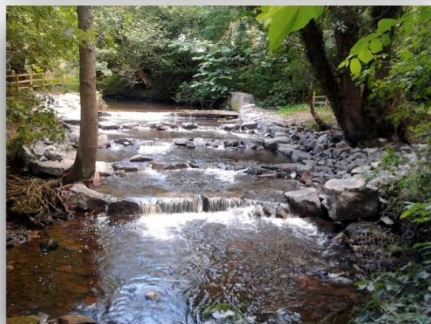


# Broomhaugh and Riding Neighbourhood Plan 2023 - 2036

**Referendum Version**

**August 2023**



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## Foreword

The Broomhaugh and Riding Neighbourhood plan sets out a vision, objectives and policies for our neighbourhood area for the period to 2036. It builds on the parish survey of 2021 and addresses the challenges and opportunities we face as a community in terms of sustainability and climate change, protecting and enhancing our natural environment, ensuring continuation and improvement of our facilities and services, includes accessibility and transport and a commitment to provide housing to achieve a more balanced demographic. Once approved by the community and adopted by Northumberland County Council it will become a formal part of planning policy for our parish.

However, the plan is more than a planning document as it includes a set of community actions that sit alongside the policies and reflect issues identified by local residents during the consultation work for the plan.

The previous Broomhaugh and Riding Parish Plan (2002) resulted in real practical action including, for example, traffic safety measures (though it has taken until this year for the pedestrian crossing on the main road to be installed); the Mill pond work has been started with a view to creating an improved amenity area, particularly for schoolchildren; heritage trail boards have been installed; and the station improved visually with flower tubs and the rail company restored the footbridge. We hope that many of you will get involved in turning our new community actions into reality too.

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

The parish council fully endorses the Neighbourhood Plan – we hope you can too.

Christine Howe  
Chair Broomhaugh and Riding Parish Council

# 1. Introduction

## Background to neighbourhood planning

- 1.1 Neighbourhood planning is a right for communities introduced through the Localism Act 2011. Neighbourhood plans are community-led, prepared by parish councils and in areas without parish councils they are prepared by neighbourhood fora. Broomhaugh and Riding Parish Council is responsible for the preparation of this plan. Neighbourhood plans set out guidance on how new development will be managed. They do this by creating land use 'planning policies'. Plans can deal with a wide range of issues like housing, employment, heritage and transport. In some cases, they may only focus on one or two issues that are of particular importance in a local area. Policies within neighbourhood plans cannot block development or support less than already committed in the statutory development plan. What they can do is shape where that development will go and what it will look like.
- 1.2 Neighbourhood plans can also cover issues which are not related to the use and development of land. They can provide a useful document in which a parish council can establish priorities for action to improve their area. These are often referred to as 'community actions' (section 5 of this plan includes the community actions which apply to our parish). However, the main purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to set policies for the use and development of land.
- 1.3 Once a neighbourhood plan has been examined by an independent examiner, agreed at the referendum stage by the local community and 'made' (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority, it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Planning law requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

## Planning context

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

### National planning policy and guidance

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

### Development plan

- 1.6 The development plan for Broomhaugh and Riding Parish comprises the Northumberland Local Plan which was adopted by Northumberland County Council (NCC) in March 2022. The Broomhaugh and Riding Neighbourhood Plan ('the plan') has been informed by the planning policies contained within the local plan and its evidence base.

### Sustainable development

- 1.7 The purpose of the planning system is to help achieve sustainable development as defined by the NPPF. This specifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be the basis for every plan and every planning decision. In brief, 'sustainable development' is about growth which delivers economic, environmental and social progress for this and future

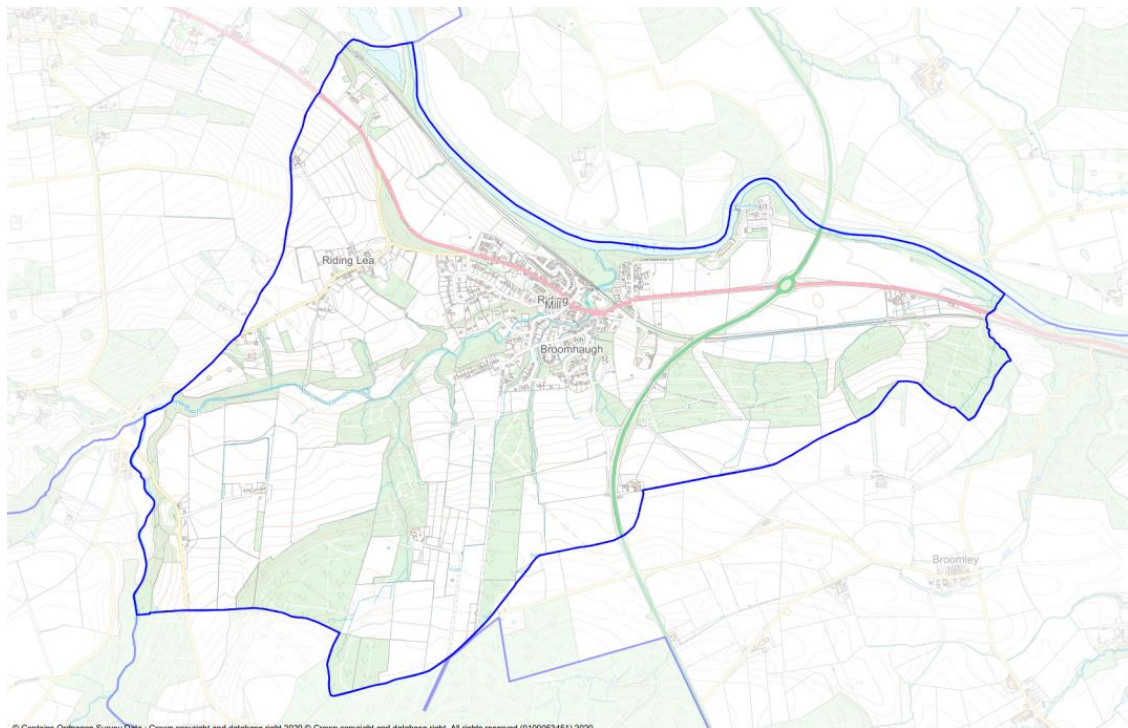
generations. The basic conditions statement, that accompanied the submission plan, explained how the implementation of the plan is expected to contribute to sustainable development.

#### Legal obligations

- 1.8 Neighbourhood plans must be compatible with legal obligations, specifically strategic environmental assessment (SEA) regulations and habitats regulations, through an appropriate assessment (AA). SEA is a way of ensuring that the environmental implications of policies are taken into account before plans are brought into force. The AA process aims to ensure that the plan will not result in significant damage to internationally important nature conservation sites.
- 1.9 NCC provided a screening opinion on whether a SEA and/ or AA was required for the plan. The conclusion of the screening opinion for the SEA was that based on the characteristics of the draft neighbourhood plan and the area characteristics, in the opinion of NCC, the plan is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment and SEA is therefore not required. The HRA screening opinion was that the draft plan would not have a likely significant effect on European Sites within 10km of the plan boundary, either alone or in combination.

### **Background to the Broomhaugh and Riding Neighbourhood Plan**

- 1.10 Broomhaugh and Riding Parish (figure 1) was designated as a neighbourhood area, for the purposes of neighbourhood planning, on 21 October 2020. Following the area designation, the parish council established six working groups and a steering group to lead the plan preparation process. The steering group has seven members, a mixture of parish councillors and local residents.



*Figure 1: Neighbourhood area*

- 1.11 To inform the preparation of the neighbourhood plan two early engagement activities have taken place:
- Parish residents survey – January and February 2021;
  - Engagement on vision and objectives as well as possible themes for planning policies and community actions during November and December 2021. The local community were asked to provide feedback on the outcome of the work of the six working groups.



- 1.12 The early engagement and evidence work informed the preparation of a pre-submission draft neighbourhood plan, which was subject to consultation for six weeks between 1 November and 13 December 2022. The submission draft plan was the result of the engagement and evidence work. It identified:
- The context in which the plan has been prepared – an overview of Broomhaugh and Riding Parish, the **opportunities and challenges** for the plan to address;
  - A **positive vision and objectives** for the future of the parish;
  - How the vision and objectives of the plan will be **delivered through planning policies** i.e. the policies that **will be used to determine planning applications** within the plan area – providing a framework for sustainable development; and
  - How the vision and objectives of the plan will be **delivered through community actions** i.e. measures which are **intended to encourage action and influence decisions** taken by relevant bodies.
- 1.13 The period covered by the plan is to 2036. This aligns with the Northumberland Local Plan (local plan). During this period, the effectiveness of the policies within the neighbourhood plan and the delivery of the community actions will be monitored. This Referendum Version of the plan is a revised version of the submission draft plan. It has been amended to take account of the recommendations of the Independent Examiner.

#### **Next steps**

- 1.14 Following the independent examination, the Plan will be put to a local Referendum; if this returns a majority vote in favour of the Plan, it will be brought into legal force by the County Council and planning decisions will be made in accordance with its policies.

