

# WARKWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT  
NOVEMBER 2022

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## Foreword

This draft Warkworth Neighbourhood Plan proposes planning policies which, if agreed, will be used to guide new development in Warkworth Parish. It also contains community actions which include projects to improve the area. The neighbourhood plan does not need to repeat policies contained within the Northumberland Local Plan; it can however add important local detail. For the policies contained within our neighbourhood plan to be used by Northumberland County Council to inform decisions on planning applications, it must pass an independent examination and be supported by the local community in a referendum.

The draft planning policies and community actions contained within the plan have been informed by engagement with the local community and other stakeholders, particularly the feedback received from the residents and business surveys which took place in Autumn 2021. During May and July this year residents were then asked for feedback on areas for possible planning policies and community actions.

The vision for the plan is:

*"In 2036 the Parish of Warkworth will continue to be an attractive place to live and grow with a community that is sustainable, cohesive, and thriving. We will have retained and improved our community facilities; protected and enhanced our valued green spaces and special landscapes; and conserved our unique historic environment. Warkworth will be a carbon neutral parish."*

*New development will minimise environmental harm by employing high quality design and sustainable building technology. Developments will be designed to be resilient to the effects of climate change*

*The diverse needs and wellbeing of the existing and future residents will be provided for, and the community will be sustainable in relation to the facilities and infrastructure available to residents. Residents will have good access to facilities and be well connected by safe roads, cycle ways and footpaths.*

*All people who live in the parish will have the opportunity to participate in shaping their surroundings and feel proud of where they live."*



The vision is supported by six aims which clearly relate to the issues identified through early engagement:

- Sustainability – the special character of Warkworth and the vibrancy of the community will be conserved and enhanced;
- Housing – any new housing development will meet local needs as well as reflecting the distinct character and built heritage of Warkworth;
- Environment – the natural, built and historic environment will be conserved and enhanced;
- Community – key community facilities and infrastructure will be protected and developed;
- Economy – appropriate and sustainable levels of commerce across the parish will be supported. Tourism will be managed to protect the charm of the village in a way that does not detract from the needs of permanent residents;
- Transport and access –access to services and facilities for residents and visitors will be maintained and enhanced.

Six planning policies are designed to support the delivery of these aims:

- Design – the policy seeks to ensure that any new development will conserve and enhance local distinctiveness. The policy includes several considerations for new development, including: scale, heritage, materials, sustainability, protecting amenity, parking and accessibility, natural environment and pollution;
- Meeting housing needs – whilst the plan does not propose any specific sites for new housing development, the policy requires that any proposals for new housing which come forward in the parish meet the needs of the local community, including the provision of affordable housing and the development of smaller homes;
- Local green space – the policy proposes the allocation of 19 sites as local green space to be protected from development;
- Warkworth Conservation Area – the policy requires development within or affecting the setting of the conservation area to preserve or enhance its character or appearance. It identifies key considerations to be used when assessing the impact of development on buildings and structures which contribute to the importance of the area;
- Community facilities – the policy identifies six facilities which have great importance to the local community to be protected. The policy also provides support for development which would sustain or protect existing shops, facilities and services;
- Sustainable transport network – the policy supports development that would improve and extend the rights of way network as well as protecting the existing network from inappropriate development.

The draft plan includes 17 community actions covering a wide variety of projects, including: energy efficiency and renewable energy, enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, the development of a new community centre and other sport and recreation facilities, the creation of a business hub, enhancement of accessibility, improvements to car parking and pedestrian safety.

Warkworth Parish Council would welcome your comments on the draft plan. Comments should be submitted by noon on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Following the consultation, the draft plan will be revised and submitted to Northumberland County Council for examination early next year. When the plan passes examination there will be a referendum where all of those on the electoral register will be able to vote on whether the plan should be used by Northumberland County Council to inform decisions on planning applications.

## 1. Introduction

### Background to neighbourhood planning

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

### Planning context

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

### National planning policy and guidance

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

### Development plan

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

### Sustainable development

- 1.7 The purpose of the planning system is to help achieve sustainable development as defined by the NPPF. This specifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be the basis for every plan and every planning decision. The most recognised definition of 'sustainable development' is that which meets the needs of the present without compromising

the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The basic conditions statement, that will accompany the submission plan, will explain how the implementation of the plan is expected to contribute to sustainable development.

Legal obligations

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

**Background to the Warkworth Neighbourhood Plan**

- 1.10 The parish council held a number of early engagement events with the local community in 2019 and early 2020 to gauge support for a neighbourhood plan. Warkworth Parish (figure 1) was designated as a neighbourhood area, for the purposes of neighbourhood planning, on 21 February 2020. As a result of the Covid19 pandemic there was a delay in the formation of a steering group until December 2020.



Figure 1: Neighbourhood area

1.11 To inform the preparation of the neighbourhood plan the following engagement activities have taken place:

- Parish residents survey – Autumn 2021;
- Business survey – Autumn 2021;
- Consultation on possible planning policies and community actions informed by responses to the residents and business surveys - May to July 2022.

