

# Northumberland Local Plan

## Core Strategy Preferred Options for Housing, Employment and Green Belt

Consultation Document: October 2013



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### Foreword

As Policy Board Member for Planning, Housing and Regeneration in this new Council, I am pleased and privileged to have been given responsibility for taking forward the Council's main strategic plan – the Core Strategy.

Following two earlier consultations with Northumberland people, the plan has now reached a critical stage.

You have made it clear that you want to keep your communities viable and thriving but you also attach great value to Northumberland's unique environment.

Our population forecasting work has left the Council in no doubt that we need a considerable amount of growth. This is the only way to keep working-age families in the County and provide housing that is affordable along with a choice of quality jobs.

With all of this in mind, we have set out in this document how new homes and workplaces can be accommodated without negatively impacting on Northumberland's distinctive environment.

This stage of the Core Strategy begins to set out quite a lot of the detail about how our towns and larger villages should grow. We have had to make some difficult decisions about the scope for places to absorb housing and how the Green Belt may need to be rethought in places.

We want as many people as possible to participate at this stage of the Core Strategy. We need growth but we need to grow in the right way and this is why we need your local knowledge and opinions on the plans

I therefore urge you to take part in this consultation process and look forward to receiving your views.

**Councillor Alan Hepple**  
**Policy Board Member for Planning, Housing and Regeneration**



## 1. Introduction

### 1. Introduction

#### What is a Local Plan?

**1.1** All local planning authorities are required to have an up to date Local Plan<sup>(1)</sup>. Local Plans should:

- set out a vision for growth and identify the quantity, broad location and key sites for new housing, employment, shops and community facilities;
- identify how through the planning process the environment will be protected and enhanced;
- be in line with national planning policy principles as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- reflect the needs and priorities of local communities.

**1.2** Policies within the Local Plan are the starting point for the assessment of all planning applications.

**1.3** A Local Plan can be made up of a number of different documents, see Figure 1.1.

**1.4** Neighbourhood Plans, prepared by Town and Parish Councils, will also form part of the Development Plan once they are adopted.

**Figure 1.1 The Local Plan**



1 'Local Plan' is a clear term that people understand. We have previously called it the 'Local Development Plan' or the 'Local Development Framework'

## What is the Northumberland Local Plan?

**1.5** In Northumberland, the Local Plan is currently the adopted Core Strategies and saved policies of the Local Plans of the former local planning authorities that made up Northumberland prior to Local Government reorganisation in 2009.

**1.6** The Council is currently preparing a Core Strategy and a Delivery Document that will replace the adopted and saved policies.

### **1.7 The Northumberland Core Strategy will:**

- Set out the strategic planning policies of the Council;
- Provide the planning principles to guide future development and planning decisions in Northumberland<sup>(2)</sup> to 2031;
- Set out the general scale and distribution of new development which is required to meet Northumberland's needs to 2031; and
- Include strategic allocations for housing and employment.

**1.8** The Core Strategy will supersede:

- All strategic policies in the Core Strategies adopted in 2007 for the former Alnwick, Blyth Valley and Tynedale Districts, and some policies in the former Blyth Valley Development Control Development Plan Document (2007);
- Some saved policies from the Local Plans of former planning authorities; and
- Policy S5 of the Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan (2005).

### **1.9 The Northumberland Delivery Document will include:**

- Detailed land allocations and designations, as well as site-specific proposals for the necessary infrastructure, buildings and services to deliver the proposals in the Core Strategy;
- Detailed development management policies; and
- A proposals map identifying land allocations and designations.

## What is the relationship with neighbourhood plans?

**1.10** A number of communities in the County are preparing Neighbourhood Plans. Provided they conform generally to the Core Strategy's strategic policies, pass independent examination and are agreed by their host community following a referendum, these plans will become part of the Development Plan.

**1.11** The scope of Neighbourhood Plans will be determined by the Town and Parish Councils in consultation with their communities.

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<sup>2</sup> Excluding Northumberland National Park, which is a separate Local Planning Authority and has separate adopted planning policies

# 1. Introduction

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## Core Strategy - what have we done so far?

### Issues and Options

- This was the first significant period of public engagement on the Core Strategy;
- Consultation took place between May and August 2012 over a 12 week period;
- There were substantial levels of participation and response during the consultation period;
- All of the responses received are available on the Council's website at [http://northumberland-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/core\\_strategy/csio](http://northumberland-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/core_strategy/csio).

### Preferred Options – Stage 1

- Responses to the Issues and Options consultation highlighted that there was a requirement for a significant amount of work on the housing and employment evidence base before housing numbers and employment land requirements could be accurately defined;
- Consultation took place during February and March 2013;
- This document proposed 57 draft policies covering:
  - Affordable housing, rural exception sites, housing for older and vulnerable people;
  - Approach to windfall employment development, rural economy and tourism;
  - Town Centres and retailing;
  - Minerals and waste;
  - Renewable energy and sustainable construction;
  - Transport and ICT;
  - Community facilities; and
  - Natural and historic environment;
- As additional detailed work was still being undertaken, it did not include draft policies covering:
  - Proposed level and location of housing land;
  - Proposed level and location of employment land; or
  - Approach to Green Belt.
- All of the responses received are available on the Council's website at [http://northumberland-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/core\\_strategy/cspo](http://northumberland-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/core_strategy/cspo).

## What is the purpose and scope of this consultation document?

**1.12** This document is **Stage 2 of the Preferred Options** consultation. It sets out the Council's preferred policy approach to housing, employment and Green Belt.

**1.13** This consultation document:

- Defines the preferred level of housing and economic growth;
- Defines the preferred broad distribution of development to deliver the strategy for Northumberland;
- Proposes the preferred policy approach to Green Belt:

- identifies the locations where land will be required to be deleted from the Green Belt, in order to deliver the preferred strategy;
- defines the Council's preferred detailed boundary for the Green Belt extension around Morpeth; and
- Sets out the reasonable alternatives that the Council has considered as part of developing the preferred policy approach and the potential impact of alternative options.

### **What is the relationship between this document and the Stage 1 Preferred Options document?**

**1.14** Stage 1 of the Core Strategy Preferred Options (February 2013) defined the emerging overarching spatial vision and objectives for the Local Plan. It proposed 57 draft policies for comment.

**1.15** This Stage 2 consultation document sets out the detailed policy approach for housing, employment and Green Belt that were not included in the Stage 1 document. It should be read alongside the Stage 1 document as together the documents form the Council's Core Strategy Preferred Options.

**1.16** A full draft Core Strategy will be published early in 2014.

**If as a result of the proposals within this current consultation document you wish to make further comments on the Stage 1 (February 2013) document the Council will also accept these comments. The Council will respond to all comments received at both Preferred Options stages in advance of the publication of the full draft Core Strategy document in 2014<sup>(3)</sup> the Council will also accept these comments. The Council will respond to all comments received at both Preferred Options stages in advance of the publication of the full draft Core Strategy document in 2014.**

### **How has the document been prepared?**

**1.17** In order to strengthen the existing evidence base and inform the preferred strategy for population, housing, employment and Green Belt the Council:

- Undertook population and household modelling work<sup>(4)</sup> to enable different scenarios to be tested both at the Countywide and local level. The local areas correspond to those used within the Housing Needs Survey;
- Commissioned a refresh of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment to take into account the impact of policy changes such as the National Planning Policy Framework, Welfare Reform legislation, 2011 Census data, and more up to date housing market data;

<sup>3</sup> The Stage 1 Preferred Options document (February 2013) is available at:  
<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/corestrategy>

<sup>4</sup> Appendix A provides explanation of the baseline data used in the population and household model.

## 1. Introduction

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- Updated the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and used it to assess whether there was suitable development land within or adjoining Main Towns and Service Centres to deliver the strategy;
- Updated employment land take up and availability information; and
- Identified and assessed appropriate options for the Green Belt extension around Morpeth.

**1.18** Work has also been on-going to fully appraise the potential implications of reasonable alternative policy approaches as they emerge through the following assessment processes:

### Sustainability Appraisal

- Required under law <sup>(5)</sup> to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the emerging Core Strategy;
- Helps to ensure that the policies proposed are the most appropriate;
- An on-going transparent process which supports all stages of plan preparation;
- The appraisal findings of this document, the Stage 2 Preferred Options, are subject to consultation alongside this document<sup>(6)</sup>.

### Equality Impact Assessment

- Required by the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation;
- To seek to ensure that any new policies promote equality and diversity and do not adversely affect or discriminate against those with 'protected characteristics'<sup>(7)</sup>;
- It is a transparent process, and an assessment has been undertaken at each of the stages and has helped inform the draft policies;
- Further details of the equality work undertaken to date and what is proposed is set out in Appendix B.

### Habitats Regulations Assessment

- The Council is a 'competent authority' under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010<sup>(8)</sup>;
- The Council must ensure that the Core Strategy does not have any adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites of nature conservation interest <sup>(9)</sup>;
- A Habitats Regulations Assessment must form part of the process to inform policy development;
- The Assessment is an iterative process and the Council can only adopt the Core Strategy after having established that it will not adversely affect the integrity of a European site;

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5 Town and Country Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

6 The Sustainability Appraisal document is available at: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/corestrategy>.

7 The protected characteristics are age (older/younger), disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, and religion and belief.

8 Required under Regulation 102(1) of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

9 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protections Areas (SPAs) collectively are termed European Sites and also include Ramsar sites, as they are treated as European sites in practice.

- An assessment has been undertaken at each of the stages and has helped inform the draft policies;
- Further details of the Habitats Regulations Assessment work undertaken to date and what is proposed is set out in Appendix C.

### Viability Assessment

**1.19** The Council has a requirement to ensure that the Core Strategy is deliverable. The Viability Assessment is an important tool to help confirm this is the case. A robust assessment methodology is being developed which will provide:

- Analysis of the broad value and costs of types of development that are likely to come forward over the plan period;
- A structured and transparent means of understanding the deliverability of the plan and any necessary balances and trade-offs;
- More certainty for developers and greater likelihood of delivering sustainable development for communities; and
- Improved collaborative working and shared understanding of the interests, objectives and constraints facing different parties.

**1.20** Feedback on the methodology is being sought alongside this consultation<sup>(10)</sup>.

### Infrastructure Delivery Plan

**1.21** Physical, green, social and community infrastructure is critical to delivering sustainable, diverse and resilient communities. Planning for such infrastructure is therefore integral to the Core Strategy preparation process. The first stage of the Strategic Infrastructure Study has:

- Involved working collaboratively with stakeholders, including infrastructure providers and adjoining local authorities;
- examined the baseline position, providing evidence of the current supply and capacity of existing infrastructure and committed or proposed improvements; and
- explored future infrastructure needs in the context of the strategic options identified in the emerging Core Strategy.

**1.22** The next stage will involve developing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will:

- identify the infrastructure needed to support the delivery of the Core Strategy;
- identify costs and delivery mechanisms; and the likely sources of funding available;
- acknowledge any risks to the delivery of the plan and associated contingency measures;
- be a living document which will be subject to monitoring and updating;
- be closely linked with other strategies and programmes including the Council's own capital investment programme.

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10 The Viability Assessment consultation document is available at: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/corestrategy>.

# 1. Introduction

## Duty to co-operate

**1.23** Through the preparation of the Core Strategy, the Council will work collaboratively with adjoining authorities and other public bodies regarding strategic issues which may have significant cross boundary impacts, as part of the 'duty to co-operate' requirements<sup>(11)</sup>. placed upon local planning authorities in preparing their Local Plans.

**1.24** As part of the Duty the Council has:

- Established a Memorandum of Understanding with Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland regarding approaches to key issues such as population and housing, economic development, transport and infrastructure;
- Been actively working with Newcastle and North Tyneside, in particular, on key strategic cross border issues. This work has been further strengthened though the work associated with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership and the Combined Authority.
- Commenced working with other authorities such as those in Cumbria and Scotland as well as other relevant authorities including the Marine Management Organisation.

## Explanation of the structure of this consultation document

### How to get involved

**1.25** It is essential that the emerging Northumberland Core Strategy is informed by wide community engagement. The Statement of Community Involvement<sup>(12)</sup> highlights that the Council is committed to engage with as many residents, local groups and interested parties as possible.

**1.26** A number of drop-in and discussion sessions have been arranged to allow people to come and find out more about the Core Strategy and shape future policy. Details of these sessions are available on the Council's website at:  
<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/corestrategy>.

**1.27** The consultation on this current document is taking place from **31 October 2013** to **2 January 2014**.

**1.28** The Council is encouraging people to submit comments online at:  
[http://northumberland-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/core\\_strategy/csपो2](http://northumberland-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/planning/core_strategy/csपो2)

**1.29** Responses by email or post will be accepted and should be directed to:

Spatial Policy and Delivery Team  
Northumberland County Council  
County Hall  
Morpeth  
Northumberland NE61 2EF  
Email: [PlanningStrategy@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:PlanningStrategy@northumberland.gov.uk)

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11 Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) places the 'duty to co-operate' requirements upon local planning authorities

12 The Statement of Community Involvement is available to view at:  
<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3464>

**1.30** During the current consultation the Council is also seeking feedback on other documents, which can be viewed online at <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=7694>:

- Draft scope for the Delivery Document;
- Draft revised Statement of Community Involvement;
- Viability Assessment consultation paper;
- Questions on the approach to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA);
- Draft partial update to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

## Next steps – timetable

**Table 1.1 Key stages of the Core Strategy preparation and engagement opportunities**

Date	Milestone
31 October to 2 January 2014	Consultation – 9 weeks
April to May 2014	Consultation on full draft Core Strategy
Summer 2014	Submission consultation (publication stage)
Autumn 2014	Formal submission
Winter 2014	Examination
Spring 2015	Adoption

### Question 1

Do you have any comments on this section?

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

### 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

#### Spatial portrait

**2.1** Northumberland is England's northernmost county, stretching from the Scottish Border in the north and west to Tyneside and County Durham in the south. The County is flanked by Cumbria, the Cheviots and North Pennines to the west and by the North Sea to the East.



**2.2** The County, the largest unitary authority by geographic coverage, is also the most sparsely populated in England with only 63 people per square kilometre. Home to around 316,000 people, Northumberland remains largely rural, with its largest settlements having no more than 40,000 residents.

**2.3** The south east represents the most densely populated part of the County, containing the three largest towns of Blyth, Cramlington and Ashington, which act as the main employment and service centres for much of the area. Although the area retains some features of its post war industrial legacy, Cramlington was planned as a new town, to provide a focus for new employment and housing growth.

**2.4** Beyond the south east, the County's main settlements are located along the Tyne Valley corridor, and on a north-south axis across the lowland coastal strip; both areas incorporate main roads and rail lines. Morpeth, Hexham, Berwick-upon-Tweed and Alnwick are the main market towns, all of which have large rural hinterlands. The predominantly rural areas of the County are interspersed with smaller towns, some with their own hinterlands, as well as numerous villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads.

**2.5** Areas in the south of the County have the strongest relationship with the Tyne and Wear conurbation. Tyneside attracts people from Northumberland, who reach into the area for work, education, cultural activity and shopping. To a lesser extent areas in the north and west of the County have relationships with the Scottish Borders, Edinburgh and the Lothians and Carlisle.

**2.6** Northumberland's rural villages are still critical to farming communities, which are the lifeblood of much of the County. Many have been sustained by tourism, although the needs of the industry have created development pressures. Part of their attractiveness is the organic way in which they have grown within their landscape settings.

**2.7** There are numerous designated areas and sites, many of which are recognised internationally and nationally, for their nature conservation, geological, landscape or built heritage value. Most notable are:

- the Northumberland National Park (a separate local planning authority area);
- the Northumberland Coast and North Pennines Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- historic landscapes;

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

- areas of international biodiversity and geo-diversity importance, mostly concentrated along the coast and in more remote upland areas;
- the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site;
- 69 conservation areas; and
- significant historic buildings and structures - Norman Castles, country houses, fortified farmhouses, and buildings associated with the County's diverse social, economic and cultural legacy.

### Question 2

Do you have any comments on the spatial portrait for Northumberland?

### Delivery Areas

**2.8** Northumberland is large and diverse and different parts of the County have distinct characteristics, functions and needs. The strategic approach to the location of development is based around four Delivery Areas.

**2.9** The Delivery Area boundaries were proposed as part of Stage 1 of the Preferred Options consultation, they:

- reflect areas which are similar in terms of their social, economic, and cultural characteristics – not just defined by housing markets;
- take account of the roles and relationship between towns and villages across Northumberland; and
- take account of the interaction of places with adjoining areas, particularly Tyneside and Scotland.

**2.10** There was positive feedback from the last consultation on the proposed Delivery Areas that were amended following feedback at the Issues and Options stage.

**2.11** Defining Delivery Areas<sup>(13)</sup> will help the Council to better guide the delivery of development according to local needs; establish the scale and function of individual towns and service centres', capacity to accommodate additional development, functional relationships between settlements and connections with their hinterlands. It should however be recognised that in some instances, a countywide policy approach remains appropriate.

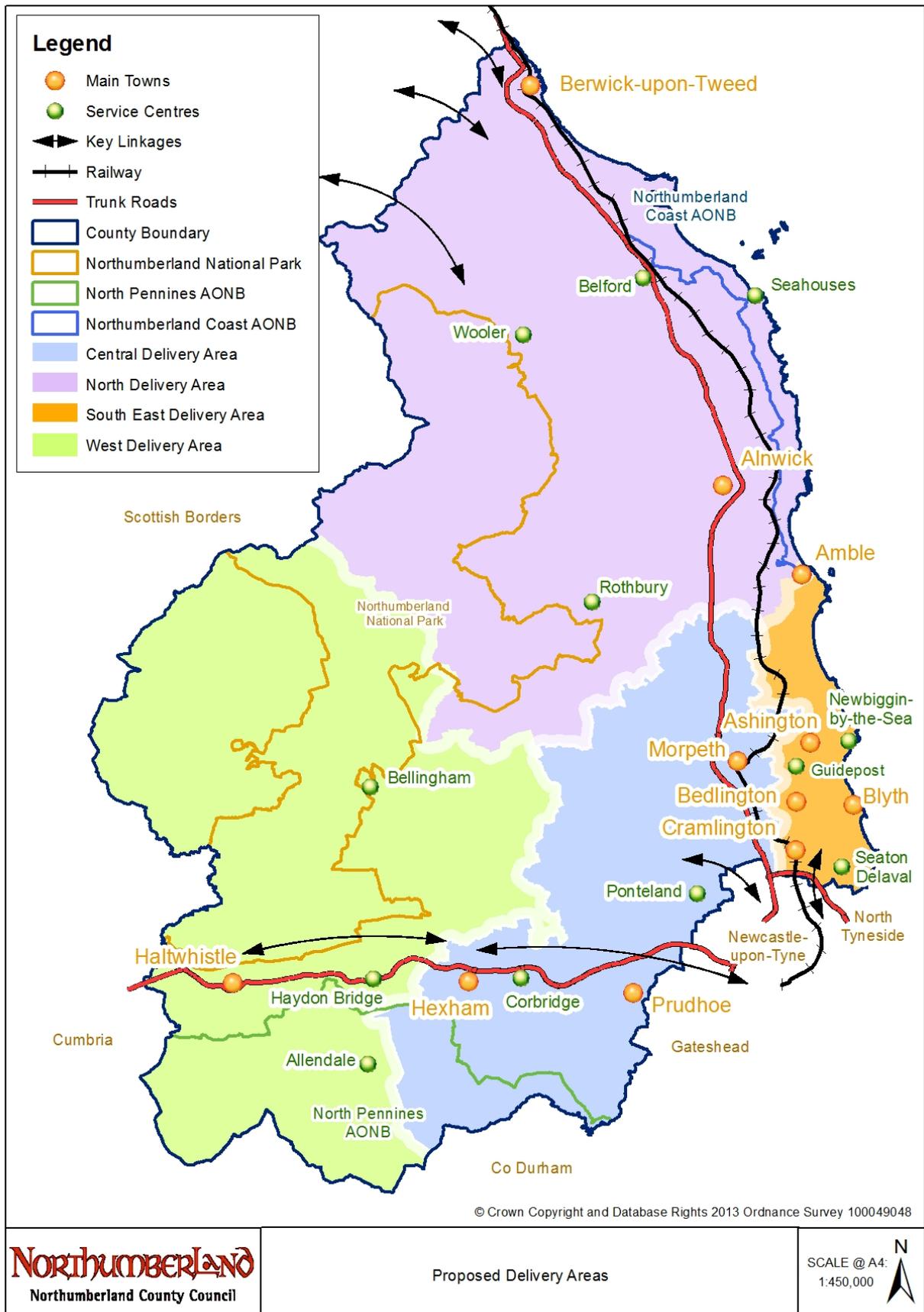
**2.12** The remainder of this section provides some context to each of the areas of Northumberland.

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<sup>13</sup> The Delivery Areas have defined boundaries in order to enable the Council to monitor development in these areas. To ensure consistency and correlation with the Housing Needs Study, the boundaries comprise groupings of the 'sub areas' used in the Countywide Housing Needs Study.

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

Figure 2.1 Delivery Areas



## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

### South East Northumberland Delivery Area

**2.13** The South East Northumberland Delivery Area extends inland from the coast, from its southern boundary with North Tyneside and Newcastle upon Tyne, to Amble in the north. The Area includes:

- the Main Towns of Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Blyth and Cramlington; and
- the Service Centres of Guidepost/Stakeford/Choppington, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Seaton Delaval/New Hartley/Seghill/Holywell/Seaton Sluice.

**2.14** The Green Belt extends across parts of the area to prevent coalescence with the Tyneside conurbation to the south. There are important green infrastructure links along the coast, many of which are protected by nature conservation designations. The landscape of the area was historically dominated by coal mining. The majority of mining sites in the area have now been restored and provide important ecological and recreational resources. Surface coal mining is still present in the area, including sites at Shotton and Potland Burn; workings at Steadsburn and Stobswood are now largely restored.



### Population

- Most densely populated part of Northumberland at 737 people per km<sup>2</sup>, with 163,200 people with 71,600 households;
- Although its towns and villages are large no settlement exceeds 40,000 residents;
- While the population is ageing, the proportion aged over 65 is smaller than in the other Delivery Areas and it has the largest proportion of younger residents.

### Roles of the Main Towns and Service Centres

**2.15** Ashington, Bedlington, Blyth, Cramlington and Amble provide the largest concentrations of housing, employment, retailing and services within the area.

**2.16 Amble:** The key centre in the northern part of the Delivery Area. It is Northumberland's most important fishing centre and has an important tourism role as a result of its location at the southern approach to the Northumberland Coast AONB and the establishment of a marina.

**2.17 Ashington:** Once a centre of the coal mining industry, the town now plays an important strategic employment role in the County and includes the strategically important Ashwood Business Park. Northumberland College and Wansbeck Hospital are also located in the town.

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

**2.18 Bedlington:** Bedlington, together with the linked settlement of Bedlington Station provides housing for those working in the neighbouring towns, and commuting to Tyneside. Given the close proximity of larger towns services provided predominantly serve the local market.

**2.19 Blyth:** Has a strategically important employment function. There is significant economic growth potential particularly at Blyth Estuary, which includes sites with Enterprise Zone status. Opportunities exist that build on existing assets including the National Renewable Energy Centre (NaREC) and the Port of Blyth which is a sizeable commercial port with a deep-water harbour and warehousing facilities. Specific sectors being targeted include, offshore oil and gas, renewables and advanced manufacturing.

**2.20 Cramlington:** Has a sub-regional role as a centre for industry, and houses the largest concentration of manufacturing businesses in Northumberland, including a cluster of pharmaceuticals companies. It is a prime location for inward investment because of the quality of its environment. The redevelopment of the town centre, including a cinema, and the construction of a new specialist emergency care hospital, to the east of Cramlington has strengthened the role of Cramlington.

**2.21 The Service Centres of Guidepost/Stakeford/Choppington, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Seaton Delaval/New Hartley/Seghill/Holywell/Seaton Sluice** provide important services for both residents and communities within neighbouring areas. Given the close proximity of the larger towns, the sphere of influence of these settlements is limited. Other smaller settlements within the area also provide local services to their resident communities.

### Housing – affordability, development pressure and delivery

**2.22** This Delivery Area has experienced consistent under delivery of housing in recent years compared to the housing allocations in local plans. Some large housing sites have stalled and sites on previously developed land have proven unviable.

### Transport

- The A189/A19 corridor provides important sub-regional road links to Tyneside for jobs, learning, shopping and leisure;
- There are some issues with localised traffic congestion in Blyth and at key highway junctions at peak times;
- Cramlington benefits from passing services on the East Coast Main Line;
- There are no rail services connecting the other towns and service centres with Tyneside or providing access to the wider rail network.
- There are opportunities from the reintroduction of passenger rail services to the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne line.

### Employment

**2.23** This area faces particular challenges; social and environmental deprivation arising from unemployment and poverty continue to frustrate the ability of communities to emerge from the post-industrial, coal mining legacy into sustained and sustainable growth. The recent closures of the RioTinto Alcan smelter at Lynemouth, and Border Foods in Amble have also had an impact upon the communities and supply chains locally.

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

### 2.24 Key opportunities for future economic growth:

- Blyth estuary area - is being actively promoted to the renewable energy, advanced manufacturing and offshore sectors;
- Cramlington continues to be recognised as a prime location for inward investment due to the quality of its environment;
- Development of an outdoor tourism and leisure destination based around the former Stobswood, Maidens Hall and Steadsburn surface coal mining sites in the northern part of the Area.

### Relationship with other areas

**2.25** The close proximity, and good road links, mean that the Delivery Area is closely linked with the Tyneside conurbation to the south. While links are not so strong with the wider Central and North Northumberland Delivery Areas, the market towns of Morpeth and Alnwick both provide employment and housing opportunities, and also provide a workforce for major employers in Cramlington and Blyth.

### Question 3

Do you have any comments on the spatial portrait for the South East Northumberland Delivery Area?

### Central Northumberland Delivery Area

**2.26** The Central Northumberland Delivery Area extends north and west from the boundary with Tyne and Wear. The area includes:

- the Main Towns of Hexham, Morpeth and Prudhoe; and
- the Service Centres of Ponteland and Corbridge.

**2.27** Much of the area is covered by Green Belt which sought to protect the countryside from encroachment from the Tyne and Wear conurbation. The south west of the Delivery Area includes part of the North Pennines AONB.



### Population

- The population density is 83 per km<sup>2</sup>, with 79,000 people in 33,700 households;
- The proportion of the population aged over 65 years is relatively high at 22.1%, as is the proportion aged up to 15 years at 16.8%.

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

### Roles of the main towns and service centres

**2.28** Morpeth, Hexham, and Prudhoe are the key hubs for housing, employment, retailing and services.

**2.29 Morpeth:** Is a historic market town, serving a wide rural hinterland, extending into the North Northumberland Delivery Area. It serves as an administrative and employment centre for the County whilst also having a commuter housing role due to good transport links and the close proximity of the Tyneside conurbation.

**2.30 Hexham:** Is located in the Tyne Valley and serves a wide rural hinterland, extending into the West Northumberland Delivery Area. With its auction mart, it is an important centre for the local agricultural industry. It also has an important role as a gateway to Northumberland National Park and Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site. The town accommodates commuters to the Tyneside conurbation. Future growth in the town is currently restricted by the Green Belt.

**2.31 Prudhoe:** Is located on a hillside, overlooking the Tyne Valley, close to the Tyneside conurbation. Within the influence of Tyneside, it has a commuter housing role but also has a longstanding local employment, housing and service centre role.

**2.32 Ponteland:** is a key service centre providing services to a wider rural area, although not to the same extent as Morpeth and Hexham. Ponteland looks to Newcastle upon Tyne for its main employment, retailing and services, and provides an executive housing offer for those commuting to Tyneside, and the wider region. Future growth in the town is currently restricted by the Green Belt.

**2.33 Corbridge** is a village of great historic and architectural significance. It has a commuter housing role but also is an important service centre, which provides services to a wider rural area. It looks to Hexham for its higher order services.

### Housing – affordability, development pressure and past delivery

**2.34** This area has some of the highest levels of development pressure within Northumberland, largely due to the ease of commuting into the conurbation. House prices are high, resulting in affordability pressures across the Delivery Area.

**2.35** Past plan policies have constrained development across the Area, through Green Belt designations, low housing targets and policies to restrict development in the countryside. This has resulted in a decline in population in some constrained areas such as East Tynedale. In the former Castle Morpeth area, despite Morpeth and Ponteland being identified as the focus for new housing development in the Castle Morpeth Local Plan, the majority of housing development has taken place in the Morpeth hinterland and former coalfield areas.

### Transport

**2.36** The area is crossed by the A1 and East Coast Main Line (ECML) corridor, and the A69 and Newcastle to Carlisle rail line. While Hexham, Prudhoe and Corbridge and other villages are served by regular train services on the Tyne Valley line, only Morpeth benefits from regular services on the ECML. The main towns and service centres, and settlements

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

along the main transport corridors are well served by buses, in the wider rural hinterlands services are less frequent. Newcastle International Airport is located on the southern edge of the Delivery Area.

### Employment

**2.37** Within the Delivery Area, many jobs are in the public sector, particularly within Local Government and health services. In the Tyne Valley, at Hexham and Prudhoe wood processing industries are major employers. The towns of Hexham, Morpeth, Prudhoe and Ponteland contain industrial estates. Much of the area encompasses productive agricultural land, while tourism makes a significant contribution to the economy particularly in the west. The area includes land associated with Newcastle International Airport.

### Relationships with other areas

- The close proximity of the Main Towns and Service Centres to Tyneside means they have a strong relationship with the conurbation and they provide popular locations for commuters;
- The influence of Hexham and Morpeth extends into the West and North Northumberland Delivery Areas respectively, with the towns providing employment and services for wide hinterlands;
- Morpeth also has a strong relationship with Cramlington and the South East Northumberland Delivery Area, which will be further strengthened following the construction of the A1 South East Northumberland Link Road.

### Question 4

Do you have any comments on the spatial portrait for the Central Northumberland Delivery Area?

### North Northumberland Delivery Area

**2.38** The North Northumberland Delivery Area is bounded to the north by the Scottish Border, to the west by the Cheviot Hills of the Northumberland National Park and to the south by the Simonside Hills and the Coquet Valley. The coast, which is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty forms the eastern boundary. The delivery area includes:

- the Main Towns of Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed; and
- the Service Centres of Belford, Rothbury, Seahouses and Wooler.



## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

### Population

- Much of the Area is sparsely populated, with an overall density of 26.3 people per km<sup>2</sup>, and a population of 53,600 in 24,250 households;
- With almost 24% of its resident population aged over 65 it has the largest proportion of older residents, and the lowest proportion of younger residents, up to 15 years (15.4% of the population), in Northumberland;
- The numbers of children in rural schools are falling.

### Roles of main towns and service centres

**2.39** The towns of Berwick-upon-Tweed and Alnwick are the key locations for housing, employment, retailing and services within the area.

**2.40** **Berwick-upon-Tweed** is the northernmost market town in Northumberland, one of England's outstanding historic towns and a key hub between the conurbations of Edinburgh and Tyneside. Its history and geography give the town a unique sense of place and it is a popular tourist destination.

**2.41** **Alnwick** is another of Northumberland's historic market towns; the centre is dominated by the 11th century castle. The castle and its gardens are popular tourist attractions.

**2.42** **Belford and Seahouses** provide a range of services to support the local communities and the tourism industry. Seahouses is a key hub for visitors to the North Northumberland coast and the Farne Islands.

**2.43** **Rothbury** is the largest settlement in western Coquetdale with its services supporting its resident population and those people who live in the more remote villages, including those in the Northumberland National Park. The village acts as a gateway to the Park for visitors, and has important relationships with Alnwick and Morpeth.

**2.44** **Wooler** has an important relationship with both Berwick and Alnwick, and is a local hub for services for its satellite communities. It is also a gateway for visitors to the northern part of the National Park. It has a working mart and is also the location for an important cluster of agricultural engineering and construction companies.

### Housing – affordability, development pressure and past delivery

- Large parts of the Area are subject to high house prices; by contrast the area has the lowest average gross incomes within the County because of the reliance on employment in the agriculture and tourism sectors;
- Access to affordable housing, particularly within the rented sector, is an issue across the area but is particularly acute in the Northumberland Coast AONB and its coastal villages, where there are especially high levels of second home and holiday accommodation;
- Development pressure in the AONB poses a threat to the conservation of its natural beauty but the sustainability of local communities by providing housing and employment opportunities is also considered to be integral to its protection and enhancement.

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

**2.45** In terms of past housing delivery in this area, the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed has underprovided in recent years despite an abundance of housing sites with planning permission. Delivery elsewhere in the former Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough has exceeded past policy, particularly in the coastal zone. Delivery in Alnwick reflects the current planning policy but Rothbury has experienced higher levels of delivery.

### Transport

- The A1/East Coast road and rail corridor connects the Area with the Tyneside conurbation and Edinburgh, with the A697 providing an additional link between these locations;
- Berwick-upon-Tweed is well served by the East Coast Mainline, while the station at Alnmouth (for Alnwick) provides more limited but important access to the strategic rail network;
- There are limited bus services operating outside the A1 corridor, the Northumberland coastal route and the axes of the A697, A698.

### Employment

- The towns of Berwick-upon-Tweed and Alnwick have industrial estates;
- The port of Berwick-upon-Tweed is important to the wider area; it is capable of handling larger freight vessels and is considered to have an important role in increasing exports;
- There are a number of small harbours in the area, at Beadnell, Craster, Holy Island, and Seahouses, which primarily support the local fishing industry. Seahouses, however, provides access by boat for visitors to the Farne Islands, and this function is important to the visitor economy.

### Relationship with other areas

- The Area is influenced by the Tyne and Wear conurbation in terms of travel to work, but not to the same extent as the Central and South East areas;
- The north of the Area, in particular Berwick-upon-Tweed, is influenced by the Edinburgh City-Region, which extends across the Scottish Borders, and which is the focus of a strategic growth strategy. Proposals for expansion in the central Scottish Borders and the re-opening of the Waverley line could also have implications for the social and economic well-being of the north section of the Area.

### Question 5

Do you have any comments on the spatial portrait for the North Northumberland Delivery Area?

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

### West Northumberland Delivery Area

**2.46** The West Northumberland Delivery Area straddles the southern area of the Northumberland National Park. It includes the Kielder area to the north-west of the National Park, the North Tyne Valley, the South Tyne Valley and parts of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and the North Pennines AONB. The West Northumberland Delivery Area includes:

- The Main Town of Haltwhistle; and
- The Service Centres of Haydon Bridge, Allendale and Bellingham.