## 2. Background to Broomhaugh and Riding Parish

### A brief history of the parish

- 2.1 Riding Mill stands on the south bank of the Tyne sixteen miles west of Newcastle and five east of Hexham. In its present form the village is really a Victorian creation, incorporating the ancient hamlets of Broomhaugh and Riding, on the east and west banks of the March Burn, which flows from the south-west to join the river.
- 2.2 Prehistoric man was clearly active in the well-wooded and fertile middle Tyne valley, and the Romans settled hereabouts as well, having built a major wall a few miles to the north with its major supply-base at Corbridge, only three miles to the west. Their road from Corbridge to York – Dere Street – passes through the village; it can be traced as a grassy bank in the fields to the west and is still there as a road to the east. The so-called ‘Roman Bridge’ across the March Burn is really a 16th or 17th centuries packhorse bridge, although there was probably a real Roman one nearby. The oldest visible feature near the village is the Norman motte-and-bailey castle of Styford on the north bank of the river, now just a grassy hump, but once the power base of the Barony of Bolbec. As the centuries passed the earthwork castle seems to have been replaced by Styford Hall quarter of a mile to the east; the village of Styford grew up on the low-lying land near the Hall.
- 2.3 Meanwhile, on the south bank, the hamlets of Broomhaugh and Riding developed during the medieval period, not the happiest of times – there were periodic visits by Scots who had unfortunate incendiary tendencies. Even after the Union of the Crowns brought peace between the nations in 1603, local lawlessness and family feuds continued. Bastle houses – thick-walled defensible farmhouses in which the owner lived on the first floor – are testimony to this period. Two survive in Broomhaugh – Broomhaugh Farmhouse and Stable End – and the oldest part of the Dower House in Riding is probably one as well. The Manor House is also of 17th-century origin, and the Wellington Inn – once the Riding House – is dated 1660 and was built by Thomas Errington (although its doorhead initials of ‘T.E’ were later altered to T.B.’). It became notorious a few years later as the claimed meeting places of covens of witches – a lurid account of their meetings was given at the Morpeth Quarter Sessions in 1673, but the accused ladies were apparently acquitted. The building was altered and enlarged in the 18th and 19th century; its original windows have lost their mullions, but two good 17th-century fireplaces survive on the first floor. Little survives of the complex of farm buildings on the north, which had a gingang or horse-engine house. Riding Farm, at the west end of the village, retains a fine example. The Mill that gave its name to the village faces the Inn; there was a corn mill here since at least the medieval period but the present building, converted into a house in 1972, is of late 18th or early 19th century date.
- 2.4 The great flood of 1771 seems to have destroyed the village of Styford; its inhabitants probably moved to Broomhaugh, set more safely on higher ground on the opposite bank of the Tyne beyond a ford, which finally fell out of use when the construction of the modern pumping station a few hundred yards downstream raised the level of the river by a couple of feet. The village street of Broomhaugh was once known as ‘Styford Street’ and retains some attractive old buildings. Outside Broomhaugh Farmhouse is a whalebone arch erected by a 19th-century mariner; over the road is the 1860 manse that went with the former Baptist chapel, whilst further south older cottages remodelled as stables for Broomhaugh, now houses again, face the brick Ford Terrace of 1907 and then, beyond a footpath representing the old east-west road on this side of the valley, Yew Tree Cottage facing the Methodist Chapel has its doorhead dated 1699 with the initials M.V. and T.V. – the ‘V’ is actually the ‘U’ of Usher. The Ushers were a Baptist family; when one of their babies died in 1708 it was refused burial at the then-parish church of St Andrew, at Bywell. As nonconformists of the time tended to do, the Ushers

responded by opening a burial ground on their own property, opposite their house. A chapel was eventually built on it in 1843, being transferred to its present Methodist congregation in 1965.

- 2.5 What made Riding Mill the village it is today was the coming of the railway with the Newcastle to Carlisle line, the first coast-to-coast connection in the world. Riding Mill Station opened in 1835, and the original building still stands; the road bridge a little further east is of the same date. Commuting into Newcastle began early; the houses of Hollin Hill Terrace, built in 1864, would not be out of place in Jesmond; thanks to the train, the town had come to the country. And thus, came about the late-19th and 20th century growth of the village, and the linking together of the old hamlets in a new settlement – steadily growing from c 150 souls in the mid-19th century to c450 in 1901 and c 900 today – that takes its name from the Mill.
- 2.6 Riding and Broomhaugh used to be in the parish of St Andrew’s Church at Bywell, three miles downriver. The Anglican church of St James was only built as a chapel-of-ease to Bywell in 1868; as the village and its congregation grew a rather more spacious transept and chancel were added eleven years later. In the trees on the hill above the church is Oaklands built in 1860 by Thomas Wilson, a playful Gothic house that seems to have been the prototype for the grander Shotley Hall (Shotley Bridge) also built by Wilson three years later. At the east end of the village are also two slightly later Victorian houses in a more Italianate style, Broomhaugh House (later a hotel, but now an engineering business, Osbit) and Underwood (now Wentworth Grange residential home).

### Population and housing

- 2.7 The 2011 census<sup>1</sup> illustrates that the parish had a population of 966 residents, the 2019 ONS estimated identifies and increase to 979. Figure 2 illustrates that, in 2011 the parish had a large population between the ages of 45-84, higher than Northumberland and England. The parish also had a low percentage of residents between the ages of 0-15, 16-24 and 25-44 compared to Northumberland and England.

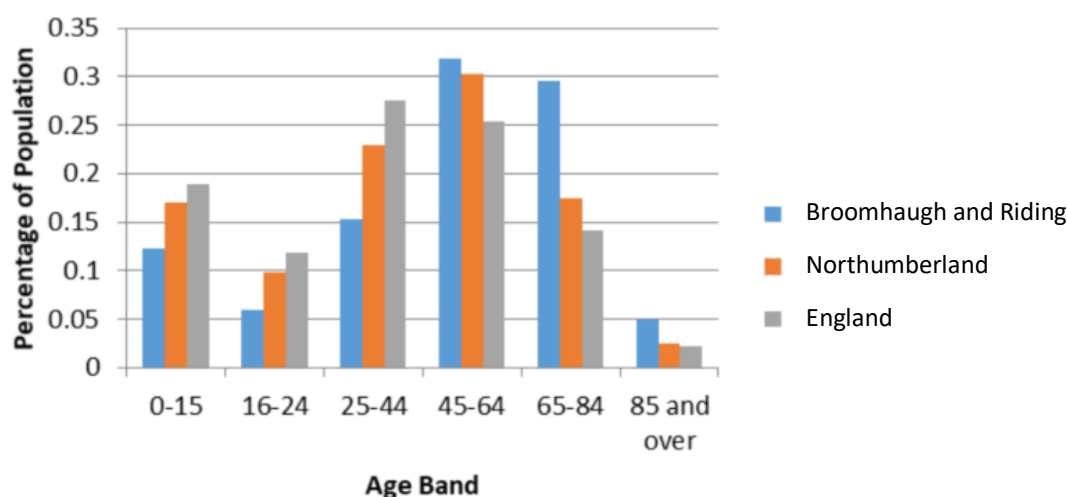


Figure 2: Age structure - 2011 census

- 2.8 Table 1 illustrates that the parish has a higher percentage of family households and a lower proportion of one person households than Northumberland and England, with notably more households aged all over 65, and fewer families with dependent children.

<sup>1</sup> Parish level information from the 2021 census is expected in spring 2023.



Table 1: Household composition (2011 census)

Household type		Broomhaugh and Riding	Northumberland	England
One person household	Total	21.6%	29.9%	30.2%
	Aged 65 and over	11.8%	14.0%	12.4%
	Other	9.8%	15.9%	17.9%
One family only	Total	73.2%	66.3%	61.8%
	All aged 65 and over	23.3%	10.3%	8.1%
	With no children	22.4%	21.0%	17.6%
	With dependent children	16.7%	24.9%	26.5%
	All children Non-Dependent	10.8%	10.1%	9.6%
Other household types	Total	5.2%	3.8%	8.0%

- 2.9 Table 2 illustrates that the parish has a high percentage of detached homes and bungalows in comparison to Northumberland and England, as well as a low percentage of flats and terraced homes. This reflects the 2011 census information.

Table 2: Accommodation type (VOA 2020)

Dwelling type	Broomhaugh and Riding (LSOA E1027594)	Northumberland	England
Bungalow	21.4%	15.3%	9.4%
Flat	7.1%	11.6%	23.0%
Terrace	10.7%	26.6%	26.4%
Semi-detached	23.8%	27.7%	23.8%
Detached	36.9%	18.4%	15.9%
Unknown/other	0.0%	0.4%	1.4%

- 2.10 With regard to the size of properties, table 3 illustrates that the parish has a low number of one and two bedroom homes and a high level of four or more bedroom homes, compared to Northumberland and England.

Table 3: Dwelling size (bedrooms) (VOA 2020)

Number of bedrooms	Broomhaugh and Riding (LSOA)	Northumberland	England
1	3.6%	7.8%	12.2%
2	21.7%	30.7%	28.1%
3	34.9%	43.6%	43.6%
4+	39.8%	17.9%	15.4%

- 2.11 Most of the housing stock is contained within older properties and is thus energy inefficient. To put this in context, in 2019, the parish consumed almost 1.5GWh of electrical energy<sup>2</sup> (resulting in c. 460 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub><sup>3</sup>) though this is low compared to the gas consumption which, in 2018, was

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/postcode-level-electricity-statistics-2019-experimental>

<sup>3</sup> National Statistics (2021) 2020 UK greenhouse gas emissions (<https://iga.fyi/co2a>) and carbonindependent.org (<https://iga.fyi/co2c>)

just over 9GWh<sup>4</sup> (equivalent to c. 1,660 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub><sup>5</sup>). This cannot be addressed solely through planning policies, but they have a role to play. These will be addressed, in so far as we are able, by community actions.

- 2.12 The parish survey identified that 54% of those who responded are retired, with 11% of respondents identified as self-employed, a high proportion of whom work from home. More people are also working from home because of COVID-19. The result of this will be an increase in pressure on overall energy consumption within the parish.