1.12 This draft plan is the result of the early engagement and evidence work. It identifies:

- The context in which the plan has been prepared – an overview of Warkworth Parish, the **opportunities and challenges** for the plan to address;
- A **positive vision** for the future of the parish;
- How the vision of the plan will be **delivered through planning policies** i.e. the policies that **will be used to determine planning applications** within the plan area – providing a framework for sustainable development; and
- How the vision of the plan will be **delivered through community actions** i.e. measures which are **intended to encourage action and influence decisions** taken by relevant bodies.

1.13 The plan covers the period to 2036. This aligns with the Northumberland Local Plan (the local plan). During this period, the neighbourhood plan will be reviewed and updated where required. All the background information and feedback from the local community that has informed this pre-submission plan is available online at [www.warkworthnp.org](http://www.warkworthnp.org)

### **How to get involved**

1.14 This draft plan has been informed by community engagement and evidence work. Warkworth Parish Council needs your input to ensure the plan and policies as drafted fully reflect the views of local people.

1.15 You can let the parish council know your views on this draft plan in the following ways:

- Using the online form available at: [www.warkworthnp.org](http://www.warkworthnp.org)
- By picking up a response form from St Lawrence Church, Warkworth and dropping it off in the box provided;
- By email to: [warkworthnp.chair@gmail.com](mailto:warkworthnp.chair@gmail.com); or
- By letter to: Warkworth Parish Clerk  
Warkworth Parish Council  
30 Rothbury Drive  
Ashington  
NE63 8TQ

1.16 If you have any questions about the plan, you can get in touch using the contact details above.

1.17 Comments must be received by **noon on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023**.

### **Next steps**

1.18 Following the end of the consultation period the responses will be reviewed to identify whether any modifications need to be made to the plan and its evidence base.

1.19 The current timetable<sup>1</sup> for the next stages of the plan making process are:

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<sup>1</sup> The timetable is subject to change, for example feedback from the consultation on the draft plan could result in additional work being undertaken or further engagement and therefore submission delayed.

- Submission of the plan to NCC for examination: spring 2023;
- Consultation on the submission plan: spring 2023;
- Examination of the plan by an independent examiner: summer 2023;
- Referendum: summer/ autumn 2023; and
- Neighbourhood plan ‘made’ by NCC: autumn.



## 2. Background to Warkworth Parish

### A brief history of the parish

- 2.1 Warkworth Parish is situated on the Northumberland coast, approximately 30 miles north of Newcastle. The historic centre of Warkworth village occupies a promontory formed by a meander in the River Coquet a mile inland from where the tidal river flows into the North Sea.
- 2.2 Warkworth has a long history, with archaeological evidence within the parish dating back to Neolithic, Bronze Age and Roman times. Warkworth enters recorded history in 737 when the Anglo Saxon church and surrounding estates of Werceworde, as it was then called, was given to the monastery in Lindisfarne.
- 2.3 The key buildings which can be seen in Warkworth today include the 12<sup>th</sup> century Church of St Lawrence with its Norman origins; the castle, probably created between 1199 and 1214; and the defensive bridge and gatehouse built around 1380. An elaborate cave hermitage across the river and upstream from the castle is one of the best-preserved examples in Britain.
- 2.4 Warkworth flourished in the medieval period as a harbour and market town and the street pattern and layout on the promontory still reflects its medieval origins. Burgage plots, comprising long narrow strips of land behind the houses, run at right angles down to the river from the main streets of Bridge Street and Castle Street; most of the buildings on these streets are no longer medieval but date to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. The approach from the north by the old bridge and then ascending the main street, dominated by the massive keep, presents one of the finest sequence of views in England.
- 2.5 In the 18<sup>th</sup> century many fine farmhouses and buildings were built in the vicinity of Warkworth village and in the 19th century the Newcastle and Berwick railway was built, with a station just outside Warkworth opening in 1847 (and closing in 1958). Several villas were constructed on Station Road north of the river at this time. Building continued to the south of the castle in the early 20th century, with further development along and adjacent to Morwick Road since that time. In the last 10 years residential development to the south and west of the village has accelerated including two housing estates comprising approximately 100 new homes.



### Population, households and housing

- 2.6 According to the 2011 census the parish had a population of 1,574 residents and the 2020 Office for National Statistics (ONS) population estimates suggest an increase to 1,789. Figure 2 illustrates that, in 2011 the parish had a significantly higher percentage of the population who were 45 and over compared to Northumberland and England and had a correspondingly lower percentage of those of a younger age.



Figure 2: Age structure - 2011 census

- 2.7 According to the 2011 census the parish has a higher percentage of family households and a lower proportion of one person households when compared to Northumberland and England (see table 1). Notably there are more households aged all over 65, and fewer families with dependent children. This suggests that families with children are either less able to live in the parish or are choosing not to do so. Between 2001 and 2011 family households with dependent children decreased by 25%.

