

# **Berwick Neighbourhood Plan**

## **Housing Background Paper**

**Draft April 2017**

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Appendix 1: Draft Housing Assessment Methodology

## 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 will inform 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 draft Neighbourhood Plan Vision Statement, which defines how the Neighbourhood Plan area will look in 2032, identifies a number of areas of relevance to the housing topic:

- Historic medieval streets are conserved and complemented elsewhere with sympathetic high quality new developments and enhanced well used public spaces;
- Well-planned growth means that the town can sustain new services for families;
- Our young people no longer have to leave to find a worthwhile opportunity, and skills and wages are rising; and
- Housing provision will be of a variety of size, tenure and price, suitable to meet the needs and aspirations of all families and households. This will be delivered by new build, the use of space above high street shops, sympathetic infill and the conversion of unused commercial space for residential use.

**1.3** The main areas covered by this background paper are:

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

**1.4** 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:

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

**1.5** Comments must be submitted by **the published date**

# Strategic Planning Context

## Background

**1.6** 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

**1.7** 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.

**1.8** At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Critically, it means that neighbourhoods should:

- Develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development;
- Plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan; and
- Identify opportunities to use Neighbourhood Development Orders to enable developments that are consistent with their Neighbourhood Plan to proceed.

**1.9** Paragraph 47 of the NPPF identifies that, to boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:

- Use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy;
- Identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land;
- Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15;
- For market and affordable housing, illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period and set out a housing implementation strategy for the full range of housing describing how they will maintain delivery of a five-year supply of housing land to meet their housing target;
- Set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances.

**1.10** Paragraph 50 of the NPPF identifies that plan making for housing should include a mix of housing; identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing is required; and policies for the development of on site affordable housing are identified where a need is identified unless there is robust justification why there is a need for an off site or alternative contribution.

**1.11** The glossary of the NPPF defines affordable housing as:

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

*Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.*

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

*Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.*

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

**1.12** The NPPG provides additional advice regarding how to assess the housing and economic development needs of an area. The primary objective of identifying need is to:

- *‘identify the future quantity of housing needed, including a breakdown by type, tenure and size;*
- *identify the future quantity of land or floorspace required for economic development uses including both the quantitative and qualitative needs for new development; and*
- *provide a breakdown of that analysis in terms of quality and location, and to provide an indication of gaps in current land supply.’*

**1.13** The NPPG also provides a helpful definition about what the definition of need is:

*‘Need for housing in the context of the guidance refers to the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that is likely to be needed in the housing market area over the plan period – and should cater for the housing demand of the area and identify the scale of housing supply necessary to meet that demand.*

*Need for all land uses should address both the total number of homes or quantity of economic development floorspace needed based on quantitative assessments, but also on an understanding of the qualitative requirements of each market segment.*

*Assessing development needs should be proportionate and does not require local councils to consider purely hypothetical future scenarios, only future scenarios that could be reasonably expected to occur.’*

**1.14** The NPPG identifies that it is appropriate for Town Councils preparing a Neighbourhood Plan to use the guidance to inform their assessment of need, however a proportionate approach should be taken. The Neighbourhood Plan can refer to existing needs assessments prepared by the Local Planning Authority as a starting point and should support the strategic direction set out in the Local Plan.

**1.15** In addition, the NPPG provides guidance on how to identify a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing and economic development uses over the plan period in the housing and economic land availability assessment guidance. It is

considered an appropriate methodology for both Local Planning Authorities and groups developing neighbourhood plans.

