

# **Berwick Neighbourhood Plan**

## **Built Environment Background Paper**

**Built Environment Working Group**  
**May 2017**

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## 1. Background

1.1 This document is one in a series of background papers prepared by the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan Working Groups. It sets out the relevant national and local policy and guidance that is informing the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan. The background paper also identifies and explains the relevant evidence base, feedback from early engagement and identifies a series of options for planning policies and community actions to address the issues that have been identified.

1.2 The Built Environment Working Group aims to support the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan vision for Berwick by proposing policies and community actions which aim to conserve and enhance the important built environment of the Plan area.

1.3 The draft Neighbourhood Plan vision statement (December 2016), defines how the Neighbourhood Plan area will look in 2032 and identifies a number of areas of relevance to the built environment topic:

- *'A border town bridging England and Scotland benefiting from a plethora of historic attractions, river/waterfront activities and the surrounding natural environment which provide a playground for outdoor adventure, history buffs, walkers, cyclists and naturalists';*
- *'A wonderful and unique place; a historic walled town, riverside and coastal neighbourhood all in one. It is a place thronged with people accessing the museums, theatre, festivals, cliff top paths, seaside parades and beautiful countryside with something happening almost every night of the week';*
- *'Historic medieval streets are conserved and complemented elsewhere with sympathetic high-quality new developments and enhanced well used public spaces. The magnificent Hawksmoor Barracks is now a heritage centre and museum';*
- *'New buildings and spaces between/around buildings will be of high-quality design, throughout the plan area, both within individual developments, and in their context of the wider townscape including future proposals and aspirations';*
- *'Our existing heritage assets will be recognised, conserved and enhanced, throughout the whole of the plan area, for the benefit of residents and visitors. Berwick, Spittal and Tweedmouth will be the foremost tourist destination in northern England, of regional and international significance.*

1.4 The main areas covered by this background paper are:

- The national and local policy context for the built environment;
- An overview of other relevant documents and evidence;
- Historic environment designations that cover the Plan area;
- Consideration of feedback received as part of the early engagement on the Plan;
- Draft vision and objectives for the built environment elements of the Plan;
- Planning policy options; and
- Options for community actions.

1.5 As part of the consultation which will take place during 2017 we are inviting comments on the issues identified within this background paper. Comments can be made in the following ways:

2. By completing the online questionnaire via the link at Berwick-TC-GOV.UK
3. By submitting a comment via <http://www.berwickplan.co.uk/>
4. By email to: [consult@berwick-tc.gov.uk](mailto:consult@berwick-tc.gov.uk)
5. By letter to: Berwick Town Council, The Arch Workspace, Boarding School Yard, 90 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1BN

1.6

Comments must be submitted by the published date.

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## 2. Strategic Planning Context

### Background

- 2.1 As they are part of the Development Plan, Neighbourhood Plans have to be prepared in line with legal requirements. The way in which Neighbourhood Plans are prepared and the policies they contain will be tested by an Independent Examiner. In order to pass an examination and proceed to referendum, Neighbourhood Plans must meet a number of 'basic conditions', to ensure they are legally compliant they must:

- Have regard to national planning policy and guidance;
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan;
- Contribute to sustainable development; and
- Be compatible with European obligations.

### National planning policy and guidance

- 2.2 National planning policy and guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) respectively. The NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent.

#### *Historic environment:*

- 2.3 One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is that the planning system should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of this and future generations.

- 2.4 The NPPF is clear that local planning authorities should set out, in their Local Plan, a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. This should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. Paragraph 126 states that in developing the strategy, local planning authorities should take the following into account:

- *'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.'*

- 2.5 With regard to the determination of planning applications, the NPPF provides guidance to local planning authorities:

- Paragraph 128 states that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation;

- Paragraph 129 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal;
- Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect or, or damage to a heritage asset, paragraph 130 identifies that the deteriorated state of the asset should not be taken into account in any decision;
- Paragraph 131 requires local planning authorities to take account of:
  1. The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
  2. The positive contribution that conservation of assets can make to sustainable communities; and
  3. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;
- Paragraph 132 states that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be given to its conservation. It also highlights:
  1. That significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of the asset or development within its setting;
  2. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification: substantial harm to, or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional; Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.
- Guidance is provided within paragraph 133 on development that will lead to substantial harm to, or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset. It states that consent should be refused, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or that all of the following apply:
  1. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
  2. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
  3. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
  4. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use
- With regard to situations where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 134 states that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal;
- Paragraph 135 relates to the impact of proposals on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset. It identifies that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset;
- Paragraph 136 requires local planning authorities not to permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred;
- With regard to new development within Conservation Areas, World Heritage Sites and the setting of heritage assets, paragraph 137 requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive

contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the asset, should be treated favourably;

- Paragraph 138 explains that not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. However, the loss of a building, or other element, which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the area/ site should be treated either as substantial harm (paragraph 133) or less than substantial harm (paragraph 134) as appropriate;
- With regard to non designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, paragraph 139 requires that those which are demonstrably or equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets; and
- Paragraph 140 refers to enabling development and a requirement for local planning authorities to assess whether the benefits of the proposal, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

- 2.6 PPG provides further guidance with regard to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It sets out the main legislative framework, explains what is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, provides guidance on plan making and decision making, as well as explaining the regulatory process affecting the historic environment. With regard to Neighbourhood Planning, PPG provides the following guidance:

*‘Where it is relevant, neighbourhood plans need to include enough information about local heritage to guide decisions and put broader strategic heritage policies from the Local Plan into action at a neighbourhood scale.’*

*‘Where it is relevant, designated heritage assets within the plan area should be clearly identified at the start of the plan-making process so they can be appropriately taken into account. In addition, and where relevant, neighbourhood plans need to include enough information about local non-designated heritage assets including sites of archaeological interest to guide decisions.’ (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 18a-007-20140306)*

- 2.7 In addition, PPG explains what is meant by the term ‘public benefits’ in relation to the implementation of paragraph 133 of the NPPF:

*‘Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.’*

*Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:*

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting;*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset;*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.’ Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20140306*

*Design:*

- 2.8 Good design is an important element of the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Section 7 of the NPPF highlights the importance the Government attaches to the design of the built environment. Paragraph 56 states:  
*'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.'*
- 2.9 Paragraph 57 states that it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. Paragraph 58 requires Local and Neighbourhood Plans to develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area and should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.
- 2.10 Paragraph 58 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
- *'will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
  - *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
  - *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
  - *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
  - *create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
  - *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.'*
- 2.11 Paragraph 59 suggests that local planning authorities should consider using design codes where they could help deliver high quality outcomes. It is also clear that design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally. Paragraph 60 goes on to state that policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative. However, it is appropriate to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
- 2.12 Paragraph 61 identifies that design is about more than only the appearance of buildings:  
*'... securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.'*
- 2.13 Paragraph 62 requires local planning authorities to have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design. Paragraph 63 requires great weight to be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design in the area. However, paragraph 64 is clear that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.



- 2.14 PPG provides further guidance with regard to: the importance of good design; how plan making can deliver good design; well-designed places and spaces; planning tools; and design matters specific to particular types of development.
- 2.15 With regard to plan making, PPG identifies that the following issues should be considered (paragraphs: 006-014 Reference ID:26-006-20140306): local character; safe, connected and efficient streets; a network of greenspaces (including parks) and public places; crime prevention; security measures; access and inclusions; efficient use of natural resources; and cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods.
- 2.16 PPG identifies that a well-designed place: is functional; supports mixed uses and tenures; includes successful public spaces; is adaptable and resilient; has a distinctive character; is attractive; and encourages ease of movement. In addition, that buildings and the spaces between them should be considered in terms of their: layout, form, scale, detailing and materials.
- 2.17 The promotion of good design should be sought at all stages in the planning process. PPG recommends (paragraphs 30-32) that at the development plan stage this should be carried out through:
- Good plan and policy formulation:
- 'A local or neighbourhood plan is essential to achieving high quality places. A key part of any plan is understanding and appreciating the context of an area, so that proposals can then be developed to respect it. Good design interprets and builds on historic character, natural resources and the aspirations of local communities.'*
- The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the importance of viability. It is futile designing and planning if there is no hope of proposals being implemented. Local plans must be informed by what is deliverable. However, proper planning, including good design, is the starting point. Initial proposals should then evolve to achieve the most appropriate balance between the vision and deliverability.'*
- Good consultative and participatory techniques:
- 'Local communities play a vital part in good design. Those who live and work in an area often best understand the way in which places operate and their strengths. Local plans must evolve in a way that genuinely allows for local leadership and participation. Local plans should set a clear design framework. Neighbourhood plans can be used by local communities to develop their vision of how their area should look, feel and function.'*
- Good masterplans, briefs and site specific policies:
- 'Masterplans can set out the strategy for a new development including its general layout and scale and other aspects that may need consideration. The process of developing masterplans will include testing out options and considering the most important parameters for an area such as the mix of uses, requirement for open space or transport infrastructure, the amount and scale of buildings, and the quality of buildings.'*
- Masterplans can show these issues in an indicative layout and massing plan where the shape and position of buildings, streets and parks is set out. Masterplans can sometimes be submitted for outline planning permission or they can be adopted as local policy requirements.'*

*Care should be taken to ensure that masterplans are viable and well understood by all involved. In particular graphical impressions of what the development will look like should not mislead the public by showing details not yet decided upon as certainties.*

*Masterplans, briefs and site policies can stay in place for a long time. They need to be flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances.'*

- 2.18 With regard to the evolution of a planning application, PPG identifies that there are established ways in which good design can be achieved: pre-application discussions; design and access statements; design review; design codes; decisions on planning applications; the use and implementation of planning conditions and agreements.