### Population

- The West Northumberland Delivery Area is the most sparsely populated in the County, with 11.2 people per km<sup>2</sup>;
- It has the lowest population of the four areas with approximately 20,200 people and 8,950 households;
- The proportion of population aged up to 15 years is small at 15.5%, while 21.5% are aged 65 years or older.

### Roles of main towns and service centres

**2.47** Haltwhistle is the largest settlement in the West Northumberland Delivery Area; it is located in the South Tyne Valley. It grew as an industrial town when the Newcastle to Carlisle railway opened in the 1830s. It is a hub for housing, employment, retailing and other services, and is one of the key gateways to Hadrian's Wall. Haltwhistle has key links with Hexham and is served by the high school at Haydon Bridge.

**2.48** Bellingham is the largest settlement in the North Tyne Valley and provides services to a wide rural hinterland. It grew as an agricultural market village during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For a time the village had industries associated with surrounding coal and iron working and it was linked by railway to the rest of the North East, as well as Scotland. Bellingham acts as a gateway for people visiting the National Park and Kielder Water & Forest Park. It looks to Hexham for many higher level services.

**2.49** Allendale is located within the North Pennines AONB in the East Allen Valley. Its main role is as a local centre for housing and services, supporting the agricultural sector and tourism. The village is within commuting distance of Tyneside.

**2.50** Haydon Bridge is located in the South Tyne Valley, west of Hexham. While it is within the commuting influence of Tyneside, its main role is as a local housing and service centre for its immediate surroundings. The main high school in the south-west of the County is located in Haydon Bridge.

## 2. A spatial portrait of Northumberland

### Housing – affordability, development pressure and delivery

**2.51** Development across the area generally serves local markets and pressure for development is relatively low. However, the reaction to historic development pressure in the extreme south east of the area is reflected in Green Belt designation.

**2.52** The housing delivery strategy of current planning policy sought to stabilise the population in this area. This has largely been achieved with the exception of Haltwhistle which has actually seen an unintended decrease.

### Transport

**2.53** The east-west Tyne Gap corridor runs through the area, with the Tyne Valley rail line, relatively frequent bus services and the A69 Trunk Road connecting the settlements of Haltwhistle, Haydon Bridge and Bardon Mill with Hexham, Carlisle and the Tyneside conurbation. To the north, the North Tyne Valley and, to the south, the Allen Valleys and the upstream part of the South Tyne are more poorly connected by road or public transport.

### Economy

**2.54** The economy of the area is dominated by agriculture, forestry and tourism. Although the area has a high percentage of people of working age (63%), the population is ageing.

### Relationships with other areas

- There are strong social, economic and cultural relationships with Hexham in the Central Northumberland Delivery Area, with residents looking to the town for key services;
- The eastern part of the Delivery Area is on the periphery of the main Tyneside commuter zone;
- Links with Carlisle and Cumbria are stronger here than elsewhere in the County.

### Question 6

Do you have any comments on the spatial portrait for the West Northumberland Delivery Area?

## 3. The economy of Northumberland

### 3. The economy of Northumberland

#### A changing economy

**3.1** The Northumberland economy has grown steadily in recent years. Gross Value Added (GVA), which is an economic measure of the value of goods and services in an area, grew annually from 1999 to 2008, with a fall in 2009. Although this is similar to the national trend, the level of growth is only 62% of the national average. This can be explained as a result of the low employment rate and low productivity within the County.

**3.2** The structure of the County's economy has undergone substantial change over the past 30 years. There has been a downsizing of the agricultural workforce and a move away from deep coal mining. It now has a broader base - incorporating manufacturing, certain service sectors, and in particular the public sector, on which it is now heavily dependent. However recently, there has been a decline in manufacturing employment, as experienced nationally, but without the growth in high value service sector employment.



**3.3** There are a number of key positive features of the Northumberland economy:

- Small businesses dominate the economy with 83% of firms employing fewer than ten people;
- Many small businesses are leading edge in their sectors and are a vital part of the economy;
- A number of the larger companies are high tech and operate globally;
- New business start-ups are generally resilient, with failure rates below the regional and national average;
- Although the number of new business ventures established is proportionately lower than elsewhere in the UK, in certain settlements, such as Hexham, Morpeth, and Ponteland, it has been relatively healthy.

**3.4** However, the number of large firms is low in comparison to elsewhere in the UK. This is a major economic issue for Northumberland, particularly given the wider benefits large firms bring such as supply chain growth and skills development.

### Key issues for the Core Strategy:

Small businesses are vital to the County's economy, providing the premises and flexible policy to increase levels of entrepreneurialism and supporting the growth of new businesses is vital. A key concern is the lack of larger employers, therefore the expansion of indigenous firms and inward investment opportunities need to be positively supported.

### Education, skills and unemployment

**3.5** The Northumberland labour market in terms of educational attainment, skills, earnings, and forms of employment is geographically and socio-economically split. The average wage of Northumberland residents is 11% higher than the average wage in Northumberland based jobs. This illustrates that the County's higher earning and more skilled residents commute out of the County for work.

**3.6** Levels of educational attainment are reasonable, with Northumberland's residents achieving higher qualifications than the north east average, and only slightly lower than the national average. However, the level of residents with no qualifications is high. This, combined with the lack of appropriate training could limit the County's ability to grow and diversify<sup>(14)</sup>.

**3.7** The number of Northumberland's young people entering or continuing higher education in 2011/12, was just under 2,400 people; in broad terms this represents 1% of the County's population across each of the North, Central and West Northumberland Delivery Areas. However, only 0.5% of the population in the South East Northumberland Delivery Area were in higher education. The north east's universities were by far the most popular destinations for undergraduate and post graduate students.

**3.8** Although the Northumberland unemployment rate is lower than the national average at 4.7%, this varies significantly across the County. Worklessness<sup>(15)</sup> is a major constraint on economic growth for the County, which although low regionally is still high compared to economically successful areas of the country. This includes those classified as unemployed and sections of the economically inactive, which combined account for nearly 10% of the labour force.

### Relationship with the regional economy

**3.9** Northumberland's economy, as part of the wider North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) market, is intrinsically linked to the economies of neighbouring authorities, Tyneside in particular:

- Over 44,000 people who live in the County travel to adjoining areas for employment, with the majority commuting into Tyneside;

14 This is reaffirmed through the Economic Land Review (ELR) business survey, where 20% of respondents stated that skills shortages were an obstacle to growth

15 Those that are unemployed (looking for work) and economically inactive (not looking for work)

### 3. The economy of Northumberland

- Just over 16,000 people commute into the County for employment, the majority coming from Tyneside;
- The rate of out commuting has ebbed and flowed over recent years<sup>(16)</sup>, but with no definite downward trend.

#### **Key issue for the Core Strategy:**

Increased net inward commuting can and will only happen if the number of Northumberland based jobs increases. Whilst the role of Northumberland as a commuter belt for Tyneside cannot be denied, it is important that the Core Strategy supports growth in the number and quality of Northumberland based jobs.

#### **Question 7**

Do you have any comments about the changing economy of Northumberland or its relationship with the regional economy, including the key issues that have been identified?

### **The future of the Northumberland economy**

**3.10** Northumberland is operating in a global market so there is a need to focus on sectors in which it currently and potentially has competitive advantages.

**3.11** The County's economy has core strengths and opportunities in key sectors such as energy, low carbon industries, certain manufacturing and process industries such as pharmaceuticals and engineering, ports, and tourism. Expansion of production and research and development operations within these key sectors has the potential to offer higher value, knowledge based jobs to both Northumberland residents and in-migrants.

**3.12** Evidence suggests that the Northumberland's service sector will expand over the plan period. The growth of high quality service jobs can be strongly influenced by lifestyle factors, given the ability to attract highly skilled workers. It is also the case that improving telecommunications allows for remote operation of such businesses. Northumberland's beautiful and historic markets towns and its attractive rural landscapes are therefore key opportunities to attract mobile, highly skilled migrants likely to bring or establish such businesses, and as such will be a focus for business start-ups in creative and knowledge based service industries. Improving the quality of telecommunications is vital to achieve this.

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<sup>16</sup> Based on annual figures for the number of residents in employment minus the number of jobs in the County.

### Key issue for the Core Strategy:

The County needs to attract the higher value service jobs serving wider markets which have led to increased employment and prosperity in other areas. Growth in the service sector is forecast to be strong, and certain creative and tourist related industries will provide key opportunities. It is vital that sites and infrastructure are provided in locations where businesses want to locate, and in particular where the site characteristics complement growth sectors.

### Employment projections and employment land requirements

**3.13** In order to deliver the overall strategy the Council needs to ensure that the right supply of employment land and premises is available in the right locations. Forecasting land requirements require an analysis of forecast employment growth which are based on projecting forward expected changes to the current structure of the Northumberland economy to 2030.

**3.14** Employment growth forecasting was undertaken by St Chad's College in 2010<sup>(17)</sup>. The forecasts were based on projecting forward expected changes to the current structure of the Northumberland economy to 2030 at a GVA growth rate of 2% per annum, but not accounting for demographic changes. It produced three scenarios:

- Lower – resulting in a decline of around 5,400 FTE jobs 2010 to 2030;
- Baseline – decline in jobs to 2015 then a steady increase to 2030 resulting a net increase of around 2,300 FTE jobs; and
- Higher – quicker rebound from recession and quicker job growth to 2030 resulting in the addition of about 3,000 FTE jobs.

**3.15** The Employment Land Review (ELR) looked at the job forecasts and using different assumptions identified three scenarios to define the level of employment land required. It also considered past levels of employment land take up. The ELR suggested that there was a requirement for between 293 to 317 hectares of employment land over the plan period. It also identified parts of the County where there was either an over or undersupply of employment land.

**3.16** Following the preparation of the ELR, the recently published North East Independent Economic Review provides the emerging proposals for stimulating productivity and employment growth in the North East, it estimates that there is a need to create an additional 65,000 private sector jobs across the region, this equates to 3,000 in Northumberland.

17 'Long-term sectoral and employment projections for Northumberland' (April 2010), available at: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=1fd44c46-ab9f-40d2-9af6-a0320979099c&version=-1>

### 3. The economy of Northumberland

#### Key issue for the Core Strategy:

The right amount of employment land should be allocated through the Core Strategy to grow and diversify the economy of Northumberland.

#### Question 8

Do you have any comments about the future of the Northumberland economy, including employment projections, employment land requirements and the key issues that have been identified?



### 4. The population of Northumberland

**4.1** Population and household projection information is provided by the Government. The Council has considered the impact of these projections both at a Northumberland level and at a local level<sup>(18)</sup>.

#### A changing population

**4.2** The population of Northumberland is ageing and unless future local policy seeks to rebalance its composition, the impact on the resilience of communities could be substantial. Net inward migration is the only reason the County's population has increased over recent years; this is largely as a result of older people moving into the county who are approaching or at retirement age. By 2031<sup>(19)</sup>, 31% of the population of Northumberland is projected to be over 65 (compared to 24% in the North East and 22% in England). Northumberland has the lowest number of children under 16 in the region (17%), and there are high levels (53%) of out migration from people aged 25-64. People in the 15 to 24 age group leave the County, predominantly for further and higher education and do not return at the same rate.

**4.3** Due to these demographic and migration patterns it is predicted that the County's population will increase by only 4.2% over the plan period (from 316,278 in 2011 to 329,625 in 2031); by comparison over the same period the UK population is forecast to increase by 15.3%<sup>(20)</sup>. If this does occur, in line with past trends and the age structure of the population, it could result in a shrinking working age population and a reduction in the number of families in Northumberland. As a result, there could be a consequent reduction in the ability of Northumberland to provide a labour force to existing or potential employers who want to locate in the County. This has significant potential to impact on the future sustainability and resilience of Northumberland's communities.

#### Population projections and future housing requirements

**4.4** To inform the long term requirement for housing within Northumberland the Council has had to consider how the population of Northumberland will change and grow over the plan period (2011 to 2031). In order to do this, the Council has looked at Northumberland as a whole, each settlement individually and the wider countryside<sup>(21)</sup>. The very nature of population and dwelling projections, particularly as a result of the population size of some of the settlements in the County, means that this work is, in places imprecise. Projecting change in population is not an exact science; however it is an important element of the identification of housing requirements.

**4.5** A range of different population and dwelling scenarios to 2031 have been assessed to help define the appropriate level of housing development for each Delivery Area, Main Town and Service Centre.

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18 The local level relates to those areas defined within the Northumberland Housing Needs Survey

19 2010 Sub National Population Projections – see Appendix A for further explanation.

20 2010 Sub National Population Projections – see Appendix A for further explanation.

21 Using the lower levels set out within the Housing Needs Survey

## 4. The population of Northumberland

### Potential impacts of alternative housing requirements

**4.6** The text below provides a summary of what could happen if the Council based requirements on:

- Sub national population projections;
- Projecting forward past housing delivery rates; and
- Continuation of current housing numbers<sup>(22)</sup>.

**4.7** Table 4.1<sup>(23)</sup> provides a comparison of some of the impacts of the alternatives in terms of population change in the Main Towns and Service Centres.

### Sub national population projections

**4.8** The 2010 sub national population projections indicate that between 2011 and 2031 the population of Northumberland would increase by 4.2% (13,300). To sustain this population increase 812 dwellings would be required to be built each year, equating to 16,240 to 2031. When considering the impact of the projections at a local level, this indicates unbalanced and unstable population change across the County. For example the Main Towns of Amble, Cramlington and Haltwhistle, are projected to lose population to 2031, whilst significant increases in population are projected in some of the Service Centres, e.g. Belford/ Seahouses, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Rothbury.

### Past housing delivery rates

**4.9** An assessment of past housing delivery rates over the past five years shows that on average 780 dwellings have been built per year across the County. If this level of delivery continued forward to 2031, it would provide for only 15,600 new houses. The impact of this could be an even lower population increase of only 3.7% (11,700). An assessment of the possible impact of continuing past delivery at the local level suggests a similar result to the impact of the sub national population projections. The Main Towns of Amble, Bedlington, Cramlington, Haltwhistle and Prudhoe are projected to lose population as are the Service Centres of Corbridge, Guidepost/ Stakeford/ Choppington, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Rothbury. Significant increases in population are projected in the Service Centres of Allendale/ Haydon Bridge, and Belford/ Seahouses.

### Current housing numbers

**4.10** Current housing numbers for Northumberland are those defined within the former Regional Spatial Strategy. This equates to 875 dwellings per year, 17,500 to 2031. Although this is higher than the numbers indicated by both national projections and past delivery, it may only result in a population increase of 5.1% (16,000). The assessment of impact at the local level shows that all of the Main Towns, except Cramlington, would show an increase in population. However, there is a wide range of increase projected from only 0.1% in Prudhoe to 20% in Blyth. In addition, all but three of the Service Centres show a decline in population.

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22 As set out within the Regional Spatial Strategy

23 This data also takes account of projected changes in household size

## 4. The population of Northumberland

**Table 4.1 Projected population change by alternative requirement**

Settlement	Projected population change (2011 to 2031)		
	Sub-National Population Projections (SNPP) 2010	Past delivery <sup>(24)</sup>	Current housing numbers (RSS)
<b>Main Towns:</b>			
Alnwick	+6.0%	+21.3%	+8.7%
Amble	-4.6%	-9.1%	+10.5%
Ashington	+6.4%	+0.4%	+12.0%
Bedlington	+8.9%	-5.8%	+6.1%
Berwick-upon-Tweed	+10.7%	+12.6%	+13.0%
Blyth	+10.8%	+6.5%	+20.5%
Cramlington	-16.4%	-8.2%	-2.3%
Haltwhistle	-2.2%	-4.4%	+2.7%
Hexham	+4.8%	+0.5%	+1.5%
Morpeth	+1.1%	+0.0%	+8.59%
Prudhoe	+8.1%	-6.6%	+0.1%
<b>Service centres:</b>			
Allendale / Haydon Bridge <sup>(25)</sup>	+5.2%	+16.7%	-1.0%
Belford / Seahouses <sup>(26)</sup>	+12.9%	+37.1%	-1.2%
Bellingham	+7.2%	+3.4%	-6.9%
Corbridge	+1.7%	-7.0%	-1.6%
Guidepost / Stakeford / Choppington	-2.9%	-2.5%	+8.1%
Newbiggin-by-the-Sea	+16.0%	-0.5%	+20.8%
Ponteland	+2.3%	+0.9%	+3.7%
Rothbury	+15.6%	-2.7%	-1.3%
Seaton Delaval / New Hartley/ Seghill / Holywell/Seaton Sluice	+3.4%	+8.8%	-2.4%
Wooler	+1.2%	+4.2%	-0.1%

24 Based upon a 3 year average of housing completions 2009-2012.

25 Allendale and Haydon Bridge have been grouped together as a result of the size of the population of the areas

26 Belford and Seahouses have been grouped together as a result of the size of the population of the areas

## 4. The population of Northumberland

### Key issues for the Core Strategy

In order to support diverse and resilient communities the level of proposed housing development should promote balanced levels of development and stable population change across the County.

Population and housing growth should be focused on Main Towns and Service Centres, supporting their role and function.

Outside these areas a flexible approach should be taken where development can be accommodated within a settlement without impacting on its character.

### Question 9

Do you have any comments on the population projections and the key issues that have been identified?

### Impact of housing on population and economic growth

**4.11** Increasing the number of jobs within the County will enable the large commuting outflows to be reduced, as residents will be better able to meet their employment requirements within the County. This will have obvious benefits in terms of sustainable development. Northumberland therefore needs to make itself attractive to employers and employment growth by creating and sustaining a sufficient and suitably skilled labour force. Therefore, sufficient housing will be required to provide for this labour force and provide opportunities for young people and families to remain in and return to Northumberland.

**4.12** When assessing the impact of the level of homes built on changes in the population, the demographic model can also predict the potential impact of the number of new homes built on the economy in terms of the proportion of economically active population and their ability to access jobs. This has highlighted that without influencing other factors which contribute to the size of Northumberland's labour force, projections show steady and significant annual job losses over the plan period, for example:

- If housing was developed to provide for the 2010 sub national population projections, there would be a corresponding loss of almost 500 jobs per annum. Northumberland would simply not have the labour force to support economic growth. Employers would go elsewhere as the labour force would not be available in the County;
- If housing continued to be developed in line with the past delivery, on average 780 new dwellings per year, there could potentially be a loss of around 500 jobs per year from the County's economy.

**4.13** Planning to grow the economy in line with population projections, past delivery or current housing numbers, is not considered to be a viable option. The Council considers this would unacceptably impact on the vitality and resilience of Northumberland communities. Some of the potential impacts include:

## 4. The population of Northumberland

- Reduction in the level of wealth created and retained within the County;
- Further pressure imposed on spending in the public sector on social care and welfare;
- Impact of reduced local expenditure - reducing income to local businesses and threatening further job losses;
- The appetite for innovation and creativity may be suppressed - with those who have marketable or transferable skills moving elsewhere to find employment or further, higher education or training;
- The County as a whole could become less competitive in increasingly competitive markets;
- There is a risk of lower aspirations in education and learning; and
- The reduction in wealth creation may be accompanied by reduced investment in the buildings and spaces which make up the fabric of the County's towns and villages, together with its natural and historic environments. This in turn may impact on the ability to attract new investment in the new economy; most notably digital, media, telecommunications and software.

**4.14** It could be argued that no or limited growth will reduce some of the pressures currently imposed on the County's environmental assets. Also, that an ageing population will create new employment opportunities, through the expansion of support services, increased levels of disposable income brought by in-migration, or simply by people working well beyond current retirement age. However, the Council consider there is a high level of risk of limited benefits and potentially high costs to the social and economic well-being of the wider community, because the County will not have the labour force to sustain economic growth.

### Key issue for the Core Strategy

The strategy for housing in Northumberland must complement, and not constrain the economic growth aspirations for the County. Specifically the policies in the Core Strategy must seek to boost significantly the supply of housing to attract families into Northumberland, increase the labour force and support diverse and resilient communities.

### Question 10

Do you have any comments on the impact of housing on population and economic growth and the key issues that have been identified?

## 5. The preferred strategic development option for Northumberland – planning for economic growth

### 5. The preferred strategic development option for Northumberland – planning for economic growth

#### Delivering the vision for Northumberland

**5.1** The Core Strategy needs to define the level of development that is required to deliver the vision which was set out within Stage 1 of the Preferred Options:

By 2031 Northumberland's diverse communities will be healthy and resilient and set within a diverse and strong economy. The County's significant resources will be utilised in a sustainable way and the unique and varied qualities of the natural, historic and built environment will be protected and enhanced.

#### Growing the economy

**5.2** In order to deliver the strategy for the Northumberland economy as set out within the draft Growth and Resilience Framework and to support the creation of up to 3,000 new private sector jobs<sup>(27)</sup> in the County to deliver the emerging North East LEP Strategic Economic Plan, the Core Strategy will:

Plan positively to grow and diversify the Northumberland economy by making it an attractive and competitive place to start, grow and invest in a broad range of businesses, and so increase the number and quality of jobs available to raise levels of employment of Northumberland residents, and attract working age migrants.

**5.3** Particular emphasis will be placed on:

- Attracting inward investment by globally connected, export orientated companies and supporting initiatives to grow local businesses by connecting them to new supply chains and markets;
- Supporting the growth and clustering of Northumberland's key economic sectors - low carbon and environmental industries, energy, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, engineering, and tourism;
- Growing the number of businesses and high value jobs in professional business services;
- The development of knowledge based and creative industries, building on the attractiveness of Northumberland's lifestyle to highly skilled, mobile labour;
- Increasing the number of local business start-ups;
- Developing the supporting infrastructure needed by the County's businesses to grow; and
- Improving skills levels of residents to match the needs of expanding economic sectors.

**5.4** This will be achieved by:

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27 This also closely relates to the St Chad's baseline scenario and the Employment Land Review

## 5. The preferred strategic development option for Northumberland – planning for economic growth

- Providing a portfolio of high quality sites in the right locations which are attractive to the market, this includes:
  - 221 hectares of strategic employment land, of which 207 hectares forms part of the Blyth Estuary Renewable Energy Zone; and
  - 28 hectares of new employment land;
- Protecting 113 hectares of land in established centres of B-class activity and available sites in the best locations to attract development, and promote a mix of employment generating activity (identifying 42 hectares of land) on other employment sites;
- Supporting locations in the South East and Central Delivery Areas as cost effective alternatives to the Tyneside market for industrial development;
- Providing a diverse range of interconnected sites around the Blyth Estuary to provide for growth of the strategically important sectors – low carbon and environmental goods, energy generation, and offshore engineering;
- The development of high quality office accommodation at Northumberland Business Park, and key locations in the other main towns;
- Supporting the creation and expansion of hubs for business services and creative industries in the County's historic market towns, rural business developments, and through more home run enterprises;
- Supporting spatially initiatives to improve skills levels in Northumberland's resident work force in accordance with the Northumberland Skills Strategy;
- Supporting the growth of tourism facilities and accommodation;
- Supporting improvements to transport and telecommunications infrastructure, and the County's gateways to international growth – The Ports of Blyth and Berwick, and Newcastle International Airport;
- Supporting the objectives of partners including the North Eastern Local Enterprise Partnership to support business investment.

### Question 11

Do you have any comments on our preferred strategic approach to growing and diversifying the economy?

### Growing the labour force - building more new homes

**5.5** Section 4 highlights that without positive policy intervention there is likely to be an accelerating ageing of Northumberland's population resulting in a shrinking labour force and fewer families within the County, impacting on the long term diversity and resilience of communities across Northumberland.

**5.6** Section 4 also explains that setting a level of new housing only to meet population projections or in line with past delivery or current policy would be unacceptable because of its likely impact on the economy and sustainability of the communities of Northumberland. Policy intervention will therefore be required through the Core Strategy to ensure that the available labour supply does not impede economic sustainable growth.

**5.7** In order to deliver economic growth in Northumberland the Core Strategy needs to:

## 5. The preferred strategic development option for Northumberland – planning for economic growth

Extend choice across Northumberland’s housing markets and to build a resilient economy from the County’s core strengths and capacity for growth, particularly in competencies relevant to the new economy and renewables/low carbon industries. This will require continuous investment in both physical infrastructure and the skills base and learning capacity of Northumberland’s workforce.

**5.8** Extending choice in the housing market, including the provision of affordable housing, will:

- assist household formation;
- increase the numbers of people moving into the County;
- reduce those moving away;
- help to re-balance and re-energise the resident population;
- assist in the provision of housing for older people and vulnerable groups<sup>(28)</sup>;
- maintain and enhance local services; and
- strengthen the labour force.

### Level of housing growth

**5.9** In order to deliver the level of jobs required to positively grow and diversify the Northumberland economy as identified within the economic projections, ELR and emerging North East LEP Strategic economic plan there is a need to allow for around 24,000<sup>(29)</sup> new homes over the plan period.

**5.10** In order to identify an appropriate level of housing growth required to deliver the overall strategy, the Council has looked at the impact of different housing growth scenarios on:

- Northumberland as a whole;
- Main Towns;
- Service Centres;
- The areas outside Main Towns and Service Centres.

**5.11** As part of this assessment consideration has been given to a number of issues, including:

- The role and function of the area e.g. whether it is a Main Town, Service Centre, rural area;
- Impact of past policy on the delivery of new homes;
- Projected population change - as a guide, it has been considered that on average an acceptable increase in population for Main Towns is between 10% and 19%, 4% and 8% for Service Centres and around 4% in the rest of the County. However, there are instances when other considerations have resulted in a different approach (See Section 9);
- Housing demand;

<sup>28</sup> See Policy 10 of the Stage 1 of the Preferred Options

<sup>29</sup> This assumes a steady decline in the unemployment rate to 4.4% by 2031, and the commuting ratio reducing by 0.0349 to 1.217

## 5. The preferred strategic development option for Northumberland – planning for economic growth

- Land suitability and deliverability; and
- Constraints to development e.g. flood risk.

**5.12** This approach to local level analysis has identified how the scale of housing required at the County wide level to deliver the preferred strategy could be appropriately and sustainably distributed.

**5.13** In order to deliver the preferred strategy, the Council considers there is a requirement for the provision of 24,310 new dwellings (an average of 1,216 dwellings per annum) over the plan period; resulting in an increase in population across Northumberland of 10.3%. It is considered that if the Core Strategy were to plan for more homes, to deliver the higher economic growth scenario the level of development would be too high to be accommodated without impacting negatively on Northumberland's unique environment. For each Delivery Area this would equate to the number of dwellings set out in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1 Housing requirements for each Delivery Area**

Delivery Area	Number of dwellings (2011 to 2031)	Average dwellings per year	Population growth
South East Northumberland	12,820	641	11.1%
Central Northumberland	6,270	314	12.3%
North Northumberland	3,740	187	6.7%
West Northumberland	1,480	74	6.5%

### Question 12

Do you have any comments on our preferred strategic approach to growing the labour force and the level of housing growth?

## 6. Economy and employment

### 6. Economy and employment

**6.1** The previous sections have provided the context and the Council's preferred strategic approach. This section provides the detailed employment policies that are considered to be required to deliver the Council's preferred strategy. It should be read alongside the Stage 1 Preferred Options document which defined the Council's preferred policy approach to:

- Windfall employment development (Policy 12);
- Blyth Estuary Renewable Energy Zone Strategic Employment Area (Policy 13);
- Rural economy (Policy 14); and
- Tourism (Policy 15).

#### Economic policy and strategy framework

**6.2** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that the planning system should do everything it can to support economic growth, and have a clear economic vision and strategy for the area. Central to this is providing the right sites in the right locations based on needs of business, including providing for new sectors and business clusters. However, NPPF also stresses that policy needs to be adaptable to change and to accommodate unanticipated need, and so should be flexible to other uses on poorly performing allocated land. This underpins the Council's preferred policy approach.

**6.3** The North East Local Economic Partnership (NELEP) has an overarching vision to create growth. The North East Economic Review (2013) builds on the Government's strategy of improving skills and economic re-balancing, suggesting the need to add 65,000 private sector jobs over the next 10 years to do so, this equates to 3,000 in Northumberland. The review identifies the need to focus investment and exports on higher value added sectors where the north east has a competitive advantage. This centres on key manufacturing sectors, but also financial and business services serving national and international markets, which are currently underrepresented regionally. The review suggests there is a need to add better quality jobs, as well as more, as the region underperforms in the number of higher skilled occupations and opportunities.

**6.4** The Northumberland Economic Strategy (2010 to 2015) has a vision to secure opportunities for residents and businesses in a resilient economy. Supporting resilient and diverse sectors and becoming a low carbon economy are central to this. Specifically it aims to support inward investment through a portfolio of quality sites and premises, and supporting low carbon economic investment at Blyth Estuary.

**6.5** The draft Growth and Resilience Framework for Northumberland (2013) sets out the Council's approach to promoting growth and resilience for the period 2013-16. It provides a delivery structure for the County's Economic Strategy, recognising that whilst the market conditions have changed since the strategy was approved in 2010 the priorities established remain just as relevant and important. However, it clarifies the weight to be afforded to the priorities to reflect the changing economic climate. These are:

- *Creating the conditions for growth* – providing strategic transport infrastructure such as the South East Northumberland Link Road, business sites and premises, and investment in superfast broadband;

## 6. Economy and employment

- *Developing resilient and diverse sectors* – pressing need for inward investment and supporting indigenous growth business to grow and diversify, as well as partnership working to deliver investment in rural businesses;
- *The low carbon economy* – developing the Blyth enterprise zones and supporting the growth of NaREC as an international centre of excellence in the field is a major priority;
- *Enabling enterprise and inclusion* – enterprise support is now aligned to provide a greater focus on high growth potential businesses in key sectors and excellent incubator and workspace facilities.

**6.6** The objectives are intended to deliver private sector growth, particularly in certain sectors, to re-balance the economy and make Northumberland a competitive and attractive location for business.

### Employment land supply and distribution

#### Forecasting land requirements

**6.7** It is vital that the Council allocates the right amount of land through the Core Strategy. Too much could offer little protection to the better employment sites against other uses such as housing, whilst any investment could be spread too thinly to stimulate any development, with little chance of the development of industry clusters. Too little could limit the growth of indigenous firms and could possibly deter inward investment.

**6.8** The Employment Land Review (ELR)<sup>(30)</sup> converted job forecasts into employment land requirements<sup>(31)</sup>; it suggested that 293 to 317 hectares would be required.

**6.9** Since the ELR was produced there has been a subdued level of employment land take-up and loss of employment land to non-employment uses, as a result of the economic climate. However, the Council has updated details of land take-up<sup>(32)</sup> and vacancy rates, and incorporated national guidance on the conversion of job numbers into employment land requirements. The impact of which has been to reduce the forecast employment land required **in the range of 133 to 161 hectares** based on a forecast growth in GVA of 2% per annum across the plan period<sup>(33)</sup>.

#### Available employment land

**6.10** There is currently 307 hectares of available employment land in the County, with the former RioTinto Alcan site to add to this on completion of decommissioning by 2015, resulting in an oversupply of land. Across the County a lot of the existing land is poor quality and in the wrong locations to meet market demand.

**6.11** To address the oversupply of land and give flexibility to allow for changing needs and unanticipated demand, the preferred approach is to:

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30 Employment Land Review available at: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=7734>

31 The ELR assessed different scenarios and considered projections against past levels of employment land take-up, and other economic and demographic considerations to indicate the likely amount of land needed over the plan period.

32 Details of land take-up have been updated to the end of March 2013.

33 Take-up and loss of employment land since the beginning of the plan period (2011) has been relatively low with only 11.30 hectares of land taken-up and 3.51 hectares developed for non-employment uses.

## 6. Economy and employment

- Provide a range of interconnected sites around the Blyth Estuary to provide for anticipated growth in strategically important sectors;
- Protect sites most likely to attract B-class development for that use;
- Allocate new land for B-class development in areas where the supply of land is restricted and where there is market demand to develop employment opportunities;
- Take a flexible approach to non B-class economic development which will be supported on a range of other employment sites where there is already encroachment of other uses;
- Support the redevelopment of active employment sites which are in a poor condition and may be suitable for other land uses such as housing provided businesses are relocated;
- De-allocate available land which is unlikely to attract future employment uses and areas of current employment sites which have been developed for housing given the permanence of this land use;
- Include a windfall employment policy<sup>(34)</sup> identifying the policy approach to unanticipated large scale B-class inward investment which the land portfolio cannot address.

**6.12** There are also a number of non-strategic issues relating to employment land supply which will be addressed in the Delivery document, including:

- A review of the appropriateness of employment land allocations where large areas of many employment sites have been developed for retail, leisure and education;
- Allocation of important employment developments in towns and rural areas which have never been allocated in a Local Plan for the now established land use; Examples of this include Prestwick Business Park, Horton Park Offices, Berwick workspace, and the employment areas along South Road, Alnwick; and
- Assessing the appropriateness of de-allocated employment land for other land uses.

### New employment land requirements

**6.13** Industry engagement and analysis of land supply, demand and take up<sup>(35)</sup> suggest that there is an imbalance between the location of available land and where businesses want to locate. The ELR suggests a number of changes to the employment land portfolio. The preferred approach for each of these settlements is set out in Table 6.1 below. The Council then considered this recommendation, which has informed the preferred approach.

**6.14** Other Main Towns and Service Centres will be equally supported as a focus for employment development but evidence indicates that the current supply is adequate for perceived demand. The proposed changes would provide 28 hectares additional ha of land for B-class uses; giving a total of 140.6 hectares across Northumberland. This falls within the lower end of the preferred range of 133 to 161 hectares. However, given that there will also be a significant amount of land flexible for other economic development uses that is likely to provide for some B-class development, this is considered to be appropriate. The preferred approach to employment development within rural areas was set out in policy 14 of the Stage 1 Preferred Options.