**Question 1:**

**Have all of the national planning policy issues been identified? If not, what is missing?**

**YES**

## **Local Plan**

### Berwick upon Tweed Local Plan

**1.16** 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.

**1.17** The 'shelter' objectives of the Local Plan include:

- To make land available for the development of 1000 new dwellings in the Borough, during the period 1991 – 2006;
- To enable the provision of additional housing, should such a demand arise through inward investment in the local economy, on a scale which will not have a strategic impact on development elsewhere;
- To accommodate the demand for new housing in a manner which conserves or enhances the environmental wealth of the Borough;
- To provide for a range of accommodation which is accessible to all persons in the community;
- To meet the housing requirements of the indigenous population;
- To meet the housing requirements of those seeking to move to the Borough, to work, retire or for other purposes, as the main home or second or holiday home;
- To ensure that new housing development acknowledges the scale and form of existing development and settlement patterns;
- To enable the conversion and reuse of existing buildings for housing, where appropriate;
- To locate housing where other facilities and services, such as shops, schools, workplaces and places of entertainment, are easily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport, wherever practicable;
- To promote development in Berwick-upon-Tweed, to maintain the town's role as a sub-regional centre for housing, employment and the provision of services;
- To encourage development in Belford, Seahouses and Wooler, to maintain their roles as secondary centres for housing, employment and the provision of services in the Borough;
- To encourage the development of housing in other settlements which provide a reasonable level of services, to support viable rural communities and maintain the level of services.

**1.18** The Local Plan states the importance the provision of accommodation plays, being one of the most basic requirements and a principal piece in determining the quality of life (paragraph 4.0.1).

**1.19** The overarching Local Plan 'shelter' policy was not 'saved' in 2007, therefore housing proposals within Berwick currently rely on the following area/ topic based policies:

- S2: Five year housing land supply
- S5: Conversion of buildings in the countryside
- S6: Affordable housing
- S7: Gypsy site
- S30: Castle Terrace

**Question 2:**

**Does this section identify the relevant issues from the Berwick Local Plan? If not, what is missing? YES**

Emerging Northumberland Core Strategy

**1.20** Northumberland County Council (NCC) is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will replace the existing saved planning policies. The Northumberland Core Strategy is the first Local Plan document currently being prepared; it will set out the strategic policies. The current version of the Core Strategy is the Pre Submission Draft (October 2015). This should be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy - Major Modifications document (June 2016) and the Core Strategy – Further Major Modifications (November 2016). Whilst the emerging Core Strategy is not an adopted planning document the strategic policies and associated evidence base are helping to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

**1.21** The Core Strategy identifies that the population of Northumberland is ageing and the significance of this demographic change makes it a major policy issue for the resilience and prosperity of Northumberland communities.

**1.22** Policy 15 of the emerging Core Strategy defines the scale and distribution of housing for the County that is assessed as being required over the plan period. The North Northumberland Housing Market Area has an allocation of 4,190 dwellings over the plan period, which equates to an average of 210 new dwellings per annum. Berwick and East Ord Parish Council has been identified as delivering 900 of these dwellings (45 per year).

**1.23** Policy 18 highlights that the mix of housing provided as part of applications should be appropriate to the needs of the community, providing extended choice to provide balanced stock. Policy 19 identifies the approach to the delivery of affordable housing. The overall target is for the provision of 30% affordable housing, however given the level of development completions and anticipated development, the requirement is for at least 15% of new housing development to be affordable, where there is an identified need.

**1.24** The needs of older persons and vulnerable groups are identified through Policy 21 which supports the provision of accommodation to meet the needs of these groups. Policy 22 supports the provision of specialist accommodation for older and vulnerable people who are unable to live independently.

**1.25** Policy 23 makes provision for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities where it is considered appropriate.

**Question 3:**

**Does this section identify the relevant issues from the emerging Core Strategy? If not, what is missing? YES**

### **Summary**

**1.26** The NPPF and NPPG require planning policies to boost significantly the supply of housing, planning for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trend and the needs of different groups in the community.

1.1 The saved Berwick upon Tweed Local Plan policies are supportive towards new housing development, provided the development does not: adversely impact on amenity, the environment, highways.

1.2 The emerging Core Strategy plans to significantly boost the supply of housing. It provides a positive policy framework to support the delivery of new housing development.