Table 1: Household composition (2011 census)

| Household composition        |  | Warkworth | Northumberland | England |
|------------------------------|--|-----------|----------------|---------|
| One person household         | <b>Total</b>                             | 28.1%     | 29.9%          | 30.2%   |
|                              | Aged 65 and over                         | 15.0%     | 14.0%          | 12.4%   |
|                              | Other                                    | 13.1%     | 15.9%          | 17.9%   |
| One family only              | <b>Total</b>                             | 68.8%     | 66.3%          | 61.8%   |
|                              | All aged 65 and over                     | 17.5%     | 10.3%          | 8.1%    |
|                              | With no children                         | 29.6%     | 21.0%          | 17.6%   |
|                              | With dependent children                  | 13.1%     | 24.9%          | 26.5%   |
|                              | All children Non-Dependent <sup>17</sup> | 8.6%      | 10.1%          | 9.6%    |
| <b>Other household types</b> | <b>Total</b>                             | 3.1%      | 3.8%           | 8.0%    |

Source: ONS 2011, AECOM Calculations

- 2.8 The mix of dwelling types in the parish is shown in table 2. It includes housing completions data (houses that have been built) to provide an understanding of the type of housing that has been developed between 2011 and 2021. The table shows that, whilst there is a varied mix of dwellings in Warkworth, approximately two thirds of recent completions have been of detached houses. There is a much higher percentage of detached dwellings (43% in 2021) than Northumberland (18.4%) and England (15.9%). There is a relatively even split between semi-detached and terraced housing, which follows Northumberland trends.

*Table 2: Accommodation type*

| Dwelling type   | Number of dwellings identified in 2011 (census) (% of dwelling total in brackets) | Number of dwelling completions 2011-2021 (NCC) (% of completions in brackets) | 2021 – number of dwellings (2011 census + NCC completions) (% in brackets) |
|-----------------|---|---|--|
| Flat            | 63 (7%)   | 5 (3%)  | 68 (6%)  |
| Terrace         | 208 (23%)   | 3 (2%)  | 211 (20%)  |
| Semi-detached   | 264 (30%)   | 48 (29%)  | 312 (30%)  |
| Detached        | 358 (40%)   | 99 (60%)  | 457 (43%)  |
| Unknown / other | -   | 11 (6%)   | 11 (1%)  |
| Total           | 893   | 166   | 1,059  |

- 2.9 With regard to the size of properties, table 3 illustrates that the parish has very few small homes with one bedroom and a higher proportion of larger dwellings with three or more bedrooms. The housing completion data illustrates that recent development has continued to follow this pattern of delivering larger homes.

*Table 3: Dwelling size (bedrooms)*

| Number of bedrooms | 2011 (Census) | Completions 2011-2021 (NCC) | 2021 total | (Census + completions) |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------------------|
| Studio             | 1             | 0                           | 1          | 0.1%                   |
| 1                  | 50            | 4                           | 54         | 6%                     |
| 2                  | 169           | 29                          | 198        | 22%                    |
| 3                  | 314           | 58                          | 372        | 41%                    |
| 4+                 | 213           | 62                          | 275        | 30%                    |
| Unknown            | 0             | 13                          | 13         | 1%                     |
| Total              | 747           | 166                         | 913        | 100%                   |

Source: ONS 2011, VOA 2021, AECOM Calculations

- 2.10 The population of Warkworth has been increasing over the last 20 years, with census and recent ONS estimated data showing an increase from 2001 to 2011 of 5.4% and from 2011 to 2020 of 13.7 %, with all the pressures on facilities and services that this implies. At the same time, the number of properties has increased by 14.2% and 18.3% respectively. the Warkworth Housing Needs Assessment identifies that this increase in the number of properties is reflected in increases in properties with non-permanent residences from 92 in 2001 to 157 in 2011 to an estimated 230 (21.4%) in 2021. It should be noted that of all the properties completed in the 10 years to 2021, 41 (24.7%) were affordable homes, which accords with the Northumberland target of 25%.

### Access to employment, services and facilities

- 2.11 The majority of respondents to the residents' survey (62%) were over 65 years old and the least represented were aged 16-24 (only two respondents). In accordance with the age demographic, 70% of respondents were retired and just over 25% were in work of some sort. Of those who were employed, 20% identified that they work within the parish. The 2011 census illustrated that 58.6% of the population of the parish was economically active, of which 28% employed full time, 14.2% self-employed, and 11% employed part time. Some of the 41.4% of the parish were economically inactive, with 31.5% retired.
- 2.12 Warkworth is a rural parish situated on the coast. The economy of the parish was traditionally based on agriculture and fishing, but only 3% of the population in 2011 worked in these

industries. 7% worked in hospitality in 2011, with 13% in the wholesale and retail trade, and another 13% in education. The business survey carried out as part of the early engagement activities had responses from 40% of the businesses in the parish. The businesses that employed the most people were hospitality, retail and farming, although less than 30% of these employees actually lived in the parish. Interestingly, the markets for most businesses in the parish were nationwide, and some were international. Over half of the businesses felt that tourism in Warkworth and the surrounding area was an advantage to their trade, although the parking issues were a detrimental factor.

- 2.13 Warkworth has both a primary school and a Post Office/general store together with four pubs/hotels, four retail establishments and several cafes. There are three static caravan parks and also many holiday lets in the parish; 72 holiday lets were counted in the centre of the village in February 2021.
- 2.14 There are several important services and facilities within the parish, figure 3 provides an extract from the results of the resident's survey.