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34 See Stage 1 Preferred Options – Policy 12

35 Undertaken as part of the Employment Land Review

## 6. Economy and employment

**Table 6.1 Preferred approach to employment land portfolio changes**

Settlement	ELR recommendation	Preferred approach
Alnwick	Around 10 hectares of further industrial land if demand is proven in the long term.	Around 5 hectares of additional land for b-class uses. This would give an overall supply of B-class and mixed employment land of nearly 13 hectares.
Blyth	Intensification of existing employment sites or a new allocation to provide about 10 hectares	More intensive use of existing sites could provide some additional land above the circa 6 hectares available, but a new site of around 5ha is proposed for general employment use, particularly given the scale of housing development proposed for the town and potentially good road access. The nearby BEREZ sites are intended to serve a strategic, sector specific role.
Cramlington	Use some land at West Hartford to provide for general employment land but retain strategic role.	Retention of at least 13 hectares of the West Hartford site as a site for large inward investment. Use of about 19ha for general employment use given constrained land supply in the existing industrial estates.  Retain Northumberland Business Park as the County's prestige office location.  Cramlington will be a strategic location for economic development building on its excellent transport links, and ready access to the Tyneside market and labour pool.
Hexham	10 to 15 hectares for offices and industry	The town has a severe shortage of available land. Around 10ha is needed for the plan period to provide for identified need.
Morpeth	5 hectares of office/industrial land depending on delivery of Fairmoor sites.	Since the ELR, funding has been secured for the South East Northumberland Link Road. This will address the access issues which the study identified as the main factor deterring investment in existing sites at Fairmoor, and so enhance market attractiveness. The current circa 18 hectares allocation at Fairmoor provides for anticipated need.
Ponteland	Around 5 hectares of mixed use land including B1 development	There is currently no available employment land for the town. An allocation of around 3 hectares could provide for local businesses, and potentially investment by companies requiring a location close to Newcastle Airport.
Prudhoe	10 to 15 hectares for office and industrial development	There is a shortage of land after successful developments in recent years. As a large site will be vacated in the short term, and the failure of developer interest in available land at the time the ELR to progress, the provision of about 5 hectares of land is preferred.

## 6. Economy and employment

### Strategic employment area

**6.15** Stage 1 of the Preferred Options, Policy 13, proposed a strategic employment area around the Blyth Estuary to provide for anticipated demand in the low carbon and environmental goods and energy generation sectors. It was proposed that this will include some newly allocated land, and land currently within the Cambois Zone of Economic Opportunity. This builds on key advantages such as the proximity to offshore wind energy sites, existing port facilities and land availability, Local Development Orders, Enterprise Zone Status of some land, and the benefits of NaREC. Given that development in these sectors are future rather than current sectoral strengths of the Northumberland economy, growth in these sectors is not fully factored into employment forecasts given that they were based on the current structure of the economy.

**6.16** Since the approach set out in Stage 1 of the Preferred Options two key issues have been identified which need to be addressed:

- Demand has emerged for uses linked to offshore oil and gas and advanced manufacturing, which are permitted by the Local Development Orders covering some of the area. Therefore it is proposed that the sectors being prioritised in the BEREZ area will be widened to include these activities; and
- Whilst the BEREZ strategic employment site will not incorporate the former Alcan smelter at Lynemouth it is recognised that the site is linked to the port via a dual carriageway and a heavy rail line, and is being actively promoted for users complementary to the intended economic activity in the BEREZ. Given the strong physical linkages to BEREZ and the potential of the site to provide for these land hungry sectors the Core Strategy will support the re-development of the site for such uses. However, given the pressing need to regenerate the area the Core Strategy will be flexible to support a broad range of economic uses to maximise the potential for future economic use.

**6.17** The BEREZ strategic employment area is around 207 hectares. This will increase the land supply in excess of need identified in the evidence base. However, this is a strategic allocation intended to provide for specific emerging sectors. These can require large amounts of land, and in particular, if RWE realised their long term plans to build a clean coal fired power station on the site, this would use most of the land. Therefore, the strategic allocation does not form part of the 133 to 161 hectares supply the evidence base suggests is required.

### Newcastle International Airport

**6.18** In addition 15 hectares of land north of Newcastle International Airport will be retained in order to allow for future growth of the Airport and related ancillary uses. This is consistent with options for the development of the airport in the draft Masterplan 2013-30, and the NewcastleGateshead Core Strategy.

### Employment land portfolio

**6.19** The proposed Employment Land Portfolio would provide **421.5 hectares** of available land. This is greatly beyond the 133 to 161 hectares assessed as being required. However, as explained, this includes the strategic BEREZ allocation, land which is flexible to other employment generating uses and land which could be developed for other land uses. Therefore the allocation is considered to be appropriate.

**Table 6.2 Employment land portfolio**

Delivery Area	South East	Central	North	West	Total
Strategic employment land (hectares)	221.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	221.0
Land protected for B-class use (hectares)	71.3	24.2	15.1	2.0	112.6
Proposed new land for B-class use (hectares)	5.0	18.0	5.0	0.0	28.0
Mixed-use employment (hectares)	28.0	7.6	4.3	0.8	40.7
Retained employment land suitable for other land use (hectares)	1.2	0.0	3.0	0.0	4.2
Land for airport related uses (hectares)	0.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	15.0
<b>Total available land (hectares)</b>	<b>326.5</b>	<b>64.8</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>421.5</b>



## 6. Economy and employment

### Policy 1

#### Employment land supply and distribution

To support the plan for economic development for Northumberland, the Core Strategy will plan for the requirement of 421.5 hectares of land for economic development, of which:

- a. 207 hectares of strategic employment land around the Blyth Estuary Renewable Energy Zone (BEREZ) will be prioritised for development in the low carbon and environmental goods, offshore engineering and energy generation sectors, as set out in Policy 13 of Stage 1 Preferred Options;
- b. At least 13 hectares at West Hartford Business Park for a B1 or B2 single user, prestige inward investment development. The development should be a regionally or nationally significant employer, providing high quality employment opportunities;
- c. 15 hectares to the north of Newcastle International Airport for the expansion of airport operations and ancillary uses directly related to its functioning, in line with the current Airport Masterplan;
- d. 113 hectares protected for B1, B2 and B8 development. Available land and premises at sites identified in Table D.1 (in Appendix 4) will be protected for B-class uses. Development of non B-class employment generating activity on these sites will only be permitted if the development will:
  - i. Directly support and be ancillary to the primary functioning of the site as a location for B1, B2, and B8 development;
  - ii. Not have a detrimental impact on the functioning of existing or future B-class operators on the site;
  - iii. Generate permanent jobs at a level equivalent to or greater than would be expected for existing or potential B-class uses.
  - iv. B-class uses remain the majority activity
- e. 42 hectares for mixed economic development. Available land and premises at sites identified in Table D.2 (in Appendix 4) will be used for B-class businesses and other land uses generating permanent employment, provided that:
  - i. The proposed economic activity is compatible with existing businesses on the site and adjoining land uses;
  - ii. Town Centre uses are appropriate in relation to Policy 15 and Policy 18 of Stage 1 Preferred Options.
- f. Employment generating activity will continue to be supported on available land and in premises at sites identified in Table D.3 (in Appendix 4), but re-development for other land uses, including housing, will be supported where:
  - i. Active businesses on the site are relocated to comparable premises in the local area at no expense to their operation;
  - ii. Re-development of the site accords with other relevant policies in the plan.

- g. The development of land on sites identified in Tables D.1 and D.2 for non-employment generating uses will only be supported where robust evidence shows that:
  - i. Re-development of the land or building for an employment generating use is no longer financially and/or technically viable, and there is no demonstrable market demand that it will be developed for an employment generating use over the plan period;
  - ii. Sufficient land of a comparable quality is available and deliverable in the local market to provide for identified need;
  - iii. Loss of a small portion of employment land would facilitate the development of a greater part of the site for employment uses which would otherwise be undeliverable for employment generating uses, providing the equivalent amount of jobs that the lost land would be expected to provide.
  
- h. To address identified land shortages around 28 hectares of land will be allocated for b-class uses in the following locations:
  - i. Hexham – 10 hectares
  - ii. Prudhoe – 5 hectares
  - iii. Ponteland – 3 hectares
  - iv. Alnwick – 5 hectares
  - v. Blyth – 5 hectares

### Question 13

This is our preferred option for employment land supply and distribution. Do you have any comments?

## 7. Housing

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### 7. Housing

**7.1** Sections 3, 4 and 5 have provided the context and the Council's preferred strategic approach. This section provides the detailed housing policies that are required to deliver the Council's preferred strategy. It should be read alongside the Stage 1 Preferred Options document which defined the Council's preferred policy approach to:

- Rural exception sites (Policy 9);
- Housing for older people and vulnerable groups (Policy 10);
- Provision for gypsy, travellers and travelling show people (Policy 11).

**7.2** As a result of the additional housing work, the draft affordable housing policy set out within the Stage 1 document has been revised and are included within this Stage 2 document for comment.

#### Housing policy and strategy framework

**7.3** The Government is committed to securing sustainable economic growth and ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support this. Local Plans are required to positively seek opportunities to meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth; and meet objectively assessed needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change.

**7.4** The scale, distribution, phasing and types of homes provided are vital to achieving well balanced and sustainable communities, in which people want to live, work and socialise.

**7.5** The Housing Strategy for Northumberland (2013) sets out the Council's approach for housing for the period 2013 to 2018. It aims to meet the housing needs of Northumberland's residents with particular reference to the provision of affordable housing, whilst also ensuring that the County is a prosperous place for residents and businesses, by supporting the provision of new housing.

**7.6** The Core Strategy must identify a continuing supply of specific, deliverable and developable housing sites looking ahead over a 15 year period. This must be capable of accommodating the required mix of housing in the right locations. This assessment is based on current and future population and market trends, as well as the needs of different groups. The plan also has to set policies to show how development will meet identified affordable housing need.

**7.7** As has been explained, given the projected change in the structure of the population of Northumberland the strategy for housing must complement, and not constrain the economic growth aspirations for the County. Specifically the policies in the Core Strategy must seek to boost significantly the supply of housing to attract families into Northumberland, increase the labour force and support diverse and resilient communities ability to access local services.

**7.8** In order to achieve these objectives, the Core Strategy sets out a series of strategic policies to ensure the necessary scale and type of housing is distributed and phased accordingly to the right locations over the plan period, with the flexibility to adapt to change.

## Scale and distribution of housing development

**7.9** The Core Strategy needs to identify an appropriate scale of housing to meet housing needs and support sustainable growth of the economy and local communities.

**7.10** Section 4 sets out that, in order to inform the long-term requirement for housing within Northumberland, the Council has considered how the population of Northumberland will change and grow. A range of different population and dwelling scenarios have been assessed to define the appropriate level of housing development. In order to do this, the Council has looked at Northumberland as a whole, each settlement individually and the countryside<sup>(36)</sup> to identify appropriate housing numbers for each Delivery Area, Main Town and Service Centre. As part of this work the deliverability of the different scenarios has been assessed<sup>(37)</sup>.

**7.11** This work suggests that there is not an appropriate one size fits all approach across Northumberland. Section 5 identifies that only building the level of homes required by population projections would result in unbalanced levels of development and unstable population change across the County. This would also be the result of building the level of houses in line with past delivery, and continuing the level of housing development proposed by existing housing policies.

**7.12** The preferred approach is to:

- Focus population and housing growth in Main Towns and Service Centres, supporting their role and function, and to allow an appropriate level of development elsewhere that precludes loss of population anywhere in the County;
- Plan for the provision of 24,310 new dwellings (average of 1,216 dwellings per annum) over the plan period; resulting in an increase in population across Northumberland of 10.3%.

**7.13** For each Delivery Area this would equate to:

**Table 7.1 Housing scale and distribution by Delivery Area**

Delivery Area	Number of dwellings (2011 to 2031)	Average dwellings per year	Population growth
South East Northumberland	12,820	641	11.1%
Central Northumberland	6,270	314	12.3%
North Northumberland	3,740	187	6.7%
West Northumberland	1,480	74	6.5%

**7.14** Housing numbers for the Main Towns and Service Centres are set out in Table 7.2 below.

36 Using the lower levels set out within the Housing Needs Survey

37 See Section 9 for a summary of the assessment by Main Town and Service Centre

## 7. Housing

**Table 7.2 Housing numbers by Delivery Area, Main Town and Service Centre**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Total delivery over Plan period (2011 to 2031)</b>
<b>South East Northumberland Delivery Area</b>	<b>12,820</b>
<b>Main Towns:</b>	
Amble	740
Ashington	1,600
Bedlington	1,200
Blyth	3,480
Cramlington	3,480
<b>Service Centres:</b>	
Guidepost / Stakeford / Choppington	420
Newbiggin-by-the-Sea	320
Seaton Delaval / New Hartley / Seghill / Holywell/ Seaton Sluice	800
<b>Rest of Delivery Area</b>	<b>780</b>
<b>Central Northumberland Delivery Area</b>	<b>6,270</b>
<b>Main Towns:</b>	
Hexham	900
Morpeth	1,500 <sup>(a)</sup>
Prudhoe	1,000
<b>Service Centres:</b>	
Corbridge	300
Ponteland	850
<b>Rest of Delivery Area</b>	<b>1,720</b>
<b>North Northumberland Delivery Area</b>	<b>3,740</b>
<b>Main Towns:</b>	
Alnwick	1,000 <sup>(b)</sup>
Berwick-upon-Tweed	900 <sup>(c)</sup>
<b>Service Centres:</b>	
Belford	200
Seahouses	300
Rothbury	380
Wooler	380
<b>Rest of Delivery Area</b>	<b>580</b>

Location	Total delivery over Plan period (2011 to 2031)
<b>West Northumberland Delivery Area</b>	<b>1,480</b>
<b>Main Towns:</b>	
Haltwhistle	400
<b>Service Centres:</b>	
Allendale	100
Bellingham	300
Haydon Bridge	200
<b>Rest of Delivery Area</b>	<b>480</b>

- Figure reflects the Core Strategy's preferred level of growth required in Morpeth to deliver the overall strategy. The Council will work with the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan Group in relation to how this figure will form part of the housing allocation of the emerging Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan, which includes the town of Morpeth and the adjoining parishes of Hebron, Mitford, Hepscoth and Pegswood. For example it is anticipated that 200 from the 'Morpeth Hinterland' area will come forward in Pegswood.
- Figure reflects the Core Strategy's preferred level of growth required to deliver the overall strategy in Alnwick and its immediate hinterland. The Council will work with the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan Group in relation to how this figure will form part of the housing allocation of the emerging Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan, which includes the town of Alnwick and Denwick Parish.
- Figure includes the area of Berwick-upon-Tweed and its immediate hinterland, of which it is anticipated that an element will come from the East Ord area.

## Delivering the scale and distribution

### Housing land supply

**7.15** The Council must identify a continuing supply of specific, deliverable and developable housing sites, this is monitored annually and published in the Five Year Housing Land Supply document. Table 7.3 identifies that since 1 April 2011, there have been 1,179 housing completions. The Council's current Five Year Housing Land Supply (2013) forecasts the delivery of 3,358 units over the next five years. This accounts for sites with planning permission expected to deliver housing and a windfall allowance of 168 units per annum.

#### The current housing land supply

**7.16** Northumberland does not have sufficient deliverable housing land to meet existing housing policy requirements<sup>(38)</sup> for the period 2013 to 2018. Although there is a good supply of land with planning permission, of almost 7,700 units<sup>(39)</sup>, **not all of this is deliverable within the five year period**. This is primarily associated with poor market conditions.

38 Former RSS requirements adjusted to reflect a deficit/over provision of housing over the plan period 2004 to 2013 and the application of a 5% or 20% buffer.

39 As at 31 March 2013

## 7. Housing

**7.17** The preferred scale of housing land proposed in Policy 2 is 1,216 units per annum, equating to 6,080 units for the current five year period. Therefore, the supply of dwelling units with permission would exceed the requirement by approximately 1,620 units over the current five year period. However, this land is not located in the correct places to deliver the preferred strategy.

**Table 7.3 Housing land supply position as at 31 March 2013**

Completions 2011 to 2013	Five year housing land supply 2013 to 2018	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013 2018 to 2028	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2013 2029 and beyond	Surplus to meet requirements
1,179	3,351	16,220	3,957	397

### Potential future housing land supply

**7.18** The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)<sup>(40)</sup> has identified that there is currently a potential supply of 16,220 deliverable and developable housing units for the period 2018 to 2028<sup>(41)</sup>. Beyond 2029, there is also considered to be a potential supply of 3,957 deliverable and developable housing units<sup>(42)</sup>. This includes:

- sites with planning permission that may deliver housing beyond the current five year housing land supply period; and
- sites without planning permission considered suitable, available and achievable with the potential to deliver housing.

**7.19** This indicates that **there are sufficient potential developable sites to meet the preferred requirement** for the provision of 24,310 dwellings over the plan period. However, **these sites are not all located in the correct places** to deliver preferred scale and distribution of housing. As a consequence, the Council is:

- reassessing some sites that were assessed as uncertain or discounted at the time of the original assessment to take account of more up to date information and;
- undertaking a call for new SHLAA sites alongside this consultation to help address the deficiencies of housing land to deliver housing land supply requirements.

### **Phasing of new land for housing development**

**7.20** Given the suppressed housing market arising from current economic conditions and looking forward to the housing market emerging from recession, it is anticipated there will be latent demand which may generate an increased demand for new homes, and hence output in the mid to latter part of the plan period. The next version of the Core Strategy will set out a realistic phasing profile of the housing land supply for Northumberland, including a housing trajectory, to ensure that a five year supply of deliverable sites is maintained at all times.

40 Based on a call for sites undertaken in June 2008 and updated to reflect a base date of 1 April 2013

41 This total comprises deliverable and developable sites of five or more dwellings and a small site delivery forecast for sites of four or less dwellings.

42 This total comprises deliverable and developable sites of 5 or more dwellings only.

### Efficient use of land

**7.21** The efficient use of land and buildings is important when planning for housing delivery to ensure that the core planning principles of the NPPF and the wider sustainable development objectives within the Core Strategy are not compromised.

### Previously developed land

**7.22** Northumberland is predominantly a rural county and the availability of previously developed land (PDL) is less than in many authorities across the UK. Since 2009 housing completions on PDL in Northumberland have been consistently over 60%. Looking forward, approximately 50% of planning permissions outstanding are on PDL sites. As a result, there are a reducing number of viable PDL sites remaining. Additionally, the SHLAA demonstrates that there are not enough PDL sites coming forward to accommodate the required level of housing growth to deliver the overall strategy.

**7.23** As a result of the current economic conditions and viability issues on remaining PDL sites it is not proposed to set PDL targets for Northumberland. However, the Council will still be seeking to maximise the reuse of PDL in accordance with NPPF and the Sustainable Development Policy <sup>(43)</sup>. This flexible approach will enable the Council to take account of changes in market conditions, whilst at the same time encouraging and not stifling development opportunities.

### Residential garden development

**7.24** Residential gardens are excluded from the definition of PDL in the NPPF which provides a degree of restriction and protection. It is not considered necessary to provide a policy on the development of residential gardens in the Core Strategy however the reuse of PDL will be encouraged over development in residential gardens.

### Density of development

**7.25** Due to the diverse nature and character of Northumberland the density of development varies greatly across the County. Higher densities will be more appropriate in urban, more accessible areas and lower densities in rural, less accessible areas.

**7.26** The appropriate density for a particular development depends on a number of factors that contribute to good design such as: the type of housing provided, its siting, layout, massing, scale, overall design and its landscaping in response to its existing environment. It is therefore not proposed to set locally appropriate density standards in the Core Strategy. It is expected that development proposals will be assessed in accordance with their impact on the character and accessibility of the area and the provisions of the Strategy's design policies.

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43 Policy 1 of the Stage 1 Preferred Options consultation

## 7. Housing

### Type and mix

**7.27** Across Northumberland there is a need for a mix of homes of different types and tenures to meet identified needs. It is also important the Council provides an appropriate choice and mix across the County to create and maintain balanced and sustainable communities.

**7.28** The Council will plan for a mix of housing that will be appropriate to the needs of the community, providing extended choice across a range of types, sizes and tenures to create a better balanced stock to help address the impact of demographic change and the needs of the younger and older population as well as vulnerable groups.

**7.29** The Council's preferred policy approach as set out in the Preferred Options document (February 2013) is still considered acceptable in that new residential schemes will be required to reflect the latest evidence of need. It is however recognised that on some sites it may not be appropriate to be too prescriptive in the composition of a development proposal as site characteristics and constraints may limit the range of housing that is possible or there may be market demand or viability issues. These issues will be considered and explored in negotiation with developers.



## Policy 2

### Housing provision

To ensure that housing development helps to support the plan to positively grow and diversify the Northumberland economy and meet housing need, the Core Strategy will:

- a. Provide for the delivery of an additional 24,310 dwellings over the plan period (1,216 per annum), distributed as follows:

Delivery Area	Average annual net dwelling provision	Total delivery over plan period (2011 to 2031)
South East Northumberland	641	12,820
Central Northumberland	314	6,270
North Northumberland	187	3,740
West Northumberland	74	1,480

- b. Focus the majority of housing development in Northumberland's Main Towns and Service Centres as specified in Delivery Area Policies 5, 6, 7 and 8.
- c. Ensure there is an appropriate mix of housing types, sizes and tenures including the provision of affordable housing to meet identified needs.
- d. Make efficient use of land, with priority being given to the development of previously developed land wherever possible.
- e. Achieve a density that is appropriate for the area. The precise density will be determined having regard to:
- i. The site's immediate environment;
  - ii. On-site constraints;
  - iii. The type of development proposed; and
  - iv. The need to provide an appropriate mix of house types and sizes to meet the community's needs
- f. Require all housing developments to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet current local needs as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and local housing needs studies. The mix will depend on the character and density of the local area, site characteristics, the viability of the scheme, and market conditions.

### Question 14

This is our preferred option for housing provision. Do you have any comments?

## 7. Housing

### Delivering affordable homes

**7.30** The delivery of affordable homes is a key priority for the Council. The Core Strategy has an important role to set out policies to allow the need for affordable housing to be met. NPPF<sup>(44)</sup> defines affordable housing as:

**Affordable housing:** Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as 'low cost market' housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

**7.31** In common with the rest of the country, Northumberland experienced significant increases in house prices from 2000 to 2008. The current average price in the County is £168,799<sup>(45)</sup>.

**7.32** NPPF requires local planning authorities to identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular locations reflecting local demand. It also requires that where a need for affordable housing is identified, policies are set to meet this need on-site, or elsewhere when robustly justified, to create mixed and balanced communities.

### Affordable housing targets

**7.33** The Stage 1 Preferred Options identified a 30% target for the provision of affordable housing across Northumberland. The Council has considered the responses to the consultation and also commissioned a partial update to the SHMA<sup>(46)</sup>. This update considered the impact of policy changes such as Welfare Reform legislation, 2011 Census data, and more up to date housing market data. The SHMA update reconfirms that the 30% overall affordable housing target as set out in Northumberland Housing Needs Study (2012) and policy 8 of the Stage 1 Preferred Options can be justified, subject to economic viability. The update slightly amends the overall tenure mix of 65% social rent and 35% intermediate housing across Northumberland.

**7.34** Although the Council considers there is a need to set a 30% target across the County, given the diversity of Northumberland and its housing markets the need for affordable housing differs. In some areas and specific sites, there will be a higher requirement for the provision of affordable housing and in other areas or sites it will be lower. As a guide, the SHMA update has identified the Delivery Area targets detailed in Table 7.4 based on the preferred housing numbers set out in Policy 2.

44 National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, Annex 2: Glossary, page 50

45 Land Registry Residential Property Price Report Q2 2013

46 The Council is seeking feedback on the draft partial SHMA update alongside this current consultation

**Table 7.4 Affordable housing targets by Delivery Area**

Delivery Area	Affordable housing target
North Northumberland	35%
Central Northumberland	30%
South East Northumberland	25%
West Northumberland	35%

**7.35** The ability of development proposals to contribute towards meeting affordable housing need depends upon a range of factors, including those which are site specific, market conditions and the size of the development as well as the cost associated with the provision of the affordable housing element. The targets will be subject to:

- further analysis through the Viability Assessment of the Core Strategy which will test the targets in the context of those in the rest of the plan; and
- negotiation and viability assessment as part of the Development Management process.

### Site thresholds

**7.36** Given the rural nature of much of Northumberland, small development sites make a valuable contribution to the delivery of housing. Therefore a balance needs to be achieved which maximises the delivery of affordable homes without jeopardising the viability of small developments.

**7.37** Between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2013, 64% of housing sites completed were one unit in size. However, sites of this size, only contributed 14% of the total net dwellings completed during this time. Therefore, while exempting such developments from an affordable housing contribution will make developing single units more viable, such an approach will not have a significant impact upon affordable housing delivery.

**7.38** The Council also recognises many people aspire to build their own home and that self-build or custom build can make a valuable contribution to housing supply<sup>(47)</sup>. The Government requires the Council to take positive steps to permit it to happen.

**7.39** To facilitate self and custom build, a threshold of two units will apply before a contribution towards affordable housing provision will be required.

### Off-site affordable housing contributions

**7.40** In providing affordable housing the presumption is that it will be delivered on the application site and designed as part of the overall scheme, to promote social inclusion and contribute towards creating a mixed and balanced community. The Council recognises this may not be possible on small sites, however this will be required to be justified as part of the development management process. Where it can be robustly justified, off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision may be acceptable, provided it contributes to the creation of mixed communities.

47 'Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England' (2011) indicates that custom home builders are building as many homes each year as each of our individual volume housebuilders, with around 13,800 custom homes completed in the UK in 2010-11.

## 7. Housing

### Impact of changes to permitted development rights

**7.41** The Council recognises that recent changes<sup>(48)</sup> and proposed changes<sup>(49)</sup> to permitted development rights means that in some circumstances other uses (offices, shops and financial and professional services and agricultural buildings) may change to residential development without planning consent. Where permitted development rights exist, the requirement for the provision of affordable homes will not apply.

### Policy 3

#### Delivering affordable housing

The overall target for the provision of affordable housing across Northumberland is 30% of all new homes.

In order to achieve this target, all open market residential development proposals of two or more units will be expected to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing where there is an identified need.

The affordable housing contribution required for a development will be determined taking into account:

- a. The extent of the housing need, and the appropriate tenure mix required, as evidenced by an up to date housing needs study; and
- b. The cost of development and the impact on viability.

Where a developer considers that an affordable housing requirement would make a scheme unviable, the developer will need to demonstrate this by providing a viability assessment, which will need to be verified by the Council.

In order to create mixed and balanced communities, there will be a presumption that affordable housing will be provided on-site. If off-site provision or a financial contribution can be robustly justified, the following sequential policy approach will be applied:

- i. Provision to be made in the settlement, or grouping of Parishes or Wards which make up the settlement, where the contribution arises;
- ii. Provision to be made in an adjoining Parish or Ward;
- iii. Provision to be made elsewhere in the Delivery Area where the contribution arises;
- iv. Provision to be made to cross-subsidise affordable housing provision where priorities are identified throughout the County.

48 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(Amendment)(England)Order 2013 which came into force on 30 May 2013 allows for a change of use from B1(a) office to C3 residential purposes for 3 years.

49 Proposals to amend permitted development rights to allow for the conversion of A1 and A2 uses and agricultural buildings to C3

### Question 15

This is our preferred option for delivering affordable housing. Do you have any comments?



## 8. Green Belt

### 8. Green Belt

**8.1** The Northumberland Green Belt has an important role in delivering the strategy for Northumberland, particularly helping to direct development to the most sustainable locations whilst ensuring that development requirements can be met within and beyond the plan period. This section sets out the Council's preferred policy approach to the Green Belt within Northumberland.

#### National policy requirements

**8.2** Nationally, the Government attaches great importance to the Green Belt and through the NPPF sets out the policy approach to Green Belt. The NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, and that a key attribute of land in the Green Belt is its openness.

**8.3** The NPPF sets out the five purposes of the Green Belt<sup>(50)</sup>, which are to:

- Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- Prevent the neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

**8.4** NPPF includes a general presumption against permitting inappropriate development within the Green Belt<sup>(51)</sup>. In summary, inappropriate development includes:

- all new buildings except those which are required for: agriculture and forestry; outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries;
- the limited extension or alteration, or replacement, of existing buildings; and
- limited infilling in villages or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites.

**8.5** The over-riding principle is that new development in the Green Belt should preserve the openness of the Green Belt and reflect the purposes of its designation.

#### Extent of the Tyne and Wear Green Belt

**8.6** The Green Belt within Northumberland forms part of the wider Tyne and Wear Green Belt, the overriding purpose being to prevent the unrestricted sprawl of the Tyne and Wear conurbation. Areas of Green Belt were designated around the Tyne and Wear conurbation, including parts of Northumberland, in the 1960s and in the 1970s. Since the original designation was made, areas have been added<sup>(52)</sup> as well as removed<sup>(53)</sup> from the Green Belt. Currently, within Northumberland, the designated Green Belt covers 43,610 hectares (43.61 square kilometres), which amounts to 10.8% of Northumberland's Local Plan

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50 National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, paragraph 80.

51 A more complete definition of inappropriate development is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, paragraphs 87 to 92.

52 Seaton Valley area through the Blyth Valley Local Plan (adopted in 1999), the area west of Hexham through the Tynedale Local Plan (adopted 2000) and the area to the West of Darras Hall, Ponteland through the Castle Morpeth Local Plan (adopted 2003).

53 Operational area of Newcastle Airport through the Castle Morpeth Local Plan (adopted in 2003)

area<sup>(54)</sup>, see Figure 8.1. Main Towns and Service Centres that are inset<sup>(55)</sup> in the Green Belt are Corbridge, Hexham, Prudhoe, Ponteland and Seaton Delaval/Seghill/New Hartley/Holywell/Seaton Sluice.

**8.7** An extension to the Green Belt around Morpeth was identified in the 1996 Northumberland Structure Plan, Regional Planning Guidance (RPG1) in 2002, with Policy S5 of the revised Northumberland Structure Plan (2005) defining the general extent.

**8.8** The 2008 North East Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)<sup>(56)</sup> sought to continue to safeguard the countryside from encroachment, check the unrestricted sprawl of Tyne and Wear and maintain the broad extent of the Green Belt with detailed boundaries to be defined in relevant Local Plans, around Morpeth. Specifically, in relation to Northumberland, it stated that the Green Belt should:

- Prevent the merging of:
  - Newcastle upon Tyne with Ponteland, Newcastle Airport, or Cramlington; and
  - North Tyneside with Cramlington or Blyth;
- Preserve the setting and special character of Hexham, Corbridge and Morpeth; and
- Assist in urban regeneration in the city-regions by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

**8.9** As a result of the cancellation of the RSS, the saved Structure Plan Policy S5 relating to the Green Belt at Morpeth was retained by the Government to enable the extension of the Green Belt around Morpeth, reflecting the Government's commitment to safeguarding Green Belt protection<sup>(57)</sup>.



54 Total area of Green Belt designated does not include the whole of the general extent of the Green Belt extension defined through Saved Northumberland Structure Plan Policy S5.

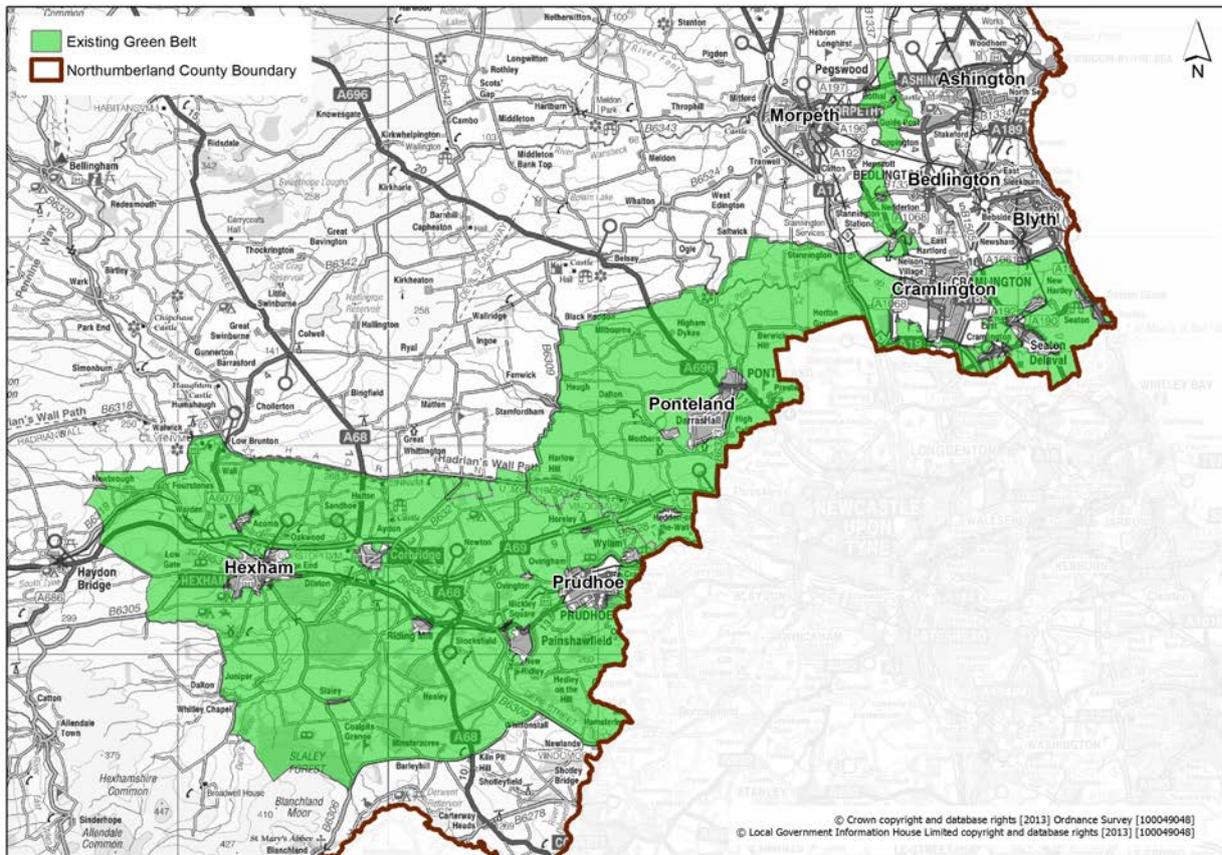
55 Inset means that the settlement itself is excluded from the Green Belt and Green Belt policies do not apply to development within the settlement. Green Belt policy will apply to those areas designated as Green Belt outside of the settlements.

56 The Regional Spatial Strategy for North England (2008) has now cancelled by Government and is no longer part of the statutory development plan

57 <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-vote-office/March-2013/18-03-13/6.DCLG-Abolition-of-Regional-Planning.pdf>

## 8. Green Belt

Figure 8.1 Existing Green Belt in Northumberland



**8.10** In accordance with the NPPF, the preferred strategic policy approach to the Tyne and Wear Green Belt within Northumberland will seek to:

- Continue to check the unrestricted sprawl of Tyne and Wear;
- Continue to safeguard the countryside from encroachment;
- Preserve the openness of the Green Belt within Northumberland.

**8.11** Planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances clearly outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt.

### Existing Green Belt boundaries

**8.12** The NPPF requires that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. Where it is considered necessary to alter Green Belt boundaries, this should be undertaken through the preparation or review of a Local Plan, and that such boundaries need to have permanence enduring beyond the plan period.