### **Question 4:**

**Do you have any comments on this section?**

**OUR HOUSING NEEDS ANALYSIS HAS IDENTIFIED THE NEED FOR MORE PROPERTIES  
OUR EVDIENCE HAS IDENTIFIED A NEED FOR MORE AFFRODABLE HOMES, AND  
OVERCROWDING**

## Other documents

**1.27** In addition to the strategic planning framework, there is a lot of other documents and evidence available to inform the preparation of the sustainable transport elements of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **1.28** Definition of affordable Housing

The internationally accepted measure of affordability is given as the ratio of mean house price to mean earnings. Manchester for example have recently adopted the use of this method to define 'affordable housing' in their area. Other sources include the following

Paris, C (2007) International Perspectives on Planning and Affordable Housing, Housing Studies, 22(1), pp 1-9.

Pittini, A(2012) Housing Affordability in the EU – Current situation and recent trends, CECODHAS Housing Europe's Observatory, RESEARCH BRIEFING, Year 5 / Number 1, January 2012, [http://www.iut.nu/Literature/2012/CECODHAS\\_HousingAffordability2012.pdf](http://www.iut.nu/Literature/2012/CECODHAS_HousingAffordability2012.pdf), accessed November 2013.

Shelter (2011) Research Report Shelter Private Rent Watch, [https://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/386828/Private\\_Rent\\_Watch\\_Report\\_1.pdf](https://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/386828/Private_Rent_Watch_Report_1.pdf), accessed November 2013.

Stone, M (2006) A Housing Affordability Standard for the UK, Housing Studies, 21 (4), pp 453-476.

The International Housing Affordability Survey states that 'affordable housing' has a ratio of 3 or less. For comparison Newcastle and Tyenside are 4.3 or £133k, Middlesborough & Durham are 4.1 or £117k, Edinburgh is 4.4 or £169k

The State of Northumberland Survey 2016 gives an average house price of £154,950 for Northumberland. Average wages found here <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/> and is £26,723 for Berwick-upon-Tweed. The ratio for for Berwick is therefore 5.9, though local house prices may well be lower. Even so that is well above the widely accepted ration of 4 for 'affordable'.

## National level

### 2011 Census

**1.29** The population of Berwick has increased between 2001 to 2011 from 13033 to 13417, with an increase in the 45-64 age group. In 2011 Berwick had a smaller proportion of its population at working age than the County as a whole, and a larger proportion over 65.

Year	Population	0-4 years	5-15 years	16-24 years	25-44 years	45-64 years	65-74 years	75 +
2001	13033	5.1%	12.8%	9.4%	25.6%	26.3%	10.6%	10.1%
2011	13417	5.5%	11.3%	9.7%	22.9%	28.5%	10.9%	11.1%

**1.30** There were 6,464 household spaces in Berwick in 2011, an increase of 388 since 2001. Of these spaces 464 (7.1%) had no residents. Other relevant housing information from the 2011 census includes:

- 60.3% of households were living in owner occupied properties;
- 23.9% in social rented housing;
- 15.8% in private rented sector;
- 11.6% of households occupied were with four or more bedrooms;
- 49.2% had fewer than three bedrooms;
- 39.2% had three bedrooms;

**Question 5:**

**Is there any other national information that should be referred to in this section?  
NOT THAT I AM AWARE OF**

## County level

### Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (October 2015)

**1.31** The Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) sets out the Council's approach to establish the objectively assessed need for housing. The report also assesses the demand and need for both market and affordable housing across Northumberland.

**1.32** The report provides social, economic, demographic and housing data for Northumberland County to underpin the proposed policies within the emerging County Core Strategy.

### Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (May 2016)

**1.33** The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) provides information about potential future sources of land for housing in Northumberland. It:

- Identifies sites with potential for housing;
- Assesses the sites with housing potential; and
- Assesses their suitability for housing and the likelihood of development coming forward in the future (the availability and achievability).

**1.34** The SHLAA does not guarantee planning permission for any site, it is purely to display that the Local Plan housing targets are able to be delivered through the availability of suitable land for development.

**1.35** The SHLAA identifies the following potential delivery from suitable, available and achievable sites:

- Deliverable within 5 years: 607 units;
- Deliverable within 6-10 years: 457 units;
- Deliverable within 11-15 years: 311 units
- Deliverable 15+ years: 91 units

### North Northumberland Strategic Land Review (June 2016)

**1.36** The Strategic Land Review (SLR) explores the main issues for delivering the Core Strategy. It looks at each of Northumberland's main towns and service centres and considers their potential to accommodate the level of development proposed in the Core Strategy. The SLR also examines the capacity of smaller settlements and rural areas to accommodate a level of development. It provides a high-level analysis exploring whether the preferred strategy is broadly suitable and deliverable at a local level.