### **Employment**

- 2.13 The 2011 census identified that 65% of the population of the parish was economically active, with 29% employed full time, 18% self-employed, and 14% employed part time. Some of the 35% of the parish who were economically inactive, but more than a quarter (27%) were retired. Less than 2% described themselves as unemployed. This profile was reflected in the parish survey, undertaken in early 2021, in which 55% of respondents were retired, 28% employed and 11% were self-employed (and many of them work from home). The proportion of older people is expected to continue rising (from 25% being 65 or over in 2001, to 35% in 2011 and 38% in 2019). Given more than half the population in 2011 had level 4 qualifications and above, there is little pressure to create employment in the parish.
- 2.14 There is only one significant employer in the parish, Osbit, which works in subsea engineering and offshore technology, employing around 140 highly skilled people, with plans to expand. Other employers in the parish include Wentworth Grange Care Home, High Plains Equestrian Centre, Shepherds Dene Retreat and the agricultural industry. In addition, there are seven houses registered as self-catering holiday lets (although it is not clear if they are being let), two offices, two workshops, a public house and two shops (although one of the shops is currently unavailable).

### **Access to services and facilities**

- 2.15 There are a number of important services and facilities within the parish, including allotments, tennis club, sports club, millennium hall, parish hall, station coffee house, pub, outdoor pre-school, primary school, play area and places of worship. However, the village lacks a number of important services and facilities, including a doctor's surgery, dentist and pharmacy.
- 2.16 The parish is served by the Riding Mill train station which is on the Newcastle-Carlisle Line. It is connected to Newcastle and the A1 by a number of roads including the A695 which passes through the village, the A68 and the A69. There is a half-hourly bus service linking the village to Hexham and Newcastle. The parish is within 20 minutes' drive of Newcastle International Airport.



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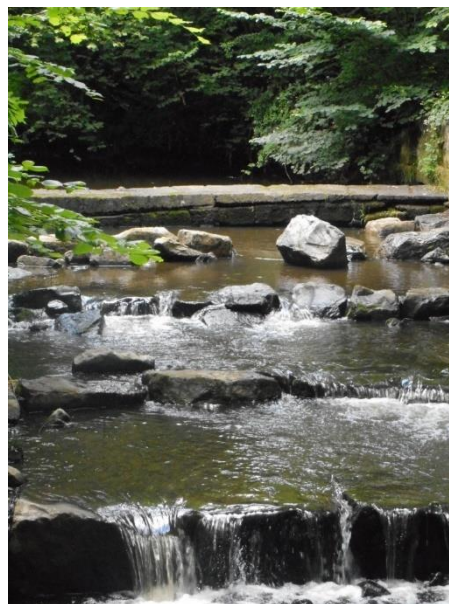
<sup>4</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/postcode-level-gas-statistics-2018-experimental](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/postcode-level-gas-statistics-2018-experimental)

<sup>5</sup> See carbonindependent.org (<https://iga.fyi/co2c>)

## Natural, historic and built environment

### Natural environment

- 2.17 The parish supports a fantastic range of species and habitats. It is underlain by sedimentary carboniferous rocks, comprising a repetitive succession of limestones, sandstones and shales. The parish rises to 160m in the south at Eastwoodhouse Fell and its lowest point is around 20m above sea level as the Tyne exits on the eastern boundary. It is a rural parish dominated by farmland with blocks of plantation forestry and scattered smaller fragments of other habitats such as ancient woodland, species-rich grassland, heathland, and various wetlands. The River Tyne forms the northern boundary of the parish, while the March Burn (the Tyne's main tributary in the parish), broadly bisects the parish south-west to north-east.



- 2.18 The parish spans two landscape national character areas: the Tyne Gap and Hadrian's Wall National Character Area<sup>6</sup> to the north and the North Pennines National Character Area<sup>7</sup> to the south. The parish only has one designated local wildlife site – part of the Tyne River, Corbridge – Stocksfield Local Wildlife Site (LWS). However, it is a large and important one, encompassing the entire River Tyne corridor as it meanders across the parish. Tree cover in the parish is estimated at only 18% which is well below the European average of 37% and world average of 30%, however it is more than the UK estimate of 13%. Feedback from the local community identifies the importance of the green agenda and tree planting has an important role in carbon capture.
- 2.19 The natural environment background paper provides further details on the rich natural environment of the parish and this is summarised in table 4 and figure 3.

*Table 4 - natural environment features*

Feature	Comments
Tyne River, Cobridge – Stocksfield Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	The only designated LWS within the parish. The River Tyne and its fringing woodlands support a wide range of species and provide a significant wildlife corridor across the parish. Although not part of the LWS, the adjacent farmland provides important additional habitat that supports this wildlife interest, since the wooded riparian strip is relatively narrow along much of its length.
March Burn corridor	The March Burn, together with its streamside woodlands and grasslands, forms a diverse chain of wildlife rich habitats crossing the western half of the parish. The adjacent farmland provides important additional habitat that supports this wildlife interest.
Ancient woodlands	The woodland upstream of the weir at the end of Marchburn Lane is the main block of ancient woodland in the parish. It supports a rich ground flora as well as a diverse assemblage of breeding birds. The narrow strip of woodland alongside the Lonnen leading from Church Lane to High Plains also supports a rich ancient woodland flora.

<sup>6</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6734181715410944?category=587130>

<sup>7</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5682293?category=587130>

	There are also large areas of ancient replanted woodland along the March Burn and in the east of the parish in the Shilford Woods. These still retain areas of species-rich ground flora and their wildlife interest could be enhanced by sympathetic woodland management. They provide exciting opportunities for restoration to native broadleaved woodland.
Heathland	The plantations to the west of High Plains Farm stand above an extensive area of heathland. This understorey of heathland is contiguous with the open area of heath just over the parish boundary on Eastwoodhouse Fell, which in turn links to heathy habitats in Healey and beyond. The heathland understorey has survived under the plantations because they are predominantly of Scots Pine, which casts a lighter shade than other conifer species so it is important not to re-stock the plantations with species that will damage the wildlife interest. There is a fantastic opportunity for heathland restoration in this area.
Species-rich grasslands	There is not a large area of species-rich grassland in the parish, but the remaining areas are very significant. Important areas of grassland remain at South Close Field and further west along the March Burn, above Broomhaugh First School playground and in the graveyards at St James' Church. The road verges throughout the parish provide a significant resource of unimproved grassland. These small and fragmented remnants of grassland would benefit from expansion and linking.
Breeding waders	The parish retains a small population of breeding lapwing and curlew. Recent breeding locations are High Plains Farm (lapwing, curlew), High Shilford Farm area (lapwing, curlew), the grassland above Oaklands Rise (lapwing) and the fields around the Broomhaugh roundabout (lapwing). In addition, woodcock breed in the woodlands around the parish.
Farmland birds	The farmland throughout the parish still supports an important assemblage of breeding birds including yellowhammer, skylark, meadow pipit, house and tree sparrow, reed bunting, yellow wagtail, grey partridge, whitethroat, bullfinch and swallow. This interest extends into the village which supports a thriving tree sparrow population
Swifts	The village supports an important breeding population of swifts.
Footpaths	<p>A network of footpaths provide access to the parish. Important routes that are regularly used and that benefit from a rich natural environment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Along the River Tyne</li> <li>• Around the Weir/Marchburn woods</li> <li>• Lonnen above Long Rigg leading to High Plains, the 'Blue Bridge' and Broomleyfell Plantation and Eastwoodhouse Fell</li> <li>• High Shilford Farm and the Shilford/'Pit' woods</li> <li>• The 'old A68' / Whiteside Bank</li> <li>• Around Wentworth Grange</li> <li>• Out to the Broomhaugh roundabout</li> </ul>