**8.13** Through previous consultations on the Core Strategy the Council highlighted that many of the existing Green Belt boundaries around settlements may not provide sufficient capacity to accommodate the level growth required to deliver the vision set out within the Core Strategy. It was therefore identified that it may be necessary to agree localised Green Belt boundary reviews to provide settlements with sufficient land for future economic and/or residential development.

**8.14** The work undertaken to identify the preferred level of economic and housing development required has identified that the following Main Towns and Service Centres that do not currently have suitable development land available: Hexham, Prudhoe, and Ponteland. They will require land to be deleted from the Green Belt in order to deliver the overarching strategy of the Plan.

**8.15** In order to identify the most appropriate locations within the Green Belt for future development, a Green Belt Review methodology <sup>(58)</sup> based on best practice has been developed. This assessment process has:

- Considered the level of land required to deliver the proposed housing numbers/ employment land;
- Identified and mapped relevant constraints;
- Identified options for the location of future development;
- Undertaken an assessment of these options against the established purposes of Green Belt;
- Discounted options and identified a preferred location.

**8.16** The use of this methodology has ensured consistency in approach in relation to the identification of the most appropriate locations to be removed from the Green Belt to allow for future development. The preferred broad locations for localised Green Belt review for the settlements of Hexham, Prudhoe, and Ponteland have been identified and are shown in Section 9. Following feedback from this consultation, the precise Green Belt boundary changes in relation to these settlements will be defined in the next version of the Core Strategy.

### Question 16

Do you have any comments on our approach to localised Green Belt review?

### Treatment of Green Belt settlements and their boundaries

**8.17** There is currently an inconsistent policy approach to the treatment of Green Belt settlements below Main Town and Service Centre level as a result of different approaches taken in the former District Local Plans. The treatment of settlements ranges from settlements which are:

- inset within the Green Belt;
- washed over by the Green Belt; and
- washed over with an infill boundary <sup>(59)</sup>.

**8.18** The NPPF sets out that when preparing or reviewing Green Belt boundaries account should be taken of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. In doing so there should be consideration given to the consequences for sustainable development of directing development towards:

58 <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3458>

59 See glossary for definitions

## 8. Green Belt

- urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary;
- towns and villages inset within the Green Belt; and
- locations beyond the outer Green Belt.<sup>(60)</sup>

**8.19** The NPPF also identifies that if it is necessary to prevent development in a village, primarily due to the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included within the Green Belt. Should the character of a village need to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area designation or normal development management policies and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt<sup>(61)</sup>.

**8.20** The existing Green Belt boundaries and approach to the treatment of settlements below Service Centre level, will in some places constrain the ability to allow for development to support diverse and resilient communities in these areas. The assessment work has identified that there are issues particularly in:

- Acomb
- Fourstones
- Heddon on the Wall
- Horsley
- Newbrough
- Ovingham
- Ovington
- Stocksfield
- Wylam

**8.21** The boundaries of these settlements will be reviewed as part of the preparation of the Delivery Document. This work will be undertaken using the same methodology that was used to identify the land to be removed from the Green Belt in Main Towns and Service Centres. The approach to the treatment of other Green Belt settlements below Service Centre level, including those that fall within the extension around Morpeth, will also be reviewed as part of the Northumberland Delivery Document.

**8.22** For those settlements that fall within the extension around Morpeth, until this work is completed, it is proposed that the current settlement boundaries will be utilised as Green Belt infill boundaries as a guide to assist the development management process and any settlements without a settlement boundary will be classed as being washed over by the Green Belt.



60 National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, paragraph 84.

61 National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, paragraph 86.

**Question 17**

Do you have any comments on our approach to the treatment of Green Belt settlements and their boundaries?

**Previously developed land in the Green Belt**

**8.23** A number of major developed sites within the Green Belt are identified in policies in existing development plans. The major developed sites designated by former Castle Morpeth Borough Council and Tynedale District Council are set out in Table 8.1 below.

**Table 8.1 Major developed sites identified in former district Local Plans**

Site	Local Plan	Plan policy reference
Prudhoe Hospital	Tynedale	NE10
Hexham Racecourse	Tynedale	NE11
Slaley Hall	Tynedale	NE12
Ochrelands, Yarridge Road	Tynedale	NE13.1
Bywell Home Farm	Tynedale	NE13.2
Stocksfield Hall Business Units	Tynedale	NE13.3
Fourstones Paper Mill	Tynedale	NE13.5
Marley Tile Co., Newlands, near Ebchester	Tynedale	NE13.6
Tyne Valley Nursery, Mickley Square	Tynedale	NE13.7
Howford Haulage Site, Acomb	Tynedale	NE13.8
Wentworth Grange Care Home, Riding Mill	Tynedale	NE13.15
Police Headquarters, Ponteland	Castle Morpeth	C19
Cottage and Rural Enterprise Village, Ponteland	Castle Morpeth	C19
Ponteland High and Middle Schools	Castle Morpeth	C19
Ponteland Leisure Centre	Castle Morpeth	C19

**8.24** While these sites are located within the Green Belt, the policies generally allow limited infill development where this would not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The NPPF does not require the identification of major developed sites, it encourages partial or complete development or infilling of previously developed sites in the Green Belt, whether redundant or in continuing use. That is provided the development would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

## 8. Green Belt

**8.25** As a result of the change in Government policy, the review of the majority of these major developed sites will be undertaken as part of the Delivery Document. The major developed sites of Prudhoe Hospital, the Police Headquarters, Ponteland, the Cottage and Rural Enterprise Village, Ponteland, the Ponteland High and Middle Schools and the Ponteland Leisure Centre have been reviewed in conjunction with the Green Belt boundary review work associated with the settlements of Prudhoe and Ponteland. Details of this assessment are set out in Section 9.

### Question 18

Do you have any comments on our approach to previously developed land in the Green Belt?

## Defining Green Belt boundaries

### Morpeth Inner Green Belt Boundary

**8.26** As part of identifying the Green Belt extension around Morpeth, an appropriate inner boundary to the settlement of Morpeth needs to be identified through the Core Strategy. As Green Belts are a long-term planning tool their boundaries are required to have permanence over a long period, around 30 years. The Morpeth Inner Green Belt boundary therefore needs to provide for sufficient capacity to meet strategic land requirements, both in the current plan period and subsequent plan periods.

**8.27** Alternative inner Green Belt boundary options for Morpeth have been assessed using the Green Belt Review methodology. The assessment work has identified that:

- The eastern boundary should be drawn tightly to the existing settlement edges to maintain and protect the River Wansbeck green infrastructure corridor and setting of Morpeth. In particular, the railway line and River Wansbeck act as strong physical boundaries, with the Blue Mountains, Parish Haugh area, Wansbeck river valley, Bluebell Woods and the A197 providing strong complementary boundaries in relation to the preservation of the setting of Morpeth;
- Due to the town's historic setting, the nature conservation, environmental and landscape designations running east west along the River Wansbeck, the western boundary should be tightly drawn to the existing settlement edges. This will protect the strong green infrastructure boundary of Morpeth Common, Athey's Dean, the Borough Woods, the Wansbeck river valley and Scotch Gill Woods as well as the setting of Morpeth;
- The preferred option for the northern boundary, will allow for development to take place to the north of Morpeth, including the St George's Hospital and Northgate Hospital sites. The Morpeth Northern Bypass, which is intended to provide better access to and promote economic regeneration and improve social inclusion across South East Northumberland, will cross the proposed Green Belt, but will contribute to one of the Green Belt's primary objectives by assisting urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of land; and
- In relation to the southern boundary, the preferred option would allow for some development during the plan period at South Loansdean and limited long term

development potential, during the next plan period, south of the A196. It is considered the preferred southern boundary would retain the rural character of the rising ground to the south and ensure continued separation between the town and Clifton and Hepscoth.

**8.28** The preferred Morpeth Inner Green Belt boundary is shown in Figure 8.2. The Morpeth settlement boundary will be defined through the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan. Section 9 of this document sets out the Council's preferred broad location for new housing and employment sites. Until the new settlement boundary is defined, it is the intention that the remaining 'white land' not identified for development, will be safeguarded for future development in the next plan period.

### Question 19

Do you have any comments on our preferred Morpeth Inner Green Belt boundary?

### Morpeth Outer Green Belt Boundary

**8.29** As explained, saved Policy S5 of the Northumberland Structure Plan established the general extent of the Green Belt extension around Morpeth. Parts of this detailed boundary have already been defined in existing development plans covering the former Blyth Valley and Wansbeck districts. However, the detailed boundaries of the Green Belt extension within the former Castle Morpeth area are not defined as the review of the Castle Morpeth Local Plan did not reach adoption before Local Government reorganisation in 2009.

**8.30** Although Policy S5 did not define the detailed outer boundary, the policy provided a detailed description of where the boundary should be defined:

- West of Netherwitton, Hartburn and Belsay;
- North of Longhorsley and west of Widdrington Station, excluding the Stobswood Opencast site;
- East of Pegswood;
- West of Ashington, Guide Post, Bedlington and the A1068; and
- East of Bothal, Hepscoth, Nedderton and Hartford Bridge.

**8.31** As defined within adopted policy, the purpose of the Green Belt extension around Morpeth is to:

- Preserve the special setting and character of Morpeth;
- Prevent Morpeth merging with neighbouring settlements;
- Assist regeneration of main settlements and coalfield villages in South East Northumberland beyond the Green Belt; and
- Safeguard the countryside from encroachment.

**8.32** Given the length of time that has elapsed since the adoption of Policy S5 and the importance of having a robust evidence base and methodology to underpin the emerging Core Strategy, it has been concluded that a range of alternative boundary options to Policy

## 8. Green Belt

S5 should be tested against the nationally established purposes of Green Belt and the vision of the emerging Core Strategy. A methodology for defining the Outer Green Belt boundary was prepared which:

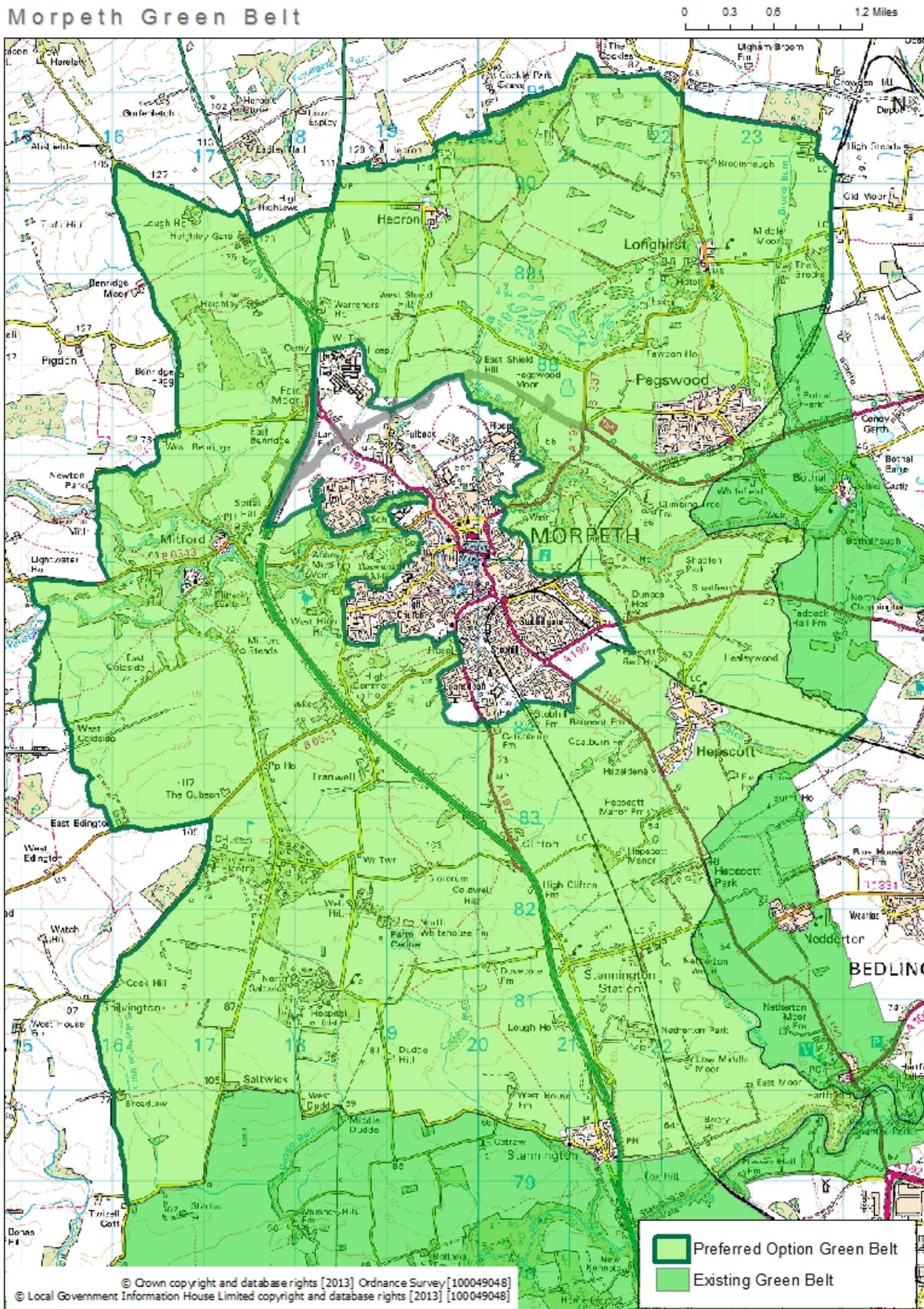
- Defined the broad outer Green Belt policy context;
- Identified and mapped relevant constraints;
- Defined three alternative boundary options;
- Undertook an assessment of alternative boundary options against the purposes of Green Belt and the emerging Core Strategy;
- Refined options and identified a preferred boundary option.

**8.33** The results of the assessment has identified that whilst both the Policy S5 and preferred boundary will deliver the long established purposes of the strategic extension around Morpeth, the preferred boundary option, as illustrated in figure 8.2 would allow for appropriate sustainable development in smaller rural settlements to take place; supporting the development of a diverse and strong rural economy in accordance with the vision for the Core Strategy. Development beyond the Green Belt boundary would be controlled through the use of both national and local policies which would restrict inappropriate development in the open countryside and seek to protect its character.

### Question 20

Do you have any comments on our preferred Morpeth Outer Green Belt boundary?

Figure 8.2 Morpeth Inner and Outer Green Belt Boundary Preferred Option Map



## 8. Green Belt

### Policy 4

#### Green Belt

The Tyne and Wear Green Belt, including the detailed boundary of the extension of the Northumberland Green Belt around Morpeth, will be protected in accordance with national policy to:

- a. Safeguard the countryside from encroachment;
- b. Check the unrestricted sprawl of Tyne and Wear;
- c. Prevent the merging of:
  - Newcastle upon Tyne with Ponteland, Newcastle Airport, or Cramlington; and
  - North Tyneside with Cramlington or Blyth;
- d. Preserve the setting and special character of Hexham, Corbridge and Morpeth;
- e. Prevent Morpeth merging with neighbouring settlements; and
- f. Assist in the regeneration of settlements in South East Northumberland beyond the Green Belt.

Planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances clearly outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt.

The Northumberland Delivery Document will review the treatment of Green Belt settlements and major developed sites below Main Town and Service Centre level.

### Question 21

This is our preferred approach for Green Belt. Do you have any comments?

### 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.1** This section sets out the impact of the preferred strategy by Delivery Area, Main Town and Service Centre. It defines the preferred locations for housing and employment to be delivered. It also provides detail of some of the reasonable alternatives considered as part of the identification of the preferred approach. As previously explained, the assessment has been based on:

- The role and function of an area e.g. whether it is a Main Town, Service Centre or rural area;
- Impact of past policy on the delivery of new homes;
- Projected population change;
- Housing demand;
- Land suitability and deliverability of sites of five or more dwellings; and
- Constraints to development (for example flood risk).

**9.2** Maps are provided to highlight the broad location of future development; they do not define detailed boundaries.

#### South East Northumberland Delivery Area

**9.3** The preferred strategy for the South East Northumberland Delivery Area is to:

- Allow for housing and economic growth to underpin social, economic, environmental and cultural regeneration. This will support the renewal and revitalisation of settlements within the South East Northumberland Delivery Area, and facilitate the wider spatial strategy for growth;
- Sustain and grow the Main Towns of Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Blyth and Cramlington, so they continue to act as key hubs for housing, employment, education, healthcare, and retail;
- Support the renewal and revitalisation of communities by allowing additional large scale development in key locations in Blyth and Cramlington;
- Support the regeneration of Ashington by:
  - utilising the wider town centre regeneration proposals, including the new community and leisure centre facility, as a catalyst for creating the conditions for social growth and resilience within the town;
  - allowing for new housing development which supports the existing housing market by helping to extend choice to achieve a balanced housing market;
- Sustain and grow Guidepost/Stakeford/Choppington, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Seaton Delaval/New Hartley/Seghill/Holywell/Seaton Sluice to protect and enhance local services and allow them to continue to act as key Service Centres to their resident population, by allowing for housing and economic growth in order to support the sustainable growth of the settlements and to sustain and enhance services within the area.

**9.4** The South East Northumberland Delivery Area will play an important role in delivering the Council's overall strategy for economic growth. This will require the provision of 362.5 hectares of land for economic development. Key elements include the:

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

- Strategic employment area of the Blyth Estuary Renewable Energy Zone (BEREZ) being prioritised for development in the low carbon and environmental goods, offshore engineering and energy generation sectors;
- Designation of Enterprise Zone sites;
- Allocation of West Hartford as a Strategic Employment Site, of which half will be allocated for large scale inward investment; and
- Allocation of a small amount of additional land for business uses in Blyth to address an identified shortage of land.

**9.5** Past housing delivery within the area has historically not delivered housing growth in the numbers anticipated. This can largely be attributed to former development plan policies restricting development on Greenfield sites, together with stalled sites and previously developed sites becoming unviable and undeliverable. Projecting past delivery rates into the plan period could result in a loss in population in Amble, Bedlington, Cramlington, Guidepost/Stakeford/Choppington and Newbiggin-by-the-Sea. Blyth and Seaton Delaval would see increases in population, with Ashington maintaining its population level. These levels are not considered to be compatible with the identified future roles of the Main Towns and Service Centres.

**9.6** In order to deliver the preferred strategy, it is proposed to allow for an additional 12,820 dwellings over the plan period, equating to 641 dwellings on average per year, resulting in population growth of 11.1% over the plan period.

### Amble

**9.7** To maintain and strengthen Amble's role as a Main Town, it is considered that growth in population significantly above national population projections is required in order to support its housing, employment and retailing services.

**9.8** The Coquet Enterprise Park comprises 23 hectares located to the south of the town. Vacancy levels are generally low; however occupancy levels within the starter units are higher. 7.8 hectares of land are available for development whilst the former Northumberland Foods factory has now been demolished and is being marketed as a vacant plot.

**9.9** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 740 dwellings over the plan period.

**9.10** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity to accommodate around 520 dwellings, with approximately half of these units accounted for by a site at Marks Bridge which has planning consent.

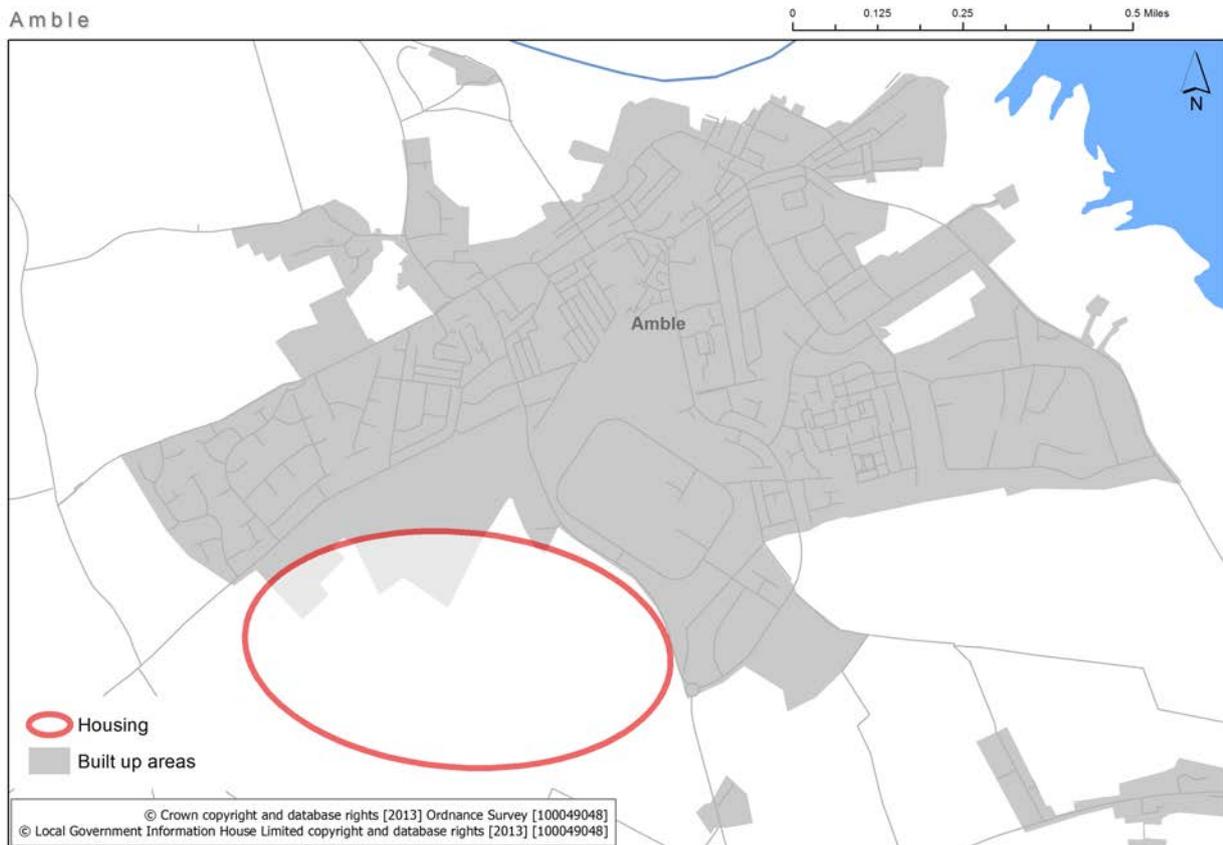
**9.11** The preferred strategy is to accommodate the majority of new housing on land to the south west of the town including the Marks Bridge Site, which, if developed early in the plan period could release adjacent sites for development. A strategic housing area in this location could accommodate approximately 800 dwellings.

### Discounted options for Amble

**9.12** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require only 200 dwellings over the plan period and would not provide

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

the level of growth required for a Main Town. Housing development at this level would result in an unacceptable reduction in population, compromising the sustainability and vitality of the community and the employment, services and facilities.



### Question 22

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Amble. Do you have any comments?

### Ashington

**9.13** Ashington plays an important strategic employment role in the County and includes the modern Ashwood Business Park which is a key economic asset. Employment sites within Ashington are generally located to the north and south of the town, benefitting from relatively close proximity to the strategic road network, residential areas and services within the wider area. As a consequence, it is proposed to retain all existing employment land in the town.

**9.14** To maintain and strengthen Ashington's role as a Main Town, it is considered that growth in population above national population projections is required in order to achieve a balanced housing market and regenerate the town, whilst supporting the existing housing market.

**9.15** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 1,600 dwellings over the plan period.

# 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.16** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites to accommodate around 1,780 dwellings. This includes land within the town on previously developed land, some of which has consent for significant housing schemes, including that south of Wansbeck Hospital and the former NCB Workshops.

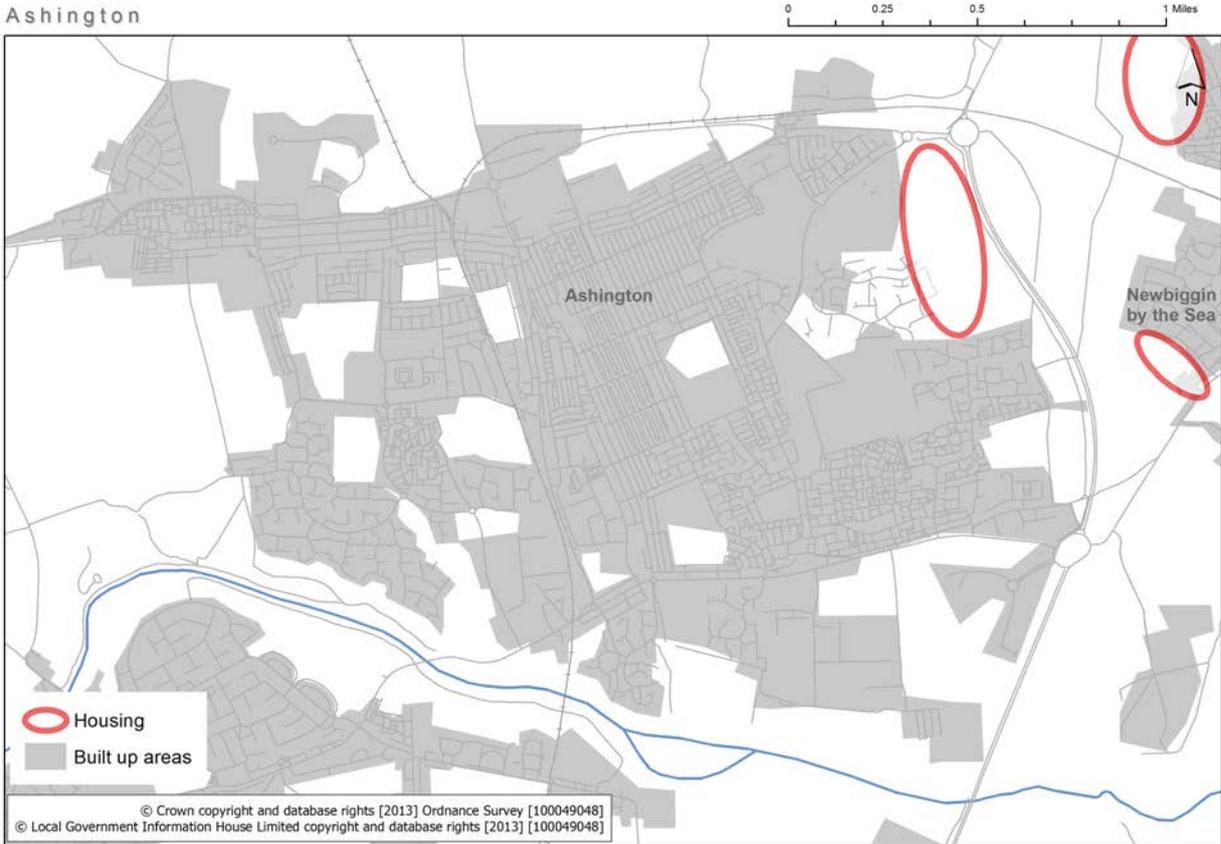
**9.17** The preferred strategy is to accommodate the majority of new housing on land to the east of Ashington. This strategic area, which is well related to the town centre and easily accessible by the A189, has the capacity to accommodate approximately 700 dwellings.

**9.18** A number of SHLAA sites on the four industrial estates in the town were considered but it was concluded that the loss of employment land would not be acceptable.

## Discounted options for Ashington

**9.19** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 1,380 new dwellings over the plan period. It is considered that the population growth that would result from this level of new housing development would be too low given the need to seek to re-balance the population, and would therefore not deliver the overall strategy.

**9.20** Alternative higher development options have also been considered requiring between 2,000 and 2,400 new dwellings over the plan period. It is considered that this level of growth could begin to compromise the existing housing market and may risk a significant housing market failure. There is also a lack of suitable development sites in the town to accommodate this level of growth.



### Question 23

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Ashington. Do you have any comments?

#### Bedlington

**9.21** To maintain and strengthen Bedlington's role as a Main Town, it is considered that growth in population consistent with national population projections is required in order to support the role of the town.

**9.22** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 1,200 dwellings over the plan period.

**9.23** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites to accommodate around 310 dwellings. This includes the Welwyn Factory. In order to deliver the preferred strategy a number of sites such as Broadway House Farm in Bedlington and brownfield sites such as land at the former Vald Birn site in Cambois will need to come forward, and an urban extension would be required.

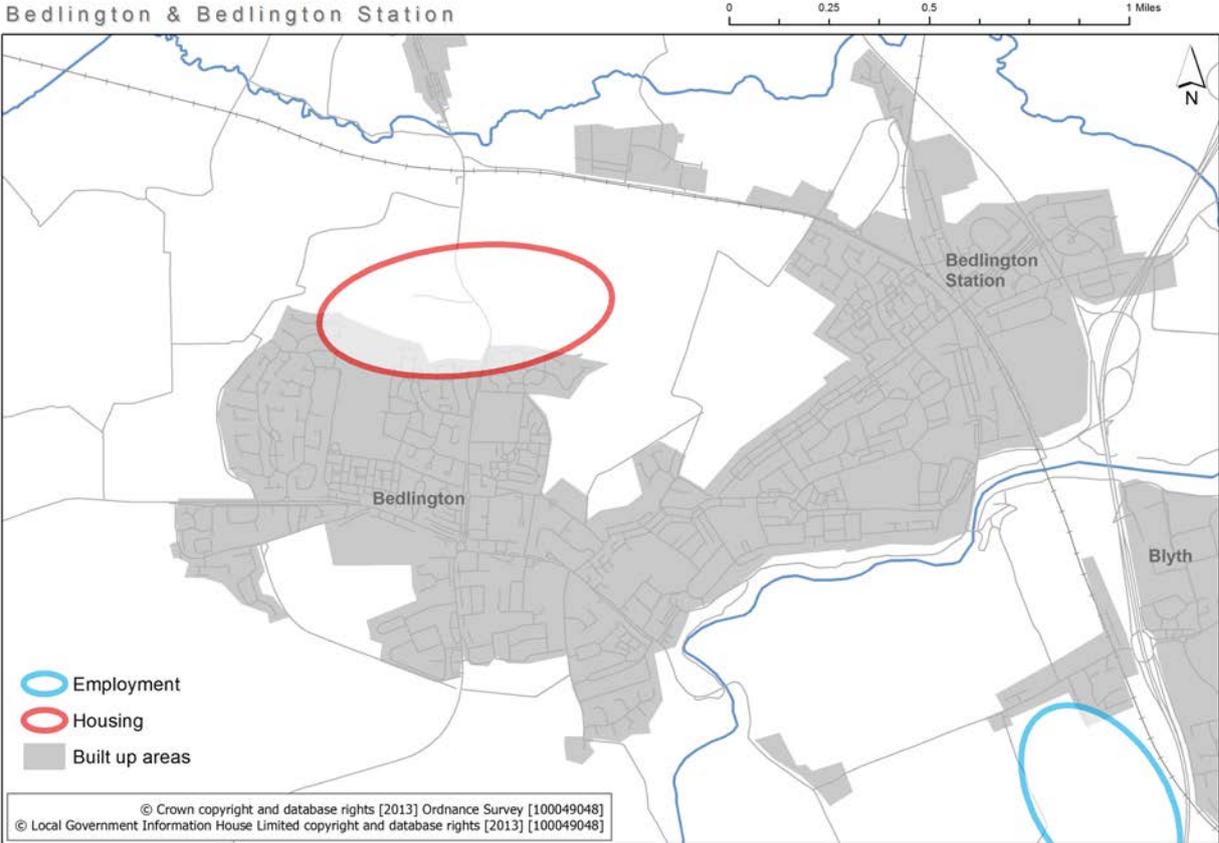
**9.24** The preferred strategy is to accommodate the majority of new housing on land to the north of the town. The preferred strategic housing location will accommodate approximately 800 dwellings. It is considered the most appropriate location in the town due to its proximity to the town centre and access onto the A1068.

**9.25** Alternative locations, such as a settlement extension to the west of the town of Bedlington have been considered. However, development of these sites would extend beyond a strong existing settlement edge into an area of open countryside and risk coalescence with Nedderton.

#### Discounted options for Bedlington

**9.26** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. The level of housing development set out within existing policy would require 980 new dwellings, but would not provide the level of growth required for a Main Town. It is considered that the population growth that could result from this level of new housing development would be too low given the need to seek to re-balance the population, and would therefore not deliver the overall strategy. Forecasting past delivery forward would result in an unacceptable reduction in the population.

# 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



**Question 24**

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Bedlington. Do you have any comments?

## Blyth

**9.27** The preferred strategy for Blyth is for strategic, targeted growth in line with its role as a Main Town and its contribution to the overall competitiveness of the County. The level of development proposed would be above past delivery rates and beyond projected sub national population projection levels, but at a level below that required by current development plan policy.

**9.28** This reflects the fact that a number of the sites around the Blyth Estuary, previously identified as potential housing sites, will no longer come forward for housing development but for large scale employment uses to support the role of Blyth as a hub for the low carbon, renewables and off-shore sectors. The level of housing growth proposed would still enable Blyth to fulfil its role, with 3,480 dwellings proposed over the plan period.

**9.29** Blyth has not delivered housing growth in the numbers anticipated in current development plan policy. It has however delivered a steady flow of new dwellings in recent years.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.30** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity to accommodate almost 2,790 dwellings. This includes land within the town on previously developed land, some of which has consent for significant housing schemes such as the former Wellesley Children's Home, Blyth Links and the former Bates Colliery.

**9.31** A large site to the west of the town at Chase Farm also benefits from planning permission, and while a number of units have been constructed here already, the site is considered a strategic location for future housing, with the capacity to accommodate an additional 700 dwellings.

**9.32** Another strategic growth area, with a capacity to accommodate approximately 1,000 dwellings is located at South Newsham. Development here will add to the existing housing offer, be well located for schools, and have good access to bus services and the strategic road network. Development would enhance the viability of the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne railway line, with new and existing developments benefiting, should passenger services be reintroduced and a rail halt provided.

**9.33** Employment land within Blyth is largely located on the northern and eastern outskirts of the town, running along the banks of the river Blyth to the north and towards Blyth Harbour to the east. Whilst there are limited opportunities for expansion of existing employment areas, Blyth, and Cambois to the north, offer large-scale strategic development opportunities, which are being promoted to the low carbon and renewable sectors, advanced manufacturing, off-shore sectors and Port related activity.