**1.37** The SLR identifies:

- 25% of the population from North Northumberland live in Berwick;

- 22.7% of the dwellings from North Northumberland are in Berwick;
- 21.5% of the proposed dwellings for North Northumberland are in Berwick.

**1.38** The SLR identifies that, based on national projections, between 2011 and 2031 Berwick's population will age:

Age group	2011	2031	Population change	Population change as a %
0-15	2,254	2,326	72	3.2%
16-59 (female) 16-64 (male)	7,639	7,311	-328	-4.3%
60/65 – 74	2,012	2,416	404	20.1%
75+	1,502	2,339	837	55.7%
Total	13,407	14,392	985	7.3%

Projected population change 2011 – 2031

**1.39** In 2011 88.5% of houses in Berwick were in Council Tax bands A to C, with 63.7% of these in A. The SLR identifies that compared to Northumberland as a whole, Berwick contains a large proportion of low value properties and less high value properties. There are fewer owner occupiers, and more households living in social rented properties.

**1.40** The SLR identifies the capacity of sites to deliver at least the level of housing proposed for Berwick in the emerging Core Strategy.

#### 5 Year Housing Land Supply Document (December 2016)

**1.41** The SHLAA report provides a basis for the Councils five year supply of deliverable sites (to 2020). The five year housing land supply report identifies where new housing is likely to be built in the next five years. These sites have a realistic expectation that they will be delivered within the specified period.

**1.42** The report identifies that within the North Housing Market Area there is a 7.2 years supply of housing land – the housing supply exceeds the five year housing supply requirement of 1,304 units by 570 units. The Berwick small area contributes 505 units from large sites to the 5 year supply.

#### **Question 6:**

**Are there any other county level policy/ guidance that should be referred to in this section? NO**

#### **Local level**

##### Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment (November 2016)

**1.43** AECOM were commissioned by Berwick Town Council to conduct a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for Berwick-upon-Tweed to inform the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment identified that the following factors would have an increased impact on future housing need in the town:

- Affordable housing;
- Age profile;
- Economic growth;
- Quality of private housing stock;
- Overcrowding;
- Travel to work.

**1.44** The HNA concluded that the following factors would have no impact on future housing need in Berwick-upon-Tweed:

- House values;
- Scottish Borders (future growth).

**1.45** To inform the level of housing required in the Plan area, the HNA considered five possible housing projections based on:

- a. The emerging Core Strategy – 801 dwellings;
- b. 2014 based national household projections – 413 dwellings;
- c. A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates between 2001 and 2011 – 674 dwellings;
- d. A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates between 2011 and 2016 – 576 dwellings; and
- e. A projection forward of net dwelling completions and dwellings currently under construction between 2011 and 2016 – 1,852 dwellings.

**1.46** The HNA concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan should plan for a range of between 801 to 1,250 dwellings. This represents unconstrained need/ demand and does not take into account supply constraints such as the availability of land, viability, environmental constraints or policy constraints.

**1.47** With regard to other issues that influence the Plan areas future housing need, the HNA concluded:

- It is considered the proposed Core Strategy affordable housing target of 15% is adequate to fulfil the affordable housing needs of the town, notwithstanding that there may be a need for this target to change over the lifetime of the plan due to changes in demand locally;
- The HNA concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan may wish to consider a target to increase the amount of housing for the elderly and explore the possibility of make provision for first time buyers. There was also a suggestion that the Plan may wish to consider a relatively low level of family housing to reflect the reduction of that sector living in the area;
- There may be a desire to include a policy to address the needs of those who require residential development who have a disability or life limiting illness;
- Concluded that 1 and 2 bedroomed properties were in demand within the Neighbourhood Plan area;
- Recommendation that the Plan may wish to include policies regarding the tenure type.