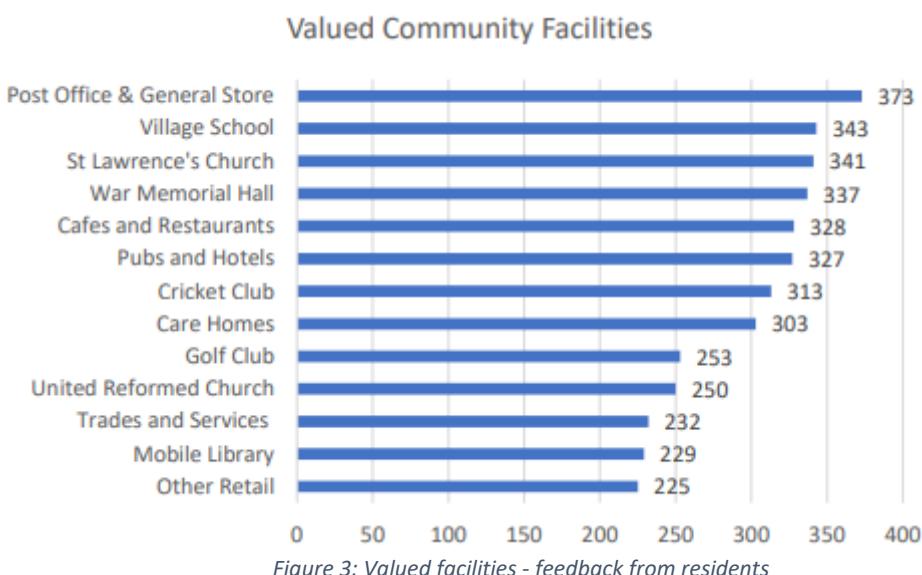


Figure 3: Valued facilities - feedback from residents

- 2.15 Feedback from the residents' survey showed that people were very concerned about access to health facilities, partly because there is no longer a doctor's surgery in the village but also because of the perception that it is more difficult to get appointments at the Amble Health Centre. Increased development was seen as a contributing factor towards this. There were also comments about the general loss of retail facilities for residents over the last 50 years. In the 1960s the village had two butchers, two grocers, a greengrocer, a baker, a hairdresser, two boutiques, a bank, a book shop and a haberdashery. In common with many villages of this size, these have disappeared as a result of the social and economic changes over the years.
- 2.16 Warkworth lies on the A1068 which leads towards Amble in the south east and Alnwick in the north west. This road has become busier as development, tourism and car ownership has increased, and there is concern about the safety of pedestrians and cyclists using it. These issues lie outside the remit of the neighbourhood plan but have been identified in the community actions.
- 2.17 Public transportation links are via local buses to Alnwick and Newcastle together with links to the rail services at Alnmouth which is on the east coast main line service from Kings Cross to Edinburgh. Public transport to other areas of Northumberland, however, is not straightforward

and the 2011 census showed that 10% of the households in the parish had no car. The nearest main hospital and A&E is in Ashington which is 14 miles away and has a bus service once an hour, although there is a community hospital in Alnwick.

- 2.18 The National Cycle Network passes through Warkworth on the Coast and Castles Route, and there are also many footpaths.

### **Natural, historic and built environment**

- 2.19 The environment of the parish is strongly valued by the local community. The parish includes a significant number of international and national natural environment designations, including part of the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a Ramsar Conservation Wetland, two special protection areas, a special area of conservation, three sites of special scientific interest, a marine conservation zone, three local wildlife and geological sites, as well as areas of ancient woodland.
- 2.20 The historic assets are an important part of the character of the area. There are 128 entries on the National Heritage List for England in Warkworth Parish. This includes 122 listed buildings/structures (four of which are grade I listed and two are grade II\*) and six scheduled monuments<sup>2</sup>. Warkworth also has a conservation area. In addition, there are over 150 additional sites, monuments and findspots in the Northumberland Historic Environment Record listed for Warkworth Parish, which are not designated.

### **Key issues for our plan**

- 2.21 Early engagement and evidence work has identified the following key issues for the plan:
- Protection and enhancement of green spaces both for recreational purposes but also for their beauty, tranquillity, and wildlife;
  - Protection of wildlife and conservation of their habitats;
  - Concerns over the impact of new development on the environment;
  - Negative impact of tourism on the village particularly in terms of an increase in holiday and second homes, as well as parking and traffic;
  - The need to prevent the further decline in services and facilities;
  - Support for new businesses;
  - Lack of affordable homes preventing young family's ability to stay in the village;
  - Any new housing should be for permanent residency only (not second or holiday homes).
- 2.22 These issues have informed the vision and aims for the plan.