## **Local Plan**

### **Berwick upon Tweed Local Plan**

- 2.19 Currently the Local Plan for Northumberland consists of the saved<sup>1</sup> policies of the former Local Planning Authorities that made up Northumberland before Local Government Reorganisation in 2009. For the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan Area, these are the saved policies of the Berwick upon Tweed Local Plan (1999). Given the time that has elapsed since the preparation of the Berwick upon Tweed Local Plan and as it was prepared to cover the period up to 2006, some elements of it are out of date, therefore it does not provide a wholly appropriate strategic context for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.20 Given the time that has elapsed since the preparation of the Local Plan, some elements of it are out of date, therefore does not provide a wholly appropriate strategic context for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.21 The Local Plan clearly acknowledges the importance of the historic environment, the need to sustain it for its contribution to residents quality of land and to the area's physical, social and economic attractiveness.
- 2.22 Most of the policies relevant to the historic environment topic were not saved in 2007. Other policies relevant to the historic environment topic are:
- Policy F1 – Environmental Wealth: Identifies that primary importance will be given to sustaining and enhancing environmental wealth; and
  - Policy F5 – requires development within Berwick upon Tweed, including Tweedmouth, Spittal and East Ord to: accord with its surroundings by virtue of its scale, density, height, massing, layout, hard and soft landscaping.

### **Emerging Northumberland Core Strategy**

- 2.23 Northumberland County Council (NCC) is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will replace the existing saved planning policies. The Core Strategy is the first Local Plan document and it will set out the strategic policies, with the subsequent Northumberland Delivery Document adding detail to the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy is expected to be adopted in December 2017. Whilst the emerging Core Strategy is not an adopted planning

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/WAMDocuments/C7737F00-2738-43F3-9D25-681033B85351\\_1\\_0.pdf?nccredirect=1](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/WAMDocuments/C7737F00-2738-43F3-9D25-681033B85351_1_0.pdf?nccredirect=1)

document the strategic policies and associated evidence base are helping to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 2.24 Policy 1 sets out the approach to sustainable development, highlighting the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It also highlights that consideration will be given to the impact of plans and/ or proposals on: their contribution to the conservation and enhancement of Northumberland's historic and built environment; and demonstrates high quality sustainable design.
- 2.25 Policy 2 requires high quality sustainable and inclusive design, including: responding to the character of the wider setting, creating a distinctive environment which takes advantage of opportunities to preserve, enhance or enrich the setting and local distinctiveness, heritage assets, local built vernacular and street patterns.
- 2.26 Policy 28 sets out the strategic principles for the environment in both plan making and decision taking. It identifies that the historic environment will be conserved, protected and enhanced by:
- Giving appropriate weight to the statutory purposes and special qualities of the hierarchy of international, national and local designated and non-designated nature and historic conservation sites and their settings. Greatest weight will be given to international and national designations, followed by sites of regional and local importance;
  - Promoting a shared understanding of the significance of natural and historic assets and their settings, seeking to avoid adverse impacts of proposals, and identifying opportunities to mitigate harm or enhance them; and
  - Ensuring that new development respects the character and local distinctiveness of its landscape or townscape setting.
- 2.27 Policy 33 identifies that in plan making and assessing development proposals, there will be a requirement to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the significance of the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings, by ensuring that:
- Developments affecting a heritage asset will be based on a sound understanding of the significance of that asset;
  - Proposals that would result in harm to or total loss of the significance of designated heritage assets will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances where the harm is outweighed by public benefit. Where the proposal would cause less than substantial harm this will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Proposals that affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered taking into account the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset;
  - Where a decision is made to allow the loss of a heritage asset, in whole or part, developers will be required to record and advance understanding of the asset through appropriate mitigation. The results of such mitigation should be made publically accessible through appropriate archiving and publication. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted;
  - New development in historic settlements and conservation areas should seek to reinforce local distinctiveness through appropriate design and the use of appropriate materials. Developments in Conservation Areas should enhance or better reveal their significance;

- Recognition is given to the contribution that historic places and sites can make to the visitor economy;
- Where conservation or enhancement of the heritage assets may be required but there are limited resources available, priority will be given to assets that are considered characteristic of Northumberland, important within the context of its history, cultural development or landscape and/or unique to the area and Heritage at Risk;

- 2.28 With regard to heritage at risk, policy 34 identifies that the Council will seek to secure the sustainable future of heritage assets at risk, giving priority to:
- Grade I, Grade II\* buildings and structures and Scheduled Monuments identified on Historic England's at Risk Register; and
  - Historic assets, including any from the above Register, that are considered characteristic of Northumberland, important within the context of its history, cultural development or landscape and/ or unique to the area.

### **Summary**

- 2.29 The NPPF and NPPG gives strong protection to the historic and built environment, recognising its cultural significance and the multiple ways it supports and contributes to the economy, society and daily life.
- 2.30 The emerging Core Strategy sets out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of Northumberland's historic and built environment and heritage assets, including those at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. It acknowledges that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and the need to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

### 3. Other strategies and plans

3.1 In addition to the strategic planning framework, there are a number of other documents and evidence available to inform the preparation of the built environment elements of the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### National level

##### Historic England planning advice

3.2 Historic England provides written advice to support owners, developers and local planning authorities. The advice comes in two forms:

- Good practice advice – which provides supporting information on good practice, particularly looking at how national policy and guidance can be applied. It follows the main themes of the planning system, plan making and decision taking, as well as other issues significant for good decision making affecting heritage assets;
- Historic England advice notes – include detailed practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance.

3.3 Each of the Historic England advice documents contains information of relevance to planning decisions within the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan area. The ones of most relevance to the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan are summarised below.

##### *The Historic Environment in Local Plans – Good Practice Advice in Planning: 1 (March 2015)*

3.4 Paragraphs 28 to 32 of the document provide advice with regard to Neighbourhood Planning. It highlights that a full and proper understanding of the heritage of the local area is the most appropriate starting point for Town and Parish Councils to both propose boundaries of the Neighbourhood Plan area and develop policies that support and encourage the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

3.5 The guidance identifies that including heritage matters in a Neighbourhood Plan will help ensure that new development is integrated with what already exists and can demonstrate where standard design and construction may not be appropriate. This can encourage sensitive development of historic buildings and places that can invigorate an area. In addition, that Plans need to include enough information about local heritage to guide decisions, in particular, what it is about a local area that people value, and therefore, requires conservation and enhancement. That information will need to be based on robust evidence, such as the relevant Historic Environment Record.

##### *Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment - Advice Note (August 2014)*

3.6 The advice note highlights the importance of evidence to inform emerging Plans and also obtaining feedback from the local community to understand their likes and dislikes. It also suggests opportunities to undertake further research/ analysis such as:

- An analysis of the historic character of the area highlighting its contribution to the development and appearance of the place;
- The identification of any listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields or local heritage assets and a discussion of the contribution they make to local character;
- The environmental issues which the Plan seeks to address;

- Opportunities to repair, conserve or bring heritage assets back into use, especially those that are at risk;
- Policies to manage the settings of heritage assets or important views;
- Policies to promote locally distinctive development in terms of scale and materials;
- Particular historic environment considerations to be taken into account when seeking to develop specific sites;
- Opportunities for investment into the historic environment alongside delivery of new development;
- As part of the process of preparing for a Neighbourhood Plan, opportunities could be identified to protect buildings and spaces. The Neighbourhood Plan could also identify any buildings and spaces that are worthy of protection through national designation or local designation, the possibility of new or revised conservation areas together with conservation area appraisals, the need for a local heritage list or local buildings at risk survey.

*The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans – Historic England Advice Note 3 (October 2015)*

**3.7** The advice note highlights that it may be of use in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans where sites are being allocated. A three-stage site allocation process is set out within the guidance:

- Stage 1 – evidence gathering: identifies that the site allocation process is best informed by an up to date and robust historic environment evidence base and that this begins prior to the commencement of work on the Plan. The relevant Historic Environment Record (HER) and other evidence held by the local planning authority will help establish the baseline information. This in turn will help identify heritage assets affected (e.g. desktop analysis), whilst also identifying gaps in the evidence base where there may be a need to produce further information which will be needed in order to fully understand the potential impacts of potential site allocations on the historic environment. The guidance suggests that discussions with community groups/organisations may, in some cases, also offer further evidence. The evidence gathered should relate to both designated and non-designated heritage assets, in accordance with the NPPF.
- Stage 2 – site selection: the site selection process needs to be detailed enough to: support the inclusion of appropriate sites for development; justify the omission of a site; and set out clear criteria for sites that are acceptable in principle. It is important to understand the significance of any heritage assets that would be affected by a potential site allocation. The guidance explains that this involves more than identifying known heritage asset within a given distance, but rather a more holistic process which seeks to understand their significance and value;
- Stage 3 – site allocation policies: the guidance identifies that these are a positive feature of a Local Plan as they can highlight the specific criteria against which a development needs to be judged and thereby speed up the implementation process, providing clarity for a wide range of audiences. It is recommended that the policy and/or supporting text provides clear references to the historic environment and specific heritage assets where appropriate. The level of detail required in a site allocation policy will depend on aspects such as the nature of the development proposed and the size and complexity of the site. However, it ought to be detailed enough to provide information on what is expected, where it will happen on the site and when development will come forward including phasing. Mitigation and

enhancement measures identified as part of the site selection process and evidence gathering are best set out within the policy to ensure that these are implemented.