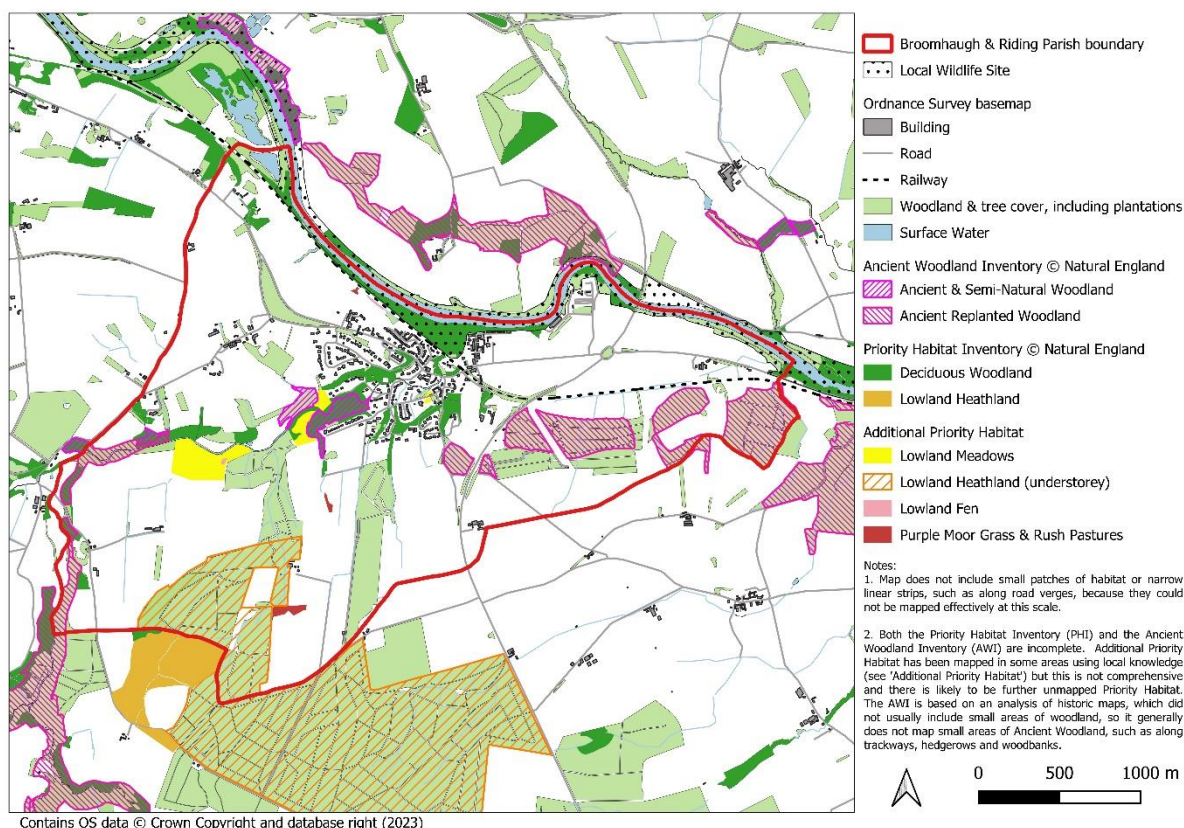


Figure 3 - Natural Environment

### Historic environment

- 2.20 The historic assets are an important part of its character. There are 35 listed buildings all of which are grade II<sup>8</sup>. There are currently 56 entries on the Northumberland Historic Environment Record<sup>9</sup> listed for Broomhaugh and Riding Parish. Entries include boundary stones, trackways and roads, mileposts and houses. Not all non-designated heritage assets are included, and further entries could be added in future as a result of further research.

### Key issues for our plan

- 2.21 The feedback from the parish survey and evidence work has identified the following key issues for the plan – these are not listed in priority order:
- Addressing sustainability and climate change – reducing the carbon footprint of the parish;
  - Having a diverse and balanced population;
  - Protecting rural footpaths, green spaces and the natural environment;
  - Impact of traffic in the village;
  - Light pollution and litter;
  - Enhancement of community facilities;
  - Need for sustainable, affordable and energy efficient housing;
  - Importance of good design in new development.

- 2.22 These issues have informed the vision and objectives for the plan.

<sup>8</sup> All listed buildings are included on the National Heritage List for England. You can search the list by parish <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/advanced-search?searchType=nhleadvancedsearch>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/default.aspx>

### 3. Vision and objectives

#### Vision

- 3.1 The vision sets out what the Broomhaugh and Riding Neighbourhood Plan intends to achieve over the plan period to 2036. It informs all the plan objectives, draft planning policies and community actions:

*“Making the most of our heritage, connectivity and rural environment, we aspire to become a more balanced, diverse and sustainable community.”*

#### Objectives

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

**Objective 1 – Built environment:**

*To ensure that the built environment respects and protects our heritage whilst delivering a balanced provision of housing, reflecting the demographic of the parish and meeting the design policy and zero carbon targets;*

**Objective 2 – Natural environment:**

*To maintain and enhance a thriving natural environment that can be enjoyed by residents of the parish both now and in the future. This includes preserving the dark skies of the parish for both residents and wildlife; reducing light pollution where possible to do so, whilst maintaining a safe and hospitable environment.*

**Objective 3 – Transport:**

*To become a more attractive place to live and visit through better connections to different modes of public transport and easier to navigate as a pedestrian and cyclist with improved wayfinding.*

**Objective 4 – Climate change and energy:**

*To work towards becoming a ‘zero carbon’ village by 2035;*

**Objective 5 – Health and wellbeing:**

*To provide a lovely and friendly environment in which to live, providing residents of all ages with the opportunity to engage in a wide range of leisure and recreational activities for the benefit of their health and wellbeing;*

**Objective 6 – Local economy:**

*To recognise the growth in home working and to ensure that local services meet the requirements of those choosing to spend more time working from home.*

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



## 4. Planning policies

### Introduction

- 4.1 This section of the plan sets out the planning policies which will deliver the vision and objectives. It is not necessary for the neighbourhood plan to repeat policies contained within the local plan. Where it is considered that the matter is fully addressed by a local plan policy and that there is no specific parish detail to add, this is explained.

### Sustainable development and climate change

#### Zero carbon parish

- 4.2 The NPPF explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development<sup>10</sup>. It highlights three overarching objectives, economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways<sup>11</sup>. The NPPF therefore includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development<sup>12</sup>. This presumption is repeated within the Northumberland Local Plan (policy STP2).
- 4.3 The requirement for the planning system to meet the challenges of climate change is also clearly explained within the NPPF<sup>13</sup>. It stresses the need to shape places in ways which contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources; and support renewable and low carbon energy. Planning policies are therefore required to take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, including considering the long-term implications of flood risk.
- 4.4 Broomhaugh and Riding Parish has the same challenges faced by other rural communities, including enforced car dependence and a lack of footpaths and cycle paths, especially to neighbouring towns and villages.
- 4.5 Local plan policy STP4 requires new development to mitigate climate change and contribute to meeting nationally binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It includes several criteria that must be considered as part of the assessment of planning applications, including:
- Through the location, layout, and pattern of development, reducing the need to travel for both people and goods and also, encouraging sustainable modes of transport;
  - Development should be designed to reduce energy consumption;
  - Incorporation of decentralised, renewable, and low carbon energy;
  - The re-use of existing buildings and materials;
  - Incorporation of multi-functional green infrastructure which can provide carbon storage and environments that encourage walking and cycling;
  - Protecting and enhancing habitats that provide important carbon sinks; and
  - Incorporate electric vehicle charging facilities.
- 4.6 Furthermore, local plan policy STP4 requires new development to support adaptation to climate change, be resilient to it and not make neighbouring areas more susceptible to its negative impacts. The policy includes the following requirements for new developments:
- Incorporation of design features to provide resilience to climate change;
  - Designed to reduce demand on water resources;

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<sup>10</sup> Paragraph 7

<sup>11</sup> Paragraph 8

<sup>12</sup> Paragraph 11

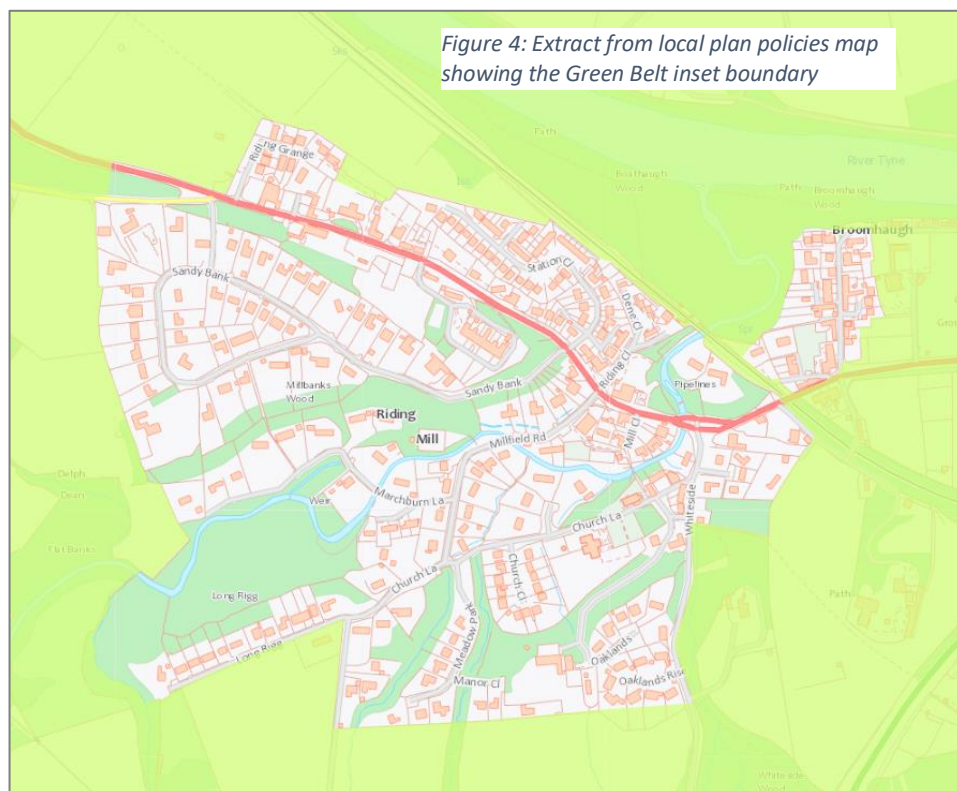
<sup>13</sup> Section 14

- Take into account the risk of flooding and coastal change;
- Incorporation of sustainable drainage systems, to minimise and control surface water run-off;
- Incorporation of multi-functional green infrastructure, where feasible.

Alongside managing development which requires planning permission the parish council have identified several community actions regarding reducing energy use, renewable energy schemes and compensating for carbon emissions in other ways (see section 5).

### Sustainable location of new development

- 4.7 The NPPF identifies that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the open countryside, unless specific criteria are met<sup>14</sup>, which is also reflected within local plan policy STP 1. The local plan seeks to focus new development within sustainable locations. It includes a settlement hierarchy (policy STP 1), which identifies that most development across the county will take place within main towns and service centres. Riding Mill and Broomhaugh together are identified as a service village, which is expected to provide a proportionate level of housing and be a focus for investment in the wider rural area. This level of development is intended to support the provision and retention of local retail, services, and facilities. In the interests of clarity, the neighbourhood plan refers to the whole settlement as Riding Mill.
- 4.8 The local plan defines a Green Belt inset boundary for Riding Mill and supports sustainable development within the inset boundary (figure 4). Land outside the boundary is Green Belt. The NPPF attaches great importance to the Green Belt, with the fundamental aim of it being to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open<sup>15</sup>. The purposes of the Green Belt are defined in the NPPF and repeated in local plan policy STP 7. Policy STP 8 sets out how proposals for development in the Green Belt will be assessed.