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<sup>2</sup> Three of the scheduled monuments are also listed buildings

### 3. Vision and aims

#### Vision

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

| Vision   |
|--|
| In 2036 the Parish of Warkworth will continue to be an attractive place to live and grow with a community that is sustainable, cohesive, and thriving. We will have retained and improved our community facilities; protected and enhanced our valued green spaces and special landscapes; and conserved our unique historic environment. Warkworth will be a carbon neutral parish. |
| New development will minimise environmental harm by employing high quality design and sustainable building technology. Developments will be designed to be resilient to the effects of climate change.   |
| The diverse needs and wellbeing of the existing and future residents will be provided for, and the community will be sustainable in relation to the facilities and infrastructure available to residents. Residents will have good access to facilities and be well connected by safe roads, cycle ways and footpaths.   |
| All people who live in the parish will have the opportunity to participate in shaping their surroundings and feel proud of where they live.  |



## Aims

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



| Aims   |
|--|
| <b>Aim 1 – Sustainability:</b><br>The special characteristics of our Parish and the vibrancy of our community will be conserved and enhanced by seeking high quality sustainable design in new development, which will make a positive contribution to social, environmental or economic needs and will mitigate any negative impacts.                             |
| <b>Aim 2 – Housing:</b><br>The location, quantity and type of housing built in the Parish will meet locally identified needs. Housing will reflect the distinct character and built heritage of Warkworth.   |
| <b>Aim 3 – Environment:</b><br>The natural environment, including the Northumberland Coast AONB, will be conserved and enhanced, including biodiversity and green infrastructure networks and local green spaces which are valued by the community. New development will make a positive contribution to the historic and built environment.                       |
| <b>Aim 4 – Community:</b><br>Key community facilities and infrastructure will be protected and developed to ensure that the community is inclusive and sustainable.  |
| <b>Aim 5 – Economy:</b><br>Appropriate and sustainable levels of commerce in a variety of sectors across the Parish will be encouraged, and key services and facilities that contribute to a thriving community will be protected. Tourism will be managed so that it enhances the charm of the village and does not detract from the needs of permanent residents |
| <b>Aim 6 – Transport and access:</b><br>Access to facilities and services will be facilitated for all residents, and visitors, by the creation of safe and high-quality roads, parking areas, pavements and green routes including footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways. The use of public transport will be encouraged.   |

## 4. Sustainable development and climate change

### Introduction

- 4.1 The NPPF explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development<sup>3</sup>. It highlights three overarching objectives, economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways<sup>4</sup>. The NPPF therefore includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development<sup>5</sup>. This presumption is repeated within the Northumberland Local Plan (policy STP2).
- 4.2 The requirement for the planning system to meet the challenges of climate change is also clearly explained within the NPPF<sup>6</sup>. It stresses the need to shape places in ways which contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources; and support renewable and low carbon energy. Planning policies are therefore required to take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, including considering the long-term implications of flood risk.
- 4.3 Feedback from the residents' survey illustrated that climate change was an issue that concerned many residents. In the survey, residents were asked about their concerns for the future in Warkworth, and the results are shown in figure 4. There were 380 responses, with over a quarter concerned about our carbon footprint and renewable energy. Residents were also in favour of a variety of carbon reduction projects such as electric vehicle charging points, solar energy, improved housing insulation, and other ways of generating electricity. Much of this is outside the scope of a neighbourhood plan, therefore is addressed within the community actions. In addition, the parish council is also drawing up a climate change policy in line with requirements from Northumberland County Council and the plan includes three community actions regarding climate change and sustainability (see annex 1).