## **Regional level**

### North East Strategic Economic Plan (2017)

- 3.8** The updated Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) identifies the importance of the environment of the region to supporting economic growth. With regard to the historic environment, the SEP identifies that historic towns and cities now provide centres for international culture, education, services and housing and that the rural hinterland boasts scores of historic sites which are now part of a vibrant tourism economy.
- 3.9** The SEP identifies that cultural and historic assets will strengthen growth. Highlighting that the North East's historic legacy and cultural distinctiveness provides a focus for communication and expression of the region's identity through tourism, cultural industries and events. That the Great Exhibition of the North in 2018 will be the latest of many activities that have contributed to the region's reputation for culture-led regeneration, and will provide a platform for strengthening tourism and the visitor economy.
- 3.10** The first North East SEP set out an objective to secure investment for a North East Convention Centre to provide a new focus for encouraging business tourism and providing a facility for key events in the region. Work is also underway to assess the national and international linkages of North East culture businesses and to identify opportunities for strengthening the role of cultural organisations in delivering North East economic ambitions.
- 3.11** The SEP identified that the Local Economic Partnership will work with the North East Culture Partnership and national arts and heritage bodies to identify opportunities to secure further investment into regional assets and to exploit the skills and connections of cultural leaders to support wider growth.

## **County level**

### Northumberland Historic Environment Record

- 3.12** The HER is the primary evidence base for decision-making on, and future management of the historic environment. It is a dynamic record, constantly being updated and enhanced. The HER is supplemented by a range of local studies and resources, such as Conservation Area Character Appraisals, Conservation Area Management Plans, Extensive Urban Surveys and the Historic Landscape Characterisation Study, which contain wide ranging information on the entire historic environment, including locally important non-designated heritage assets.
- 3.13** For the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan Area the HER identifies within the Plan area there are:
- 297 listed buildings, including: 18 Grade I; 22 Grade II\*; and 257 Grade II;
  - Nine Scheduled Monuments;
  - Three Conservation Areas – Berwick upon Tweed; Tweedmouth; and Spittal;

### Northumberland Historic Landscape Characterisation

3.14 The Northumberland Historic Landscape Characterisation study places the main historic landmarks in a wider context, bringing to the fore associated features and potential areas of interest. The evidence that it provides of different eras and aspects of human occupation within a single landscape greatly enriches the understanding of those areas and brings significant additional information to decision-making on projects that may affect heritage or the landscape. In order to support the positive strategy for the historic environment, and where resources are identified, the Council will promote a review of existing Conservation Areas, the designation of new Areas and the means of protecting and enhancing their intrinsic qualities.

3.15 For the Berwick Neighbourhood Plan Area the HLC should be referred to.

#### **Local level**

##### Berwick Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (2008)

3.16 The Berwick upon Tweed Conservation Area was designated in August 1970. The Character Appraisal and Management Strategy were prepared in 2006 by the North East Civic Trust on behalf of the former Borough Council. The final document was informed by significant community engagement, which took place during 2006 and 2007.

##### Tweedmouth Conservatin Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (2008)

3.17 Tweedmouth Conservation Area was designated in September 1991. The Character Appraisal and Management Strategy were prepared in 2006 by the North East Civic Trust on behalf of the former Borough Council. The final document was informed by significant community engagement, which took place during 2006 and 2007.

##### Spittal Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (2008)

3.18 Spittal Conservation Area was designated in November 1995. A Character Appraisal was prepared in 2003 by McIntyre Associates for the former Borough Council and was adopted in 2004. The Management Strategy was prepared in 2006 by North of England Civic Trust for the former Borough Council. The final document was informed by significant community involvement, which took place during 2006 and 2007.

##### Tweed and Silk – a public realm strategy for Berwick upon Tweed (2010)

3.19 The public realm strategy was commission by the Berwick Futures Partnership to set out a simple approach to achieving a high quality and coordinated public realm over the next 20 years. Engagement with key stakeholders resulted in the identification of key spaces that were selected for sample design studies. The Strategy introduces two overarching design themes: Tweed and Silk, which the study explores palettes of suitable furniture and paving. The study area is split into character areas and further sub divided by quality and open



space. Finally, design guidance is provided for all aspects of the public realm and is applied to sample sites within the study area.

**3.20** The Strategy aims to support the transformation of key parts of the Conservation Areas of Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal and enhance their unique identities through an attractive and high quality public realm. In turn the Strategy will assist in promoting an improved quality of life for residents and visitors alike and strengthen investor confidence in Berwick. The Strategy responds to local distinctiveness and considers existing examples of local and national best practice and precedent.

**3.21** Early engagement identified the following issues:

- Traffic dominance on Marygate;
- Visual appearance of Marygate, including shopfronts and clutter;
- The Town Green at Tweedmouth.

**3.22** The study concluded that *‘Berwick’s heritage has a complexity and richness that cannot be overemphasised nor adequately described within the confines of this document’*. That the three areas at the heart of the Strategy are the Conservation Areas of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Tweedmouth and Spittal, as a result it is fundamental that the character and heritage of these areas are respected in any proposed scheme or visual change. The Conservation Area Character Appraisals of Berwick, Tweedmouth and Spittal are considered to be an excellent source of reference and have informed the study. The Character Area Appraisals should be carefully considered in the light of any development within the Conservation Area boundaries and for retailers there must be strict adherence to the Shopfront Design Guide for Conservation Areas in Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough, Supplementary Planning Guidance 1998

**3.23** The study suggests a number of solutions to the following issues:

- Improvement of the key arrival point of Scots Gate and the Co-op;
- Resolving movements conflicts in Golden Square and Marygate;
- Boosting tourism with a new design for the Parade Ground;
- Recommendations to reduce street clutter; and
- Need for a shopfront grant scheme.

#### Berwick upon Tweed Heritage and Character Assessment (2017)

**3.24** The report presents a summary of the history and character of Berwick-upon-Tweed and the surrounding area. It was prepared by AECOM on behalf of Locality, working closely with the Berwick Neighbourhood Planning Group. The assessment is based on a detailed appraisal of the area carried out through desk study and fieldwork.

**3.25** The assessment can be used as evidence to support the planning and design process. This approach is supported by the NPPF, which states that neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies based on an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. In doing so, policies can ensure that development responds to local character and history, and reflects the identity of local surroundings.

**3.26** The study provides context to the Plan area including: location; geology and soils; topography and hydrology; planning policy position; landscape designations; and cultural associations. It

then explains the historical development of the area and provides an overview of the heritage assets. Detailed landscape character area profiles (see figure x below) are then set out.

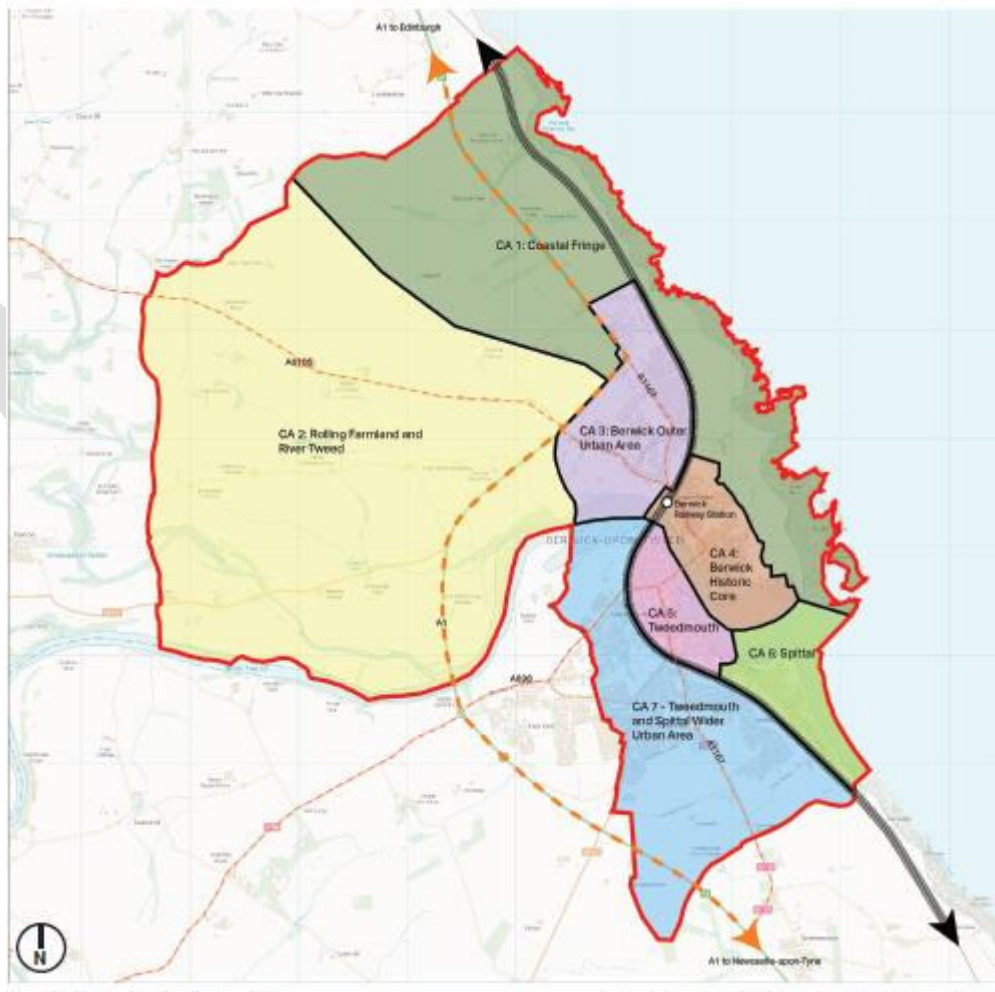


Figure 1: Landscape Character Areas

#### CA1 – Coastal Fringe:

3.27 Key characteristics are described as:

- A linear strip of land that follows the coastline, bound by steep cliffs to the north east becoming lower to the south east with several sandy bays;
- Landcover is mostly open grassland (amenity or rough grazing) or arable, with some hedgerows and a small amount of tree cover, generally limited to shelterbelt blocks;
- Linear transport routes are found in this area including the A1, East Coast Mainline railway and the Berwickshire Coastal Path, a long distance walking route that follows the coast. All have the opportunity for dramatic views towards the sea and create an exciting approach to Berwick when travelling from the north;
- Built development within this area includes a few scattered farms, concentrated mostly along the road corridor of the A1 north of Berwick, and two caravan/holiday parks situated on lower level ground close to the shore;
- Magdalen Fields are an expansive open space with ancient ridge and furrow field formations, military earthworks and golf fairways;

- A smooth continuity between the different land uses along the coastal fringe including; golf courses, farmland and the ramparts exist due to the openness of the land and panoramic views towards the North Sea.