<sup>14</sup> Paragraph 80

<sup>15</sup> Section 13

- 4.9 As the local plan does not identify a requirement for the Green Belt boundary to be amended, it is not possible for the neighbourhood plan to amend the inset boundary. The management of development within the Green Belt is clearly set out within the local plan and national policy, it is therefore not necessary to repeat this within the neighbourhood plan.

#### Sustainable construction

- 4.10 National planning policy identifies that new development should be planned for in ways that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions<sup>16</sup>. The government currently uses energy performance certificates as a means of assessing energy efficiency of premises. Whilst these do have their shortcomings, they do provide a way to compare the energy efficiency of residences and settlements. Category 'A' represents the highest level of energy efficiency and therefore the lowest running costs. Each letter represents a spread of numbers, A is 92-100, with 100 being the highest efficiency and the lowest carbon emissions. The average score for a house in Riding Mill is 54, compared to the national average of 60 – although it is estimated that there is the potential to reach an average of 75.
- 4.11 Homes within the parish therefore need to become much more energy efficient, through insulation and reducing the emissions from energy, by making greater use of alternatives to gas boilers.
- 4.12 The local plan explains that consideration of how to minimise demand on resources, such as energy and water, should take place as part of the design process. Policy QOP5 includes several criteria against which new development will be assessed:
- Incorporating passive design measures which respond to existing and anticipated climatic conditions and improve the efficiency of heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting;
  - Prioritising the use of locally sourced, recycled and energy efficient building materials;
  - Incorporating or connecting to small-scale renewable and low carbon energy systems which contribute towards the supply of energy to the development;
  - Connecting to an existing or approved district energy scheme where viable;
  - Facilitating the efficient use of water;
  - Incorporating measures to reduce waste generated during construction and ensuring there is appropriate provision for recyclable and non-recyclable waste;
  - Minimising vulnerability to flooding;
  - Providing flexibility to allow for future modification, refurbishment and retrofitting.
- 4.13 Policy BR1 provides a positive commitment to embedding carbon reduction in new development, supporting the delivery of plan objectives 1, 2 and 4.

#### **Policy BR1: Embedding energy efficiency and renewable energy**

All development proposals which embed a commitment to sustainable design and construction will be supported, subject to compliance with other relevant policies in the development plan, particularly those which reduce carbon emissions from both the supply chain and the use of the proposed development. Proposals should be supported by sufficient information to demonstrate how, where appropriate, they:

- a. Incorporate passive design measures to improve the efficiency of heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting including through orienting principal rooms to take account of future climate change, with passive solar gain, ventilation and energy efficiency maximised;

<sup>16</sup> Paragraph 154

- b. Ensure there is appropriate storage space and segregation facilities for recyclable and non-recyclable waste;
- c. Ensure that energy and water efficiency measures are incorporated into the development;
- d. Incorporate, as far as possible, on-site energy generation from renewable sources; and
- e. Reduce energy demands of historic buildings. The installation of energy saving measures and the appropriate use of micro-renewables will be supported where it does not result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset.

### Standalone renewable energy proposals

- 4.14 The NPPF seeks to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat<sup>17</sup>. The local plan includes two key policies regarding renewable energy. Policy REN 1 supports proposals for renewable and low carbon energy development, particularly those which are community led. It identifies criteria against which applications must be considered, including the impact on landscape character; internationally, nationally and locally designated nature conservation and geological sites and features, including protected habitats and species; international, national and locally designated heritage assets, as well as non-designated heritage assets; air, ground and surface water quality; hydrology, water supply and flood risk; the highway network, including rights of way; amenity; the openness of the Green Belt; and aviation safety. Policy REN 2 defines when onshore wind development will be supported.
- 4.15 It is considered that local plan policies, alongside the NPPF provide an appropriate policy framework which would support the delivery of renewable energy proposals.

## **The built, historic & natural environment and our thriving community**

### Design

- 4.16 Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. It creates better places in which people live and work. It is fundamental to what the planning and development process should deliver and ensures that new development contributes positively to the local environment and therefore, enhances the quality of life for residents.
- 4.17 The NPPF highlights the importance the government attaches to good design and the important role that neighbourhood plans<sup>18</sup> can play in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in new development. In addition, the national design guide<sup>19</sup>, which forms part of national planning practice guidance, sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. The national model design code provides further detailed guidance to promote successful design. There are several good practice guidance documents that can help inform the design of development, such as Building for a Healthy Life<sup>20</sup>, which is a government endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use it to guide discussions about creating good places to live.
- 4.18 As part of the preparation of the plan, the steering group identified what good design means in the parish. This is captured within policy BR2. Policy BR2 will support the delivery of all the plan

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<sup>17</sup> Paragraph 155

<sup>18</sup> Paragraph 127

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Building-for-a-Healthy-Life-July-2020.pdf>

objectives.

## Policy BR2: Design

1. Development should conserve and enhance local distinctiveness by demonstrating high quality design by:
  - a. Respecting and understanding the scale and character of existing and surrounding buildings, without the need for replication. Innovative design is encouraged and welcomed alongside the conservation of historic character;
  - b. Sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, including that generated by the relationship with their setting;
  - c. Respecting the spacing and size of plots when considering additional dwellings within existing curtilages, respecting existing sight lines and the style and nature of front gardens and boundary treatments in the locality;
  - d. Using good quality materials that complement the existing palette. Recyclable and reused materials are encouraged alongside the preference for materials that are appropriate to the local area;
  - e. Adopting the principles of sustainable urban drainage;
  - f. To minimise both the likelihood of and fear of crime;
  - g. Creating a safe, accessible and well-connected environment that meets the needs of its users;
  - h. Innovating to achieve low carbon sustainable design. This should be through fabric first principles of insulation, renewable energy sources and correct orientation of new development;
  - i. Providing sufficient external amenity space, appropriately sited refuse and recycling storage and car and bicycle parking to meet the needs of the development and ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape;
  - j. Ensuring the development would not prejudice the amenity of its future occupiers or that of adjacent properties in terms of overshadowing, loss of light, dominance, loss of privacy, noise or general disturbance;
  - k. Placing emphasis on the impact of development on the landscape, in the context of the green nature of the parish, seeking to retain and increase tree and shrub cover and meadows, considering their value as wildlife habitats and through landscaping schemes associated with development proposals;
  - l. Incorporates measures to support species and habitats, such as artificial nest sites for Swifts;
  - m. Encouraging cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel;
  - n. Ensuring that lighting associated with the development would not have a significant adverse effect on residential amenity or wildlife;
  - o. Ensuring the development would not result in unacceptable levels of noise, air or water pollution.
2. Where a design and access statement is required as part of a planning application, this must demonstrate how the proposal has responded to the above as an integral part of the design process.

## Heritage

4.19 Heritage assets can either be designated or non-designated. Designated assets have statutory status and include listed buildings and conservation areas. A non-designated asset is a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which does not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.

4.20 The NPPF defines a heritage asset as: *'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'*



4.21 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and the NPPF requires them to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance<sup>21</sup>. Also, that planning decisions affecting a heritage asset are required to be based on a sound understanding of the significance of the asset and the impact of the proposal on that significance. Local plan policy ENV7 provides protection to designated and non-designated assets across Northumberland, the significance of which could be affected by new development. It is not necessary to repeat this protection within the neighbourhood plan.

## Natural environment

4.22 The parish survey found that the natural environment was one of the most valued aspects of the parish for residents. The local plan includes policies to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, particularly policies ENV 1, ENV 2 and ENV 3. Policy ENV 1 requires the character and significance of the distinctive and valued natural environment to be conserved, protected, and enhanced. Policy ENV 2 defines criteria against which planning applications will be considered to ensure they minimise their impact and secure a net gain for biodiversity. Policy ENV 3 requires the conservation and enhancement of the landscape of the county. Given the rich natural environment of the parish (described in section 2 and the natural environment background paper), policy BR3 seeks to ensure the important characteristics are conserved and enhanced through the planning process. Policy BR3 will support the delivery of plan objective 2.

### **Policy BR3: Natural environment**

1. Development proposals that will be assessed against Policies ENV 1 and ENV 2 of the Northumberland Local Plan 2016-2036 must demonstrate they protect and enhance the local rich natural environment by seeking to ensure no loss or significant harm to sites of biodiversity value with attention to any effect on those areas of ancient woodland and priority habitat identified on Figure 3 that have been identified as being of particular local biodiversity importance. Support will be given to proposals which promote the conservation of priority habitats and species and the protection and recovery of protected species.

<sup>21</sup> Section 16



2. Proposals should demonstrate how a measurable net gain for biodiversity, calculated in accordance with the latest government policy and advice, will be secured.
3. Development schemes should embed proposals which enhance existing natural features and increase biodiversity within the wider site where appropriate and provide habitat for wildlife within the built environment, such as artificial nesting or roosting sites.
4. To protect water dependent protected and priority species, developments on or near watercourses, drains, ponds or wetlands need to consider these species. Key habitats/areas should be buffered from built development to maintain corridors and allow for species dispersal.

### Local green space

- 4.23 Green spaces are a vital part of a vibrant and healthy community and are of great importance to the character and identity of a place. They are valued for a wide range of reasons including visual amenity; historic significance; recreational value; tranquillity; and richness of wildlife. Uncontrolled changes to green spaces can irrevocably alter their special character or intrinsic value.



