should not be limited to the provision of these services in their current form. This does limit the effectiveness of the Policy in protecting established services but named services can be included in the supporting text.

161. I am content with Haydon Parish Council's proposed amendment to the drafting of the final paragraph to recognise that the policy cannot influence permitted development. As drafted it is too restrictive in stating what will *"only"* be supported.

162. Policy H15 does not meet the Basic Conditions

- **M19 - Amend Policy H15 to**
 - **Delete the first paragraph**
 - **Replace *"The following commercial services are identified as being essential to the future sustainability of the parish"* with *"Where planning permission is required development proposals will be supported which sustain or protect existing shops, facilities and services."***
 - **Delete *"only"* and *"to the satisfaction of the local planning authority"* in the fourth paragraph**
- **M20 – Provide details of the existing shops, facilities and services in the supporting text:**
 - Newsagents/ convenience store – Claire's Newsagents – 11 Church Street;
 - Pharmacy – Haydon Bridge Pharmacy – 5 Church Street;
 - Post office/ supermarket – Coop Food, 4 Ratcliffe Road;
 - Pub/ restaurant: Anchor Hotel – John Martin Street;
 - General Havelock Inn – 9 Ratcliffe Road;
 - Railway Hotel – 1 Church Street;
 - Carts Bog Inn – Langley;
 - Butchers – WMH Quality Farm Fresh Meats – 4 Church Street;
 - Garage – Anchor Garage, Unit 112, 1b Church Street.

- OM13 – [Retitle the Policy and subsection “Services and facilities”]

163. **Policy H16** – This defines the boundary of Haydon Bridge Village Centre where development which strengthens its role will be supported subject to relevant criteria.

164. The Policy is informed by evidence of pressures on the vitality of the village centre resulting from the net loss of businesses. The Village Centre boundary is shown on the Policies Map. The boundary is informed by the Primary Shopping Area boundary designated in the existing Local Plan Policy RT2 with alterations to reflect changes since the Local Plan was adopted identified through community consultation. The location of the proposed boundary is supported by a background paper. I was provided with a basic map showing the extensions and it would be appropriate to include a refined version of this with accurately defined boundaries or provide a link from the Plan. The emerging Local Plan recognises Haydon Bridge as a Service Centre (Policy TCS1) and does not designate either a Town Centre or Primary Shopping Area boundary for the village. I visited the proposed boundary and am satisfied that it is appropriate.

165. The Policy drafting is unduly restrictive in not supporting development having only minor impacts and the reference to the local planning authority needing to be satisfied serves no purpose.

166. Policy H16 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M21 – Amend Policy H16 to:**
 - Replace “*an*” with “*a significant*” in criterion b.
 - Replace “*to the satisfaction of the local planning authority without negatively impacting*” with “*without a significant negative impact*” in criterion c.

Local economy

167. This part of the Plan is supported by a background paper providing evidence as to the strength and nature of local business. It is recognised that the Local Plan addresses a

majority of the issues and the Plan focuses on two areas. For completeness the supporting text should also reference the Northumberland National Park Local Plan in paragraph 5.110.

168. **Policy H17** – This supports tourism facilities and visitor accommodation within the built up area and requires it to respect the countryside if located outside.

169. The Policy addresses an issue of direct relevance to the area. Addressing representations from Northumberland National Park Authority I am satisfied that the Policy expresses an appropriate preference for using previously developed land and existing buildings but does not rule out new buildings and these will be subject to other development plan policies. The approach to using buildings can be clarified.

170. The Policy drafting is unduly restrictive in stating what is “*required*” of development outside the built up area and the references to compliance with other plan policies serve no clear purpose.

171. Policy H17 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M22 – Amend Policy H17 to**
 - Delete “*where the proposal complies with other policies in the development plan*” in the first paragraph
 - Replace “*will be required to*” with “*should*” and delete “*should*” in the second paragraph
 - Insert “*existing*” before “*buildings*” in the second paragraph
 - Delete “*, as well as complying with other relevant policies in the development plan*” in the second paragraph
- OM14 –[Include a reference to the Northumberland National Park Local Plan in paragraph 5.110]

172. **Policy H18** – This is supportive of agricultural development and diversification.

173. The Policy takes a positive approach. Its drafting can be improved and the reference to compliance with other relevant policies serves no clear purpose. As Northumberland National Park Authority notes, the approach is simple and does not address the full range of potential planning considerations but the decision over scope is one for Haydon Parish Council. All development plan policies, including those in the Northumberland National Park Local Plan, will apply in respect of any individual planning application and there is no strategic conflict.

174. Policy H18 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M23 – Amend Policy H18 to:**
 - Delete *“where the proposal complies with other relevant policies in the development plan”*
 - Delete *“by doing so,”*

Accessibility and transport

175. **Policy H19** – This supports development encouraging sustainable transport choices.

176. The Policy is unduly restrictive in stating what *“must”* be demonstrated by applicants and the references to development plan requirements serve no clear purpose. The drafting should reference the Design Code in a manner consistent with other policies and it should be clear that all criteria apply.

177. Policy 19 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M24 – Amend Policy H19 to:**
 - Replace *“must”* with *“should”*
 - Replace *“reflecting the requirements of”* with *“having regard to”* in criterion b.
 - Delete *“as required by the appropriate policies of the development plan”* in criterion f.
 - Insert *“; and”* at the end of criterion f.

178. **Policy H20** – This protects the existing walking and cycling network, supports its improvement and extension and safeguards a proposed route connecting to Hexham.

179. The Policy is consistent with Policy TRA1 of the emerging Local Plan and provides important detail relevant to the local area. The Policies Map locates four categories of Public Rights of Way- footpath, bridleway, restricted byway and byway. The use of these goes beyond walking and cycling. The supporting text identifies the walking and cycling network to comprise the Public Rights of Way network plus the *“road network where this is suitable for cycling or walking”* (paragraph 5.121). The location of this part of the road network is not provided and its inclusion would make the Policy unclear. The approach also does not address the needs of horse riders. The Policy drafting can clarify support for improving and extending the existing network identified on the Policies Map.

180. The intention to safeguard a new route to Hexham has strong public support. The route identified is based on work by the parish council in conjunction with others and the Plan provides some detail as to the intention for future funding. There is a lack of clear evidence, however, that the new route is capable of being implemented within the Plan period and on this basis it is too restrictive to safeguard it from development or identify the specific route in the Policy. The route should be directly referenced in the supporting text. There is also a lack of evidence that the route will reduce car use. The route is incorrectly identified as Policy H21 on the Policies Map.

181. Policy H20 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M25 – Amend Policy H20 to:**
 - **Replace the title with “Sustainable transport network”**
 - **Replace “walking and cycling network” with “existing Public Rights of Way network identified on the Policies Map” in the first paragraph**
 - **Replace “walking and cycling” with “Public Rights of Way” in the second paragraph**

- **Replace the final paragraph with “Development which protects or supports delivery of a new route for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders connecting Haydon Bridge and Hexham will be supported.”**
- M26 – In relation to the proposed new Hexham – Haydon Bridge route
 - Amend the supporting text to reference the Policies Map as showing a “potential indicative route”
 - Amend the Policies Map to remove any direct relationship between Policy H20 and the route and identify it as a “potential indicative route” in the Key Diagram

8. Recommendation and Referendum Area

182. I am satisfied the Haydon Parish Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other requirements subject to the modifications recommended in this report and that it can proceed to a referendum. I have received no information to suggest other than that I recommend the referendum area matches that of the Neighbourhood Area.