**3.28** Positive aspects of the character of the area are:

- Open and undeveloped nature of the landscape;
- Attractive seascapes with views towards the coast and open skies;
- Accessibility along the coast;
- Attractive beaches and rocky outcrops along the coast;
- Open views across the mouth of the Tweed Estuary to Spittal and the coast beyond;
- Historic features within the landscape including linear earthworks and ridge-and-furrow field formations.

**3.29** The following issues have been identified which could be addressed through new development or active management:

- Accessibility and legibility of the coastal area from within Berwick town centre;
- Condition of the coastal footpath, (Berwickshire Coastal Route);
- Condition of facilities at the beaches;
- Weak development boundaries to the north adjacent to the Ramparts;
- Business Park and around the Holiday Park, necessary to reinforce development boundaries and to provide a framework for them within the wider landscape.

**3.30** The following elements have been identified as particularly sensitive to change:

- The open, un-developed coastal landscape which provides a setting to Berwick is particularly sensitive to development pressure in the form of expansion of the holiday parks and from encroachment from the urban edge;
- Historic features within the landscape including the earthworks that are sensitive to increased visitor pressure;
- The open countryside to the north of Berwick is sensitive to the potential expansion of the Ramparts Business Park;
- The strong horizontal nature of the coastal landscape is sensitive to the addition of vertical elements such as wind turbines.

**3.31** In order to address the issue highlighted above, the following change management principles have been identified:

- Conserve the open un-developed character of the landscape and the dramatic coastal views;
- Reinforce the structure planting around Berwick Holiday Park to help set it within the coastal landscape creating a cohesive boundary treatment;
- Future development within the Ramparts Business Park should be limited to the north and defined within a strong planted boundary treatment, with woodland planting, in order to define the urban limits and provide screening of the business park from views experienced along the A1 looking over the open coastal landscape;
- Opportunities to improve wayfinding and interpretation from Berwick town centre to the coast, both to the beaches and the Berwick Coastal Path;
- Improve pedestrian and disabled accessibility to the beach at Greenses Haven and other beaches close to Berwick town centre by providing wheelchair safe access routes and improved beachside facilities;
- Limit the future development of wind turbines, so that they are associated with the existing turbines on the urban edge rather than set within the open countryside.

*CA 2 – Rolling Farmland and River Tweed:*

**3.32** Key characteristics are described as:

- Sloping farmland falls towards the sweeping river course of the River Tweed and its tributary Whiteadder Water to the south;
- Open, expansive views across the Tweed valley and towards the Cheviot Hills, create a strong visual connection to the inland landscape;
- Land rises to a rounded hill with a high point of 160m AOD at Halidon Hill and falls towards the Tweed River Corridor to the south where it becomes more undulating;
- Landcover comprises of medium sized arable and pasture fields, defined by hedgerows with occasional field trees, post and wire fences and drystone walls. There are intermittent pockets of woodland planting along the river and some small areas of shelterbelt planting associated with settlements;
- Masts and overhead lines are a common feature with distant views of wind farms to the south;
- Two principal routes extend through the character area. The A6105 follows the contour extending east west and the A1 road corridor runs north to south. A network of narrow rural roads and long distance routes and Public Rights of Way extend across the wider countryside;
- The A1 creates a physical barrier to movement;
- Settlement is scattered and limited to occasional roadside properties, farms and fishing shiels next to the river;
- Halidon Hill has historical significance and provides a dramatic viewpoint to Berwick and in particular the Royal Border Bridge as it crosses the Tweed.

**3.33** Positive aspects of the character of the area are:

- The open agricultural landscape which demonstrates a consistency of character;
- Expansive views over the rolling farmland and Tweed Valley to the Cheviot Hills;
- Undiscovered feel of viewpoint at Halidon Hill and the panoramic view experienced;
- Historical and cultural significance of this border landscape;
- Rural countryside character and undeveloped nature;
- The riverside Public Right of Way provides proximity to nature and wildlife.

**3.34** The following issues have been identified which could be addressed through new development or active management:

- Conflicts with crossing points over the A1 and improved linkages between the rural and urban areas. Currently there are no designated cycle routes or safe crossing points for cyclists prohibiting cycle connectivity between Berwick and the open countryside;
- The military history and significance of the Battle of Halidon Hill 1333, is somewhat ignored and lacks adequate visitor interpretation;
- Landscape features are typically well maintained, although there has been some loss of hedgerows and occasional stone walls are in disrepair.

**3.35** The following elements have been identified as particularly sensitive to change:

- These relate to the historic and cultural significance of this border landscape as well as the sensitive habitats along the River Tweed;
- Relatively open undeveloped skyline, could be affected by additional masts and the introduction of wind turbines or pylons within the area;
- Hedgerow and stone wall field boundaries could be lost if not well maintained;

- The intact character of the landscape reflected in the agricultural landscape and scattered settlement pattern and use of local stone in building materials;
- Loss or lack of information about the heritage associated with the English/Scottish border and the Battle of Halidon Hill 1333.

**3.36** In order to address the issue highlighted above, the following change management principles have been identified:

- Improve sustainable transport connections with Berwick with safe routes and crossing points at the A1 for cyclists and pedestrians;
- Development should be of a high quality design and where appropriate reflect the local vernacular style and materials and seek to reflect the existing pattern of scattered properties and farmsteads;
- Retain and enhance historic farm buildings;
- Consider opportunities to improve the visitor interpretation surrounding Halidon Hill;
- Reinforce field boundary treatments particularly the stone walls and hedgerows;
- Sensitive siting of masts and other vertical structures to maintain the characteristic openness of the landscape and un-interrupted views experienced;
- Maintain and manage the sensitive habitats and nationally important conservation interests along the River Tweed corridor.

*CA 3 – Berwick Outer Urban Area:*

**3.37** Key characteristics are described as:

- An urban area to the north of the historic core of Berwick. Land uses include predominantly residential, some large scale retail supermarkets, a cemetery and an industrial estate;
- This area shows the phased evolution of Berwick's built fabric reflected in the 18th and 19th Century buildings with 20th/21<sup>st</sup> Century developments dominating the periphery of the town;
- Large Victorian villas extend out along North Road giving way to post war semi-detached residential estates which extend as far as the railway corridor to the east, each estate with its own distinctive style;
- Older Victorian housing is located in the south of this area, including large villas along Castle Terrace, a river escarpment that maximises the panoramic views towards the River Tweed and beyond;
- The main road corridor of North Road (A1167) runs through as a central spine and forms the northern approach and gateway into Berwick;
- Retail and commercial development is centred on the A1 junction along with light industrial development at the Ramparts Business Park;
- The East Coast Mainline bounds this area to the east and south, creating a clear boundary between character areas;
- Open fields extend from the western residential edge to the A1;
- The River Tweed forms the southern extents of the character area where the natural river escarpment falls sharply to the flat riverside where the dramatic and listed Royal Border Bridge crosses the Tweed;
- Fishing shiels such as Whitesand shiel are distinctive and attractive features within the river corridor.

**3.38** Positive aspects of the character of the area are:

- Access to the River Tweed and the attractive views along it including the dramatic Royal Border Bridge;



- Attractive Victorian villas which provide a coherent and high quality built fabric particularly along Castle Terrace and parts of North Road;
- The open un-developed river banks and wider river valley setting to the Tweed;
- Fishing shiels and the timber boathouse of Berwick Amateur Rowing Club are attractive and appropriate structures along the river;
- Views from Coronation Park.

**3.39** The following issues have been identified which could be addressed through new development or active management:

- Large areas of amenity grass that have no clear function and provide a poor public realm along this key approach to Berwick;
- Northern gateway experience of Berwick which is dominated by large retail developments and vehicular dominated North Road;
- Lack of access and legibility of access to the coast from within this area;
- Weak settlement edge;
- Occasional infill development is not responsive to the local vernacular.

**3.40** The following elements have been identified as particularly sensitive to change:

- Intact areas of 19th century villas which contribute positively to the townscape, creating a strong architectural presence and character;
- The open, un-developed river corridor provides both an important green space as well as being of international conservation importance;
- Key views west along the River Tweed corridor towards the iconic and imposing Royal Border Bridge.

**3.41** In order to address the issue highlighted above, the following change management principles have been identified:

- Future residential development within the fields to the east of the A1 should be set within a robust landscape framework providing a strong settlement edge along the A1 and a sensitive interface with the existing residential areas;
- Any future expansion of the Ramparts Business Park should be set within a strong landscape framework reinforcing the settlement edge to the north and screening views of the industrial units particularly from views along the A1;
- Development should be sensitively sited within the wider river corridor, avoiding the escarpment with consideration of impacts on the views along the river corridor both west up the estuary and east towards the Royal Border Bridge;
- Limit the gradual encroachment of development within the rural hinterland providing defensible settlement edges;
- Future infill development should be responsive to the local setting and building vernacular in terms of numbers of storey, elevational treatment and use of materials;
- Consider opportunities to improve the gateway approach to Berwick from the north with public realm and planting opportunities;
- Consider opportunities for a Park and Ride facility adjacent to the retail park to discourage car traffic within the town centre;
- The public space around Newfields requires public realm improvements which could be incorporated into the creation of an attractive outer northern gateway, leading on to the Victorian terraces of North Road;
- North Road is wide enough for avenue planting and could support a separate cycle corridor;

- Maximise opportunities for public green space and designated play space within future residential development;
- The list of buildings of interest identified in the appendix of this report should be taken into consideration in the production of any formally adopted local list of non-designated heritage assets.