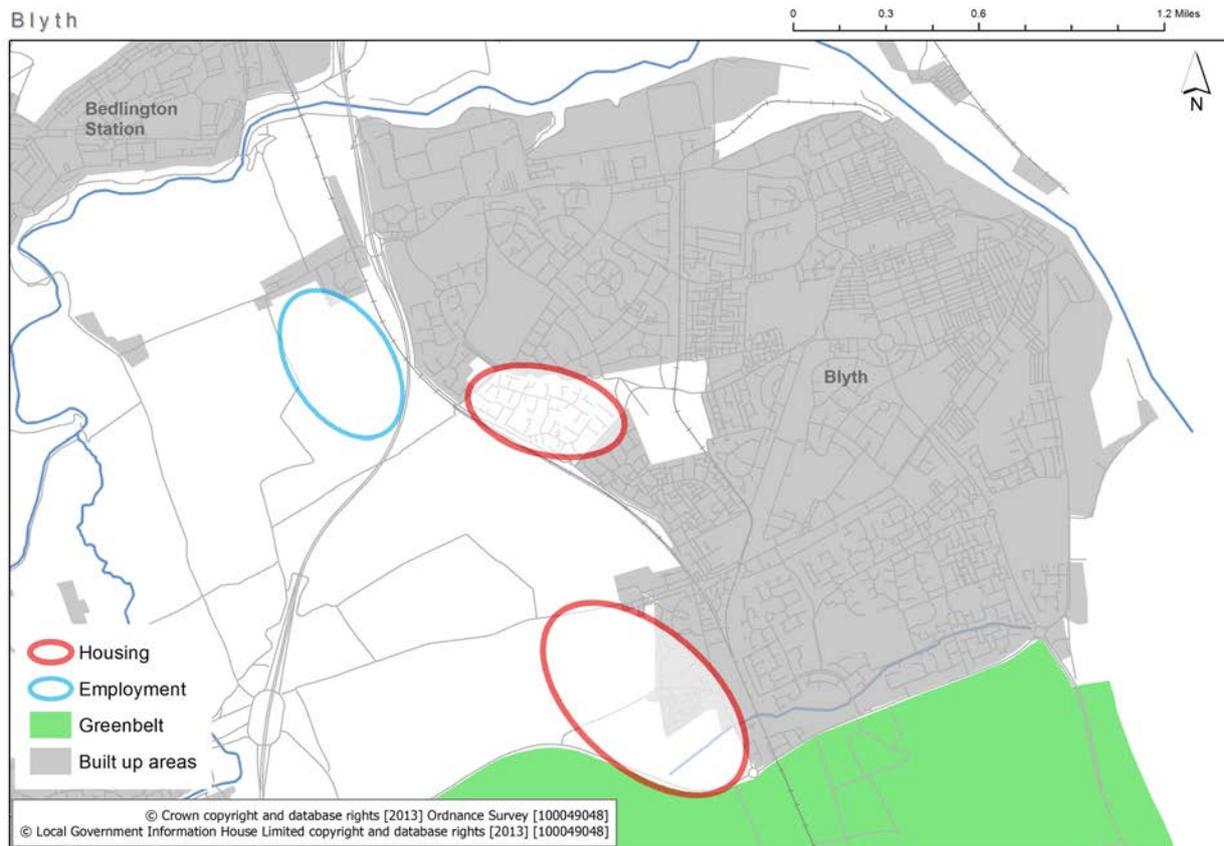
**9.34** An additional allocation of 5 hectares of employment land is proposed to the south of Bebside. Given the coal resource within the area there will be a requirement to explore whether it is feasible and environmentally acceptable to extract the coal so as not to sterilise the resource. While this location was also considered for strategic housing growth, the location, next to the A189 spine road with good access to the highway network is more suited to employment land. Land towards the roundabout on the A1061 and A192 to the west of Blyth was considered as an alternative for employment land. However, this location is considered somewhat detached from Blyth and may result in a coalescence of Cramlington and Blyth.

### Discounted options for Blyth

**9.35** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 2,940 new dwellings over the plan period.

**9.36** While development at this level would result in a significant population increase, it is not considered sufficient to revitalise the town, support the employment aspirations of the area or re-balance the ageing population. Higher levels of development, which would be required by existing policies, may not be deliverable in Blyth. Additional land would be required and an over-supply of housing may result in market failure. The direction of growth is constrained by the sea and River Blyth and the Green Belt.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



### Question 25

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Blyth. Do you have any comments?

### Cramlington

**9.37** The preferred strategy for Cramlington is to reverse projected population loss which could arise from the continuation of current development plan policy, past housing delivery rates and forecast net outward migration. The Core Strategy seeks to sustain and grow the town as a sub-regional employment centre, building from previous investment in its physical and social infrastructure to improve the County's contribution to the diversification and competitiveness of the regional economy.

**9.38** Targeted housing growth for Cramlington will help to stem the population loss currently being experienced and address the need to attract and retain a younger, working age population for the town, reinforcing and maintaining the town's sub-regional role. The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 3,480 dwellings over the plan period, and the retention of around 13 hectares of the West Hartford site as a site for large inward investment.

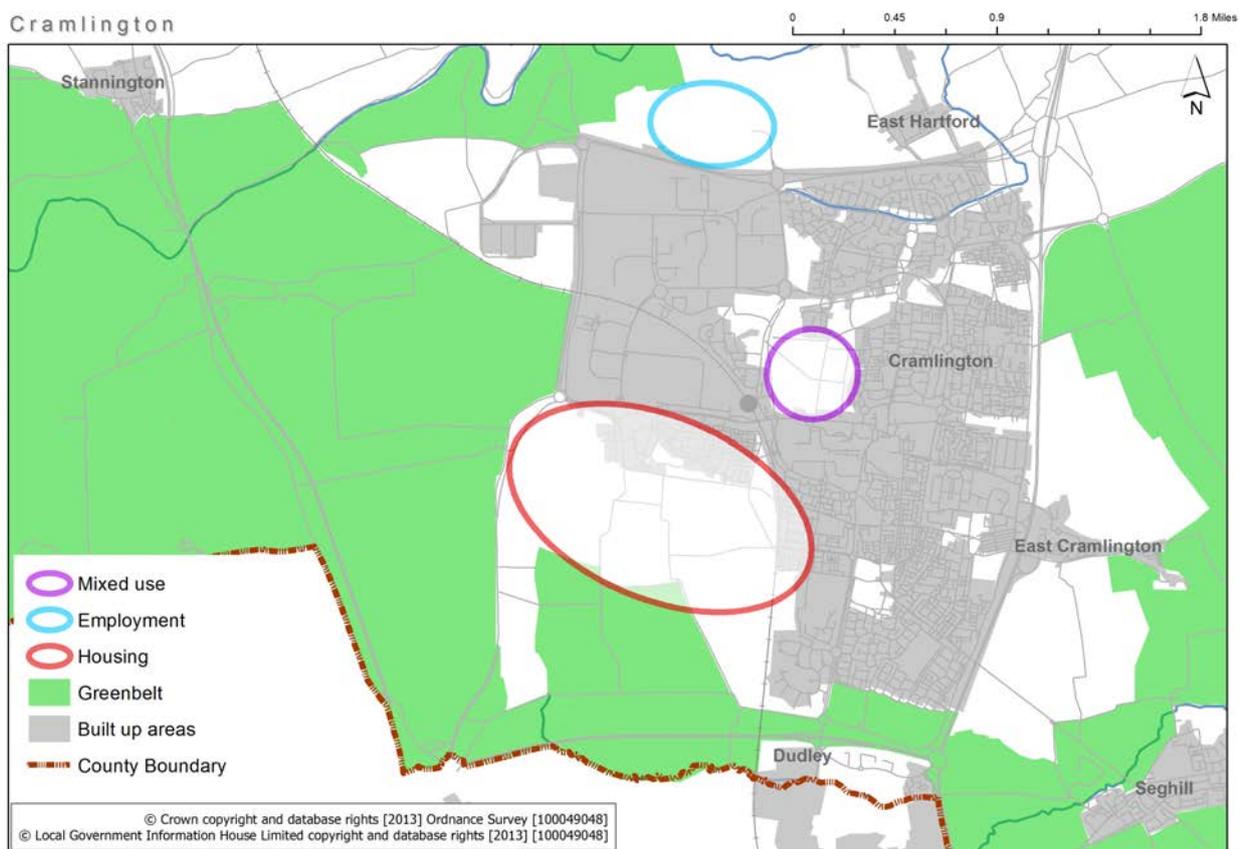
**9.39** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites to accommodate around 4,160 dwellings. These sites are capable of accommodating most of housing requirements over the plan period.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.40** The preferred strategy is to accommodate the majority of new housing on land at South West Sector. It is considered that this location can support around 3,550 dwellings. Land to the north of Station Road is also considered a strategic growth area with a capacity to accommodate approximately 300 dwellings, together with a mix of other uses.

### Discounted options for Cramlington

**9.41** National population projections and past delivery projections would result in a loss of population, and consequently are likely to have a negative impact upon employment, the viability of services and facilities and the vitality and well-being of the local population.



### Question 26

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Cramlington. Do you have any comments?

### Guidepost/Choppington/Stakeford

**9.42** To maintain and strengthen Guidepost, Choppington and Stakeford's role as a Service Centre, it is considered that growth above past delivery rates, but to a level below that required by current planning policies, is required in order to maintain its role and facilitate regeneration.

**9.43** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 420 dwellings over the plan period.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

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**9.44** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity to accommodate around 290 dwellings, largely within Choppington.

**9.45** The preferred strategy is to accommodate the majority of new housing in Guidepost. Subject to highways improvements, it proposed that land to the south and south west of Guidepost is identified as a strategic housing area with the capacity to accommodate approximately 450 dwellings.

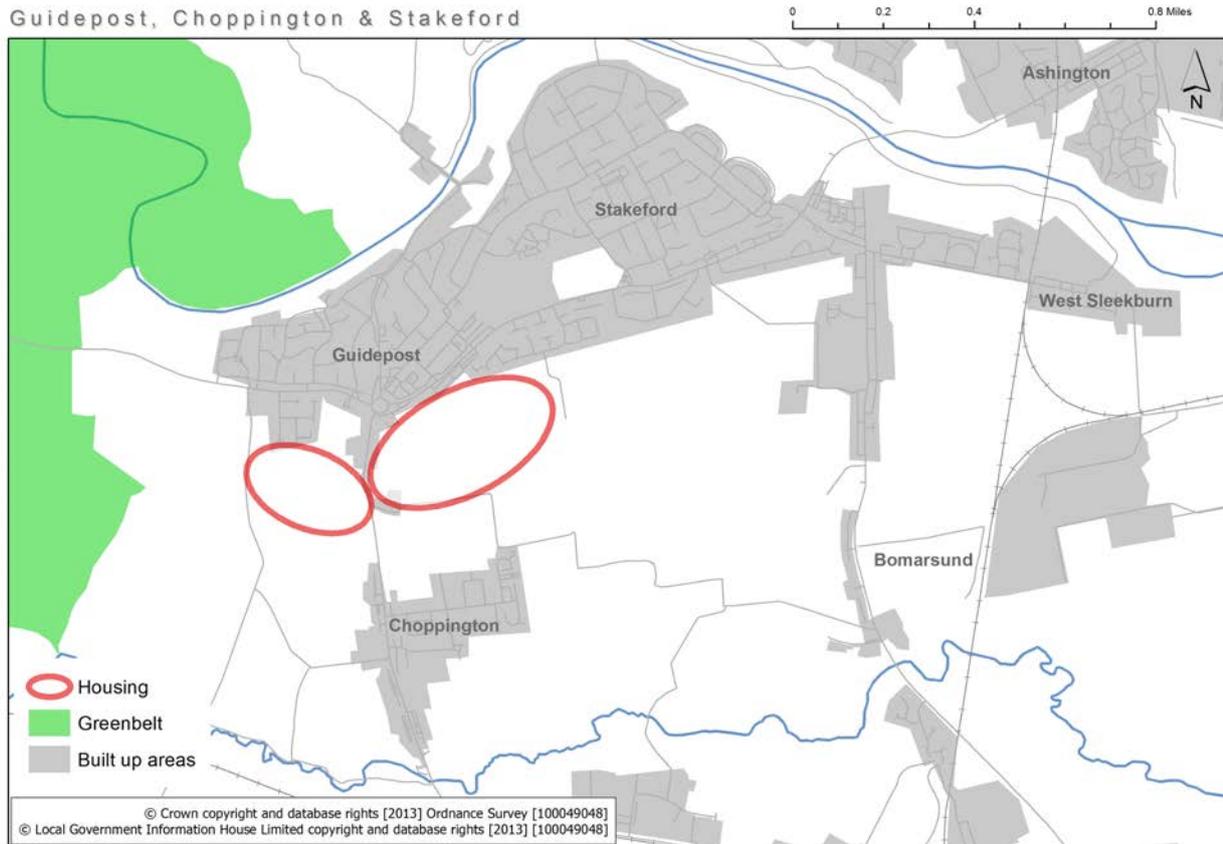
**9.46** An alternative was to focus development east of Choppington. While small scale development may be appropriate in this location, it is considered preferable to focus development in the larger settlement of Guidepost, with a greater level of services.

**9.47** The Barrington Industrial Estate, located in the south of the area, is the main concentration of employment land. This estate, together with industrial sites to the south east, are however better connected with Bedlington Station than the settlements in the area. The preferred policy is to retain these areas for employment uses. A more flexible approach to land use on an employment site in Bomarsund is proposed.

### Discounted options for Guidepost/Choppington/Stakeford

**9.48** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 80 new dwellings over the plan period but would result in a loss of population. Consequently development at this level is likely to have a negative impact upon employment, the viability of services and facilities and the vitality and well-being of the local population. Housing delivery based on current policy could result in a significant increase in population; however, historically, delivery at this rate has not been achievable, and is not considered to be viable over the plan period.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



### Question 27

This is our preferred approach for the settlements of Guidepost/Choppington/Stakeford. Do you have any comments?

### Newbiggin-by-the-Sea

**9.49** To maintain and strengthen Newbiggin's role as a Service Centre, it is considered that growth in excess of past delivery but below that identified in current planning policies is required in order to protect and enhance local services and support the sustainable growth of the settlement.

**9.50** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 320 dwellings over the plan period.

**9.51** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites to accommodate around 320 dwellings.

**9.52** The preferred strategy is to accommodate the majority of new housing on land at Spittal Farm, a previously allocated site (approximately 90 dwellings) and on land at Storey Crescent/Woodhorn Road (approximately 300 dwellings) subject to highways improvements. Delivery of these sites will provide sufficient housing to meet the preferred strategy.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.53** Development to the south east of the settlement was considered. However, the existing allotment use and close proximity to the sewage works meant this area was discounted.

### Discounted options for Newbiggin-by-the-Sea

**9.54** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 520 new dwellings over the plan period.

**9.55** Development on this scale, and that required by existing policy, is considered unrealistic particularly given the low rate of past delivery.



### Question 28

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Newbiggin-by-the-Sea. Do you have any comments?

### Seaton Delaval/New Hartley/Seghill/Holywell/Seaton Sluice

**9.56** In order to maintain and strengthen the role of the settlements of Seaton Delaval, Holywell, Seghill, New Hartley and Seaton Sluice, it is considered that growth in population at a level higher than the national population projections is required in order to re-balance an ageing population and retain employment.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.57** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 800 dwellings over the plan period.

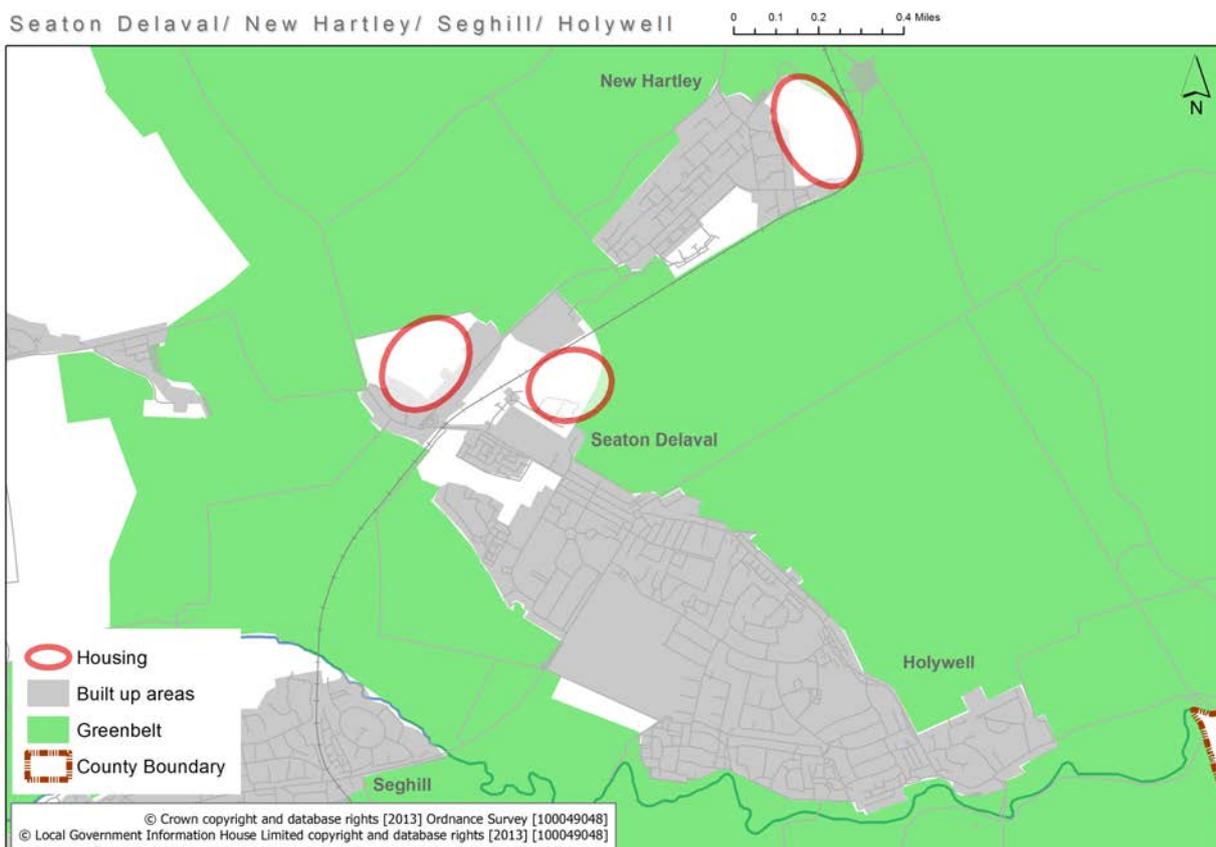
**9.58** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity to accommodate around 760 units.

**9.59** To deliver the strategy it is proposed that strategic housing areas are located to the east of New Hartley, and two locations in Seaton Delaval which currently have planning consent. These sites can be developed without a need for Green Belt deletion and are all well related to the settlements.

**9.60** Alternative growth areas in Seghill, Holywell and Seaton Delaval were considered. Each of these would require Green Belt deletion, which given the close proximity of the settlements to each other and the boundary with North Tyneside may be difficult to achieve without compromising the purposes of Green Belt designation.

### Discounted options for Seaton Delaval/New Hartley/Seghill/Holywell/Seaton Sluice

**9.61** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 760 dwellings over the plan period, but could result in a small increase in population. Delivery on the basis of current policy could see a reduction in the population and may compromise the ability of the Seaton Valley settlements to retain key services.



## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

### Question 29

This is our preferred approach for the settlements of Seaton Delaval/New Hartley/Seghill/Holywell/Seaton Sluice. Do you have any comments?

### Development elsewhere within the South East Northumberland Delivery Area

**9.62** Elsewhere within the South East Northumberland Delivery Area, which is mainly focused on settlements within the former rural coalfield, the preferred strategy is to plan for modest population growth, with around 780 new dwellings being built over the plan period.

**9.63** Development will be dispersed amongst the larger villages spread out along the coastal plain, the object being to maintain current levels of local services, and to strike a balance between their individual characters and open landscape setting.

**9.64** The southernmost area is most vulnerable to population decline and its consequences, with communities to the south of Amble and to the north east of Morpeth forecast to experience more modest levels of decline, in the absence of a strategy promoting sustainable growth.

### Policy 5

#### South East Northumberland Delivery Area

To deliver sustainable development across the South East Northumberland Delivery Area the following core strategic planning principles apply in both plan-making and assessing development proposals and in order to sustain the vitality of the areas local communities:

- a. The Main Towns of Ashington, Amble, Bedlington, Blyth and Cramlington as key hubs for housing, employment, education, healthcare, and retail, will be the main focus for development to underpin their social, economic, environmental and cultural regeneration;
- b. Additional large-scale development and growth will be focused on key locations in Blyth and Cramlington to support the renewal and revitalisation of communities;
- c. The regeneration of Ashington will be supported by: utilising the wider town centre regeneration proposals, including the new community and leisure centre facility, as a catalyst for creating the conditions for social growth and resilience within the town; allowing for new housing development which supports the existing housing market by helping to extend choice to achieve a balanced housing market;

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

- d. Guidepost/Stakeford/Choppington, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Seaton Delaval/New Hartley/Seghill/Holywell/Seaton Sluice will continue to be supported as key settlements with critical masses of services, accessible to their resident communities and those in a wider area. Development will be supported that maintains and strengthens this role;
- e. Outside these areas proposals will be considered in accordance with Policy 2 (of the stage 1 Preferred Options consultation);
- f. Provision will be made for 326.5 hectares of land for economic development, comprising:
  - i. 221 hectares of strategic employment land;
  - ii. 71.3 hectares of land protected for B-class use;
  - iii. 5.0 hectares of new land proposed for B-class use in Blyth;
  - iv. 28.0 hectares identified for mixed use employment; and
  - v. 1.2 hectares identified as suitable for other uses
- g. Half of the West Hartford Strategic Employment Site will be retained as a large-scale inward investment site with the remainder for general employment development;
- h. The Blyth Estuary Renewable Energy Zone strategic employment area is prioritised for economic development within the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector and for renewable and low carbon energy generation;
- i. Provision will be made for the delivery of an additional 12,820 dwellings over the plan period, distributed as follows:

*Main Towns:*

Amble	740
Ashington	1,600
Bedlington	1,200
Blyth	3,480
Cramlington	3,480

*Service Centres:*

Guidepost / Stakeford / Choppington	420
Newbiggin-by-the-Sea	320
Seaton Delaval / New Hartley / Seghill / Holywell/	800
Seaton Sluice	

*Rest of Delivery Area:* 780

- j. Inappropriate development, which is harmful to the Green Belt, will not be permitted, except in very special circumstances.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

### Question 30

This is our preferred option for the South East Northumberland Delivery Area. Do you have any comments?

### Central Northumberland Delivery Area

**9.65** The Central Northumberland Delivery Area will play an important role in the delivery of the Council's overall strategy for economic growth. The preferred strategy for the area is to:

- Allow for housing and economic growth to underpin the social, economic, environmental and cultural diversification of the County as a whole: to strengthen and revitalise the well-being of its local communities and to facilitate the wider spatial strategy for growth;
- Sustain and grow the Main Towns of Morpeth, Hexham and Prudhoe so they continue to act as key hubs for housing, employment, education, healthcare and retail;
- Support the continuing revitalisation of Morpeth by allowing additional large scale development in key locations, building from significant investment in strategic infrastructure;
- Sustain and grow Ponteland and Corbridge to protect and enhance local services and allow them to continue to act as key service centres to their resident population, allowing for appropriate level of housing and economic growth; and
- Prevent the merging of Newcastle upon Tyne with Ponteland and Newcastle Airport and preserve the setting and special character of Hexham, Corbridge and Morpeth and extending the Northumberland Green Belt around Morpeth, to preserve its setting and character, whilst allowing for appropriate amounts of strategic housing and employment land.

**9.66** In order to deliver the preferred strategy, it is proposed to allow for the delivery of an additional 6,270 dwellings over the plan period, equating to 314 on average per year of which the majority will be delivered in the Main Towns and Service Centres. The population of the area as a whole will thereby increase by 12.3%.

**9.67** There is also a need to support sustainable development in the network of villages and smaller settlements which fall within the rural hinterlands of Hexham and Morpeth. This development is required to extend choice in the housing market and provide affordable homes, diversify the local economy, and retain local services and facilities. Development will need to reflect the rural character of these settlements, and it is likely that some growth will take place through windfall development in the form of conversions of existing buildings and re-use of previously developed land.

**9.68** In order to deliver the overall strategy, within the Central Northumberland Delivery Area there will be a requirement for the provision of 65 hectares of land for economic development. It is proposed that 24 hectares of land is protected for industry, whilst 8 hectares are identified to allow a more flexible approach to employment generation via mixed use development. 18 hectares of new land to promote the diversification of the

employment base into the new economies are required in Morpeth, Hexham and Ponteland. 15 hectares of expansion land in the vicinity of the airport for related uses only is also required.

### Hexham

**9.69** To maintain and strengthen Hexham's role as a Main Town that serves a wide rural hinterland, without compromising the historic fabric of the town and its setting, it is considered that a growth in population should be proposed, above that required by sub national population projections. This will sustain its role and re-balance the population more evenly between young and older people and retain employment. The level of growth proposed takes account of Hexham's role as a Main Town serving a wide rural hinterland.

**9.70** The town has a shortage of available land for employment and delivery of housing has been constrained by tight Green Belt boundaries.

**9.71** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 900 dwellings and 10 hectares of employment land over the plan period.

**9.72** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity for almost 200 dwellings. This includes part of the Craneshough area to the east of the town, which together with surrounding sites, is currently safeguarded for housing growth. A strategic housing extension is proposed in this location which can accommodate approximately 160 dwellings. However, to accommodate the level of development proposed, additional land will be required; therefore there is a need to review the Green Belt boundary.

**9.73** The preferred option is to allow for a settlement extension to the west, in a broad location between the B6531 and the B6305 to accommodate approximately 600 dwellings and employment development. Development in this location will provide easy access into the town centre, and subject to junction improvements on the A69, allow access to the east and west without generating extra journeys through the town. Alternative areas have been assessed. This has identified that development to the south of the town is severely constrained by topography, and access being via Eastgate and other junctions in the town centre.

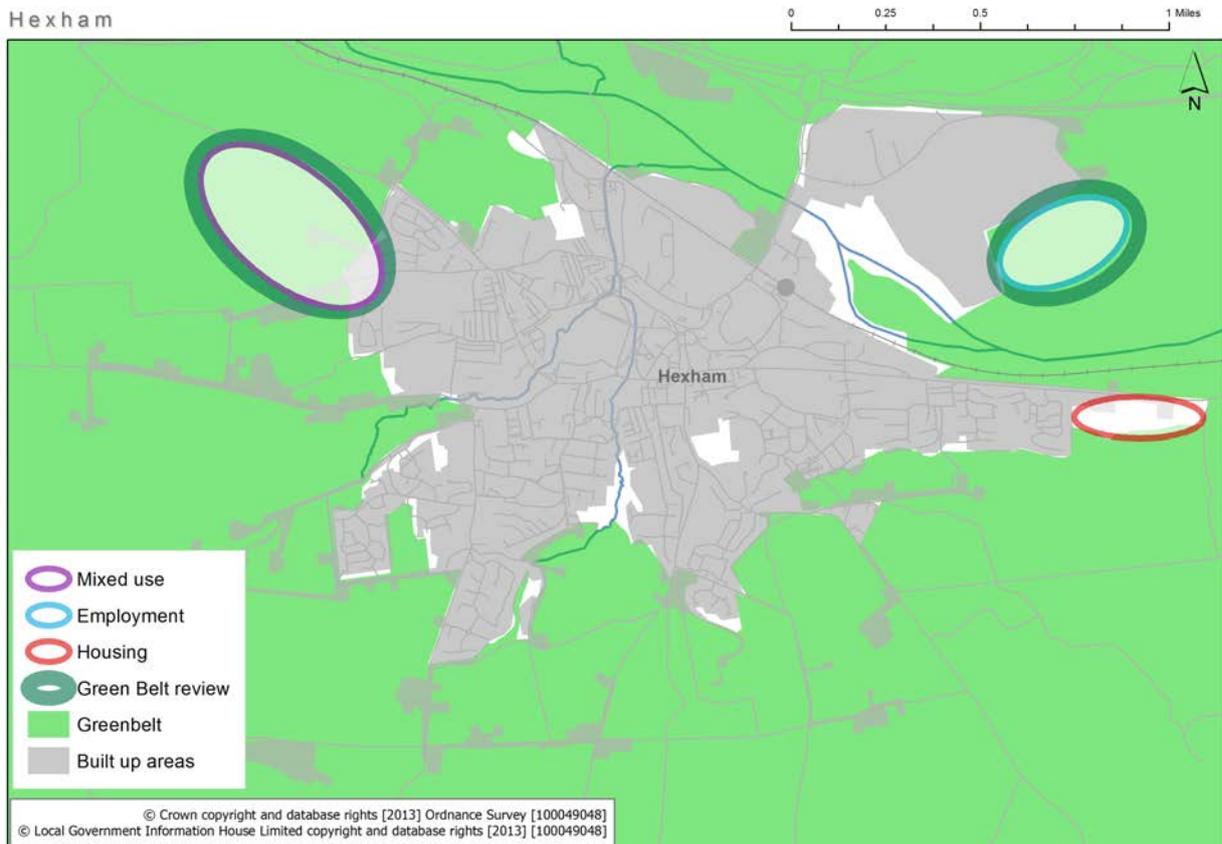
**9.74** Accommodating additional employment land will also require Green Belt review. Although some land will be included within the extension to the west of the town, it is proposed that the majority will be located on land close to Egger on the north bank of the Tyne. Subject to further investigation, particularly around flooding issues, it is considered that development here will not conflict with other land uses and provide ease of access to the A69. Few feasible alternatives have been identified given the constrained nature of the town.

### Discounted options for Hexham

**9.75** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections, this would require 660 new dwellings over the plan period. The evidence shows that the population growth that would result from this level of new housing development would be too low, particularly given Hexham's role as the main settlement in the west of the Delivery Area. It is considered that low levels of growth would not extend the choice in the local housing market required to sustain the social and economic

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

well-being of the community or protect and enhance vitality and would therefore not deliver the overall strategy. An alternative higher development option has also been considered requiring 1,000 new dwellings over the plan period. It is considered that this level of growth could begin to compromise the historic fabric and setting of the town particularly given the lack of suitable development sites.



### Question 31

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Hexham. Do you have any comments?

### Morpeth

**9.76** Morpeth has an extensive hinterland which is predominantly rural to the north, south and west, but which becomes more urban in character to the east. Its location in relation to the A1 and Tyneside, and importance in terms of its housing, employment and service base illustrates why it has been identified as a key location for employment and housing growth. Its potential is considered to be complementary to patterns of growth which are also sought across the South East Northumberland Delivery Area.

**9.77** The focus in Morpeth will be to take advantage of opportunities to respond to market demand, investment in strategic infrastructure, and capacity to accommodate sustainable growth. The outcome will be an extended housing offer across the market, including the provision of affordable accommodation, together with investment in modern employment

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

land, attractive to new enterprises. Morpeth's potential is to attract sufficient numbers of people into the town to even up the numbers of young and older people, and to start adding new employment to the County.

**9.78** In order to achieve this, it is considered that growth in population significantly above national population projections is required.

**9.79** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 1,500 dwellings in the town over the plan period. This number reflects the emerging aspirations of the draft Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan.

**9.80** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity to accommodate almost 1,900 dwellings; however this includes a large site which is proposed for employment. This does not however include the capacity of sites which could most likely only come forward with the construction of the Morpeth Northern Bypass.

**9.81** In order to deliver the preferred strategy it is proposed that the majority of development should be located to the north of the town, with a broad location of the St George's Hospital identified as a housing growth area to accommodate approximately 1,000 dwellings. Additional housing land for approximately 200 dwellings will be located to the south of Morpeth. Until the new settlement boundary is defined through the Neighbourhood Plan, it is the intention that the remaining 'white land' not identified for development, will be safeguarded for future development in the next plan period.

**9.82** Alternative locations have been considered, however the north of Morpeth is the preferred location for growth as it has better access to key services and facilities, the majority of which are located to the north of the River Wansbeck. It will also benefit from access to and from the Morpeth Northern Bypass. The north of Morpeth has the physical capacity to accommodate significant growth without adversely impacting on the character of the town or its gateways. Directing the majority of development in this direction will have the added benefit of reducing the need to allow piecemeal development elsewhere in the town.

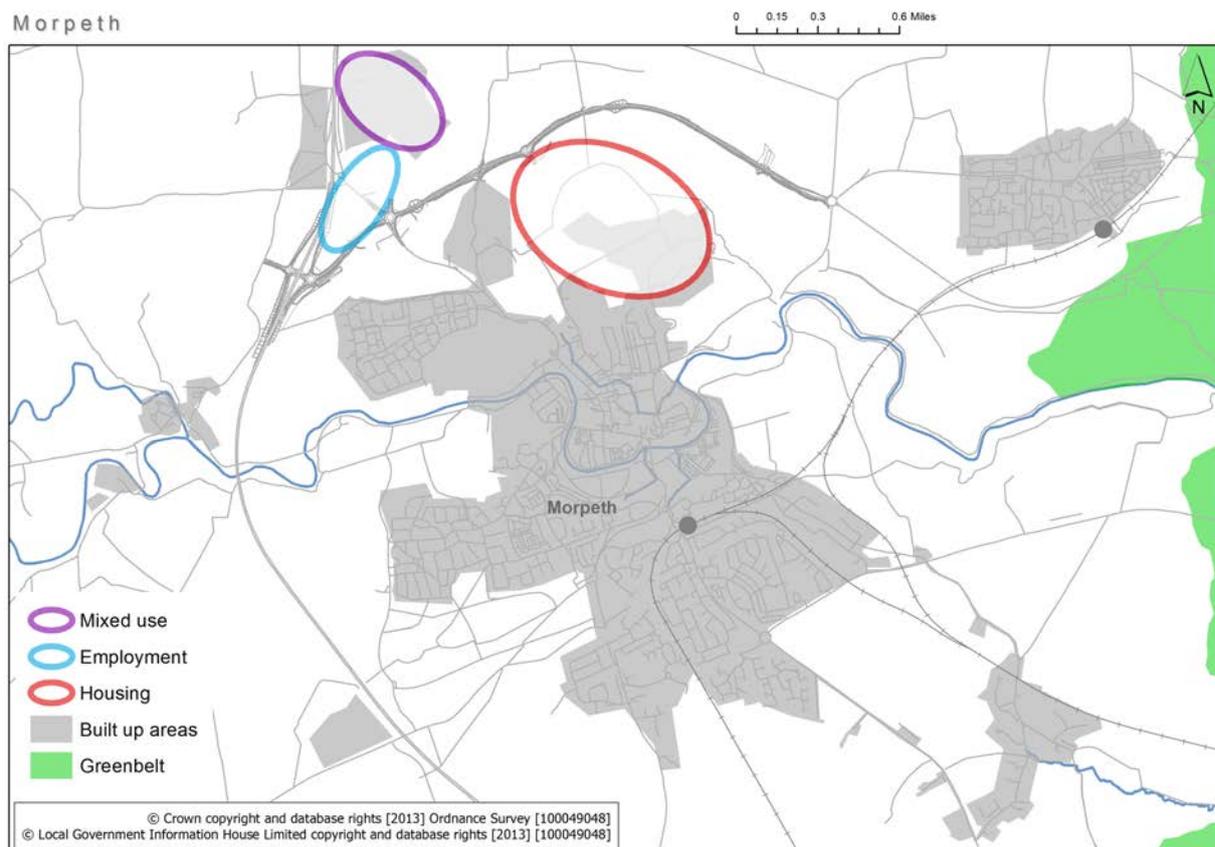
**9.83** Morpeth currently has a shortage of employment land; Coopies Lane, the town's main industrial estate, is fully developed. There are currently allocated employment sites in the Fairmoor area, which amount to 18 hectares; they are strategically located, adjacent to both the A1 and the Morpeth Northern Bypass and the completion of the latter will unlock access to the sites, and enable their delivery. It is considered that these sites would meet the current requirement for additional employment land.