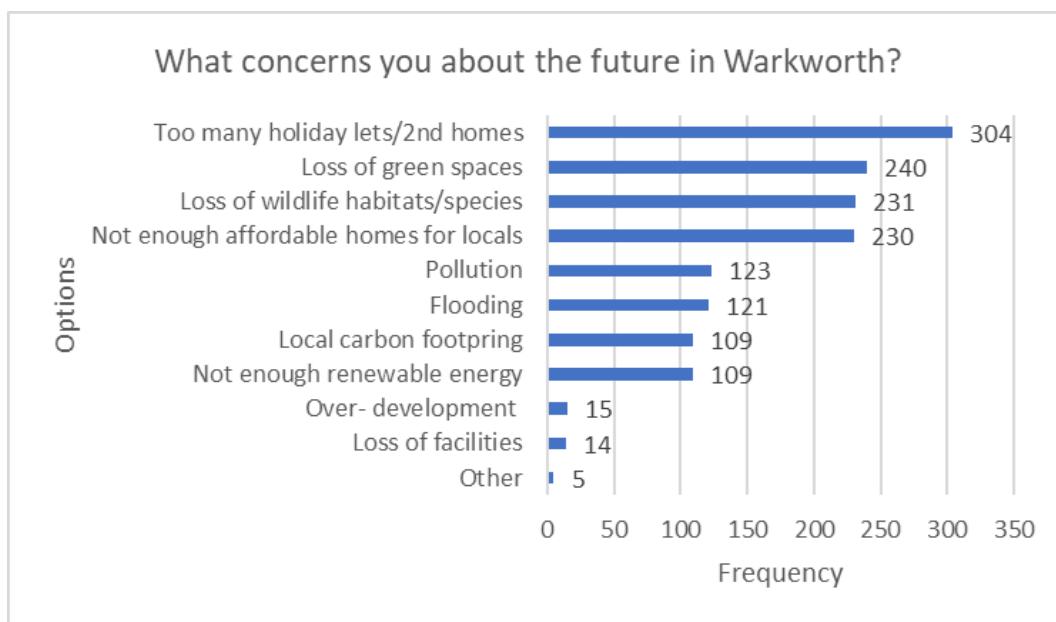


Figure 4: Feedback from the residents survey - concerns for the future

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 7

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 8

<sup>5</sup> Paragraph 11

<sup>6</sup> Section 14

- 4.4 Local plan policy STP4 requires new development to mitigate climate change and contribute to meeting nationally binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It includes several criteria that must be considered as part of the assessment of planning applications, such as:
- Through the location, layout, and pattern of development, reducing the need to travel for both people and goods and encouraging sustainable modes of transport;
  - Ensuring that development is designed to reduce energy consumption;
  - The incorporation of decentralised, renewable, and low carbon energy;
  - The re-use of existing buildings and materials;
  - The incorporation of multi-functional green infrastructure which can provide carbon storage and environments that encourage walking and cycling;
  - Protecting and enhancing habitats that provide important carbon sinks; and
  - The incorporation of electric vehicle charging facilities.
- 4.5 Furthermore, local plan policy STP4 requires new development to support adaptation to climate change, be resilient to it and not make neighbouring areas more susceptible to its negative impacts. The policy includes the following requirements for new developments:
- Incorporation of design features to provide resilience to climate change;
  - Designed to reduce demand on water resources;
  - Take into account the risk of flooding and coastal change;
  - Incorporation of sustainable drainage systems, to minimise and control surface water run-off;
  - Incorporation of multi-functional green infrastructure, where feasible.
- 4.6 As a result of the detail contained within both the local plan and national policy, the parish council consider that the neighbourhood plan could not add to this.

### **Sustainable location of new development**

- 4.7 The NPPF identifies that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the open countryside, unless specific criteria are met<sup>7</sup>, which is also reflected within local plan policy STP1. The local plan seeks to focus new development within sustainable locations. It includes a settlement hierarchy (policy STP1), which identifies that most development across the county will take place within main towns and service centres.
- 4.8 Warkworth is classified as a service village, which is expected to provide a proportionate level of housing and be a focus for investment in the wider rural area. This level of development is intended to support the provision and retention of local retail, services, and facilities. The local plan defines a settlement boundary for Warkworth and supports sustainable development within the settlement boundary (figure 5).
- 4.9 As part of the early engagement which took place in May 2022, which informed the scope of the neighbourhood plan, the local community were asked for their views on whether the settlement boundary should be amended to accommodate additional development, particularly given the results of the housing needs assessment (see section 5). The clear feedback that was that the neighbourhood plan should not review the settlement boundary and that it would be appropriate to rely on the policies within the local plan to manage development outside the settlement boundary.