*CA 4: Berwick Historic Core:*

**3.42** Key characteristics are described as:

- Historic townscape and distinctive Grade I Listed Walls in a unique setting surrounded by the sea, the Tweed estuary and the rural hinterland;
- Strong historical and cultural associations;
- The fortification walls and ramparts create a popular walking route for locals and tourists, with elevated views towards the coast and over Berwick urban area;
- Varied topography underlying the built fabric reflected in level changes experienced through vennels;
- Built development follows a compact, fine grain, historic street pattern;
- Land uses are mainly residential and commercial with the commercial centre of Berwick located along Marygate, Hide Hill and Bridge Street;
- Strong entrance to the historic core of Berwick with the walls and arches dominating and a linear line of sight towards the Town Hall;
- The architecture is mostly victorian or geogrian with a vertical rhythm of terraces two to four storeys high, with a small amount of recent infill development. Materials include stone, red pantiles and slate rooves;
- Intricate 'dancing' roofscape and varied skyline, unbroken by large scale modern development;
- A large amount of parking is located within the commercial centre and at the quayside and detracts from the appreciation of the historic townscape;
- The remnants of Berwick Castle are located within this area adjacent to the train station;
- Gaps, vacant buildings and underutilised sites can be found within the urban fabric.

**3.43** Positive aspects of the character of the area are:

- The town's unique position between the River Tweed and North Sea;
- The heritage associated with a 12th century walled town with the fortification walls mostly intact;
- The intricate street and block pattern;
- The extensive 18th and 19th century architecture;
- A large number and variety of historic buildings survive in the area, and from which the area draws its character and appearance;
- The prevalence of two to three storey building heightens the impact of larger structures within the Character Area, particularly institutional buildings such as the Town Hall and the Church of Holy Trinity;
- The variations in roof form, pitch, materials and tone create diversity and character;
- The many panoramic views.

**3.44** The following issues have been identified which could be addressed through new development or active management:

- Traffic congestion and the predominance of car and coach parking throughout the town detracts from the heritage assets and integrity and appreciation of the townscape;

- Deteriorating condition of buildings puts the historic fabric at risk with many vacant buildings that are falling into disrepair, with several large redevelopment opportunity sites;
- The main commercial area is cluttered with signage and street furniture and lacks tree planting (Castlegate was previously a tree lined street);
- A number of shop frontages are not appropriate to their heritage setting, with empty units above shops;
- A number of buildings, particularly older commercial buildings currently lie vacant;
- A number of rendered buildings have been painted in far lighter colours than their surrounding buildings, producing a harsh and unsympathetic contrast;
- Inappropriate infill and new development which doesn't reflect the conservation area character, including incongruous flat roofs, such as the building at Eastern Lane Car Park, opposite The Maltings and modern buildings at Walkergate and Woolmarket which fail to generate any sense of place which relates to the Conservation Area. Similarly Boots and the two adjacent properties on Marygate where inappropriate materials and building form do not respond to its location. Gap sites which detract from the enclosure otherwise created by street frontages;
- The Castle remains are a largely overlooked historic asset;
- The quayside is a very important open space but requires a stronger function and use.

**3.45** The following elements have been identified as particularly sensitive to change:

- The medieval street pattern and building plots, densities and form;
- Listed buildings and those which make a significant contribution to the conservation area which are in poor repair or in need of work to improve their appearance;
- Traditional shopfronts are particularly susceptible to the detrimental impacts of cumulative changes;
- Vernacular floorscape treatments which have survived but are at risk of erosion through lack of maintenance of the public realm;
- Panoramic views.

**3.46** In order to address the issue highlighted above, the following change management principles have been identified:

- Protect, enhance and consolidate the urban structure, town walls, structure of blocks, plots, streets, space and vennels to be protected and reinforced through future development and management of the historic environment;
- Consider extending the Article 4 directions to include satellite dishes and garden walls, as suggested in the 2008 Conservation Area Management Strategy but not as yet implemented;
- Protect and enhance strategic views of the town, particularly river vistas and panoramic views;
- Protect the visual character of the historic core by ensuring that the heights of new development sit broadly within the undulating roofscape, complementing the roofline and not competing with the landmark buildings;
- Avoid the introduction of buildings with flat roofs, so that the roofscape is protected and also limits nesting sites for seagulls;
- New development to be high quality and responsive and sensitive to the historic setting and be accompanied by design statements or design codes;
- Use of a signage audit and strategy to create a uniform design, identifying locations where unnecessary signage could be removed and new signage erected. This would



de-clutter the streetscape and increase the legibility of the historic environment particularly at key arrival points such as Scots Gate;

- Enhance the arrival sequence for visitors with the potential for street tree planting along Castlegate to draw visitors into the town centre from the station (also referenced in the 2008 Conservation Area Management Strategy). Conserve vernacular floorscape treatments through maintenance of the public realm;
- Improve the visitor interpretation associated with the Castle remains;
- Enhancement of the retail quarter along Marygate and Hidehill with provision and enforcement of shopfront design guidance. The 2008 Conservation Area Management Strategy states that the shopfront design guide needs to be updated and needs to include guidance on the conversion of shops to other uses. This is still relevant and has not yet been implemented;
- The sensitive conversion of empty units above shops back into use, especially residential, would assist in the restoration of the historic fabric and enhancing the vitality of the town centre;
- Resolve traffic congestion and parking so that the overriding dominance of vehicles is reduced and the setting of heritage assets such as the Ramparts by Castlegate are restored;
- Create a gateway for visitors at the railway station with public realm improvements and creation of a transport interchange with a second deck of parking and coach parking to encourage pedestrian movement from the station into the town centre;
- Consideration of shared surfaces and providing a stronger focus on pedestrian movement;
- The buildings of interest, identified within this report should be taken into consideration in the production of any formally adopted local list of non-designated heritage assets;
- Enhanced signage and wider access to the coast and hinterland;
- Improved interpretation and signage of the Northumberland and Berwickshire Coastal Paths;
- Consideration of flood issues in the design of future development (2008 Conservation Area Management Strategy).

**3.47** The following sites have been identified as key opportunities for public realm improvements which will play an essential part in the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. These could be financed through the Town Council seeking funding in partnership as well as through s106 contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy:

- Marygate – shared surfaces;
- Castlegate – Tree planting to improve link between station transport interchange and Scots Gate. Remove car and coach parking to restore the setting of the Walls;
- Eastern Lane Car Park (The Maltings) – opportunities for high quality public space, not dominated by car parking;
- Railway station forecourt – transport interchange, consolidate parking with part coach park and additional deck for car parking and enhance the arrival/gateway for visitors;
- The Berwick Bridge consideration of pedestrian and cycle movement only;
- The Parade – opportunities to enhance the space with tree planting, a formal square (2008 Conservation Area Management Strategy) as well as temporary uses to reinforce the relationship between The Parade and the Barracks;
- Quayside – opportunities the creation of a civic space encompassing a modest development which is respectful of this unique space providing permeability of views

to the quay walls and multi-functional uses including the potential for a market space

**3.48** The following sites would benefit from Design Codes and ensuing design policies that set out urban design principles:

- Quayside;
- Eastern Lane car Park (The Maltings);
- Station Forecourt;
- Hatters Lane car park;
- Hospital site.

*CA 5: Tweedmouth:*

**3.49** Key characteristics are described as:

- Characterised by its diverse set of conditions: semi-industrial character of the riverside edge, rolling topography of the residential areas between the riverside and Main Street and the Main Street itself;
- Subtle variety in building form, height and scale is a basic characteristic of Tweedmouth's robust, simple traditional architecture;
- The industrial past is apparent along with current industrial uses, concentrated along the river front;
- Public open space is concentrated along the river front, with a large linear area known as the Town Green that connects Tweedmouth and Spittal, with open views towards Berwick and in particular the clarity of the fortification walls;
- The architectural style consists of some older Victorian stone houses close to the river's edge with more recent post war housing, with distinctive red tiled roofs and rendered finishes, on higher ground;
- The topography drops towards the river corridor and residential development spreads from the river's edge, gradually rising up quite steep streets towards higher slopes;
- Panoramic views towards Berwick, the bridges and the rising hinterland backdrop.

**3.50** Positive aspects of the character of the area are:

- Open, panoramic views towards Berwick providing uninterrupted vistas of the townscape and distinctive roofscape;
- Proximity to the River Tweed and the views experienced along it including the three bridges;
- The historic village core around Tweedmouth Parish Church;
- The survival of a large number of historic buildings, reflected in the designation of the Tweedmouth Conservation Area, which has a significant impact upon the character and appearance;
- The division of the Tweedmouth Conservation Area into sub areas reflect the architectural diversity across the area, and a distinction between areas of historical development;
- The Town Green and accessibility to the river corridor;
- The Goody Patchy.