### Discounted options for Morpeth

**9.84** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections, this would require 460 new dwellings over the plan period.

**9.85** In considering alternatives, neither development at this scale, nor that of existing policy or existing policy plus 20%, will deliver the quantity of development which is required to grow the town, nor would it reflect the aspirations of the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore considered that the preferred strategy reconciles the need to realise Morpeth's potential to contribute to a step change in the competitiveness and prosperity of the County and protect its character.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



### Question 32

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Morpeth. Do you have any comments?

### Prudhoe

**9.86** As the main settlement in the eastern Tyne Valley in order to maintain and strengthen Prudhoe's role, without compromising the setting of the town, and that of the Tyne Valley, it is considered that growth in population significantly above national population projections is required in order to retain employment, sustain services and facilitate regeneration.

**9.87** The delivery of housing in the town has been constrained by tight Green Belt boundaries.

**9.88** The preferred level of housing growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 1,000 dwellings over the plan period.

**9.89** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites to accommodate around 160 dwellings, including a large town centre site. A rationalisation of Council assets, together with highway improvements in the middle of the town may be able to contribute significant additional land to the supply. However, to accommodate the level of development proposed, additional land will be required necessitating a review of the Green Belt boundaries.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

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**9.90** The preferred option is to develop the Prudhoe Hospital site which is currently identified as previously developed site in the Green Belt. The level of housing on this site depends upon whether development is restricted to the footprint of the former hospital buildings, which has capacity for approximately 400 units. If the wider site is developed for housing, the capacity could increase to approximately 650 dwellings; it is therefore proposed to remove the site from the Green Belt.

**9.91** Without the larger area being developed, a strategic extension to the west of the town is proposed, to accommodate approximately 300 dwellings. This would require an access road along the western edge of the town.

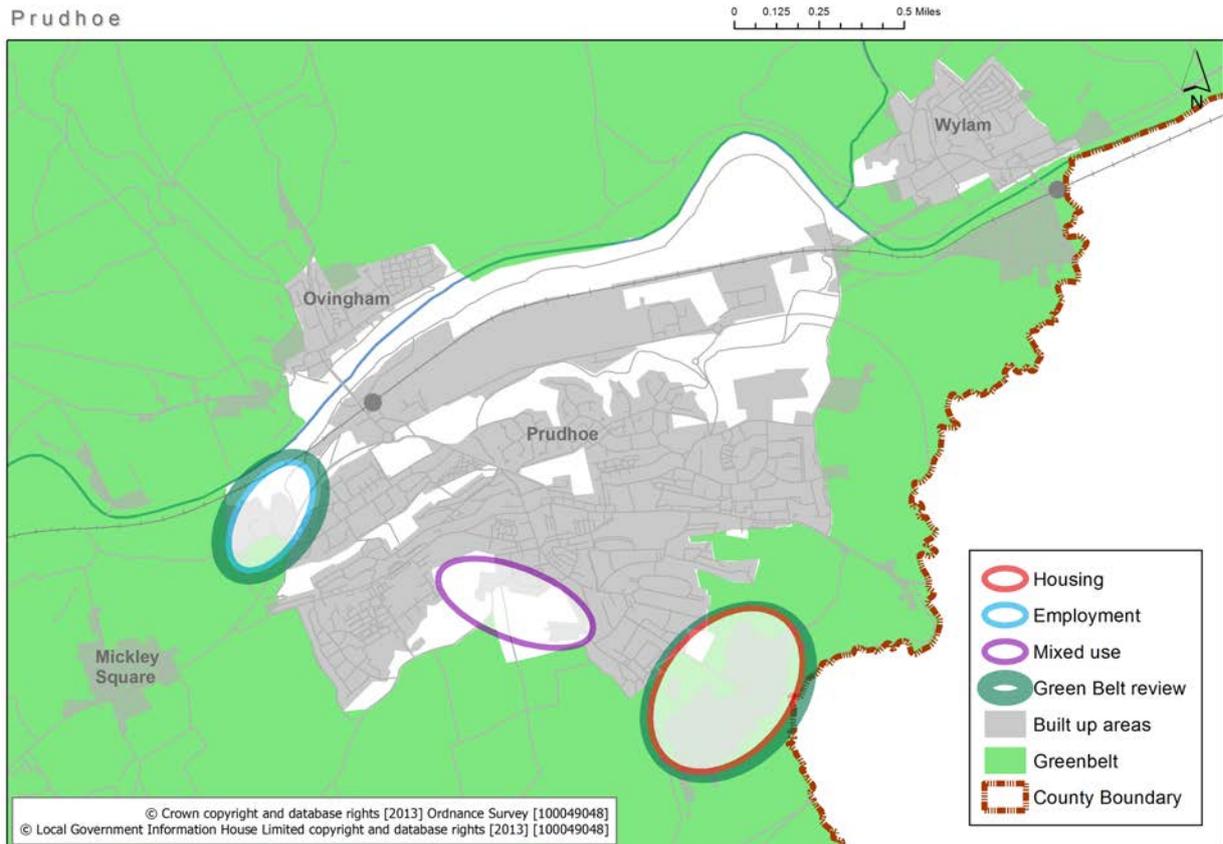
**9.92** The town has an established economic base, including significant manufacturing, a range of medium-sized and smaller employers on its various industrial estates and enjoyed past success in attracting inward investment. It also has a significant amount of employment in service industries in line with its role as a market town. To maintain momentum in this role an additional 5 hectares is identified for employment use.

**9.93** Additional employment land will be allocated in the vicinity of the Hammerite Factory to the north of A695, which is scheduled for closure and clearance. It is considered that employment land in this location will not conflict with other uses and the site benefits from good access.

### Discounted options for Prudhoe

**9.94** While the delivery of the preferred level of growth required to sustain the viability and vitality of the town may require a loss of Green Belt around the settlement, the levels of growth based on past delivery could result in a decline in population. Sub national population projections suggest the population would increase, but this would still require sufficient land to deliver 820 new dwellings. Many of the issues highlighted above would still need to be addressed, but without accruing the same level of anticipated beneficial impact on the future sustainability of the town.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



### Question 33

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Prudhoe. Do you have any comments?

### Corbridge

**9.95** Although Corbridge is home to a substantial number of commuters, whose employment is located either in Hexham to the west or Newcastle to the east, it also provides access to housing in the local market and services; it is also a gateway to Hadrian's Wall. Its relationship with the visitor economy is an important source of employment – it has very little dedicated employment land.

**9.96** Current development plan policy aims to stabilise the population, but if recent rates of development were to continue into the plan period, the population of Corbridge and its hinterland would fall to below 5,000 people. In the fullness of time decline would be likely to impact on the viability of local services such as the First School.

**9.97** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 300 dwellings over the plan period.

**9.98** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity to accommodate almost 120 dwellings. This includes some areas currently safeguarded for housing.

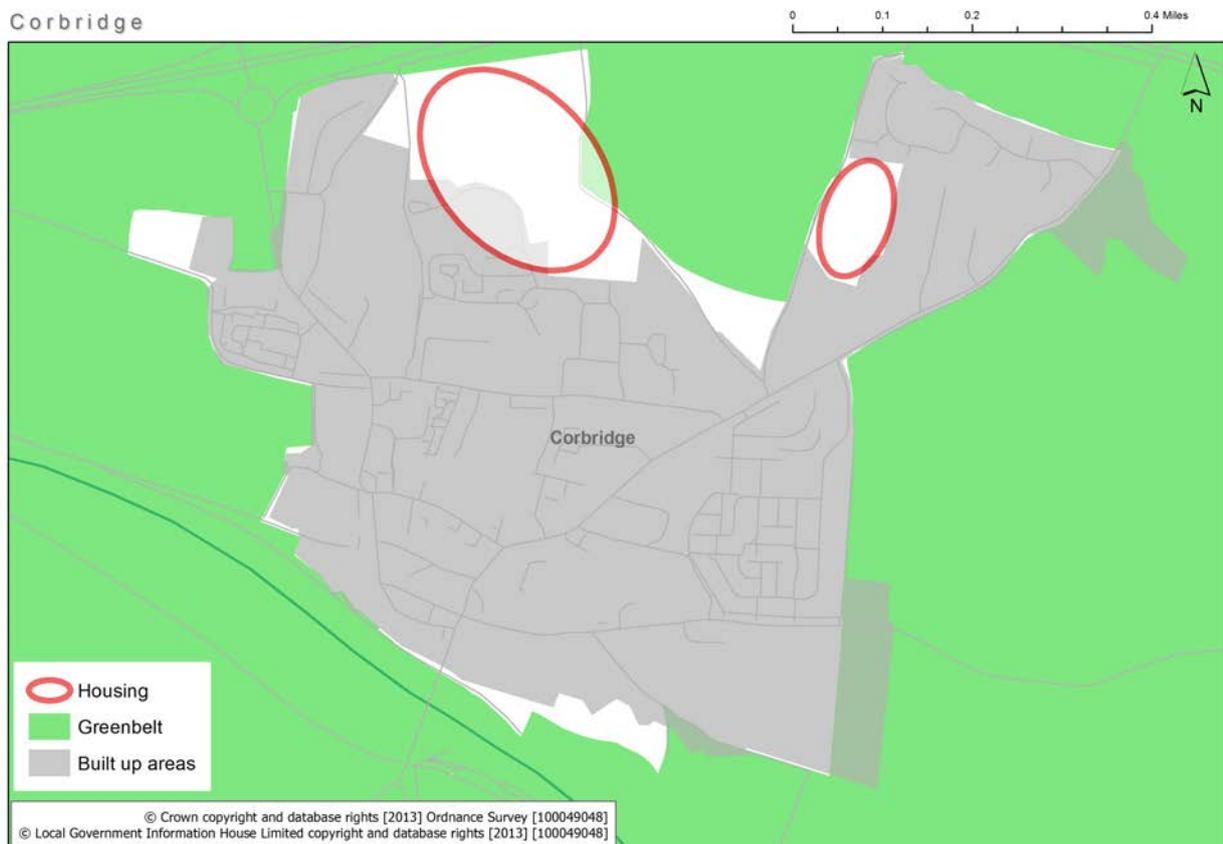
## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.99** To deliver the preferred strategy it is proposed to accommodate the majority of new housing in areas currently safeguarded for housing, including those previously discounted through the SHLAA. A strategic housing area to accommodate approximately 250 dwellings is proposed along Milkwell Lane, and a smaller area to the east of Deadridge Lane to accommodate approximately 50 dwellings. Development of the Milkwell Lane area will require highway improvements and a realignment of school sites. Development in these locations is considered well related to the village centre and its amenities and services.

**9.100** Alternative locations to the east and north east of the village have been considered but would necessitate a review of Green Belt boundaries. Development in these locations would have a more significant impact upon the setting of the village and openness.

### Discounted options for Corbridge

**9.101** If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet migration based sub national population projections this would require 260 dwellings over the plan period, and see a modest increase in population. Projecting recent levels of housing delivery into the plan period could result in population decline; so too could the continuation of current development plan policy. It is considered that the vitality of the village could be compromised should population decline occur or provision made for only a small increase. Development at higher level may start to affect the historic character and setting of the village, requiring amendments to Green Belt boundaries.



## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

### Question 34

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Corbridge. Do you have any comments?

#### Ponteland

**9.102** Ponteland is an important service centre, providing access to facilities and services not only to its residents, but also to those in its rural hinterland to the north and west. However, levels of employment, services and retail activity are undoubtedly curtailed by the proximity of Newcastle upon Tyne. The settlement has a distinctive character, which in its totality, makes it different to any other Northumberland community of a comparable size.

**9.103** The Green Belt boundary is tightly drawn around the settlement, restricting development opportunities generally to within the current pattern of building. As a result, an average of 8 new dwellings per annum have been built in recent years.

**9.104** Ponteland's distinctive spatial characteristics provide an opportunity to effect a level of sustainable growth, which could not be replicated elsewhere in the County, and which, in combination with the strategy for settlements elsewhere within the Central Northumberland Delivery Area, would significantly contribute to achieving and meeting the strategy's vision and objectives. It's location in relation to the Tyneside conurbation makes it an especially desirable location in which to live. It balances high standards of residential amenity, local services (including Community First, Middle and High Schools) immediate access to the surrounding countryside with easy access into Newcastle upon Tyne for employment and higher levels of education, healthcare, retail and leisure.

**9.105** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 850 dwellings and 3 hectares of employment land over the plan period.

**9.106** The focus will be to take advantage of opportunities to respond to latent demand in the housing market, the potential to attract entrepreneur led investment in new economic activity, creating clusters of high value jobs close to the airport. The outcomes which will accrue will be similar to those sought in Morpeth: extended choice across the housing market, including the provision of affordable accommodation, together with investment in modern employment land, attractive to new enterprises.

**9.107** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites in Ponteland to accommodate 440 dwellings and the villages of Stamfordham and Medburn with the capacity to accommodate almost 40 dwellings. This includes the development of the Police Headquarters which is identified as a previously developed site in the Green Belt, and the auction mart site. In order to facilitate the preferred strategy, amendments to the Green Belt and the treatment of sites within the Green Belt will be required.

**9.108** The preferred strategy will focus housing development in two key locations; the Police Headquarters to the north west of the town at Smallburn, and a broad area to the south east. The Police Headquarters currently benefits from a planning consent covering part of the site. As a previously developed site, priority is given for development in this

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

location, although it is proposed that the footprint is extended to allow for additional residential development, to accommodate approximately 350 dwellings in total. It is proposed that this site is removed from the Green Belt.

**9.109** The area to the south east of Ponteland also includes previously developed sites in the Green Belt; the leisure centre and the high school. It is proposed that an area encompassing these sites extending towards the Dobbie's Garden Centre is designated for a mix of residential and employment uses. This will enable the leisure centre and high school to be removed from the Green Belt. While greenfield in nature, development in this location is well related to the town centre and school sites and will not necessitate additional journeys through the town centre for commuters to Tyneside, or those accessing the A1.

**9.110** With the existing development along Cheviot View and Ridgely Drive, the impact of Green Belt deletion in this location upon openness is considered less severe than in other areas. The area is identified as being of lower landscape sensitivity. With easy access to Newcastle Airport, the city centre and the A1, it is considered that including employment land in this location will facilitate enterprising businesses and generate a cluster of high value jobs. It is proposed that this this strategic area could support approximately 450 dwellings and 3 hectares of employment land.

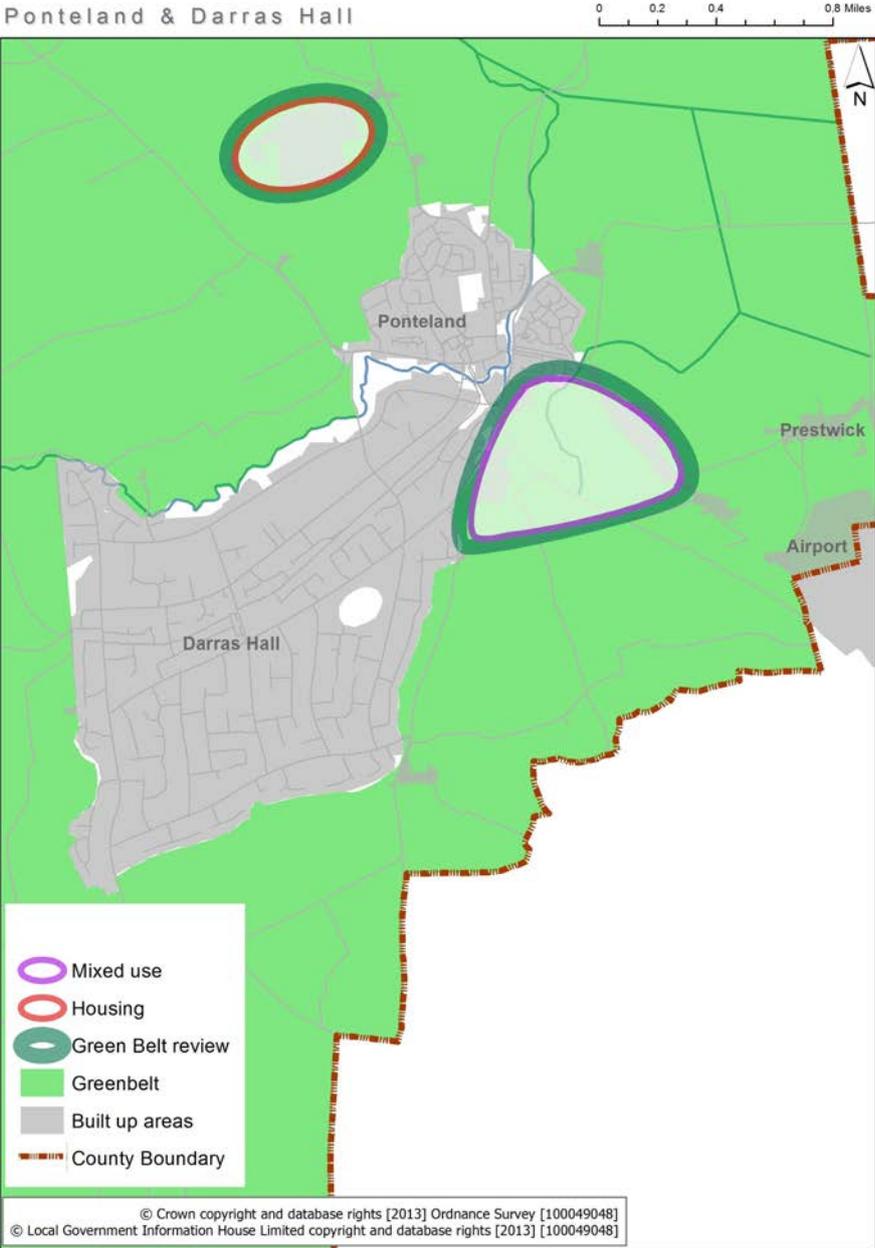
**9.111** Alternative areas have been considered. This assessment has identified that development to the south, and south west of Darras Hall would have a greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and that development would not be sustainable being located some distance from town centre services. This area is identified as being of higher landscape sensitivity. Additional development to the immediate northwest of the settlement, while being centrally located, would generate significant additional traffic in the town on the way to Newcastle or the A1.

### Discounted options for Ponteland

**9.112** If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet migration based sub national population projections this would require 280 dwellings over the plan period, and see only a modest increase in population. Preventing any additional housing development, or simply allowing the process of natural change to run its course in the settlement is likely to result decline in local services and facilities.

**9.113** The Council has also considered alternative growth scenarios, requiring 360 and 640 dwellings over the plan period, it is considered that neither of these alternatives would realise the important contribution that Ponteland can make to the overall prosperity of the County, given its attractiveness in the housing market and potential to identify Northumberland as a destination for entrepreneurs in the new economies. It is considered that the higher housing growth option, requiring 1,000 new dwellings over the plan period could begin to compromise the character of the town.

# 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



## Question 35

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Ponteland. Do you have any comments?

### Development elsewhere in the Central Northumberland Delivery Area

**9.114** The remainder of the Central Northumberland Delivery Area can be divided into three broad rural areas:

- East Tynedale, which arcs from Slaley around Prudhoe to the boundary of north west Newcastle;
- Hartburn and Longhorsley, which lies to the west and north of Morpeth and the A697: and
- Hexhamshire, which lies predominantly to the south of Hexham.

**9.115** The preferred strategy will allow for 1,720 new dwellings over the plan period, which will allow modest population growth. The policy will be to disperse the new houses across the small settlements which lie within the area, many of which are either inset or washed over by Green Belt.

### Policy 6

#### Central Northumberland Delivery Area

To deliver sustainable development across the Central Northumberland Delivery Area the following core strategic planning principles apply in both plan-making and assessing development proposals and in order to sustain the vitality of the areas local communities:

- a. The Main Towns of Morpeth, Hexham and Prudhoe as key hubs for housing, employment, education, healthcare, and retail, will be the main focus for development to underpin their social, economic, environmental and cultural regeneration;
- b. Advantage will be taken of key locations in Morpeth to support the rejuvenation and revitalisation of the town, by identifying and supporting targeted levels of development. Development will be supported which allows for the town's role to be maintained and strengthened, acknowledging its strategic importance to both South East Northumberland and the County as a whole;
- c. Ponteland and Corbridge will continue to be supported as key settlements with a critical mass of services, accessible to their resident communities and those within other settlements clustered in their hinterlands. Development will be supported which maintains and strengthens this role;
- d. Outside these areas proposals will be considered in accordance with Policy 2 (of the Stage 1 Preferred Options consultation);
- e. Within the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the special qualities of the area will be conserved and enhanced by ensuring that new development is sensitively located and designed;
- f. Provision will be made for 68.4 hectares of land for economic development, comprising:

**9. Delivery of the preferred strategy**

- i. 24.2 hectares of land protected for B-class use;
  - ii. 18 hectares of new land proposed for B-class use in Hexham, Morpeth, Prudhoe and Ponteland;
  - iii. 7.6 hectares identified for mixed use employment; and
  - iv. 15 hectares of land for Airport related uses.
- g. Provision will be made for the delivery of an additional 6,270 dwellings over the plan period, distributed as follows:
- |                               |       |  |
|-------------------------------|-------|--|
| <i>Main Towns:</i>            |       |  |
| Hexham                        | 900   |  |
| Morpeth                       | 1,500 |  |
| Prudhoe                       | 1,000 |  |
| <i>Service Centres:</i>       |       |  |
| Corbridge                     | 300   |  |
| Ponteland                     | 850   |  |
| <i>Rest of Delivery Area:</i> | 1,720 |  |
- h. Inappropriate development, which is harmful to the Green Belt, will not be permitted, except in very special circumstances.

**Question 36**

This is our preferred option for the Central Northumberland Delivery Area. Do you have any comments?

**North Northumberland Delivery Area**

**9.116** Within the context of the Strategy's vision, aims and objectives, to ensure that the population of the County's communities are more evenly divided between young and old, and more economically active, whilst its distinctive and valuable historic environmental assets are protected and enhanced - the preferred strategy for the delivery area as a whole is to:

- protect, enhance and add to the area's natural and built environmental wealth and historic assets;
- sustain and grow its two market towns, Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed, as the principal locations for housing, employment and essential services, by promoting and supporting investment in additional choice in the housing market and employment opportunities; thereby strengthening and re-energising their respective communities and creating the wherewithal to maintain and improve local services and investment in the protection of their historic environmental assets;

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

- sustain and grow the settlements of Belford, Rothbury, Seahouses and Wooler, to protect and enhance local services and re-balance the structure of their resident populations, by promoting choice in the local housing market (including affordable housing) and opportunities for investment in new employment. Development will be supported at levels which will neither compromise the character of the settlement nor its landscape setting;
- allow an appropriate level of new development in other settlements with local, but small levels of local services, acknowledging that clusters of settlements often support amounts of activity whose cumulative importance to the well-being of the local population is greater than their individual importance; and
- support local job creation by encouraging the expansion of existing rural businesses, farm diversification, new and home based enterprises to keep local people employed and attract mobile entrepreneurs involved in the new economies to the area, where their development is compatible with their immediate and wider landscape settings and not harmful to the biodiversity of the area.

**9.117** To deliver the sustainable growth required to arrest the accelerating ageing of the resident population, the consequent loss of jobs and the wider social, economic, environmental and climatic impacts of recurrent decline, the aim is to grow the area's population over the plan period by 6.7%. This will require the provision of 3,740 new homes, building an average of 187 houses per year.

**9.118** Economic growth will be furthered by protecting current employment land from change to other uses, the provision of additional land to support job creation and some diversification of use on land currently set aside for industry, 27.4 hectares of land will be identified for employment use

### Alnwick

**9.119** To maintain and strengthen Alnwick's role, without compromising the historic fabric of the town and its setting, it is considered that growth in population above national population projections is required in order to re-balance an ageing population, and retain employment. The level of growth proposed will also take into account the role and function of Alnwick as a Main Town serving a wide rural hinterland.

**9.120** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 1,000 dwellings across the town and the immediate hinterland, and an additional 5 hectares of employment land. The level of growth reflects the emerging Neighbourhood Plan for the town, which is promoting more housing development, to secure overall improvements to the social and economic well-being of the town and its physical fabric.

**9.121** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites across the town to accommodate almost 440 dwellings. Subject to significant highway improvements as part of a major development, SHLAA sites to the south of the town have the potential to deliver significant additional development. A rationalisation of school sites may also increase capacity in the town.

**9.122** It is proposed that south Alnwick is identified as a mixed use area, with the capacity to support approximately 500 dwellings. Development will support proposals to relocate a school here.

# 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

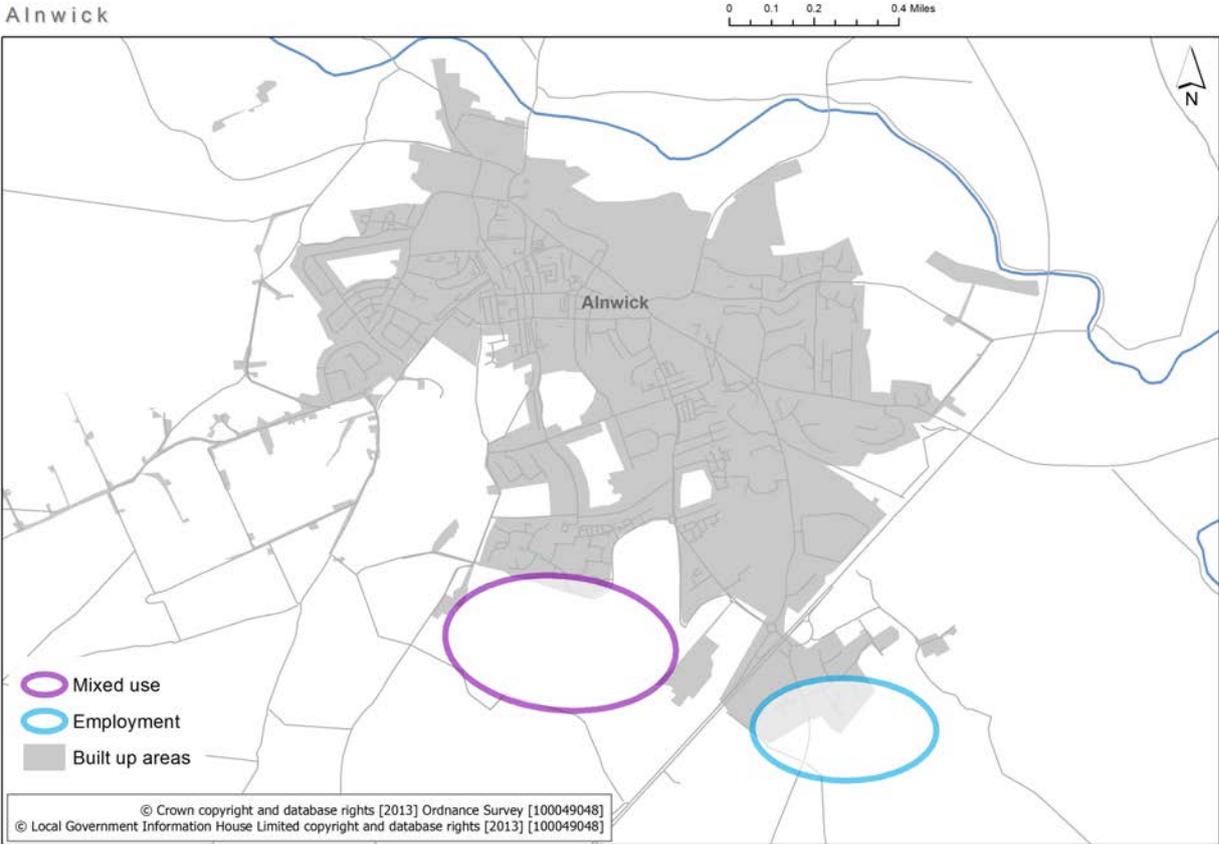
**9.123** Alternative locations for housing have been considered. Land to the north east of the town may accommodate some level of development, but landscape and access constraints mean a smaller scale development may be more appropriate.

**9.124** It is proposed that additional employment land is allocated east of the A1 in the vicinity of the existing Lionheart Enterprise Park and Cawledge Business Park. It is considered that development in this location will not compromise the setting of the town and benefit from good access to the A1.

## Discounted options for Alnwick

**9.125** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections for Alnwick and its hinterland this would require significantly more dwellings over the plan period, and may compromise the character and setting of Alnwick. Additional developable land would need to be found to accommodate growth on this scale.

**9.126** The level proposed largely reflects the level of development achieved in recent years, and far exceeds that required by existing policy. A continuation of existing policy would result in only a marginal population increase for Alnwick and its hinterland, not sufficient to re-balance an ageing population, retain employment and services support a wide hinterland.



### Question 37

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Alnwick. Do you have any comments?

#### **Berwick-upon-Tweed**

**9.127** To maintain and strengthen Berwick-upon-Tweed's role, without compromising the historic fabric of the town and its setting, it is considered that growth in population below national population projections is required. The level of growth proposed will also take into account the role and function of Berwick as a main town serving a wide rural hinterland. This also reflects that a resurgence in the economies of the Edinburgh and Lothians City Region and south east Scotland, will benefit the town, given its sustainable transport links to these areas.

**9.128** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 900 dwellings across Berwick, Spittal, Tweedmouth and East Ord and the immediate hinterland. No increase in the provision of employment land is proposed.

**9.129** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity to accommodate around 1,700 dwellings.

**9.130** It is proposed that an area to the northwest of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and an area to south of East Ord are identified as strategic housing areas, each with a capacity to accommodate approximately 350 dwellings. A number of sites in these locations currently benefit from planning consent. While the level of development to date has been constrained by market conditions, it is considered that development in these locations is achievable. It is also considered that significant development can be achieved on previously developed sites to regenerate areas of Berwick and Tweedmouth.

**9.131** Alternative locations for housing have been considered. While a number of deliverable and developable sites are identified to the south of Tweedmouth, this area is identified as being of higher landscape sensitivity. Therefore while a lower level of development may be able to be accommodated in this location, it is not considered appropriate for a strategic housing growth area.

#### Discounted options for Berwick-upon-Tweed

**9.132** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet SNPP this would require 1,140 dwellings over the plan period for Berwick-upon-Tweed and its hinterland, and may compromise the character and setting of the town. While developable land is identified to accommodate growth on this scale, an over supply of identified housing land may inhibit the delivery of housing in preferred location given that a number of sizeable applications in Berwick have not progressed in recent years.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



### Question 38

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Berwick. Do you have any comments?

### Belford and Seahouses

**9.133** To maintain and strengthen the role of both Service Centres, it is considered that growth at a level above that required by current planning policies but below past delivery is required in order to sustain the services in both Belford and Seahouses, rebalance the population more evenly between young and older people, and create opportunities for local people to afford and access housing.

**9.134** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 500 dwellings over the plan period.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.135** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites for Belford and Seahouses with the capacity to accommodate almost 410 dwellings, while the settlements of Beadnell, Bamburgh and Lucker have capacity for almost 60. To deliver the strategy, it is proposed that the majority of development is largely spilt between Beford and Seahouses, with a lower level of development in smaller settlements.

**9.136** It is proposed that an area to the south of Belford is identified as a strategic housing area for approximately 200 dwellings. This area would represent an extension of the recent development to the west of the town, and is identified as of being of lower landscape sensitivity.

**9.137** Areas to the north and south were considered. However these locations are of higher landscape sensitivity and subject to additional constraints.

**9.138** In Seahouses, it is considered that land to the east of Broad Road, and to the rear of St. Aidan's, which has long been considered suitable for housing is identified as a strategic housing area with a capacity for 300 dwellings. This location is bounded on three sides by existing development and detached from the coastal strip.

**9.139** SHLAA sites to the south of the settlement were considered. However, while this area may contribute towards supply, the landscape impact of development upon the AONB and highway constraints mean it is not considered appropriate as a strategic housing area.