- 4.24 The NPPF enables neighbourhood plans to designate areas of local green space for special protection, thereby preventing development on these sites other than in very special circumstances<sup>22</sup>. These spaces do not need to be publicly accessible but must be in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve as well as being demonstrably special to them, holding a particular local significance. The designation cannot be applied to an extensive tract of land.
- 4.25 The sites listed in policy BR4 and shown on the policies map are proposed to be designated as local green spaces as they meet the criteria set out within national policy and guidance. A local green space background paper<sup>23</sup> has been prepared to outline the reasons why the sites are of particular importance to the local community and to explain the process that led to their proposed designation. Policy BR4 will support the delivery of plan objectives 1, 2 and 5.

### **Policy BR4: Local green space**

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

- LGS01 The Spinney
- LGS02 Land to the west and east of Wentworth Grange
- LGS03 Land to the east of East View
- LGS04 Old trackway off Long Rigg
- LGS05 Woodland to the south of playpark
- LGS06 A695 road verge to Broomhaugh roundabout

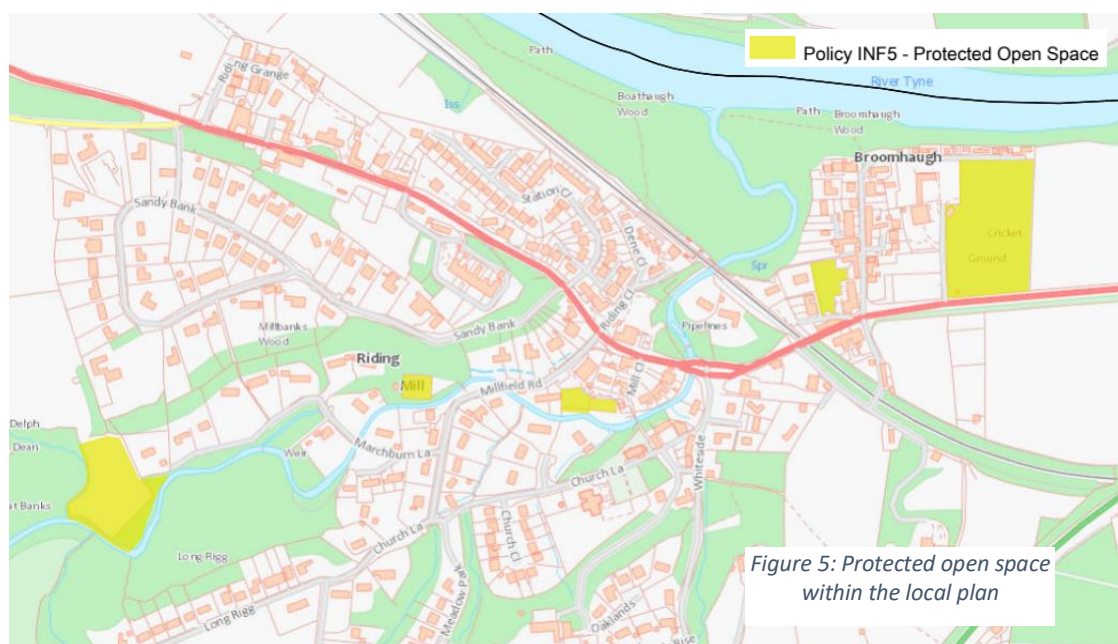
<sup>22</sup> Paragraphs 101-102

<sup>23</sup> Available on the parish council website <https://ridingmill.org/neighbourhood-plan/>

LGS07 Grass and woodland adjacent to tennis court and clubhouse  
LGS08 Marchburn Woods/ Mill Pond  
LGS09 Parish Hall Grassland  
LGS10 Grassed area of Marchburn Lane.

### Protected open space

- 4.26 There are many areas of open space which are valued for their local amenity value and for formal and informal recreational purposes, but which do not meet the detailed allocation criteria for designation as local green space.
- 4.27 Following an assessment of the green spaces within the parish it was concluded that there was not a need to identify further protected open space in addition to those allocated within the local plan (see figure 5).



## Homes

- 4.28 The NPPF highlights the government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes<sup>24</sup>. Neighbourhood plans have an important role in supporting the delivery of the number, type and mix of homes that are required in the area. They must support the strategic development needs that are set out in local plans and not promote less development. The NPPF also highlights that neighbourhood planning groups should consider opportunities for allocating sites for housing in their area<sup>25</sup>.
- 4.29 Local plan policy HOU3 identifies housing requirements for neighbourhood areas. There is no allocation for Broomhaugh and Riding Parish. Since 2016 there have been only three housing completions with planning permission for an additional 11 dwellings. The parish survey asked the local community questions about housing needs. The main reason people identified as wanting to move home was to live independently, mainly from people growing up and leaving the family home. However, homes being too large, unsuitable or too small were also identified as reasons.

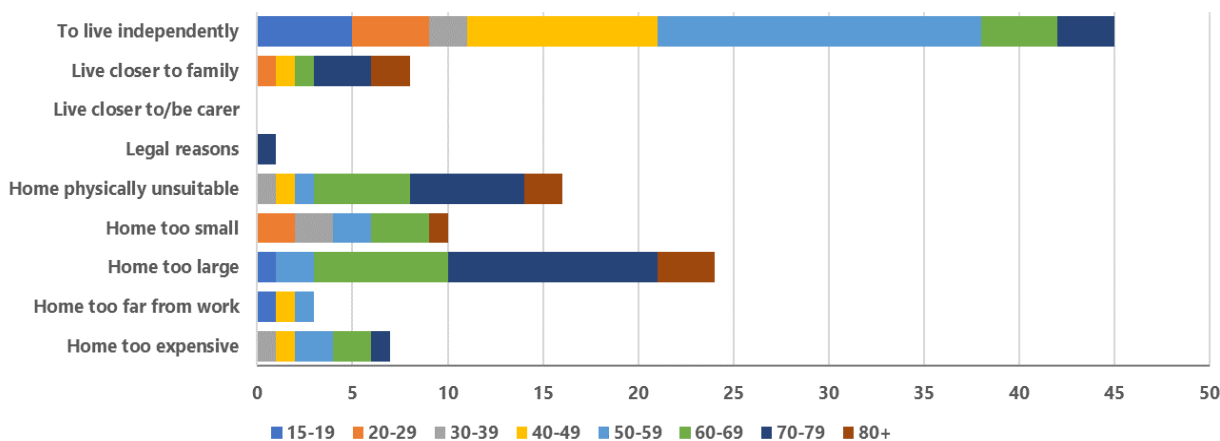


Figure 6: Village survey - reasons people were looking to move home

- 4.30 Most of those who responded to the survey were in favour of most types of housing, although the most opposition was to the building of larger detached houses. Comments included a desire for housing specifically designed for older people and for those that would attract families with young children. Several respondents stressed the need for sustainable housing, affordable housing, and energy efficient housing. A small number indicated that they did not support the provision of additional housing.
- 4.31 To inform the housing policies within the neighbourhood plan, the parish council commissioned AECOM, through the government's technical support programme, to undertake a housing needs assessment<sup>26</sup>. The assessment considered the needs for different housing sizes and tenures, affordability issues and whether there was a need for the provision of specialist housing for older people. Key issues identified in the assessment are:
- The parish has a notably higher proportion of homeowners and an especially lower proportion of social rented households than the county and England. The proportion of owned properties is 85% which is 20 percentage points greater than both the Northumberland and England averages;
  - The proportion of social rented properties is relatively low at 3%, which is almost 16 percentage points below the Northumberland and England average;

<sup>24</sup> Paragraph 60

<sup>25</sup> Paragraph 70

<sup>26</sup> Available on the parish council website <https://ridingmill.org/neighbourhood-plan/>

- The proportion of private rented households are also underrepresented at 9.3% compared to 13% in Northumberland and 17% in England;
- Between 2001 and 2011 home ownership increased by 20%;
- The income required to buy an average market home for sale is more than would be expected to be available to those on average household incomes. The income required to buy an average entry-level home is also more than average;
- The parish has a high potential demand for both affordable homes to rent and buy – it is estimated that to 2036 there is a need for 7 affordable homes to rent and 26 to buy;
- There is a high proportion of properties with four or more bedrooms (40%, compared to 18% in Northumberland and 15% in England) and a low number of smaller one and two bedroom properties (25%, compared to 39% in Northumberland and 40% in England);
- In terms of demographics, the parish has a large percentage of the population between the ages of 45-84, higher than in Northumberland and England. It also has the lowest percentage of residents below the age of 25, while England has the highest percentage in this group;
- There are fewer one person households (22%) and more family households (73%) than Northumberland (30% and 66%). It has more families aged 65 and over (23%) than Northumberland (10%);
- The results of the life-stage modelling exercise indicates that by 2036 there is a need to increase the proportion of smaller, one and two bedroom homes;
- No need for specialist accommodation was identified to be provided within the parish. In accordance with local plan policy, Corbridge was identified as accommodating specialist housing need arising from the area.

- 4.32 Whilst there is no requirement identified within the local plan for additional housing to be delivered within the parish, the HNA and feedback from the parish survey provide compelling evidence that there is a need for further housing to support the sustainability of the local community. As a result, the steering group undertook a site assessment process which considered potential housing sites across the parish. The housing background paper provides full details of the assessment process<sup>27</sup>.
- 4.33 The site assessment process considered 18 sites, out of which three sites were identified as being suitable for housing development: land south east of Manor House, Riding Farm and land east of Broomhaugh Cottage. Following the consultation on the pre-submission draft plan, planning permission was granted in December 2022 for housing development on the Riding Farm site.
- 4.34 With regard the Manor House site, the county council advised that as a planning application for 13 dwellings on the site had recently been refused planning permission as a result of impact on heritage assets, if the plan retained the allocation, a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) would need to be undertaken. Despite proposed changes to the policy wording, the advice remained that a SEA would be required. As a result of the regulations that must be followed when preparing a SEA, this would delay progress on the plan by around 9 months. The parish council therefore reluctantly agreed to remove the proposed Manor House allocation from the submission draft plan.
- 4.35 Land east of Broomhaugh Cottage lies within the Green Belt. The provision of market housing within the Green Belt is considered inappropriate development and can only be supported where very special circumstances are met. Because the local plan does not identify a need for changes to the Green Belt in Riding Mill, it is not possible for the neighbourhood plan to amend the Green Belt boundaries or allocate land for housing. The parish council consider the site

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<sup>27</sup> Available on the parish council website <https://ridingmill.org/neighbourhood-plan/>

would be appropriate for housing development, subject to details regarding the type, mix and design of the development. It is not possible however for the neighbourhood plan to identify this site for housing because of the conflict with national and local policy.