**3.51** The following issues have been identified which could be addressed through new development or active management:

- Inappropriate intrusive development such as the Pets at Home store, Asda supermarket and the spaces and buildings around it, which compromise the setting of the Conservation Area and leads to a gradual loss of character in Tweedmouth;
- New development that is not in keeping with the scale of its setting, in particular within Tweedmouth Conservation area or areas in close proximity to older areas of Tweedmouth such as the historic village core;
- The loss and replacement of original architectural detailing through modern alterations which are poorly designed and intrusive in the traditional architectural scene;
- An incremental loss of historical architectural features, particularly associated with shop fronts and their modernisation or conversion into dwellings;
- Deteriorating condition of buildings puts the historic fabric at risk with vacant buildings that are falling into disrepair;
- The railway corridor creates a physical barrier with limited points

**3.52** The following elements have been identified as particularly sensitive to change:

- The Tweed Dock area and its surrounds are vulnerable to incremental change arising from the continued operational use of the dock. The Port has permitted development rights and consequently can erect anything relating to the trade of the port without needing planning permission;
- Housing development within the existing fragmented open spaces;
- Extension of the commercial port at Dock Road;
- Improvements to the quality of public realm on offer at the Town Green are threatened by resistance to any

**3.53** In order to address the issue highlighted above, the following change management principles have been identified:

- New development should conserve, and enhance the distinctive character of the area. In particular, vulnerable shopfronts are included in this. The size, shape, colour, style of lettering and materials must be responsive to the building and the area, and should recognise the relationship with neighbouring buildings;
- The list of buildings of interest, identified within this report, should be taken into consideration in the production of any formally adopted local list of non-designated heritage assets;
- The 2008 Conservation Area recommended that Article 4 directions for windows/doors as well as Article 4 to withdraw some PD rights for the Harbour Commission be implemented but this has not been done. Satellite dishes could also be added for Article 4 inclusion. Implementing this would assist in protecting the unique character and heritage from being further eroded;
- Main Street and the river edge act as the two key structuring elements and their character should be reinforced, their amenity enhanced and accessible linkages between them improved. Prince Edward Road is wide enough for avenue planting;
- Manage the height of new development in respect of views from Berwick historic core and Spittal particularly in respect to protecting the ridgeline of Tweedmouth from development;
- New development should be subject to detailed design guidance as policy in order to avoid further inappropriate and intrusive new development further harming the distinctive character;

- Opportunities to enhance Tweedmouth's waterside green space as a riverside park and promenade which serves the town as a whole and enhances the visual relationship between Tweedmouth and Berwick;
- Consider the introduction of a parking gateway at Berwick Bridge bridgehead (also identified in the 2008 Conservation Area Management Strategy);
- Protect and improve the amenity value of the Goody Patchy;
- Enhance strategic walking and cycling opportunities connecting Spittal, Tweedmouth and Berwick;
- Encourage visitors into Tweedmouth through improved signage and enhanced pedestrian and cycle provision, including the potential to remove vehicle traffic from Berwick Bridge;
- Consolidation of port activities to potentially release land for other activities;
- Protect and enhance the strategic views towards Berwick and the river vistas and panoramic views to Spittal Point and beyond;
- Strengthen gateways into Tweedmouth with strategic public realm improvements;
- Increase visual coherence along Main Street by increasing maintenance of the public realm and retaining and enhancing vernacular floorscape treatments;
- The retail area along Main Street could be improved and extended with a comprehensive public realm treatment, decluttering of signage, improvement to shop fascia and maintenance and repair of poorly maintained buildings. The 2008 Conservation Area Management Strategy states that the shopfront design guide needs to be updated and needs to include guidance on the conversion of shops to other uses. This is still relevant and has not yet been implemented.

**3.54** The following sites have been identified as key opportunities for public realm improvements which will play an essential part in the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. These could be financed through the Town Council seeking funding in partnership as well as through s106 contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy:

- Dock Road – respect for Village Green status with possible cycle path;
- Tweedmouth Bridge End – possible part coach park and opportunities for inner gateway by Old Bridge and associated landscape improvements;
- Tweedmouth Main Street – general public realm improvements to streetscape.

**3.55** The following sites would benefit from Design Codes and ensuing design policies that set out urban design principles:

- Brewery Bank area;
- Tweedmouth Goods Yard;
- The Docks.

*CA 6: Spittal:*

**3.56** Key characteristics are described as:

- A mostly residential area which extends along the lower slopes of the coast, exposed to the elements and with vast coastal and open sky views;
- The character of Spittal is determined by its relationship to both the river and the coast, the resulting micro climate condition, fragments of industrial heritage and compactness of the existing urban form;
- Distinctive local character with traditional, well established local vernacular and community spirit;
- A Victorian promenade is a popular recreational feature along with the sandy beach, that starts at Spittal Point and extends approximately 500m along the coast;

- Links to the historic industrial land uses in this area can be seen in small fishermen cottages and industrial buildings that have now been converted into residential properties;
- Main street is an attractive wide road corridor with a cohesive row of Victorian terraces, personalised with painted doors and planting including mature avenue trees and ornamental planting beds. This was originally a rail route from coal mines to the processing factory at Spittal Point;
- Substantial houses set amid generous gardens contrast with small fishermen houses, curing sheds and the larger scale industrial quarter at Spittal Point;
- There is a potential development opportunity at the derelict industrial estate at Spittal Point. This estate contains Spittal Chimney, which has become a popular landmark on the point where the Tweed meets the sea, visible from Spittal, Berwick and Tweedmouth;
- There is a feeling of openness throughout with many open spaces including the beach, sand dunes along Sandstell Road, the promenade and play parks as well as many views towards the sea;
- Cultural influences: its maritime and riverine associations; industrial heritage (based upon extraction and land based industries); tourism;
- Architecture in this area typically includes the use of pink and buff sandstone and brick; slate and tiled roofs, pitched at 45 degrees; chimney flues; variety of architectural styles; narrow intersecting streets; enclosed and regularly massed houses; linearity; clearly defined and hard edged boundaries.

**3.57** Positive aspects of the character of the area are:

- Open character associated with the coastal location, and even within developed areas there are sea views and a spacious feel;
- Sandy beach and sand dunes form an important recreational resource with uninterrupted sea views;
- Spittal has a small village feel that is distinct from the surrounding urban areas;
- Victorian promenade provides good accessibility along the coast with attractive built features such as the Venetian Pavilion;
- The traditional intimately scaled main streets of Spittal, its enclosed and sheltered micro climate, and its relative dis-connectedness from the rest of the town, create a place of distinctive local character;
- The character and appearance of the area is highly influenced by the survival of a large number of historic buildings. This has been recognised in the designation of this area as a conservation area;
- The width of streets and pavements are variable, however the close grain of development with pavement edge properties provides continuity along street fronts acting to balance this variation;
- The dramatic projection of Spittal Point into the estuary, punctuated by the chimney and the exposure to the coastal environmental conditions, contrast with the scale and intimacy of the main street;
- Dramatic and expansive views from Spittal Point provide a strong visual connection to both the old town of Berwick and the curved form of Tweedmouth's riverside.

**3.58** The following issues have been identified which could be addressed through new development or active management:

- Poor entrance and unimpressive approach to Spittal resulting in a lack of sense of arrival. This is in contrast to the main body of the town which has homogeneity and a distinct character;
- A lack of quality landscaping with some existing public realm showing deterioration and lack of maintenance;
- Traffic problems at the junction of Main Street and on street parking which detracts from the quality of the streetscape;
- Lack of signage to viewpoints and the long distance cycle and walking routes;
- The erosion of historical features in residential properties, including the replacement of timber sash windows and traditional doors with uPVC;
- Shopfronts on Main Street have been removed or altered during the conversion of properties into dwellings and the development at such properties has encouraged the proliferation of materials and styles unsympathetic to the vernacular;
- The propensity of satellite dishes and wirescape which damages the appearance of the Conservation Area;
- The extent of vacant plots and derelict buildings at Spittal Point detracts from the unique and intact character of Spittal;
- Connectivity to wider Spittal area (Eastcliffe and Highcliffe estates) is poor mainly due to the severance created by the railway line;
- The beach area extending from the car park at Spittal Point round to Spittal quay displays a poor appearance particularly at low tide with litter prominent. This detracts in the foreground views from this important vantage point.

**3.59** The following elements have been identified as particularly sensitive to change:

- Shopfronts are sensitive to cumulative removal and degradation of traditional architectural features. The return of residential properties and former shops back to commercial use also present a risk of unsympathetic choices of materials and styles;
- Development of former industrial land at Spittal Point is very important for the future of the village;
- Gap sites and future infill development have the potential to erode the distinctive character of Spittal;
- Loss of archaeological features important to Spittal's history through development;
- The future use of the Promenade building;
- Open space such as South End is susceptible to development pressure.

**3.60** In order to address the issue highlighted above, the following change management principles have been identified:

- New development in Spittal should act to conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the village. This would include the existing shopfronts. The size, shape, colour, style of lettering and materials must be sympathetic to the building and area, as well as recognising the relationship with neighbouring buildings;
- New build designs either within or adjacent to the Spittal Conservation area must be responsive to vernacular building material, height, scale and massing. Design codes could be employed to assist in this;
- The 2008 Conservation Area recommended that Article 4 directions for windows/doors be implemented but this has not been done. Satellite dishes could also be added for Article 4 inclusion. Implementing this would assist in protecting the unique character and heritage from being further eroded;



- The list of buildings of interest, identified within this report, should be taken into consideration in the production of any formally adopted local list of non-designated heritage assets;
- Maximise the attractiveness and activity of the town centre through better interpretation and promotion of the town's archaeological, built and maritime heritage assets both for locals and tourists (e.g. coastal swimming pools, Spa Well area);
- Improve the gateway and arrival experience to Spittal particularly when considering future landuses and development opportunities. The sporadic siting of buildings gives Spittal a poorly defined limit which could be addressed through future development and gateway public realm opportunities;
- Wide spread opportunities to improve and enhance the public realm including consideration of cohesive surface treatments throughout the village and replacement street tree planting along Main Street, reinforcing the avenue planting;
- Spittal Point development provides an opportunity for a comprehensive mixed use redevelopment of this important and visually sensitive site and should include affordable housing for local people, small business opportunities, visitor and leisure uses, Design codes for this site are essential;
- Enhancement of the visitor experience at the car park at Spittal Point with opportunities to enhance the space and create better pedestrian and cycle connectivity with Tweedmouth;
- Protect, maintain and enhance open space such as South End playing fields and the Venetian Pavillion area;
- Ensure that the limited number of access points across the railway line are maintained and enhanced to provide better connectivity between the communities;
- Opportunity to create a focal vantage point at the south end of Spittal, using open space at the south end of the promenade, to draw visitors through the town and to create a positive end point for the Northumberland Coastal Path;
- Divert the Northumberland Coastal Path route along the promenade and quayside.