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<sup>7</sup> Paragraph 80

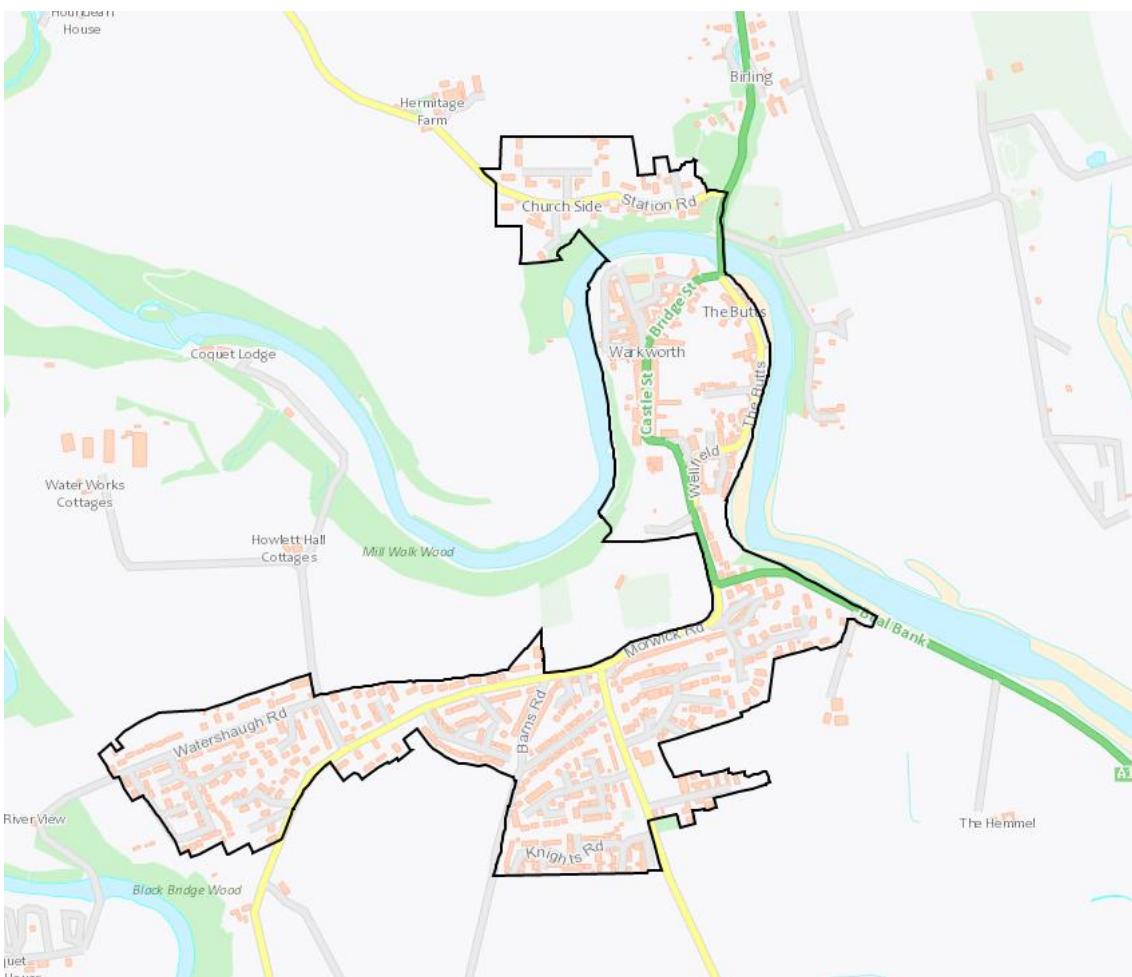


Figure 5: Warkworth Settlement Boundary

## Design

- 4.10 Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. It creates better places in which people live and work. It is fundamental to what the planning and development process should deliver and ensures that new development contributes positively to the local environment and therefore, enhances the quality of life for residents.
- 4.11 The NPPF highlights the importance the government attaches to good design and the key role that neighbourhood plans<sup>8</sup> can play in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in new development. In addition, the national design guide<sup>9</sup>, which forms part of national planning practice guidance, sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. The national model design code provides further detailed guidance to promote successful design. There are several good practice guidance documents that can help inform the design of development, such as Building for a Healthy Life<sup>10</sup>, which is a government endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Local communities, local authorities and developers are encouraged to use it to guide discussions about creating good places to live.
- 4.12 As part of the preparation of the plan, the steering group identified what good design means in

<sup>8</sup> Paragraph 127

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/Building-for-a-Healthy-Life-July-2020.pdf>

the parish and this approach was supported by the local community through early engagement. This is captured within policy W1 which requires high quality and sustainable design and defines the key elements that should be addressed as part of development proposals.

### Policy W1: Design

Development should conserve and enhance local distinctiveness by demonstrating high quality design, where appropriate and relevant to the development, by:

- a. Reflecting the incremental and phased development of the neighbourhood area;
- b. Understanding and reflecting the scale and character of the locality;
- c. Conserving and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, including that generated by the relationship with their setting;
- d. Using good quality materials that complement those of adjoining and surrounding buildings;
- e. Taking account of topography and natural features;
- f. Respecting established building lines and introducing boundary treatments and rooflines that are in keeping with the street scene;
- g. Demonstrating a commitment to sustainable design and construction;
- h. Providing sufficient external amenity space, refuse and recycling storage and car and bicycle parking to ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape;
- i. Adopting the principles of sustainable drainage;
- j. Ensuring the development would not prejudice the amenity of its future occupiers or that of adjacent properties in terms of overshadowing, loss of light, dominance, loss of privacy, noise or general disturbance;
- k. Minimising both the likelihood of and fear of crime;
- l. Creating a safe, accessible and well-connected environment that meets the needs of its users – encouraging cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel;
- m. Ensuring that lighting associated with the development would not have a significant effect on residential amenity or wildlife;
- n. Incorporating measures to support species and habitats;
- o. Retaining views that contribute to the settlement and landscape character;
- p. Providing sufficient, appropriately sited car parking and cycle storage to serve the needs arising from the development;
- q. Ensuring the development would not result in unacceptable levels of noise, air or water pollution.

Where a design and access statement is required as part of a planning application, this should demonstrate how the proposal has responded to the above as an integral part of the design process.

## 5. Meeting housing needs

### Introduction

- 5.1 The NPPF highlights the government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes<sup>11</sup>. Neighbourhood plans have an important role in supporting the delivery of the number, type and mix of homes that are required in the area. They must support the strategic development needs that are set out in local plans and not promote less development. The NPPF also highlights that neighbourhood planning groups should consider opportunities for allocating sites for housing in their area<sup>12</sup>.
- 5.2 Local plan policy HOU3 includes housing requirements for neighbourhood areas, for Warkworth the requirement has been identified as 70 units, to be delivered over the period 2016-2036. As a result of recent developments, this figure has already been significantly exceeded, with approximately 120 new homes delivered in the parish since 2016.