#### Homelessness

**1.48** During 2015/16 there were 1585 households in the former Berwick district that applied to Northumberland County Council as either homeless or threatened with homelessness or for housing advice.

**1.49** From all applications made to the County Council 12% (45) of all homeless applications were from the Berwick area: of these, 45 applications 19 were assessed as being homeless and in priority need, of which 18 were rehoused by a registered provider.

**1.50** Households who are threatened with homelessness or require housing advice are defined as 'homeless preventions'. During 2015/16 there were 122 homeless preventions in Berwick, 44 were for housing advice and 78 preventions.

**1.51** During 2015/16 there were 10 households in Berwick who were threatened with homelessness and rehoused by a registered provider. A further 52 households in Berwick were rehoused by a registered provider during the same period.

**Question 7:**

**Is there any other local information that should be referred to in this section? Do we have data on overcrowding? This is in the census**

**Summary**

**1.52** The evidence work developed alongside the emerging Core Strategy has highlighted that despite the constraints there is sufficient land within Berwick to support the delivery of the housing target.

**1.53** The HNA concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan should plan for a range of between 801 to 1,250 dwellings. This represents unconstrained need/ demand and does not take into account supply constraints such as the availability of land, viability, environmental constraints or policy constraints. Also, that the Plan should adopt the Core Strategy affordable housing target of 15%, acknowledging that this need could change over the lifetime of the Plan. Consideration should be given to the need to provide more housing for both the older population and first time buyers.

# Feedback

## Early engagement

**1.54** As a means of starting the process of collecting information and opinions that would influence the content of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Town Council arranged 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.

**1.55** 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 3 things they would change about Berwick-upon-Tweed; and
- A mapping exercise which allowed people to highlight specific locations of concern and where opportunities exist for improvements.

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

At the start of the neighbourhood plan process a series of open meetings were held with the support of the main social housing provider in Berwick, 4-Housing. In all 3 meetings took place, one covered the 3-Field estates, a second covered High Cliffe and East Cliffe Estates, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> covered Prior Park. The view of tenants attending all 3 meetings was that there is a shortage of affordable accommodation in the Plan Area.

### Housing issues identified through early engagement

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

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential Community Action
Housing	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	

#### *Good issues:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential Community Action
Great place to live!	N/A	
The people of Berwick –	N/A	

Friendly and helpful		
Affordability of houses	N/A	

*Not so good issues:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential Community Action
Lack of single bed accommodation	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	
Not enough reasonably rented property	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures.	
More one bed units for young people/elderly	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures.	

*Feedback postcard – three changes:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential Community Action
More one bed and studio flat accommodation for young people/couples	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	
Make use of empty shops in the High Street – either for businesses or housing	Town centre policy to support 'living over the shop'	
Housing - more rented houses	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures.	
Single persons accommodation	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures.	
More one bed accommodation for young people/and for elderly (i.e. more retirement units)	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	
Housing (social, affordable)	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	
More houses – Fewer Holiday Caravans	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development for permanent	

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential Community Action
	occupation. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	
Provide a greater range of housing options – type, affordable, range	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	

*Areas of opportunity:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential Community Action
Suitable housing for local people, avoiding the bedroom tax	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development/ mix of types and tenures. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	
Integration of new housing and architectural landscape	Criteria based policy. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	
Old brickworks need developing derelict for a long time – Affordable Housing a possibility.	Potential land allocation.	
Should some of the shops be turned into residences?	Town Centre policy to support vibrant centres – including residential development where appropriate.	
The need for additional housing	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	
Explore the opportunity for a retirement village in the neighbourhood plan area	Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	

*Problem areas:*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential Community Action
More businesses etc to increase employment, no more housing needed until jobs are available	Criteria based policy to support appropriate housing development. Potential land allocations where evidence exists.	