**3.61** The following sites have been identified as key opportunities for public realm improvements which will play an essential part in the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. These could be financed through the Town Council seeking funding in partnership as well as through s106 contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy:

- Seafield Park;
- Memorial green and Spa Well;
- Public performance space at South End playing field.

**3.62** The following sites would benefit from Design Codes and ensuing design policies that set out urban design principles:

- Spittal Point;

*CA 7: Tweedmouth and Spittal Wider Urban Area:*

**3.63** Key characteristics are described as:

- Residential dominated area with varying ages and styles of estate extending out from the historic core of Tweedmouth and Spittal;
- Historical industrial uses associated with the railway are still evident along with the more recent industrial buildings within the Tweedside Trading Estate;

- Historic buildings and structures are evident throughout the townscape and add to the depth of character;
- Open space is widespread and primarily associated with community facilities, such as playing fields, cemetery and the river corridor;
- Extensive areas of open countryside lie within the south of this area and adjacent to the River Tweed;
- Close relationship with both the surrounding rural area as well as the historic core of Tweedmouth and Spittal;
- Expansive seaward views from Highcliffe and Eastcliffe as well as views towards Tweedmouth and the historic core of Berwick from the A1167 road corridor;
- The River Tweed forms the northern extents of this character area where the wide riverside bank is crossed by the dramatic structure of the Royal Border Bridge.

**3.64** Positive aspects of the character of the area are:

- Panoramic gateway view when approaching along the A1167 from the south;
- Close relationship with the surrounding rural area;
- The open un-developed nature of the river corridor and pedestrian access it affords;
- Historic buildings evident throughout the townscape, add to the character and sense of place;
- The two main arterial routes provide a reasonable level of public realm with planted sections which assist in creating a degree of coherence to the road corridors despite the sometimes disparate land uses;
- The industrial estate is relatively well sited and contained.

**3.65** The following issues have been identified which could be addressed through new development or active management:

- The settlement boundary needs to be better defined to prevent encroachment into the adjacent countryside in the south and the river corridor in the north;
- Old Shieldfield Park and land surrounding Shieldfield Stadium, is not fulfilling its potential and needs a stronger function and sense of place;
- Open space adjacent to Highcliffe estate lacks purpose and sense of place;
- The railway corridor creates a barrier to movement;
- Poor connectivity of Highcliffe and Eastcliffe estates with Spittal;
- Potential pressure for further retail developments along the two arterial roads.

**3.66** The following elements have been identified as particularly sensitive to change:

- The continued pressure for expansion of housing into greenfield land to the south of the character area;
- Open space with currently limited purpose will be at threat from development such as the land surrounding the Speedway stadium and Shieldfield Park;
- The open and un-developed nature of the river corridor.

**3.67** In order to address the issue highlighted above, the following change management principles have been identified:

- Maintain and manage the sensitive habitats and nationally important conservation interests along the River Tweed corridor;
- Reinforce the urban edge to prevent further encroachment from development and to define the settlement edge particularly to the south along Cow Road and Churchill Lane;



- Public realm improvements to the gateway to Tweedmouth and the wider Berwick area when approaching from the south along the A1167 and to the west along the A698. Consideration to be given to creating an outer gateway into Tweedmouth/Spittal which in turn leads to an inner gateway associated with Berwick Bridge;
- Limit further retail parks along the two arterial roads and gateway approaches;
- Limit development incursion into the river corridor landscape from the A698 with structure planting to reinforce the urban edge;
- Conserve and enhance the heritage assets within the area which provide an important local contribution to the townscape;
- The list of buildings of interest, identified within this report, should be taken into consideration in the production of any formally adopted local list of non-designated heritage assets;
- Maintain the existing corridors connecting the communities either side of the railway line, enhancing pedestrian and cycle movement;
- Opportunities to enhance the interfaces between the residential and industrial areas, reinforcing planted buffers;
- Provision of designated children's play space and active green space within new housing developments with an emphasis on pedestrian and cycle connectivity between communities and facilities.

**3.68** The following sites would benefit from Design Codes and ensuing design policies that set out urban design principles:

- Shieldfield Park;
- Swan Centre site.

### **Summary**

**3.69**



## Historic environment designations

- 4.1 This section of the background paper summarises the historic environment designations across the Plan area.

### Built Heritage Designations

- 4.2 As explained in the previous section, much of Berwick town centre located north of the River Tweed is identified as a Conservation Area, extending east to the Magdalene Fields Golf Club and north to Berwick Middle School. A Conservation Area on the adjacent bank of the River Tweed incorporates an area from Mount Road up to the Royal Border Bridge, while an additional conservation area is located south, between the railway line and Spittal Beach.
- 4.3 Being a historic town, the centre of Berwick contains a significant number of buildings and features, which are protected by statutory designations. A number of Scheduled Monuments are located in Berwick, including; Berwick Castle, a medieval church and graveyard to the northeast, Berwick Bridge and Spades Mire Linear Earthwork, while medieval and post medieval fortifications outline much of the town centre. In addition, there are numerous listed buildings clustered throughout the centre of Berwick.



Figure 2: Built Heritage designations

## Archaeological Sensitivity

- 4.4 The extensive urban survey identifies much of the Berwick town centre to the north of the River Tweed as being of high archaeological sensitivity. As identified above, Berwick contains a significant number of scheduled monuments. Blackwell Shad, on the west bank of the River Tweed, and Calot Shad on the north bank are both identified as being of medium archaeological sensitivity; as is Green's Haven, Fisherman's Haven and a coastal area between Magdalene Field Golf Club and Bucket Rocks.

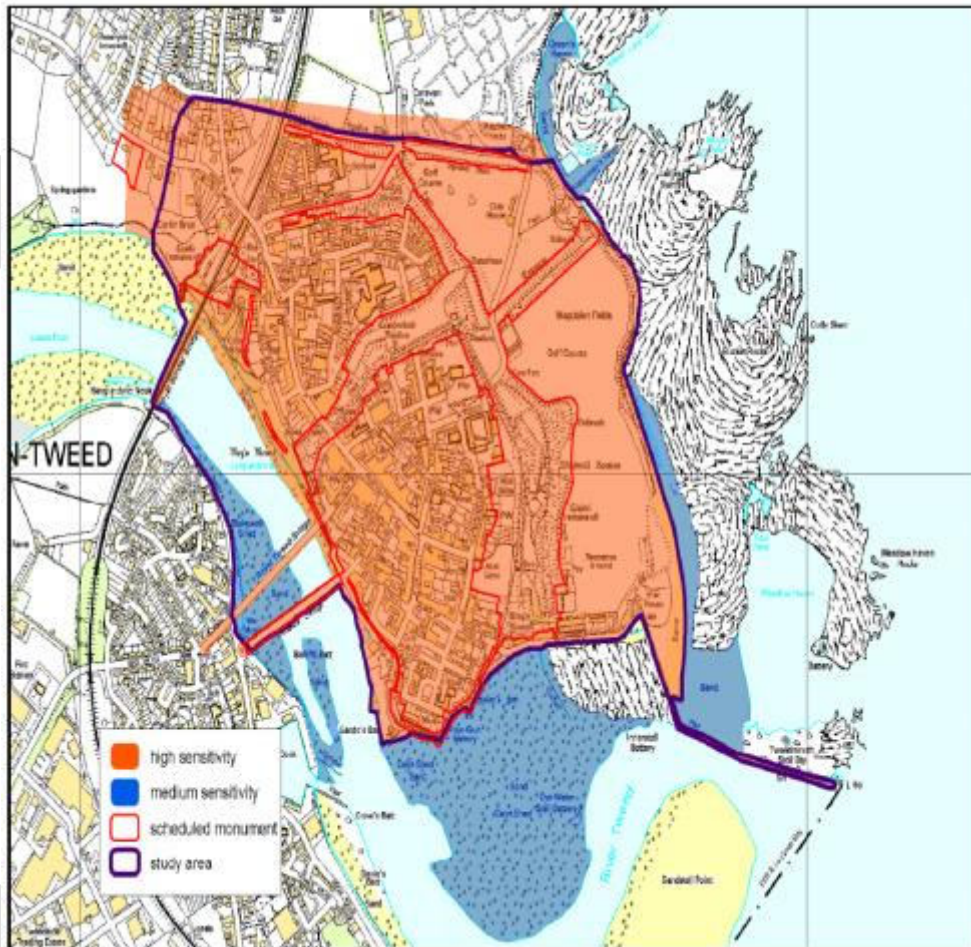


Figure 3: Berwick Archaeological Sensitivity



## Feedback

### Early engagement – local community

**1.1** As a means of starting the process of collecting information and opinions that would influence the content of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Town Council held five community engagement drop-in sessions across the Plan area which took place during February 2016. The purpose of the events was to raise awareness of the opportunities presented by Neighbourhood Planning and to engage as broad a range of people from the local community as possible from the start of the plan making process. Engagement sought to help the Steering Group to define those issues of greatest importance to the local community

**1.2** Each drop-in session sought views from the community using a variety of techniques, each of which looked to determine local opinions about life in Berwick. These techniques included:

- Feedback display boards seeking opinions about the topic areas that should be covered in a Neighbourhood Plan;
- Feedback display boards which allowed people to identify, by using 'Post-it' notes what is good and not so good about life in Berwick;
- Feedback postcards inviting people to identify the three things they would change about Berwick; and
- A mapping exercise which allowed people to highlight specific locations of concern and where opportunities exist for improvements.