- 4.36 With regard to managing the delivery of new housing outside allocated housing sites, the local plan includes detailed policies on delivering affordable and market housing (particularly policies STP 1, HOU 5 and HOU 6). This includes supporting housing on rural exception sites (policy HOU 7) where there is a need for affordable housing. Rural exception sites are those which are not allocated for housing and are adjacent or well-related to existing settlements. Some market homes may be allowed on rural exception sites where it is clearly shown to be essential to support and facilitate the delivery of the predominant affordable element. As explained above, the housing site assessment process concluded that there were potentially three suitable housing sites in the parish and one site, east of Broomhaugh Cottage, lies within the Green Belt. This is the parish councils preferred site for a small rural exception site.
- 4.37 Evidence at both county and parish levels highlights the need to support the provision of smaller homes to support young families and meet the needs of an ageing population, in particular households looking to downsize. Policy BR5 supports the limited development of rural exception site(s) where they deliver housing that meets locally identified needs supporting the delivery of plan objectives 1, 2, 3 and 5.

#### Policy BR5: Rural exception sites

1. Within the Green Belt, on sites that are immediately adjacent to and well-related to the built form of the village, proposals for limited affordable housing development to meet local community needs must meet the requirements of national planning policy and Northumberland Local Plan Policy HOU7(2, 3 and 4).
2. The mix of housing types and tenures on rural exception sites should have regard to and be informed by evidence of housing needs including that contained within the Broomhaugh and Riding Housing Needs Assessment (2021) and the Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2018) and any subsequent updates.
3. The development of rural exception sites should meet identified needs particularly through the provision of one, two and three bedroom homes for small families and those wishing to downsize.
4. Housing development on rural exception sites should accord with the provisions of all relevant development plan policies, particularly those on design, the natural and historic environment, amenity, highway safety, accessibility and the protection of valued services and facilities.

#### Services and facilities

- 4.38 Community facilities are identified in the NPPF as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. These facilities enhance the sustainability of local communities and residential environments.



- 4.39 The NPPF is clear that the planning system should support the development of new community facilities and that valued community facilities should be retained where appropriate<sup>28</sup>. Policy INF 3 of the local plan provides protection against the loss of local village convenience shops and public houses. It is acknowledged that planning permission is not always required to change the use of a building or land and this restricts the ability to secure the continued use of an important facility. The availability of the current level of facilities within the plan area are essential to support the strong sense of community that exists. It is considered that local plan policy INF3 provides an appropriate level of protection.

#### Local economy

- 4.40 The parish council strongly believes that existing businesses must be supported, and that it should maintain the conditions necessary to support new businesses. Many of these support mechanisms lie outside the planning process. The local plan includes several policies which will ensure the retention and growth of local businesses (where planning permission is required). These policies recognise the need to deliver economic growth whilst safeguarding the environment and community wellbeing (ECN 1), support for home working (ECN 11), support for employment uses within built-up areas (ECN 11), support for the rural economy, including diversification (ECN 12, ECN 13, ECN 14); and support for appropriate economic development in the Green Belt (ECN 16). A critical requirement for those residents working from home is the information technology infrastructure. The local plan promotes the importance of access to high quality communications including full fibre broadband (ICT 1 and ICT 2). As a result, it is considered that the neighbourhood plan could not add any further detail to that contained within the local plan.

#### Accessibility

- 4.41 The NPPF encourages a reduction in congestion and greenhouse gas emissions through the introduction of measures which promote a decrease in the number of journeys made by car. Whilst the preparation of transport policy at a local level is primarily a matter for the local planning authority, there are areas where the plan can have an influence on accessibility including supporting the protection and enhancement of routes for non-motorised travel and recreation.
- 4.42 The parish council want the area to become a more attractive place to live and visit through there being better connections to different modes of public transport and it being easier to navigate as a pedestrian and cyclist. Not all mobility and transport issues can be addressed through planning policies, therefore the plan includes a number of community actions (section 5).
- 4.43 The walking and cycling network include those routes that are used by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. It provides recreation and leisure opportunities and promotes healthy living. The network is identified on the policies map. Policy BR6 seeks to support proposals to improve or extend the network within the parish, as well as protecting existing routes. The policy will support the delivery of plan objectives 3, 4 and 5.

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<sup>28</sup> Paragraph 93



#### Policy BR6: Accessibility

1. Support will be given to development that will improve and/ or extend the existing public rights of way network allowing greater access for all. The network, identified on the policies map, will be protected from development unless:
  - a. There is a clear and demonstrable justification for the loss of the route; and
  - b. A suitable alternative route will be provided within an agreed timescale.
2. Development which protects or supports the delivery of a new route for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders connecting Riding Mill to Hexham, via Corbridge and to Stocksfield will be supported.

#### Sustainable transport

- 4.44 In accordance with national policy, the plan supports a range of transport modes and gives priority to walking, cycling and public transport use. New development should be designed to ensure safe pedestrian and cycle access, as well as routes to connect to employment, services and other community facilities. Policy BR7 provides a positive planning framework to ensure sustainable transport issues are fully considered as part of the development management process, supporting the delivery of plan objectives 3, 4 and 5.

#### Electric vehicles

- 4.45 Electric and ultra-low emission vehicles have an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Planning permission is not required for the installation of a wall mounted electric vehicle charging point, provided the area is lawfully used for off street parking. Local plan policy STP 4 provides support for the incorporation of electric vehicle charging facilities within new developments.

#### Policy BR7: Sustainable transport and new development

Development will be supported where it maximises the use of sustainable transport modes. Applicants should demonstrate, where relevant to the proposal, how it has been designed and located to:

- a. Promote cycling and walking, in particular by giving priority to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, whilst reducing the need to travel by private motorised vehicle and increasing access to public transport;
- b. Create places and streets that are user friendly and safe for cyclists and pedestrians;
- c. Support sustainable transport choices;
- d. Ensure as far as possible that new development can be served by existing public transport services, and where necessary, that new accessible public transport routes and/ or improvements to the existing services and facilities can be secured;
- e. Ensure that the cumulative impact on traffic flows on the highway network will not be severe or that appropriate mitigation measures can be secured and are undertaken;
- f. Incorporate an appropriate level of parking as required by the relevant development plan policies; and
- g. Enable the provision of electric charging points as part of new residential, employment, leisure and retail developments. Proposals for standalone electric vehicle charging points will also be supported.

## 5. Community actions

### Introduction

- 5.1 As part of the process of developing the neighbourhood plan, the working groups and residents identified aspirations and issues that cannot be addressed through the planning system. These have been listed as ‘community actions’ all of which relate to the policy areas of the neighbourhood plan and are supported by Broomhaugh and Riding Parish Council. Whilst it may be possible for the parish council to take forward some of these on its own initiative, others will require collaboration with other bodies and, in some cases, funding will be required. These actions are only likely to happen, however, if there is sufficient community support and the parish council would welcome offers from residents willing to assist in delivering these actions.

### Built environment

- 5.2 Residents want to live in a village that is aesthetically pleasing, climate change resilient and looked after by all who live here. Housing policies including design are covered in the planning policies but there is one area where improvements could be made and that is in our approach to townscape and streetscape.

**Objective 1: To ensure that the built environment respects and protects our heritage whilst delivering a balanced provision of housing, reflecting the demographic of the parish and meeting the design policy requirements and zero carbon targets.**

<b>Community action BE1: Townscape and streetscape enhancements</b>
<p>To improve townscape and streetscape as opportunities arise the parish council will work with the residents to identify townscape opportunities within the village to enhance the village ambience and find funding to carry these out. Spaces already identified include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the grassed area beside Bobby’s shop;</li> <li>• replacing and improving the planters at the village entrances;</li> <li>• the large tarmac area at the bottom of Whiteside Bank.</li> </ul>

### Natural environment

- 5.3 The natural environment is important to the residents of Riding Mill. There are eight actions suggested here one of which, improved litter management and street lighting is compatible with the desire to improve the streetscape, and another, tree planting, also addresses the need for climate change mitigation.

**Objective 2: To maintain and enhance a thriving natural environment that can be enjoyed by residents of the parish both now and in the future. This includes preserving the dark skies of the parish for both residents and wildlife; reducing light pollution where possible to do so, whilst maintaining a safe and hospitable environment.**

<b>Community action NE1: Litter</b>
<p>To improve litter management throughout the parish.</p>

**Community action NE2: Promoting and supporting the natural environment**

To establish an appropriate body which promotes and supports the natural environment, which would:

- Own, purchase, lease or act as guardian over land;
- Carry out planting and maintenance;
- Actively seek and manage donations, grants and legacies given to support the natural environment within the Parish of Broomhaugh and Riding.

**Community action NE3: Tree planting**

The parish council will encourage the planting of more trees, especially locally native trees, within and around the village, where compatible with existing nature conservation interest.

**Community action NE4: Invasive species**

The parish council will support and encourage the removal of invasive species within the parish. The River Tyne and March Burn corridors currently suffer from invasive Indian Balsam, Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed.