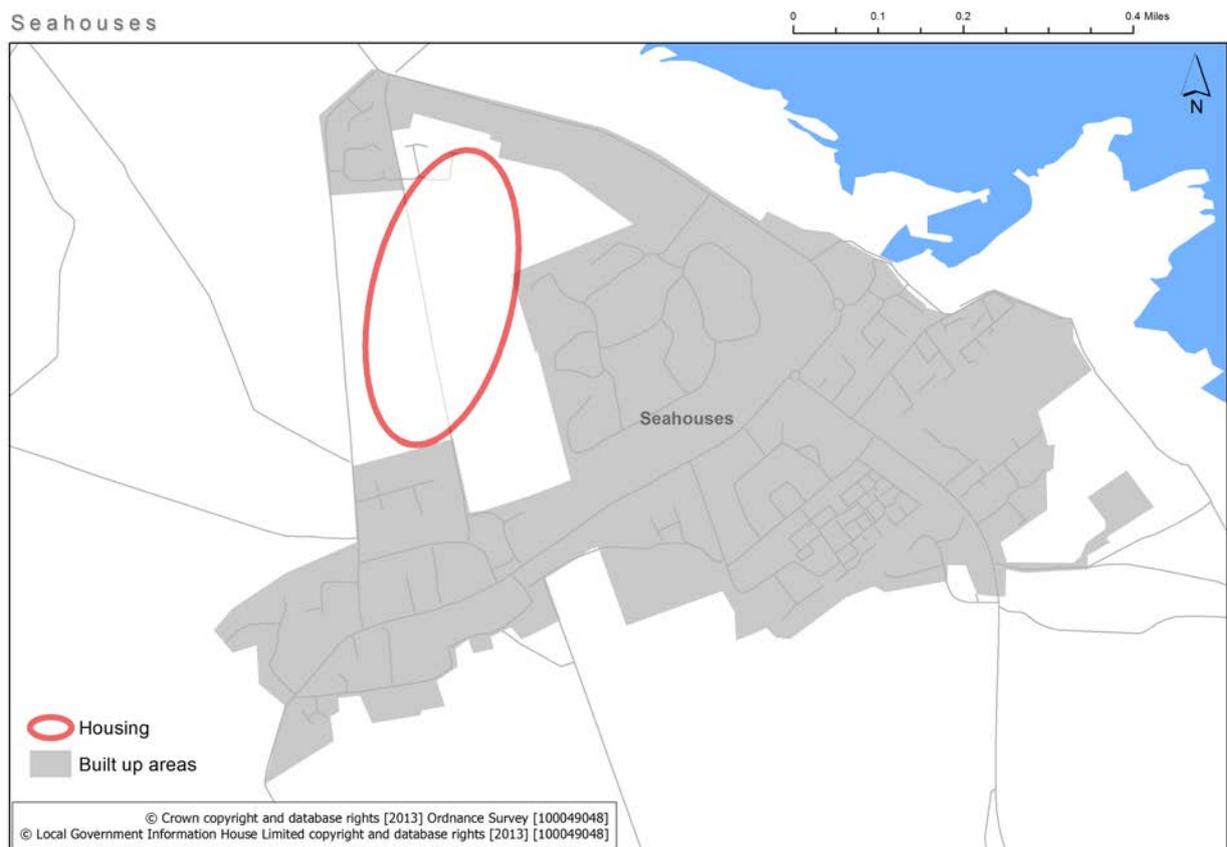
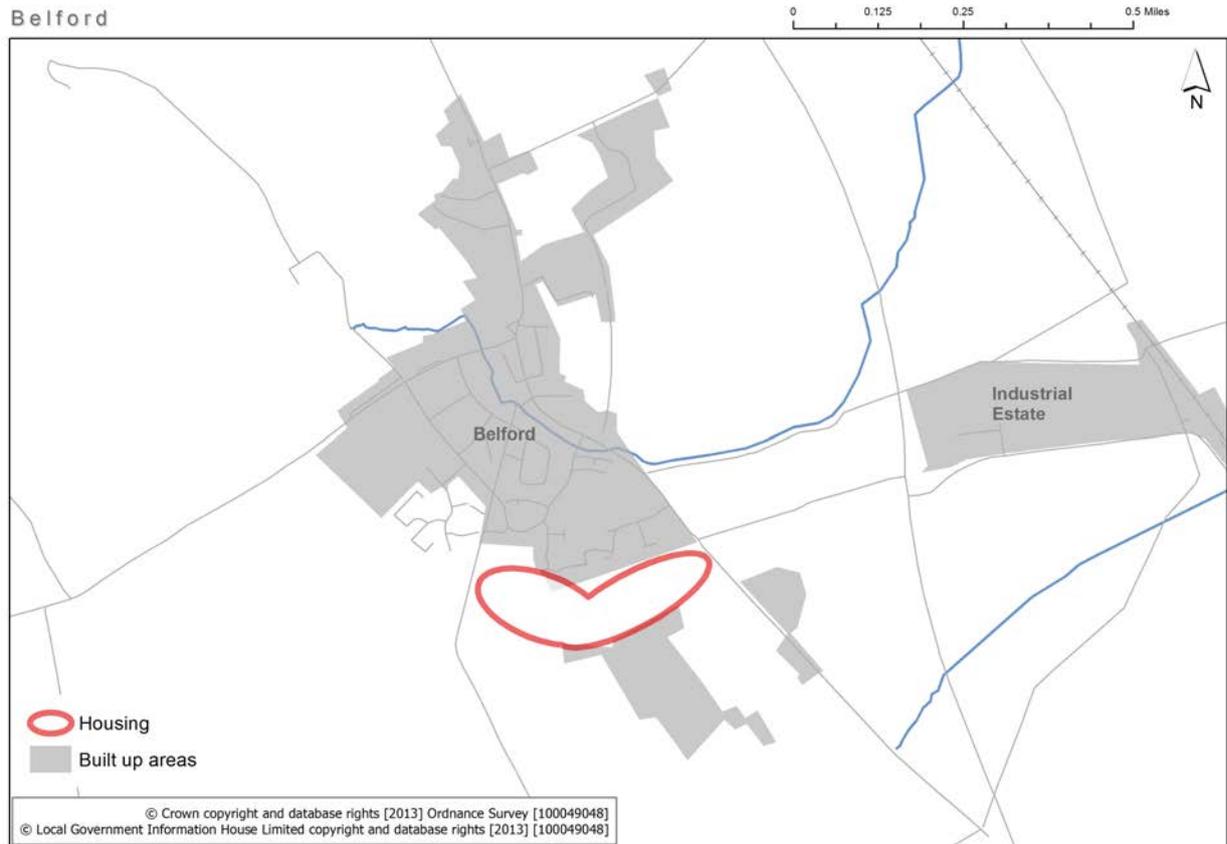
### Discounted options for Belford and Seahouses

**9.140** If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require an additional 800 dwellings

**9.141** Future policy based upon past delivery rates or population projections have been discounted on the basis that a growth in population would be too great to be accommodated. It is considered that growth of this order would adversely impact on both the communities', social and physical infrastructure, and in the case of Seahouses in particular, its setting within the coastal landscape of the AONB and surrounding biodiversity.

**9.142** Rolling current policy forward will not create sufficient momentum to ensure that a better balance can be struck across the housing market between holiday use, permanent residence and affordable housing.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



### Question 39

This is our preferred approach for the settlements of Belford and Seahouses. Do you have any comments?

#### Rothbury

**9.143** The preferred strategy for Rothbury and Coquetdale within which it lies is to promote and support some housing growth to address potential forecast population decline, thereby maintaining local service provision and the village's role as an important gateway to the Northumberland National Park. It is considered that this level of development can be achieved without compromising the character of the settlement or its landscape setting. Development in the settlement is constrained by geography, and a much higher level of development is likely to have a detrimental effect upon the village.

**9.144** Previous policy sought to limit Rothbury's growth in favour of development in Alnwick and Amble; however this ambition has not been translated into delivery, with more houses being built in the village than in Amble.

**9.145** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require 380 dwellings over the plan period.

**9.146** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites in Rothbury, Whittingham and Glanton with the capacity to accommodate almost 80 dwellings.

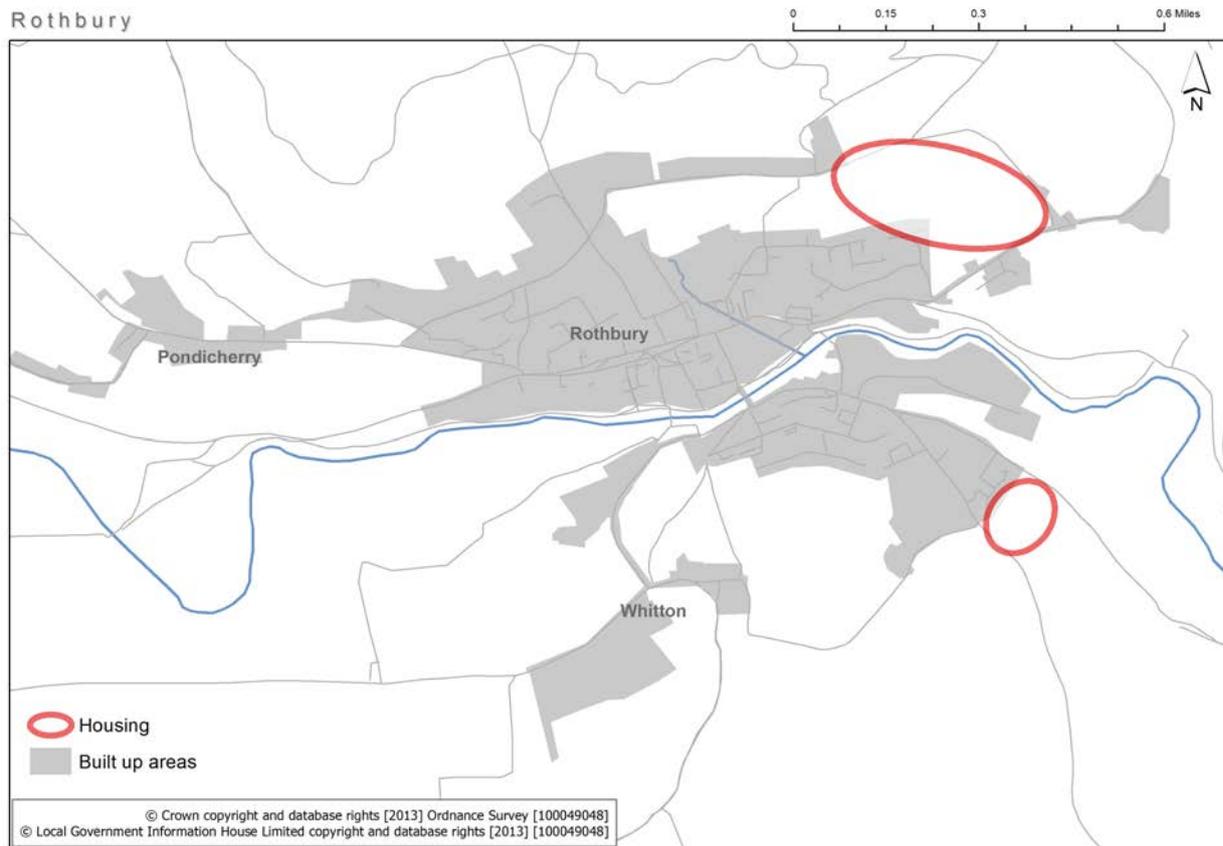
**9.147** In order to facilitate the number of dwellings required to deliver the strategy, it is considered that an element of the numbers will come from small sites. It is also proposed that two strategic housing areas are identified, and that a proportion of dwellings are accommodated in the surrounding villages.

**9.148** It is considered that a strategic area to the north east of Rothbury will accommodate approximately 150 dwellings; however significant highway improvements will be required to bring forward large scale development in this location. Development of region of 50 dwellings is proposed to the southeast. Both areas are identified as being of lower landscape sensitivity.

#### Discounted options for Rothbury

**9.149** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections, this would require 680 dwellings over the plan period. Development on this scale is considered inappropriate for a settlement of Rothbury's size, particularly given geographical constraints. Development based on current policy may result in population loss, and could compromise the continuation of services within the town which are used by the surrounding rural communities and visitors.

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy



### Question 40

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Rothbury. Do you have any comments?

### Wooler

**9.150** To maintain and strengthen Wooler's role, without compromising the historic fabric of the settlement and its setting, it is considered that growth in population above national population projections is required in order to rebalance an aging population, and retain employment. The level of growth proposed will also take into account the role and function of Wooler as a service centre serving a rural hinterland.

**9.151** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 380 dwellings over the plan period.

**9.152** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with the capacity to deliver around 60 units. It is anticipated that a number of other SHLAA sites with identified constraints will be able to contribute towards supply.

**9.153** In order to deliver the number of dwellings in the preferred strategy, two strategic housing locations are identified. The Council has significant land holdings to the east of Wooler. With a rationalisation of these assets, and adjacent land, it is proposed that approximately 170 dwellings will be accommodated within a mixed use area incorporating

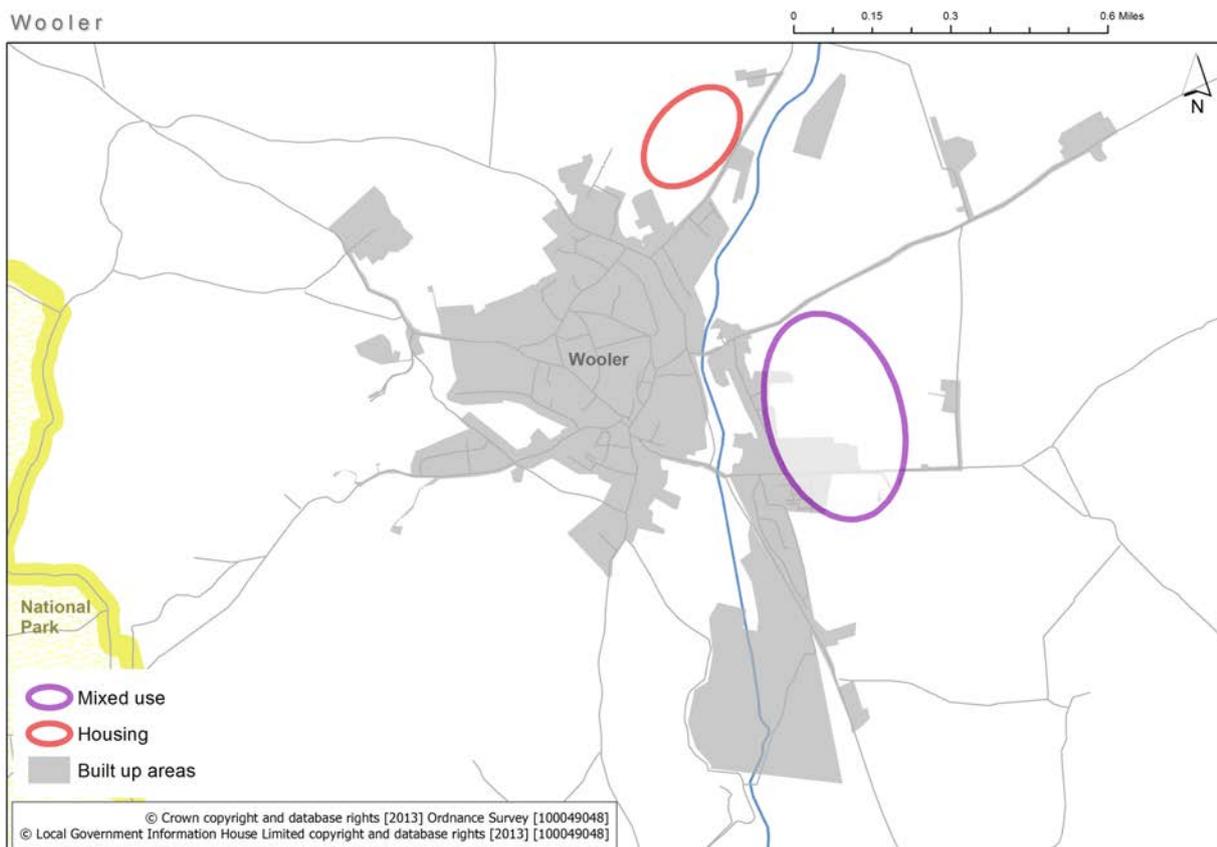
## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

the school and sports fields. Land north of Wooler is proposed to accommodate approximately 130 dwellings. Development in each of these locations will require significant highway improvements.

**9.154** Alternative locations to the west of the settlement have been considered; however this area is considered to be of higher landscape sensitivity and subject to other constraints.

### Discounted options for Wooler

**9.155** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 300 dwellings over the plan period, and result in only a marginal increase in population. Continuing existing policy would result in population loss. Both of these options may reduce the working age population, and compromise the continuation of services within the town which are used by the surrounding rural communities.



### Question 41

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Wooler. Do you have any comments?

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

### Development elsewhere in the North Northumberland Delivery Area

**9.156** The balance of the growth required to sustain communities across the more rural parts of the North Northumberland Delivery Area lie in the hinterlands of the two market towns. For Berwick-upon-Tweed this means communities located in the Tweed Valley, the northernmost coastal plain (including Holy Island). For Alnwick, communities across the coastal plain and at its margin, as well as those located in open countryside to the north west and west, between the town and the foothills of the National Park and the A1 and A697 corridors.

**9.157** It is envisaged that just over 580 new dwellings will be dispersed across the area. It is anticipated that there will be a strong imperative to deliver affordable housing to meet identified local need, supported where appropriate by market housing.

### Policy 7

#### North Northumberland Delivery Area

To deliver sustainable development across the North Northumberland Delivery Area, the following core strategic planning principles apply in both plan-making and assessing development proposals and in order to sustain the vitality of the area's local communities:

- a. The main towns of Alnwick and Berwick-upon-Tweed, as key hubs for housing, employment, education, healthcare and retail, will be the main focus for future development. Investment in the physical fabric of their heritage assets to assist economic regeneration will be encouraged and supported;
- b. Belford, Rothbury, Seahouses and Wooler will continue to be supported as key settlements with critical masses of services, accessible to their resident communities and those within other settlements clustered in their hinterlands. Development will be supported that maintains and strengthens this role;
- c. Outside these areas proposals will be considered in accordance with Policy 2 (of the Stage 1 Preferred Options consultation);
- d. The special qualities of the area will be conserved and enhanced by ensuring that new development is sensitively located and designed, especially within the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, where the impact of demand for second and holiday home adversely impacts on the housing market, inflating house prices and disenfranchising a substantial proportion of the local population from the housing market;
- e. Provision will be made for 27.4 hectares of land for economic development, comprising:
  - i. 5.0 hectares of new land proposed for B-class use in Alnwick;
  - ii. 15.1 hectares protected for B-class use;

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

iii. 4.3 hectares identified for mixed use employment; and

iv. 3.0 hectares identified as suitable for other uses.

f. Provision will be made for 3,740 new dwellings over the plan period distributed as follows:

*Main Towns:*

Alnwick	1,000
Berwick-upon-Tweed	900

*Service Centres:*

Belford	200
Seahouses	300
Rothbury	380
Wooler	380

*Rest of Delivery Area:* 580

### Question 42

This is our preferred option for the North Northumberland Delivery Area. Do you have any comments?

### West Northumberland Delivery Area

**9.158** The preferred strategy for the West Northumberland Delivery Area reflects the Council's overall strategic approach to ensure that the population of the County's communities are more evenly divided between young and older people, are more economically active, whilst protecting and enhancing Northumberland's distinctive and valuable historic and environmental assets. In the West Northumberland Delivery Area this will mean:

- Sustaining and growing the town of Haltwhistle as the principal location for housing, employment and essential services, by promoting and supporting investment in additional choice in the housing market and employment opportunities; thereby strengthening and re-energising the community and creating the wherewithal to maintain and improve local services, including those for tourists and visitors;
- Sustaining and growing the three Service Centres of Allendale, Bellingham and Haydon Bridge, to ensure they continue to provide for local needs in terms of market and affordable housing, services and employment; promoting opportunities to boost the local economy of the centres and their hinterlands. Development will be supported at

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

levels which will neither compromise the character of the settlement nor its landscape setting;

- Recognising that smaller settlements within this Delivery Area often share services and operate as clusters and that small scale housing and other development will therefore be appropriate in smaller villages or hamlets, while redundant rural buildings will provide opportunities to provide for both local business and housing needs;
- Supporting local job creation by promoting a flexible policy framework for rural businesses, farm diversification, new and home based enterprises to keep local people employed and attract mobile entrepreneurs involved in the new economies to the area.

**9.159** Planning for the above will need to be undertaken in the context of conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the area especially within the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Hadrian's Wall World Heritage site and the setting of Northumberland National Park. The scale and dispersed nature of the area's communities suggests that the amounts of development required to deliver the strategy are likely to be successfully accommodated incrementally over the lifetime of the plan.

**9.160** In order to deliver the preferred strategy, promoting the sustainable growth that is required to arrest the accelerating ageing of the resident population, the consequent loss of jobs and the wider social, economic, environmental and climatic impacts of economic decline, it is proposed to grow the area's population over the plan period by 5.5%. This will require the provision of 1,480 new homes, building on average 74 houses per year. The strategy will see this level of growth fairly evenly distributed throughout the area.

**9.161** Economic growth will be furthered by protecting current employment land from change to other uses, and limited diversification of use on land currently set aside for industry but protected for employment use. 2.8 hectares of land will be identified and retained for employment use.

### Haltwhistle

**9.162** To maintain and strengthen Haltwhistle's role, without compromising the setting of the town, and that of the Tyne Valley, it is considered that growth in population significantly above national population projections is required in order to re-balance an ageing population, retain employment and facilitate regeneration.

**9.163** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 400 dwellings over the plan period.

**9.164** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites with a capacity for around 200 dwellings, including land to west of Park Road. It is proposed that this site is incorporated within a wider strategic extension to the west, to accommodate approximately 300 dwellings, representing much of the town's housing requirements over the plan period. Part of this area is currently allocated for employment uses, but it proposed to be de-allocated through the plan.

**9.165** The town is relatively compact and constrained by its proximity to the River Tyne and the A69 and Tyne Valley railway corridors. The landscape setting of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site lies just to the north of the town and there are also constraints regarding landscape sensitivity to the south. Additionally, the Haltwhistle Conservation

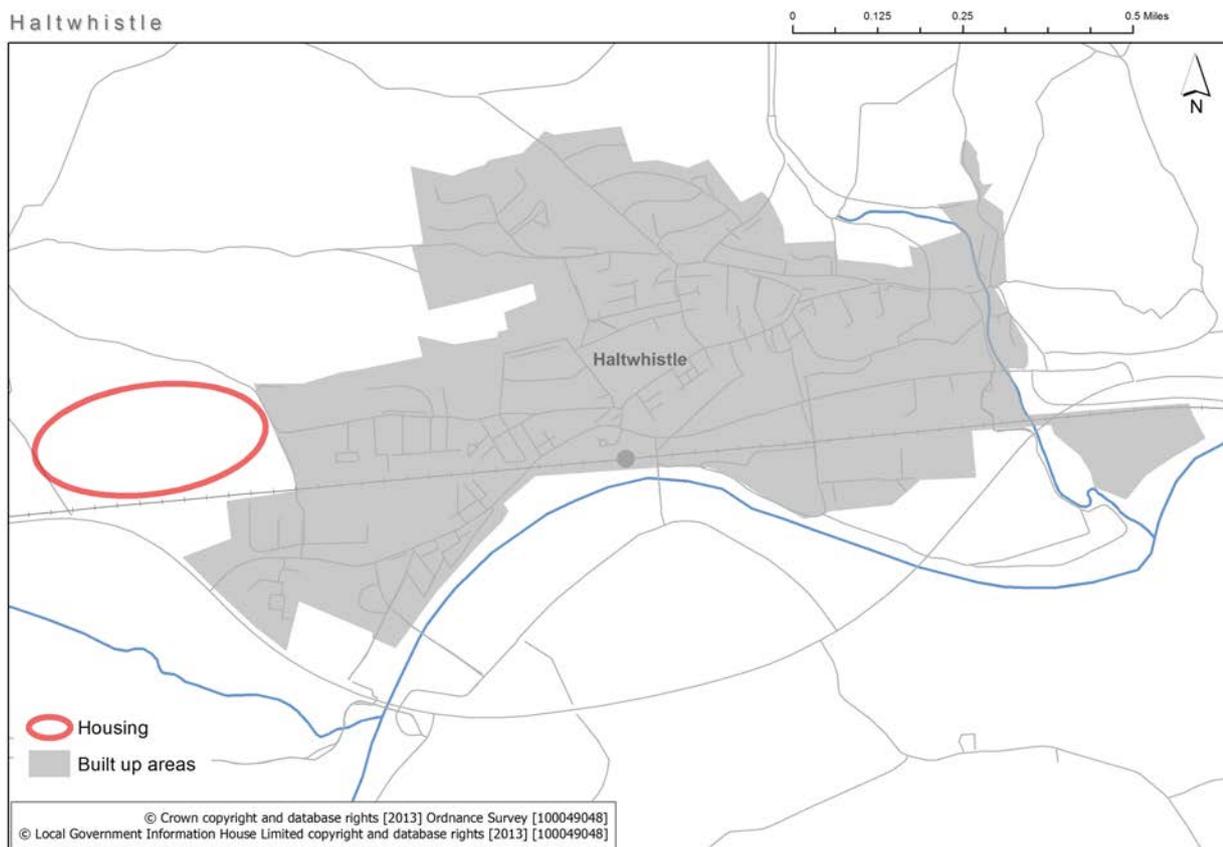
## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

Area constrains some areas to the east and north-east of the town. Other areas surrounding the town are steeply sloping, which means that some sites are unsuitable for development. Narrow residential roads are also a constraint around the northern edges, and a number of smaller sites have been discounted due to viability, as a result of the need for access improvements to sites with relatively low yields.

### Discounted options for Haltwhistle

**9.166** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 180 new dwellings over the plan period.

**9.167** While development at this level is greater than what has been achieved in recent years, over the plan period it would result in a decline in the population. Continuing existing policy will result in a modest increase, but not enough to strengthen Haltwhistle's main town role.



### Question 43

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Haltwhistle. Do you have any comments?

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

### Allendale

**9.168** To maintain and strengthen the role of Allendale, without compromising the setting of the towns and North Pennines AONB, it is considered that growth in population consistent with the national population projections is required.

**9.169** Just over 1 hectare of employment land at Catton, split between two sites, is to be protected or retained for diversified employment purposes.

**9.170** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 100 dwellings over the plan period. The SHLAA identified deliverable and developable sites to accommodate almost 25 dwellings. It is considered that small sites within Allendale will be able to accommodate development over the plan period and there is not a requirement to identify a strategic location.

**9.171** By relaxing the restrictions on the conversion of redundant buildings, the draft Allendale Neighbourhood Plan will support small scale delivery of currently unidentified sites.

#### Discounted options for Allendale

**9.172** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. Maintaining the current policy approach would result in a population decline. Conversely, if development at the level of recent years was continued, growth would be at a level which may start to compromise the character of the settlement.

#### **Question 44**

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Allendale. Do you have any comments?

### Bellingham

**9.173** The village is the largest settlement in the North Tyne Valley and acts as a gateway for people visiting the National Park and Kielder Water and Forest Park. The village looks to Hexham for many higher level services. The village is relatively remote and its local economy is more self-contained than others in the delivery area.

**9.174** Less than a quarter of a hectare of employment land is identified to continue the provision of diversified employment land.

**9.175** To maintain and strengthen the role of Bellingham, without compromising the setting of the town, it is considered that growth in population at a level slightly lower than the national population projections is required.

**9.176** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 300 dwellings over the plan period. While it is proposed that the majority of these will be delivered within Bellingham, it is considered that Otterburn will also be able to absorb a proportion of the required numbers.

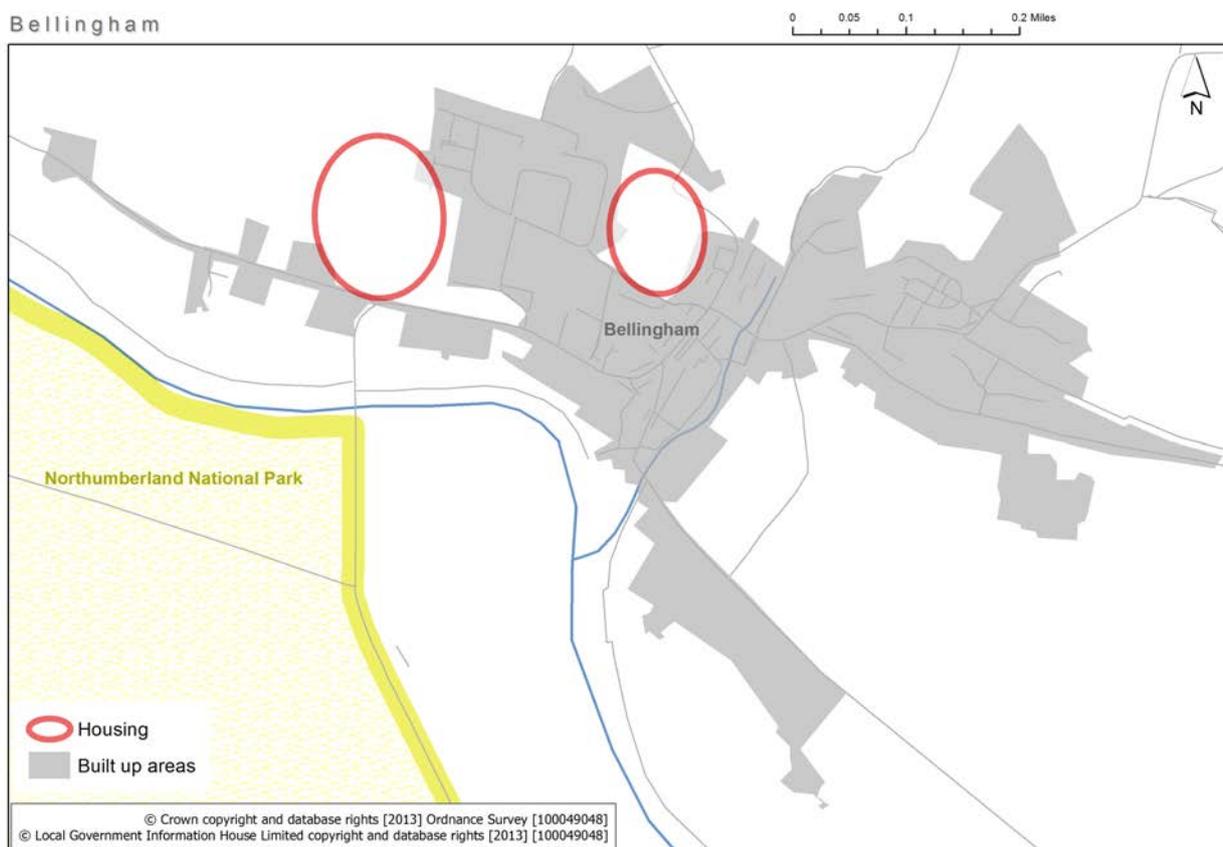
## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

**9.177** The SHLAA identifies deliverable and developable sites in Bellingham and Otterburn, with capacity to deliver around 150 dwellings, mostly within Bellingham. More than half of these units are accounted for by a site to the south of the village, currently allocated for housing. However, this capacity does not include the area to north east of Bellingham Auction Mart, or areas to the west of Bellingham, all of which were identified with constraints in the SHLAA. In order to accommodate the required level of growth, it is proposed that both these locations in addition to that to the south of village are identified as strategic housing areas with a total capacity to accommodate approximately 220 dwellings.

### Discounted options for Bellingham

**9.178** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. If the Council were to plan for the level of development required to meet sub national population projections this would require 320 new dwellings over the plan period. Given the lack of developable land it is considered growth at this level was undeliverable.

**9.179** If the level of development was to continue at the rate proposed by current policy, a significant decline in the population would occur. This is likely to have a detrimental effect upon Bellingham maintaining its role and sustaining its services.



### Question 45

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Bellingham. Do you have any comments?

# 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

## Haydon Bridge

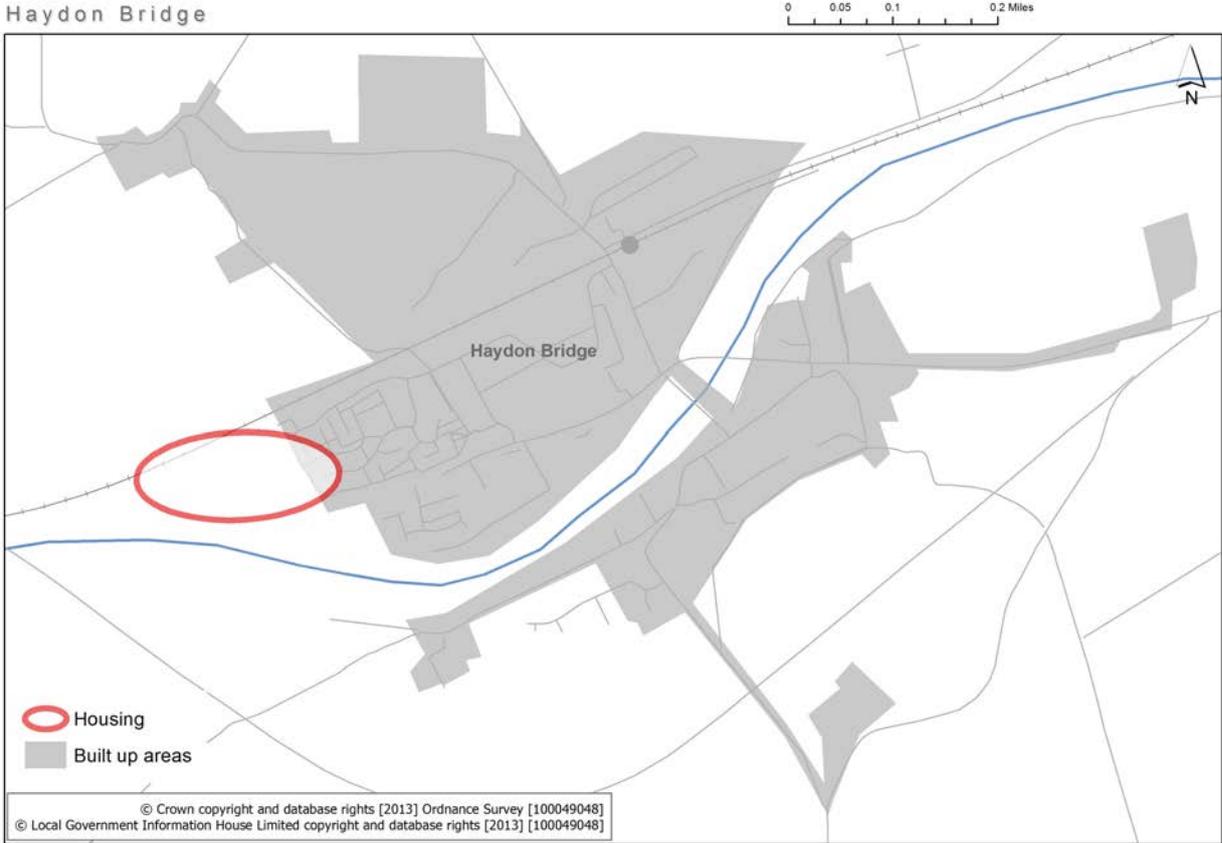
**9.180** To maintain and strengthen the role of Haydon Bridge, without compromising the setting of the town, and that of the Tyne Valley, it is considered that growth in population consistent with the national population projections is required.

**9.181** The preferred level of growth to deliver the overall strategy will require an additional 200 dwellings over the plan period. The SHLAA identified deliverable and developable sites to accommodate almost 170 dwellings.

**9.182** The location with the potential to deliver the largest number of units is that to the west of Haydon Bridge. It is proposed that this location is identified as a strategic housing area to accommodate approximately 100 dwellings. An extension of the existing 'Showfield' site will accommodate a significant number of additional homes. It is considered that other locations within Haydon Bridge will be able to accommodate development to meet the modest shortfall over the plan period.

### Discounted options for Haydon Bridge

**9.183** A range of alternative future development options have been considered. Maintaining the current policy approach would result in a population decline. Conversely, if development at the level of recent years was continued, growth would be at a level which may start to compromise the character of the settlement.



### Question 46

This is our preferred approach for the settlement of Haydon Bridge. Do you have any comments?