**Early engagement - key stakeholders**

**1.57** 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:

**Question 8:**  
**Do you have any comments on this section?**

# Housing vision and objectives

## Background

1.58 The early engagement with both the local community and key stakeholders has informed the preparation of a vision and objectives for the housing elements of the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Vision

1.59 To add

## Objectives

1.60 To add

1.61

# Planning Policy Options

## Background

**1.62** Early engagement has identified a number of potential planning issues for the Neighbourhood Plan to seek to address:

- A policy approach which supports appropriate housing development across the Plan area – that does not damage what is special about the area but builds on the uniqueness of the town and its offer;
- A policy approach which identifies the level of housing required;
- The opportunity for Berwick to provide a range of housing types/ mix appropriate to the needs of the town, wider community and economy;
- Identification of level of affordable housing required for the town, including specific types (size, market, older people, starter homes, executive housing) that is flexible enough to meet fluctuating demands to maintain a young and vibrant population and accommodate the forecasted increase of older people;
- Identification of deliverable of sites in the right location for potential future housing development – including brownfield sites;
- Anything else?

### Question 9:

**Do you consider there are any other planning issues the Plan should be looking to address?**

**1.63** This section identifies possible planning policy options to address the issues identified above.

## Supporting appropriate future housing development

**1.64** Possible options:

- 1.a.** High level policy statement which supports appropriate future housing development which balances this against the need to protect and enhance the distinctive and valued environment; to include restoration and adaptive re-use of other buildings
- 1.b.** Improve existing residential areas;
- 1.c.** Option a [ delete plus principles to] and to guide the future location of housing development

[ delete e.g. focus on particular types of housing development in specific locations;]

**1.d.** Meet only the need identified;

**1.e.** Reduce housing growth.

### Question 10:

**Do you consider there are any other planning issues the Plan should be looking to address?**

## Identification of a housing requirement

**1.65** Possible options:

- a.** The emerging Core Strategy – 801 dwellings;

- b. 2014 based national household projections – 413 dwellings;
- c. A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates between 2001 and 2011 – 674 dwellings;
- d. A projection forward of net dwelling completion rates between 2011 and 2016 – 576 dwellings;
- e. A projection forward of net dwelling completions and dwellings currently under construction between 2011 and 2016 – 1,852 dwellings;
- f. **The HNA recommendation to plan for a range of between 801 to 1,250 dwellings;**
- g. Not to identify a housing target.

**Question 11:**

**Do you have any comments on the options for the identification of a housing requirement?**

### **Identification of future housing mix**

**1.66** Possible options:

- a. Policy approach which requires the delivery of housing to meet identified needs;
- b. **Identification [delete of targets] of the need for different types/ tenures/ mixes of housing;**
- c. Combination of options a and b;
- d. Not to include a policy covering housing mix.

**Question 12:**

**Do you have any comments on the options to support the provision of a mix of house types and tenures?**

### **Provision of affordable housing**

**1.67** Policy options:

- a. Policy approach which requires the delivery of affordable housing to meet identified needs;
- b. **Identification [delete of targets] of the need for different types/ mixes of affordable housing;**
- c. Combination of options a and b;
- d. Not to include a policy covering affordable housing.

**Question 13:**

**Do you have any comments on the options to support the delivery of affordable housing?**

### **Allocation of housing sites**

**1.68** Possible options:

- a. Criteria based policy only – no site allocations
- b. **Identification of housing sites using the approach defined within appendix 1;**
- c. Identification of housing sites using a different approach – please explain.

**Question 14:**

**Do you have any comments on the options for the allocation of housing sites?**

## Potential Community Actions

1.69

1.70

1.71

## Appendix 1: Draft Housing assessment methodology

In order to assess the ability of the range of sites available across the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) area to deliver the sustainable growth of the town, an objective site appraisal methodology has been designed. It comprises six stages:

- Stage 1 Settlement-wide assessment: identification of sites and broad locations;
- Stage 2 Specific constraints (physical);
- Stage 3 Availability of land for housing development;
- Stage 4 Individual site assessment;
- Stage 5 Consultation;
- Stage 6 Completion

### **Stage 1 Settlement-wide assessment: identification of sites and broad locations**

All broad locations and sites for potential development are identified, irrespective of the quantity of development needed across the town. However, the assessment will ultimately identify the locations and sites which are suitable to meet *at least* the objectively assessed needs set out in the emerging Local Plan Core Strategy.