**Community action NE5: Wildflowers**

The parish council will support projects which increase the pollen and nectar resource within the parish. This could be through a number of initiatives including:

- Sympathetic management of roadside verges and community spaces
- Planting wildflower mixes in community spaces, where compatible with existing nature conservation interest
- Promotion of 'No Mow May' and other ways to maximise biodiversity in gardens

**Community action NE6: Bigger, better and more joined up**

'Making Space for Nature', published in 2010, identified that the UK needed to make its wildlife sites 'bigger, better and more joined up'. The parish council will support and encourage projects that enhance the natural environment through following these principles (commonly known as the 'Lawton principles').

**Community action NE7: Interpretation**

Work with local stakeholders to provide and improve interpretation about wildlife to increase local knowledge/interest.

**Community action NE8: Street lighting and dark skies**

To work with Northumberland County Council to remove poorly designed street lighting with improved 'dark sky compatible' luminaires. Promote the benefits of dark skies and the adverse effects of light pollution on wildlife and human residents.

## Transport

- 5.4 The results of the parish survey identified a number of concerns relating to traffic speeds and the lack of safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Reducing traffic depends on the availability of attractive alternatives. The village is part of a great network of local footpaths and leisure trails but lacks good pedestrian and cycling routes to neighbouring settlements. Improving amenities for pedestrians and cyclists – and reducing the level of heavy traffic traversing the village – cannot be delivered through planning policies but can, potentially, be delivered through the parish council and others working together on a range of actions. We recognise that many of these will require funding, but we will ensure that we are ready for any funding opportunities by preparing proposals so that we can take advantage of any funding that may become available.
- 5.5 The village has reasonable provision of public transport (two buses and one train per hour in each direction between Newcastle and Hexham), but in common with many rural areas there is no integration of timetables or fares. An attractive system of public transport will provide opportunities to travel that meet the needs of residents and visitors, delivered reliably and cost effectively. There are both threats and opportunities. A recent review of local bus services resulted in no significant changes to the Newcastle - Hexham route, but the possibility of future reductions cannot be eliminated. Opportunities lie in the Transport Plan produced recently by Transport North East, and the likely new mayoral combined authority embracing Northumberland that will have transport powers.

**Objective 3: To become a more attractive place to live and visit through better connections to different modes of public transport and easier to navigate as a pedestrian and cyclist with improved wayfinding.**

<b>Community action T1: Footpath and bridleway enhancements</b>
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To enhance and develop the local network of footpaths and bridleways the parish council and its rights of way group will seek opportunities to extend the local network of footpaths.
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<b>Community action T2: Safe walking and cycling routes to Hexham and Stocksfield</b>
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To secure safe walking and cycling routes to Hexham and Stocksfield, the parish council will work with Northumberland County Council and groups promoting active travel to develop routes.
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<b>Community action T3: Impact of heavy road traffic</b>
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To improve the streetscape and reduce the adverse impacts of heavy road traffic through the village, the parish council will work with the highway authority.
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<b>Community action T4: Public transport</b>
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To protect and enhance the current level of public transport provision, the parish council will work with transport providers and the regional transport authority.
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## Sustainable development and climate change

- 5.6 It is clear from the plan objectives that the village has adopted an ambitious, but necessary, objective in relation to climate change and renewable energy. Our overall approach to climate change is based on a hierarchy of objectives which reflects the policy set out in the Northumberland Local Plan, starting with the need, as far as possible, to eliminate carbon emissions and adapt to climate change through better and more energy efficient design of the built environment. Whilst this will be important for all new developments in the parish, there is limited scope for further development, and thus the planning policies will have little impact.
- 5.7 There will thus need to be a greater focus on community actions – covering the other three objectives: reducing energy use through employing a range of energy efficiency measures, exploring and potentially implementing renewable energy schemes, the installation of energy efficient heating – such as heat pumps and compensating for carbon emissions in other ways. There will be encouragement for the utilisation of renewable energy sources to replace existing non-renewable sources and, specifically, encouragement for more roof top solar, both PV and thermal. There may be scope to create a community energy generation scheme. An obvious, though not the only, compensation mechanism is through more tree planting – beyond what might be expected of developers – with an objective to raise the parish's tree cover (community action NE3).

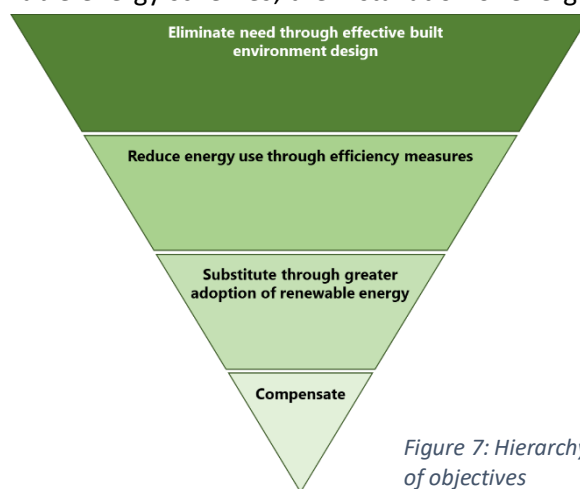


Figure 7: Hierarchy of objectives

### Objective 4: To work towards becoming a 'zero carbon' village by 2035.

<b>Community action CC1: Utilisation of energy from renewable sources</b>
The parish council will actively encourage residents to source their energy from energy companies that have made a commitment to maximising the use of renewable sources
<b>Community action CC2: Promotion of domestic renewable energy generation</b>
The parish council will create a section on its website specifically to support residents who wish to explore the installation of renewable energy mechanisms.
<b>Community action CC3: Reduction in energy use</b>
The parish council will offer advice to residents who wish to explore how they can reduce their energy consumption through improved insulation.
<b>Community action CC4: Community renewables</b>
The parish council will seek funding to allow it to undertake feasibility and other studies with the intention of designing and implementing a renewable energy scheme.

## Health and wellbeing

- 5.8 Encouraging residents to look after their health and wellbeing, particularly into old age, will allow people to live in the parish for longer and reduce pressure on health services. Encouraging more walking and cycling can also assist in reducing the village's carbon footprint.

**Objective 5: To provide a lovely and friendly environment in which to live, providing residents of all ages with the opportunity to engage in a wide range of leisure and recreational activities for the benefit of their health and wellbeing.**

### **Community action H1: Promotion of walks and footpaths**

The parish council will publish a series of walks and viewpoints around the parish promoting the existing rights of way. A map of the existing rights of way and permissive footpaths in the parish is included on the policies map.

### **Community action H2: Extending the footpath network**

Proposals for extensions to the existing rights of ways and suggestions for permissive footpaths have been identified which would not cause disturbance to or impact on the nature conservation interest of the identified areas. As these will enhance the choice and quality of walks, the parish council will approach local landowners to explore such proposals.

### **Community action H3: Riverside footpath to Corbridge**

The parish council will continue to lobby Northumberland County Council to reinstate and enhance the existing riverside right of way from Riding Mill to Corbridge.

### **Community action H4: Hadrian's cycleway link**

It is proposed to create a cycle path along the A695 from Riding Mill to Stocksfield. As well as providing a safe and green link for cyclists and pedestrians to enjoy leisure activities and to travel to work in the Tyne valley, it will also provide a link to Hadrian's Cycle Way to the north of Bywell bridge.

### **Community action H5: New cycleway and footpath west of A68, south of High Shilford Farm**

It is proposed to create a cycle way and footpath on the west side of the A68 from the top of Whiteside Bank to the junction with the Broomley Road and the Healey Road, enabling cyclists and ramblers to reach the Healey Road from the village safely and then to link to other routes accessible from the Healey Road.

### **Community action H6: New footbridge over the A68**

The parish council will prepare a proposal and will seek funding to install a footbridge over the A68 to link Whiteside Bank and Dere Street which was cut off when the A68 was built. This would thus obviate the need to cross the A68 by the Farm which is a dangerous but popular crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists.



<b>Community action H7: Participation in village sporting clubs</b>
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The parish council wishes to see the tennis, cricket and football clubs continue to prosper and provide activities for younger players to learn these sports. Wider participation from residents will be encouraged.
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<b>Community action H8: Riding Mill Society</b>
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The parish council will gauge the level of village enthusiasm to relaunch the Riding Mill Society – which could organise talks, presentations and community events.
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<b>Community action H9: Summer fair</b>
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The parish council will gauge the level of village enthusiasm to relaunch the summer fair which could help to build links and relationships within the local community and, if there is sufficient interest, support the creation of an organising committee.
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## **Local economy**

- 5.9 It is considered that planning policies will support the delivery of objective 7 and there is no need to identify community actions.

**Objective 6: To recognise the growth in home working and to ensure that local services meet the requirements of those choosing to spend more time working from home.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Broomhaugh and Riding Parish Council thanks:

The Steering group:

- Matthew Warner, local resident and chair of the steering group;
- David Irwin, vice chair of the steering group, parish councillor and chair of the local economy working group;
- Christine Howe, secretary of the steering group, chair of the parish council and chair of the housing working group;
- Tom Charman, local resident and natural environment working group chair;
- Brigit Greystoke, local resident and chair of the renewable energy and climate change working group;
- Malcolm Chainey, local resident and chair of the transport working group;
- Stephen Lightley, parish councillor, chair of the health and wellbeing working group;
- Catherine Harrison, parish clerk and treasurer to the steering group.

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- Brian Singer
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- Andy Dunhill
- Philip Latham
- Tim Boyers
- Neil Turner
- Sally Rogers
- Peter Sendall
- Rob Archer
- Peter Howe

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