### Development elsewhere in the West Northumberland Delivery Area

**9.184** In the remaining rural parts of the area, namely the lower reaches of the North Tyne valley and the far west, projections suggest different outcomes. Population decline is projected in the Wark and Humshaugh area based upon natural change, past delivery or the continuation of current development plan policy. By way of contrast the far west of Tynedale is only projected to lose population as a result of natural change or no housing growth. In order to avoid the impact of decline on communities in the area and protect current social and economic well-being, net inward-migration will be sought to increase the population. An additional 480 dwellings will be promoted. The approach will be to disperse the new houses across the small settlements which lie within the area, some of which are either inset or washed over by Green Belt.

### Policy 8

#### West Northumberland Delivery Area

To deliver sustainable development across the West Northumberland Delivery Area, the following core strategic planning principles apply in both plan-making and assessing development proposals and in order to sustain the vitality of the area's local communities:

- a. The main town of Haltwhistle, as the key hub for housing, employment, education, healthcare and retail, will be the main focus for future development and regeneration;
- b. Bellingham, Haydon Bridge and Allendale will continue to be supported as key settlements with critical masses of services, accessible to their resident communities and those in their rural hinterlands. Development will be supported that maintains and strengthens this role;
- c. Outside these areas proposals will be considered in accordance with Policy 2 (of the stage 1 Preferred Options consultation);
- d. Provision will be made for 2.8 hectares of land for economic development, comprising:

## 9. Delivery of the preferred strategy

- i. 2.0 hectares protected for B-class use; and
  - ii. 0.8 hectares identified for mixed use employment;
- e. Provision will be made for 1,480 new dwellings over the plan period distributed as follows:

<i>Main Town:</i>		
	Haltwhistle	400
<i>Service Centres:</i>		
	Allendale	100
	Bellingham	300
	Haydon Bridge	200
<i>Rest of Delivery Area:</i>		480

### Question 47

This is our preferred option for the West Northumberland Delivery Area. Do you have any comments?

## Appendix A: Explanation of the Baseline Population and Household Data

The starting point for the population and household modelling work is population and household data produced by ONS and DCLG. In September 2012, ONS published interim 2011 sub-national population projections (SNPP) for the period 2011-21. These projections vary from the previous 2008 and 2010 sub national population projections. Table A.1 below highlights the impact of the different projections for Northumberland.

**Table A.1 Population projections**

		Interim 2011-based	2010-based	2008-based
Population 2011		316,300	312,500	313,100
Population 2031		337,600	325,700	336,300
<b>Population growth 2011 to 2031<sup>(62)</sup></b>	No.	21,400	13,200	23,200
	%	<b>6.73%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>7.41%</b>

At a national level there are known issues associated with the interim 2011-based projections. The ONS highlight that caution should be used in the application of these projections for planning purposes for younger age groups, as this factor will impact the projections of household by type. The projections are known to over-project the numbers of births. A similar issue is also true for mortality rates, although to a lesser extent. Looking at Northumberland, in relation to fertility, there has been a large underestimate of the number of females, particularly those aged 28 and 29. In terms of outward migration, particularly among females, there may be a problem with applying the outward UK migration assumptions from 2010 to the 2011 data; highlighting an underestimate of the number of females that migrate.

Household projections are determined by assumptions on future levels of fertility, mortality and net migration, and household formation. The latest interim household projections, published by CLG in April 2013 use the 2011 interim SNPP as their base. They show a lower growth in households compared with the 2008-based projections, equating to approximately 235 fewer households per year between 2011 and 2031 in Northumberland. Household size is also predicted to decline, from 2.3 in 2011 to 2.2 in 2021.

62 NCC have projected forward the interim figures for 2011 to 2031

## Appendix A: Explanation of the Baseline Population and Household Data

**Table A.2 Household projections**

		Interim 2011-based	2008-based
Households 2011		137,310	138,994
Households 2031		152,922	159,303
<b>Household growth 2011-2031<sup>(63)</sup></b>	No.	15,612	20,309
	%	<b>11.37%</b>	<b>14.61%</b>

There are concerns about the robustness of the 2011 interim household projections as they are based on short-term trends which include the recession and thus being potentially too negative as the market picks up. They are also only interim figures, and only projected forward for 10 year period. Given the issues of uncertainty expressed in relation to the 2011 Interim SNPP and household projections, and the impact in Northumberland, it is considered that the 2008 sub-national household projections and the 2010 sub-national population projections are the most robust set of projections at this point in time. Therefore they have been used as the population and household projections baseline figures within the POPGROUP demographic model, however these have been scaled to account for the 2011 Census population data.

63 NCC have projected forward the interim figures for 2011 to 2031

### Appendix B: Equality Impact

The County Council is fully committed to undertaking its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation. Under it, the Council must ensure that any new policies promote equality and diversity and do not adversely affect or discriminate against 'protected characteristics'<sup>(64)</sup>.

Due to the scope of the Core Strategy it was concluded from the outset that the policies would have the potential for these types of impacts and that an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) should form part of the process. In addition, the Core Strategy is prepared in full consultation with communities and stakeholders and it is also important to ensure that there is no unfairness or discrimination in the consultation process itself.

### Equality Impact Assessments to date

At the Issues and Options and Stage 1 of the Preferred Options, full Equality Impact Assessments were undertaken and published, which

- set out baseline information to assist in clearly identifying the key equality issues;
- sought to ensure that policy options would meet equality criteria;
- sought to ensure that consultations undertaken were entirely fair in terms of the protected characteristics;
- catalogued planning issues of concern to people with protected characteristics, to feed back into the planning process;
- reviewed how the emerging plan could help deliver equality based aims set down in other documents (including some produced by other Council departments).

### How the current document relates to the assessment process

This new consultation document adds detail to the previous (Preferred Options) stage although it is not a separate stage in its own right. It is acknowledged that:

1. The EqIA that was produced at the previous stage stated that there would be a need to undertake a further EqIA following population and modelling work, as the scale of new development in each delivery area would become clearer;
2. This document includes some new policies which will need to be assessed before they are taken forward;
3. One or two policies that were assessed at the previous stage reappear in a slightly different form in the current document, due to the new evidence being fed into the process. An example is some of those relating to affordable housing. These will require reassessment.

In spite of these three points, it has been decided not to carry out another full Equality Impact Assessment at this time. In justifying this, it should firstly be made clear that the feedback received from people so far, including that specifically coming from groups and forums representing those with the protected characteristics, has been continually fed into the process. As stated, this is not a separate stage in its own right but adds detail to the previous publication. A consolidated draft plan will be published for consultation in the first

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64 The protected characteristics are age (older / younger), disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, and religion and belief.

## Appendix B: Equality Impact

half of 2014. That document will incorporate a full set of the draft policies, all of which will, by then, have been through at least one round of consultation. It is only then that policies will begin to carry some weight as part of the emerging plan and provide the degree of certainty that will allow for clearer assessment with respect to equality impact.

For the above reasons, it is appropriate that the next full Equality Impact Assessment should take place at the next stage, rather than now.<sup>(65)</sup>

### Ensuring that the current consultation meets equality criteria

Notwithstanding the above, as there is a consultation exercise, associated with this current document, it is necessary to demonstrate that this will be fair and non-discriminatory

The Council has, within its new draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), included a number of commitments, in relation to the Local Development Plan, as well as with respect to the 'protected characteristics' and will adhere to these during the current and future consultations. These reflect recent legislation, the Council's corporate approach and lessons learned from the consultations so far.

Therefore the principles being employed now and which will be applied during the current consultation, include:

- engaging with umbrella organisations or via networks that serve people with particular protected characteristics
- Insofar as time and resources allow, responding positively to requests from groups representing those less able to access the plan or events, e.g. older or disabled people, to meet them or provide materials in different forms.
- Using effective means including innovative forms of communication to reach younger people;
- Offering the use of specialised means to overcome any communications barriers.

Advice has been sought from the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy Officer on whether there are certain of the protected characteristics or any groups within the population who may be particularly affected by the proposals at this stage of the consultation and would warrant targeted questions / events etc. The opinion was that the only area of the population that might require this kind of targeting would be the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. This reflects the emphasis in the document on defining the area to be covered by the Green Belt extension around Morpeth, insofar as this could reduce the possible choice of any future permanent or transit sites. It can be noted that a question on this has already been posed, as part of targeted consultations following Issues and Options. At the time of publication of the last Preferred Options EqIA in February 2013, eight GRT respondents for the most part agreed with extending the Green Belt and stated that it did not affect traditional migration routes or pitch provision. The opportunity has been taken for the GRT Liaison Officer to continue to pose this and other targeted questions when visiting permanent sites and roadside encampments and this is on-going.

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65 In addition, further evidence that will be of assistance in assessing equality impact, e.g. the update of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, should be available by then.

The overall results will be reviewed and reported at the next stage. In conclusion, it is not considered necessary, at this stage, to carry out additional targeted consultation, over and above the general awareness raising, mailouts events and other on-going consultation exercises.

It has been identified, through the Single Equality Forum<sup>(66)</sup> that it will be important to provide feedback to, and keep involved, those who have contributed to the Core Strategy process. This type of forum will therefore be utilised at the next stage, as well as the methods listed above and in the draft SCI.

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66 The aims of the forum include enabling the views of minority individuals, groups/organisations and communities to inform policy .... through establishing communication with statutory partners across Northumberland, both regionally and nationally.

### Appendix C: Habitats Regulations Assessment

#### Habitats Regulations Assessment to date

A Habitats Regulations Assessment Scoping Report<sup>(67)</sup> was consulted upon alongside the Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation, setting out the scope and process for completing the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy. At the Core Strategy Preferred Options (February 2013) consultation stage (now referred to as the Stage 1 Core Strategy Preferred Options document), a Habitats Regulations Assessment was undertaken of the draft objectives and policies to assess whether or not they would be likely to have any adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites of nature conservation interest. The assessment identified that a small number of the policies were found to be likely to have a significant effect on one or more European sites in their current form and recommended that these policies be reviewed, with the objective of making amendments which would enable a finding of no likely significant effect to be made<sup>(68)</sup>.

#### How the current document relates to the assessment process

This current consultation document, the Stage 2 Core Strategy Preferred Options document, adds to the previous Stage 1 Preferred Options document. The Habitats Regulations Assessment has been updated and is subject to consultation alongside this document.

#### Future Habitats Regulations Assessment

A consolidated draft plan will be published for consultation in the first half of 2014, which will be subject to a full Habitats Regulations Assessment at that stage. Policies identified as requiring amendment, due to their potential adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites, at both the Preferred Options Stages will be assessed again to see if amendments have resulted in a finding of no likely significant effect on European sites. If it has, the assessment can be concluded in respect of those policies. If not, an appropriate assessment must be undertaken.

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67 Habitats Regulations Assessment Scoping Report available at:  
<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=22909e5a-be5c-402d-bcbe-f88946b6459e&version=-1>

68 Core Strategy Preferred Options Habitats Regulations Assessment available at:  
<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/idoc.ashx?docid=b678c617-4d8c-4aca-90ef-7ba6bad51d65&version=-1>

### Appendix D: Employment land tables

#### Classification of Available Employment Land<sup>(69)</sup>

**Table D.1 Employment Site Protected for B-Class Uses (available land only)**

Site name	Delivery Area	Available land (hectares)
Fairmoor (Morpeth)	Central	9.358
Fairmoor Adjacent to A1 (Morpeth)	Central	9.234
Low Prudhoe	Central	5.653
Alnwick - Lionheart Enterprise Park Phase 2	North	1.929
Alnwick - West Cawledge	North	2.882
Belford	North	0.776
Berwick - Ramparts Business Park	North	6.637
North Sunderland	North	0.834
Wooler - NW of Berwick Road	North	2.086
Ashington - Ashwood Business Park	South East	16.133
Blyth Riverside Park (Coniston Road)	South East	5.971
Cramlington Crosland Park	South East	2.313
Cramlington Nelson Park West	South East	6.838
Cramlington South Nelson	South East	1.353
Cramlington West Hartford	South East	19.000
Northumberland Business Park	South East	14.619
Wansbeck Business Park (Ashington)	South East	5.065
Allendale - Catton	West	0.552
Haltwhistle - Hadrian	West	1.449
<b>Total</b>		<b>112.68 hectares</b>

**Built out sites also protected for B-class use: Acomb – Howford Haulage, Avenue Road – Seaton Delaval, Barrington – Bedlington, Barrington Brickworks, Bridge End – Hexham, Bywell Home Farm, Egger, Eltringham (Hammerite), Green Lane Workshops – Ashington, Greenfield Park – Alnwick, Haltwhistle West End, Haydon Bridge, Loansdean (Morpeth), Meadowfield – Ponteland, Morpeth - Whalton Road, Nelson Park East – Cramlington, New Delaval – Blyth, North Nelson – Cramlington, North Road – Berwick, Rothbury, Stocksfield Hall, Willowburn - Alnwick, Willowtree – Alnwick, Windmill – Cramlington, and Wooler.**

<sup>69</sup> Totals in these tables may differ to those shown in Table 6.2 due to rounding.

## Appendix D: Employment land tables

**Table D.2 Employment site flexible employment use (available land only)**

Site name	Delivery Area	Available land (hectares)
Acomb	Central	0.277
Hexham - Former Bunker	Central	1.373
Morpeth - Coopies Lane	Central	0.162
Newlands - Marley Tile Co.	Central	6.259
Stocksfield - adjacent to Station	Central	0.264
Whitehouse Farm Centre	Central	1.011
Alnwick - Greensfield Moor	North	1.807
Alnwick - Lionheart Enterprise Park	North	0.421
Alnwick - Saw Mill	North	0.311
Berwick - Tweedmouth	North	0.144
Berwick - Tweedside	North	1.608
Amble Coquet Enterprise Park	South East	10.676
Ashington - North Seaton	South East	5.965
Ashington Jubilee	South East	0.399
Blyth Riverside Park	South East	4.241
Cambois - West Sleekburn Industrial Estate	South East	2.130
Cramlington Bassington	South East	3.255
Lintonville Enterprise Park	South East	1.096
Seaton Delaval - Double Row	South East	0.270
Bellingham - Foundary Road	West	0.223
Catton - Ridleys Yard	West	0.581
<b>Total</b>		<b>42.47 hectares</b>

**Built out sites – Alcan Lynemouth, Alnwick Station, Burn Lane – Hexham, Colwell, Corbridge, East Cramlington, Fourstones Limeworks, Fourstones Papermill, Goods Yard – Hexham, Haltwhistle Station, Haugh Lane – Hexham, Hotspur Park – Alnwick, Kitswell Dene – Swarland, Lee Moor Farm – Rennington, Milfield, Milkhope Centre, Morpeth Town Centre Sites, New Kennels (Blagdon), Ocreland Farms, Pegswood, Plenmeller, South Road – Alnwick, St Marys Hospital (remaining employment element), Station Road – Haydon Bridge, Thrunton Brickworks, Tyne Mills – Hexham, Wark Sawmill, West End Farm – Berwick Hill, West Sleekburn Earth Balance, Willowburn – Alnwick, and Wooperton Sawmill.**

## Appendix D: Employment land tables

**Table D.3 Possible re-development for other land uses.**

Site name	Delivery Area	Developed land (hectares)	Available land (hectares)
Mickley - Tyne Valley Garden Centre	Central	1.238	0
Alnwick - St Thomas Units	North	0.179	0
Berwick - Spittal Point	North	3.784	2.981
Crofton Mill	South East	0.714	0
Seghill	South East	1.756	0
Hadston	South East	4.906	1.22
Blyth Bebside	South East	1.406	0
Linton Lane	South East	2.9	0
Ellington Road End	South East	0.407	0
Bedlington Station	South East	6.409	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>23.699 hectares</b>	<b>4.201 hectares</b>

## Appendix D: Employment land tables

**Table D.4 De-allocation**

Site name	Delivery Area	Land (hectares)
Scots Gap - Auction Mart	Central	0.473
Morpeth - Railway Yards	Central	1.934
Extension to land at Fairmoor	Central	5.887
Riding Mill - Wentworth Garage	Central	1.721
St Marys Hospital – Stannington (residential)	Central	32.614
Hexham - Burn Lane (residential)	Central	0.44
Belford West	North	0.874
Linton Lane (residential)	South East	2.1
Ellington Colliery	South East	19.386
Land at Fisher Lane, Cramlington	South East	21.443
Newbiggin - Woodhorn Road	South East	0.302
South Nelson Cramlington (undeliverable east side of site)	South East	2.678
Crofton Mill	South East	1.454
Haltwhistle - West of Park Road	West	4.895
Bellingham - South of Demense Farm	West	0.137
Haydon Bridge - North of Station Road (allotment land)	West	0.227
<b>Total</b>		<b>96.56 hectares</b>

## Glossary

**A1 South East Northumberland Link Road** A road which will link the A1 north of Morpeth with Ashington and other areas of south-east Northumberland. The westernmost section of the road, sometimes referred to as the Morpeth Northern Bypass, has yet to be constructed.

**Affordable housing** Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

**Affordable rented housing** One aspect of affordable housing, this is housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80 per cent of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

**Amenity** A positive element or elements that contribute to the positive character of an area, such as lack of noise and disturbance, openness, landscape, townscape, opportunities for recreation etc.

**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)** An area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Northumberland has the Northumberland Coast AONB and part of the North Pennines AONB.

**Ashington Blyth and Tyne Railway Line** This line connects Ashington with Tyneside via western Blyth and has a link to Morpeth. It is currently used as a goods-only line but there is a long and widely held ambition to reintroduce passenger services to the line.

**Biodiversity** The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.

**Blyth Estuary Renewable Energy Zone (BEREZ)** Spanning the north and south banks of the River Blyth. A partnership of public and private organisations is working to bring further investment into this zone from the renewable energy sector, particularly in relation to offshore wind, as well as from the offshore engineering and energy generation sectors.

**Cambois Zone of Economic Opportunity** An area of expansion land at Cambois, designated in the existing Wansbeck Local Plan for development by businesses requiring large sites in non-estate locations.

**Clean coal** Technologies that may reduce emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other greenhouse gases associated with power generation from coal. This includes carbon capture and storage and coal gasification.

**Coalescence** The situation where the built-up areas of two or more towns or villages spread out and merge with each other.

## Glossary

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**Combined Authority** A formal structure to lead collaboration between local authorities on transport and economic growth, established through a Statutory Order agreed between the authorities involved (in this case the seven councils that make up the North-East Local Economic Partnership) and central Government.

**Conservation Area** Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

**Core Strategy** A Development Plan Document setting out the spatial vision, objectives and key strategic policies for an area. 'Preferred Options' is the second stage in the production of the Core Strategy and this document forms the second part of the Preferred Options stage.

**De-allocation** The removal of a planning allocation. De-allocation may be proposed if a planning allocation has existed in a local plan for many years but has never been implemented for reasons such as the land proving to be unsuitable for the proposed use or the location becoming less viable.

**Delivery Area** Any of four areas defined for planning purposes for the Core Strategy, based on those in the Sustainable Community Strategy and on housing market areas.

**Delivery Document** The development plan document that will be prepared following the Core Strategy in order to set out more detailed policies, proposals and allocations the main purpose of which is to ensure that the Core Strategy policies are realised on the ground and update older local plan policies.

**Demographic patterns / changes** The make-up of the population of a particular area in terms of birth-rates, the age profile, new migrants etc. and how this changes over time.

**Density (of development)** The amount of building within an area of land. For housing it is expressed as the number of dwellings per hectare.

**Designated area** An area defined by a line on a map which, by virtue of statute, enjoys a degree of protection from development that would impact adversely on the wildlife, landscape or other natural asset within its boundary. There are also built heritage designations such as Conservation Areas.

**Development** Defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Most forms of development require planning permission (see also "permitted development").

**Development Management** The process through which a local planning authority considers a planning application and whether it should be given permission

**Development Plan** This includes adopted council development plan documents such as core strategies and any future adopted neighbourhood plans setting out the authority's policies for the development and use of land.

**Development Plan Documents (DPDs)** DPDs are adopted plans and documents that form part of the development plan. Once adopted, planning decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise. DPDs can include core strategy, land allocation and delivery plans, area action plans, and neighbourhood plans.

**Discounted Options** This is where a number of options for the scale and distribution of development in an area have been examined. The discounted options are those that have been rejected because they will not deliver the required outcomes – e.g. they will cause a population decrease.

**Duty to co-operate** Collaborative working with adjoining authorities, and other public bodies, regarding strategic issues which may have significant cross boundary impacts, during the preparation of Local Plans.

**Employment land** Land allocated / reserved for industrial and business use.

**Employment Land Review (ELR)** Study identifying the level of employment land required, considering past levels of employment land take up and other factors. It also identifies parts of the County with an over- or under-supply of employment land.

**Enterprise Zone** An area where Central Government aided by Local Government wishes to stimulate development and investment through business rate relief, financing and regulation incentives, which may include simplified planning guidance specified in a Local Development Order.

**Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)** Undertaken to ensure that equality issues are taken into account throughout the Core Strategy process, and that it promotes equality and diversity and does not adversely affect or discriminate against any of the protected characteristics.

**Evidence base** The information and data gathered by local authorities and used to inform policy development. It includes a wide range of numerical data and other information, including, surveys, studies, discussions and consultations.

**Five Year Housing Land Supply** An identified supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to meet housing requirements over a specified five year period, collated annually.

**Geo-diversity** The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

**Green Belt** (not to be confused with the term 'greenfield') A land designation with the fundamental aim to prevent urban sprawl by keeping the land permanently open. The purposes of the Green Belt as specified in paragraph 80 of the NPPF are: to check the restricted sprawl of large built-up areas; prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and, assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

**Green Infrastructure (GI)** Green spaces in towns, villages or elsewhere, serving different purposes, which together form a network that can provide local communities with a better environment and quality of life and help wildlife.

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**Greenfield Land or Site** Land (or a defined site) which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time.

**Floorspace** The floor area (on all floors) of a building or set of buildings. Gross floorspace includes areas ancillary to the main use. Net floorspace excludes ancillary areas.

**Growth Point** A previous Government initiative to support local authorities with plans for long-term sustainable housing-led growth. South East Northumberland, comprising the former Blyth Valley and Wansbeck districts and some parts of the former Castle Morpeth district to the north, were given Growth Point status in July 2008.

**GVA (Gross value added)** An economic measure of the value of goods and services in an area, namely the value of output less the value of intermediate consumption.

**Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities** (for planning purposes) Communities consisting of persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

**Habitat** An area or natural environment in which an organism, species or population normally lives. Habitats take many forms and should not be considered in isolation as they are linked and overlap with each other.

**Habitats Regulations** A set of government regulations (currently the Habitats and Species Regulations 2010), which sets out requirements within England regarding the protection and enhancement of important natural assets, giving expression to various European Directives, international Conventions and national statutes.

**Hinterland** A term used to describe the area which falls within the influence of a town – especially the area from which the town draws most of the people who work there or use its services.

**Household** A person living alone or a group of people living together at the same address and with common housekeeping.

**Housing Needs Survey** A survey of households which assesses affordable housing needs across a defined area, looking at criteria such as housing conditions, overcrowding and household incomes and comparing these with housing costs and availability.

**Housing Land Availability Assessment** – see 'Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment'

**Housing requirement** The amount of housing that has to be built in a given period to meet needs and demands. This is now calculated separately for Northumberland, based on evidence, although the Council must cooperate with neighbouring authorities and other relevant bodies in arriving at the final requirement figure(s). (See also 'Duty to cooperate').

**Housing trajectory** Shows how housing has been delivered in the past and is projected to be delivered in the future, as compared with the requirements that have been set in the local plan.

**Independent Examination** The process by which an Independent Planning Inspector publicly examines a Development Plan Document to ensure that it is 'sound' in terms of factors such as the evidence on which it is based, national policy, consultations undertaken etc.

**Infill development** Building on a relatively small site between existing buildings.

**Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)** Telecommunications networks such as telephone lines, mobile phone masts and broadband infrastructure.

**Infrastructure** The physical entities (for example roads, railways, sewers, pipes, telecommunications lines) that are necessary for communities to function and move around.

**Infrastructure Delivery Plan** To be produced at the next stage, this document will identify the infrastructure needed to support the delivery of the Core Strategy and how this will be funded, linked with other programmes and actually provided, as well as examining possible risks and associated contingency measures.

**Infill boundary** A boundary drawn around part of the built-up area of a settlement that is washed over by the Green Belt, in order to reflect the fact that the area within the boundary contains opportunities for infill development which would not fit the description of 'limited infilling' but which would still be expected to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and not conflict with the purposes of including the settlement in Green Belt in the first place.

**Infill development** Small scale development which fills a restricted gap in the continuity of existing building.

**Inset** A term used to describe a town or village that is surrounded by the Green Belt but is not itself covered (or "washed over") by the Green Belt designation. This means that Green Belt restrictions do not apply within the settlement concerned in the area defined by the inset boundary.

**Intermediate housing** One aspect of affordable housing, this comprises homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the certain criteria. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing. Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as 'low cost market' housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

**Knowledge-based industries** Defined by the OECD/Work Foundation as high to medium tech manufacturing, finance, telecommunications, business services, education and health. However the knowledge-based economy may spread over into other sectors such as energy supply, retail and the cultural / creative industries.

**Landscape sensitivity** Based on the Landscape Character Assessment for the County as a whole, the Key Land Use Impact Study, (part of the evidence base for the Local Plan), assessed the edges of main towns and service centres to ascertain which parts would be likely to be more sensitive than others to additional built development.

**Limited infilling** Infill development which is particularly small in scale, occupying a small gap between buildings –on the scale of one or two, (rather than several) dwellings.

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**Local Development Order** A mechanism to simplify planning guidance to encourage economic growth by allowing certain forms of development to be undertaken without the need for planning permission, subject to specified conditions and design guidance.

**Local Economic Partnership (LEP)** see 'North East LEP'

**Local Plan** The documents and maps that make up the plan for the future development of a local area such as Northumberland. The term also describes older planning documents prepared by the former Northumberland authorities. Many policies in these plans continue to be 'saved' and form part of the Development Plan for decision-making purposes.

**Low Carbon Economy** The development within an area or local economy of processes and technologies, which can assist in reducing the release of carbon dioxide into the environment.

**Low Cost Market Housing** Usually refers to new build dwellings that are sold for 100% owner occupation but at a price that is discounted from the price than they could be sold for on the open market. These are not part of the definition of affordable housing.

**Main Towns** The most important settlements in Northumberland with a key housing, employment and service role across often wide areas. They were defined at the previous consultation stage, following an audit of services and facilities within the settlements across the county. They are Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Blyth, Cramlington, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Morpeth, and Prudhoe.

**Major Developed Sites** Sites within and washed over by the Green Belt where there is a major development, in use or abandoned, such as a hospital, military site, industrial or commercial buildings.

**Marine Management Organisation (MMO)** A public body established and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, which brings together key marine decision-making powers and delivery mechanisms. It acts as an "enabling marine regulator" to help marine industries grow wherever possible, while following the principles of better regulation.

**Masterplan** A detailed plan setting out how a particular area is developed, mapping the phasing of the development, (i.e. the order in which different parts of the development are to be built) and setting out an action plan explaining how, when and by whom different requirements are triggered / funded.

**Morpeth Northern Bypass** See 'South East Northumberland Link Road'

**NaREC (National Renewable Energy Centre)** Based in Blyth, this is the UK's national / transnational research centre for helping to integrate renewable energy systems into the national grid and to catalyse the development and deployment of offshore wind, wave and tidal energy generation technologies.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** A Government document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

**Neighbourhood Plan** A plan prepared for a defined area by a Parish or Town Council – the "qualifying body". Once it has been accepted by the local community through a Referendum, the neighbourhood plan will form part of the Development Plan.

**North East Independent Economic Review** A critical review of the North East economy carried out by the North East Local Economic Partnership (LEP), in order to identify opportunities for and barriers to the boosting of employment and productivity.

**North East LEP(Local Economic Partnership)** A business-led strategic organisation, spanning the North East, apart from the Tees valley area, responsible for promoting and developing economic growth and funded by the seven local authorities and Central Government.

**Northumberland County and National Park Joint Structure Plan** A development plan document prepared by the former Northumberland County Council that covered strategic matters. Only one policy remains saved from that plan (Policy S5), defining the general extent of the Green Belt extension around Morpeth.

**Northumberland National Park** Designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, the designation seeks to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park, and to promote opportunities for public understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities. The Park sits entirely within the boundary of Northumberland but is a separate local planning authority area.

**Obligation** A Planning Obligation is a legally enforceable obligation, entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

**Open market residential development** Housing for sale or rent on the open market, without any restrictions regarding occupation or price.

**Open Space** Usually used in relation to built-up areas. Refers to all open areas of public value, which can offer opportunities for sport, and recreation, as well as a visual amenity and haven for wildlife. Public open space is where public access may or may not be formally established.

**PDL** See Previously Developed Land

**Permitted Development** Certain limited or minor forms of development that may proceed without the need to make an application for planning permission.

**Phasing (housing)** How the building of housing is spread over time within a defined area or on a large housing site. The orderly development of housing can be achieved through a phasing plan – hence 'Phase 1' or 'Phase 2' of a development.

**Portfolio of sites** Normally referring to the range of employment sites across a defined area, covering the range of sizes and qualities of sites, the types of location they are in and what they are capable of accommodating.

**Previously Developed Land (PDL) or 'Brownfield' Land** Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated

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fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

**Protected characteristics** Characteristics, within the population, which policy makers must ensure are not adversely affected or discriminated against as a result of policies. They are age (older / younger), disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, and religion and belief.

**Ramsar sites** Sites designated under the European Ramsar Convention to protect wetlands that are of international importance, particularly as waterfowl habitats.

**Regeneration** The economic, social and environmental renewal and improvement of rural and urban areas.

**Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)** The former regional tier of the development plan (the RSS for the North-East) was abolished in 2013, using powers in the Localism Act 2011. The RSS set the overall scale and distribution of new development across the North-East, as well as many other strategic aspects of planning – matters which must now be dealt with in the Core Strategies of the various Councils across the region, who now have a duty to cooperate on strategic planning issues.

**Renewable energy** Energy produced using renewable sources such as wind, water or biomass. Off shore renewable energy generation projects such as offshore wind or wave power are dealt with by the Marine Management Organisation and the Government's Infrastructure Planning Unit rather than local planning authorities.

**Resilient communities** This term is sometimes applied to communities' ability to help themselves in the face of an emergency. However in this document it refers more to the degree to which communities can be self-sustaining through the retention of a working population, workplaces, services etc.

**Rural exception sites** Small sites where housing use would not normally be granted permission, which are nevertheless released for affordable housing in order to meet the local community's housing needs.

**Safeguarded land** Undeveloped land on the outskirts of an inset settlement within the Green Belt. The safeguarded land is not itself designated as Green Belt but, instead, remains as a long term allocation or as "White Land" that is safeguarded for the future expansion needs of the settlement concerned.

**Safeguarding** The protection of valuable areas of land from disturbance and/or development, due to the presence of natural assets, mineral resource or possible future proposals (such as a bypass line).

**Scenarios** Different possible outcomes – in this case regarding the growth and health of communities – depending on different 'inputs' – in this case the amount of land allocated for housing and employment and the ability for those houses and workplaces to be delivered on the ground.

**Sequential approach** A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before the consideration of others. For example, housing in relation to various levels of flood risk.

**Service Centres** The second tier of settlements, below Main Towns, which provide local services to their surrounding areas and have a housing and employment role. They were defined at the previous consultation stage, following an audit of services and facilities within the settlements across the county. They are Allendale, Belford, Bellingham, Corbridge, Haydon Bridge, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Ponteland, Rothbury, Seahouses, Seaton Delaval and Wooler.

**Site thresholds (affordable housing)** The minimum size that a market housing site must be (in terms of its area or the number of dwellings proposed) in order to trigger a requirement for affordable housing to be provided as part of / in association with the development, (assuming that a local need for affordable housing has been identified in an up-to-date assessment). The provision is secured through a legal agreement following negotiation between the Council and the developer, which must take account of viability.

**Social rented housing** One aspect of affordable housing, this is housing owned by local authorities or other registered providers for which guideline target rents are determined nationally or locally.

**Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)** Areas given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive, which is transposed into UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010.

**Special Protection Areas (SPA)** Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive.

**Stalled sites (housing)** Sites that have planning permission for housing but where building has not started or has ceased. This may reflect the changing economic climate, whereby obligations previously secured, or certain planning conditions add to the cost of implementing the development to the point where it becomes unviable and is 'stalled'.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** The Council's approach to involving the community in the planning process and development management decisions.

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)** Identifies sites with potential for housing, and assesses their housing potential and when they are likely to be developed, with a view to achieving a five year supply of deliverable housing land.

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)** An assessment of the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that an area (in this case Northumberland) is likely to need over the plan period in order to meet household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change.

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**Superfast Broadband** Superfast broadband infrastructure is infrastructure capable of delivering speeds higher than 24Mbps. Superfast broadband speeds are headline download speeds of greater than 24Mbps.

**Supply chain** The sequence or network (across space and time) of people, businesses or other organisations involved in moving products or services from suppliers to customers. The customers may themselves be manufacturers or service industries supplying consumers with products or services.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** The process of weighing and assessing policies for their global, national and local sustainability implications in relation to the environment, the economy and society, incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to comply with EU Directive 2001/42/EC.

**Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)** A long-term programme of action, published on behalf of the community which reflects the needs and aspirations of the area. (The Northumberland SCS was published in May 2011).

**Sustainable development** Defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The Government makes clear that sustainable development has economic, social and environmental dimensions which are further explained in the NPPF.

**Tenure (housing)** The ownership or rental status of dwellings – i.e. whether they are owner-occupied (owned outright / being bought with a mortgage), privately rented, rented from housing associations or rented from local authorities.

**Town centre** An area defined in a main town or a service centre that includes the key shopping area and adjacent areas where other town centre uses, such as leisure uses, cafés, restaurants and professional services are located. (Definitions were proposed in the previous consultation document).

**Viability Assessment** Compares the likely broad value of planned development likely to come forward over the plan period with the likely costs and constraints, in order to understand the deliverability of the plan and provide certainty and sustainability.

**Washed-over** A term that refers to any village or hamlet or grouping of buildings which is itself part of the Green Belt designation – i.e. 'washed-over' by the Green Belt rather than inset within it – by virtue of their open character and/or important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. Green Belt restrictions apply within these places with the exception that limited infilling may be permitted within the built-up area, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including the settlement in Green Belt in the first place.

**Washed-over with an infill boundary** See 'Infill boundary'

**World Heritage Site (WHS)** A cultural or natural site of outstanding universal value designated by an international council of experts, Hadrian's Wall being the only example falling within Northumberland.

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**NORTHUMBERLAND**

Northumberland County Council