### **Stage 2 Specific constraints (physical)**

The level of development that can be appropriately accommodated across the Plan area is limited by constraints. The following constraints are considered in the assessment methodology:

- Physical constraints (e.g. rivers, railways, main roads or topography);
- Highways (capacity of local roads and junctions);
- Flood risk (flooding from rivers, the sea, and surface water);
- Water and sewerage capacity;
- Conservation designations (natural environment and built heritage);
- Archaeological sensitivity;
- Agricultural Land classifications;
- Landscape sensitivity;
- Green Infrastructure and Open Space;
- Mineral resource areas.

### Output

- Ordinance Survey map of the town with the relative constraints identified and areas of search highlighted. Plans of the areas of search, together with the relevant constraint information

### **Stage 3 Availability of land for housing development**

This information will be derived from the Northumberland Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

### Output

- Current SHLAA map of the Plan area
- Table showing sites: which have been identified as being deliverable within five years, developable with 6-10 and 11-15 years, sites with constraints to development (uncertain sites) and those which have been identified as being not currently developable, or discounted in the SHLAA.

### **Stage 4 Individual site assessment**

The detailed site examination and the identification of site characteristics, development capacity, availability and delivery. Site specific parameters include topography, built form characteristics,

adjoining land uses, landscape features, constraints, important views, buildings and their setting, access, and accessibility.

The final site assessment will therefore comprise five components:

1. Accessibility;
2. Local impact and integration;
3. Landscape capacity;
4. Planning and infrastructure issues, and
5. Overall assessment – suitability.

Sites will be assessed as acceptable, unlikely or unacceptable as follows.

#### 1. Accessibility

The accessibility assessment will analyse issues in connection with access to services (physical distance), public transport and employment and site orientation. If a site is deemed poor in terms of access to services it will likely to be assessed as unacceptable in terms of accessibility. Access to the following services will be assessed:

- Distance to a primary school;
- Distance to a secondary school;
- Distance to a GP;
- Distance to a post office, and
- Distance to a retail centre.

#### 2. Local impact and integration

The local impact and integration assessment will analyse issues such as biodiversity, historical context, archaeology, recreational facilities, impact on adjoining land uses and the connectivity of the site to Berwick as a whole. If a site has a Scheduled Ancient Monument, listed building or poor connectivity with the settlement, then the site will probably be assessed as unacceptable or doubtful in terms of local impact and integration. Similarly, if the development of the site is likely to impact adversely on biodiversity, with limited potential for mitigation, it will likely to be assessed as unacceptable.

#### 3. Landscape capacity

The landscape capacity assessment will analyse issues concerning both national and local landscape designations, and features within the site.

#### 4. Planning and infrastructure issues.

The planning and infrastructure issues assessment will analyse issues relating to likely planning requirements; e.g. constraints regarding road access, water and sewerage, footpaths, education and contamination. If a site is deemed to have poor access, then the site will probably be assessed as unacceptable or doubtful in terms of planning and infrastructure.

#### 5. Overall assessment – suitability

The overall assessment draws all of the information together, establishing a final assessment based on the identified constraints. If there are potential mitigations or solutions which address the constraints, the site will be assessed as acceptable or unacceptable.

#### 6. Affordability

The Neighbourhood Plan will adopt a measure of affordability that takes account of incomes as well as the cost of purchase or rent.

#### 7. Hierarchy of Sites

The Plan will adopt the following preferred hierarchy of development sites, with preference given to proposals to meet housing need from the top of the list.

Brownfield Sites, with key sites to supported by Design Codes

Re-use of existing buildings

Infill

Green Field Sites

### **Stage 5 Consultation**

Consultation will be undertaken to gather additional information and confirm outcomes, particularly in connection with:

- Biodiversity;
- Archaeology;
- Landscape
- Public footpaths;
- Built heritage
- Highways
- Contaminated land
- Affordable homes;
- Education capacity, and
- Water and sewage capacity.

### **Stage 6 Completion**

Site assessments completed following consultation feedback and used to allocate sites within the Plan.