**1.3** A full report on the engagement activities is available on the Neighbourhood Plan website<sup>2</sup>.

### Built Environment issues identified through early engagement

#### *Key themes the Plan should cover:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
Using the potential of the quayside as a space for activities and as a valuable visitor asset.	Allocation of sites/ areas, including identification of key historic assets to be conserved/ enhanced as part of the development.	
Urban design	Overarching policy on design. Key design issues included within site specific policies.	
Look after our heritage	Overarching policy on heritage assets.	
Better contemporary architecture.	Overarching policy on design.	
Conservation, restoration, innovation	Overarching policy on design. Policy on heritage assets.	
Conservation and Urban Design – Important to the overall vision	Overarching policy on design.	

<sup>2</sup> xxx

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
of Berwick		

*Good issues:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
The Walls	Policy on heritage assets. Separate policies on different assets.	
Berwick's heritage assets should be protected	Policy on heritage assets. Separate policies on different assets.	
History	Policy on heritage assets	
Very beautiful and historic town	Policy on heritage assets	
Berwick is a lovely historic town with beautiful beaches, walks castles etc located around it, but what has Berwick got to offer tourists when they actually come into the Town itself, not a lot anymore.	Policy on heritage assets.	
Beauty – History, Walled Town very special.	Policy on heritage assets. Separate policies on different assets.	
Its history – architecture and wildlife needs promoting.	Policy on heritage assets.	
One of the most beautiful towns in the Country – underestimated!!	Policy on heritage assets.	
Everything here – sea, sand, history etc.	Policy on heritage assets.	
Lovely town to live in – Walls etc.	Policy on heritage assets.	
Beautiful town, beaches, walls and lovely people	Policy on heritage assets.	
Great town – history, river, coast, good rail communications etc. Decent bus services within town. All make for good living.	Policy on heritage assets.	
The historic walls and the size of the town.	Policy on heritage assets.	
A town with character	Policy on heritage assets.	
Walking around the Walls and the Beach and talking to people on the Pier and in the Town.	Policy on heritage assets.	
Steeped in History	Policy on heritage assets.	
Care of heritage buildings – active enforcement	Policy on heritage assets.	
Well preserved attractive historic town that has huge tourist potential.	Policy on heritage assets.	



Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
Wonderful history and architecture	Policy on heritage assets.	
Most of the buildings are attractive	Policy on heritage assets.	
A most attractive town with many amazing buildings.	Policy on heritage assets.	

*Not so good issues:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
The Town Walls must never again be hidden behind inappropriate buildings.	Policy on heritage assets.	
Unsympathetic modern buildings that don't fit in.	Policy on design. Key design issues included within site specific policies.	
Modern building proposal – threat to heritage, vistas, should be where sympathetic, indication of issues in wider town.	Policy on design. Key design issues included within site specific policies.	
Forget conservation areas and listed buildings and let people improve their properties	Policy on heritage assets.	

*Feedback postcard – three changes:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
Leave Berwick alone or change it back to how it used to be.	Policies to guide new development to appropriate locations and of an appropriate scale.	
Promote the town walls and Berwick is rich history more via themed packages – i.e. activity holidays linking with accommodation providers	Allocation of sites/ areas, including identification of key historic assets to be conserved/ enhanced as part of the development.	
Pedestrianize central area and prioritize for walking and cycling.	Allocation of sites/ areas, including identification of key historic assets to be conserved/ enhanced as part of the development.	
The state of the pavements and Roads in and around Berwick are dangerous	Policy on the public realm.	
The Barracks would make a very good Tourist Hub.	Allocation of sites/ areas, including identification of key historic assets to be conserved/ enhanced as part of the development.	
More emphasis on good design	Design policy	

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
Protection of heritage assets.	Heritage assets policy.	
Promotion of our obvious history	Policies to support tourism development, whilst conserving and enhancing the heritage of the area.	
Embrace our history and cherish it.	Policy on heritage assets.	

*Areas of opportunity:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
Quayside and riverside: Supporting property development for leisure uses	Allocation of sites/ areas, including identification of key historic assets to be conserved/ enhanced as part of the development.	
The Barracks and the Harbour	Allocation of sites/ areas, including identification of key historic assets to be conserved/ enhanced as part of the development.	
Investment in Spittal	Allocation of sites/ areas, including identification of key historic assets to be conserved/ enhanced as part of the development.	
Berwick has a wealth of history which lacks a clear promotional plan. More tourists in means more money in which means more development.	Policies to support tourism development, whilst conserving and enhancing the heritage of the area.	
I don't think the town is making the best use of its geographical location and rich history. We need to attract more businesses, hotels restaurants, quality shops if we are to have successful tourist industry.	Policies to support tourism development, whilst conserving and enhancing the heritage of the area	
Would like more of our built heritage taken care of and proper materials and scope for specifications used for our buildings.	Policies on heritage assets and design.	
The need to improve townscape and to conserve, the heritage and historic environment in Berwick	Policies on heritage assets and design.	

### **Early engagement – key stakeholders**

- 1.4** Following the early engagement with the local community, initial discussions were held with a number of key stakeholders around a number of issues identified through the early engagement.

### **Summary**

**1.5**

DRAFT



## Built environment vision and objectives

### Background

- 6.1 The early engagement with both the local community and key stakeholder has informed the preparation of a vision and objectives for the natural environment elements of the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### Vision

- 6.2 The vision for the natural environment of Berwick is that by 2032:

xxxxxx

#### Objectives

- 6.3 To deliver the vision the following objectives have been identified:

- xxxxx

### 7 Planning Policy Options

#### **Issue 1 Sustainable development and the built environment**

- 1a Overarching policy on SD which recognises the built environment, and particularly historic assets, as an integral part of it. Plus, respect for such assets should hold at least equal weighting with other dimensions of SD as an important principle in achieving appropriate balance in decision making

#### **Issue 2 Design Principles**

- 2a Policy on urban design principles to include reference to the following: local character and distinctiveness, permeability (ease of access), legibility (ease of reading the townscape) robustness (future potential for adaptation) layout, massing, form, density, grain, scale, roofline, historic street pattern, energy saving features, hard/soft landscaping.
- 2b Policy to require implementation of Design Codes, as specifically mentioned in the NPPF, for key sites as identified in the HCA 2017. Codes to include reference to on site public realm and s106 contributions to public realm off site.
- 2c Policy to encourage all major applications to be referred to the NE Design Review panel as a pre-application requirement at developer cost. Major application to be defined in line with ref to “major” elsewhere in regulations for referral to bodies such as EH.
- 2d Policy that major new urban developments prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement and limit car parking within the site in accordance with NCC standards. Cycle parking to be provided on site.

#### **Issue 3 Heritage Assets**

- 3a Policy setting out that proposals that affect heritage assets or their settings will be supported only if they preserve or enhance the characteristics that constitute the significance of the asset, as identified in official Listing or Schedule description.
- 3b More detailed policies will be developed relating to different types of heritage asset eg Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments including appropriate degrees of protection.
- 3c Policy to clarify interpretation of “public benefit” when it might be weighed against the value of preserving or enhancing a heritage asset.

#### **Issue 4 Public Realm**

- 4a Overarching policy on public realm to recognise the need to develop high quality public spaces between buildings that accessible to all by foot or cycle and preferably exclude or at least reduce car parking. Plus the use of sympathetic hard and soft landscaping using materials prevalent locally.
- 4b Planning obligation policy 1: Major development proposals should include sympathetic public realm on site, including play-space to NPFA standards. Policy 2: Major development which impacts on the Public realm off-site should include a contribution towards its enhancement.
- 4c Policy to protect existing public open space, in particular space with village green status

#### **Issue 5 Key Views**

- 5a Policy to ensure retention of the open, undeveloped character in the river corridor and along the coast, and no development within the river escarpment.
- Policy to limit large structures, for example wind turbines, masts and pylons, to minimise potential adverse visual impact on views.

#### **Issue 6 Local List**

- 6a Policy to encourage the emerging Local List, as set out in the HCA and beyond, to be given progressive weight in decision making as the List is developed fully and approved by NCC.

#### **Issue 7 Out of Town Retail**

- 7a Policy to resist out of town retail to help protect the town centre and local centres viability and fabric.

#### **Issue 8 Living above the Shop**

- 8a Policy to encourage and promote conversion of vacant floorspace above shops to residential use.

#### **Issue 9 Community Involvement in Design**

- 9a Policy to encourage an appropriate level of design detail, including materials and landscaping, to be submitted prior to the main planning decision being made to enable opportunity for community involvement on these issues which cannot occur through reserved matters.

## 8 Community Actions

TC will discuss with NCC:

- Progressing the formal process of compiling a Local List
- Seeking funding for a signage strategy
- Putting in place new article 4 directions to remove permitted development rights for satellite dishes and removal of front garden walls in the Conservation Areas
- Seeking funding for identified public realm works including new/improved public spaces, shared surface in Marygate and removal of vehicle traffic from the Old Bridge.