### Affordable housing and housing mix

- 5.3 To inform the approach to housing within the neighbourhood plan, two important studies were commissioned: a housing needs survey and housing needs assessment. The Warkworth Housing Needs Survey (2021) was prepared by Community Action Northumberland<sup>13</sup>. A questionnaire was distributed to all households within the parish, there was a response rate of 45% (428). The full survey results are available on the neighbourhood plan website; the key results were:
- 42 households expressed some form of housing need;
  - Most respondents were not in favour of new housing development, with only 6% (25) supportive of large-scale development (sites greater than 10 homes) and 44% (178) were supportive of small-scale development (sites less than 10 homes);
  - In contrast, 71% (290) of respondents were in favour of small developments of affordable homes with a priority for people with a local connection to Warkworth Parish;
  - Many comments referred to the need to limit the growth in second and holiday homes in the Parish;
  - Feedback identified that there was a need to adjust housing accommodation as people grow older, often associated with downsizing. Some evidence of need to accommodate growing families was also present;
  - Most households who identified a housing need preferred to buy on the open market, with or without a mortgage (93% of respondents to this specific question). Only 7% were interested in renting from a Housing Association (less than 5 households);
  - The largest demand identified was for three-bedroom houses (11 preferences in total) followed by two-bedroom bungalows (8 preferences); and
  - Of those respondents (31 in total), who indicated their household income and expressed a housing need, 32% (10) indicated an annual household income of less than £20,000 and 26% could not afford more than £400 per month to pay for their housing costs.
- 5.4 The Warkworth Housing Needs Assessment (2022) was prepared by AECOM, through the government's technical support programme. The assessment considered the needs for different housing sizes and tenures, affordability issues, whether there was a need for the provision of specialist housing for older people and issues around second and holiday homes. The full housing needs assessment is available on the neighbourhood plan website; key issues

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<sup>11</sup> Paragraph 60

<sup>12</sup> Paragraph 70

<sup>13</sup> Community Action Northumberland was funded through the government's Community Housing Fund.

identified in the assessment were:

*5.4a Tenure and affordability:*

- The majority of homes in Warkworth are owned, at a far higher rate than both Northumberland and England;
- Since 2011 there have been 166 dwellings built in the parish, of these 41 (or 24%) have been developed as affordable housing;
- House prices have been increasing – over the last ten years both the mean and median house prices have seen high increases of 53% and 39% respectively;
- Local households on average incomes are unable to access entry-level homes unless they have access to a very large deposit. Market housing, even with the benefit of a higher-than-average income, is likely to remain out of reach to most – the median house price would require an annual income 136% higher than the current average;
- Shared ownership at 10% or rent to buy would be accessible to parts of the local population;
- The most significant finding was the need for affordable home ownership in Warkworth, with potential demand for an additional 42 affordable home ownership dwellings over the next 14 years;
- The assessment explained that if the parish council wishes to boost the supply of affordable housing it could consider using community development orders, identifying and/ or supporting exceptions sites or developing community land trusts;

*5.4b Type and size:*

- The assessment highlights that there is a varied mix of dwellings in Warkworth, although there is a relatively low proportion of flats and a higher proportion of detached dwellings;
- There is a higher proportion of larger dwellings (with three or more bedrooms) and very few small homes with one bedroom. Housing completions data illustrate that recent building has continued to follow this pattern of delivering larger homes;
- The parish has a significantly higher percentage of the population aged 45 and over compared to Northumberland and England and correspondingly a lower percentage of younger people. This may be a reflection of the increasing affordability challenges in the area and the inability of younger people and families to buy homes in Warkworth, as well as attracting those older generations;
- There is a general trend in underoccupancy – over half of the dwellings have at least two surplus bedrooms, which is most prevalent in family households who are over 65;
- Priority should be given to the supply of smaller to mid-sized dwellings with one, two or three bedrooms, with a far smaller number of larger homes with four or more bedrooms;
- New affordable housing should be well balanced in terms of size and cater for all circumstances, however, the provision of smaller and mid-sized homes for sale and rent should make an important contribution to improving affordability;

*5.4c Specialist housing for older people:*

- The parish has 71 units of specialist accommodation, the majority of which are for social rent for those in financial need, with one option, of 23 units, available for private renting;
- Population forecasts estimate that the parish is to have significant growth in the population aged 75 and over;
- There are currently 235 units per 1,000 population aged 75+, but without any additional provision, this would fall significantly to 154 units per 1,000 population;
- The assessment estimates that there is a need for between 56 and 73 specialist accommodation units over the plan period;
- The position of Warkworth within the settlement hierarchy results in it being a less suitable location for specialist accommodation. In accordance with the requirements within the local plan, Amble is considered to have the potential to accommodate the

specialist housing requirements from the plan area;

*5.4d Second and holiday homes:*

- There is a fairly substantial quantity of second and holiday homes in the plan area (2011 census identified 159). The growth in commercial holiday lets from 2011 to 2021 suggests a current total of around 230 units, which is approximately 21.4% of all properties;
  - The local plan includes a policy (HOU 10) which requires any new dwellings to only be occupied as a principal residence, so they could not be used as a second or holiday home. This applies in parishes where over 20% of dwellings have no usual residents – it may therefore be appropriate to rely on the local plan policy.
- 5.5 The residents survey identified that the local community had concerns that housing is too expensive for local families and that more affordable homes are needed to enable young families to stay in the village. There was also a strong feeling that new homes should be for primary residence only. When asked about concerns, 60% of respondents (276 people) identified the impact of properties without permanent residents.
- 5.6 During early engagement on the possible policy approaches regarding the provision of housing, the local community were provided with a summary of the feedback from both the housing needs survey and housing needs assessment. The majority of those who responded (80%) concluded that the neighbourhood plan should not seek to allocate land for new housing development. As the main element of need for new housing is the provision of affordable housing, it was considered that the most appropriate approach would be to rely on the housing policies contained within the local plan, principally policy HOU7 which would support the development of affordable housing on exceptions sites, where specific criteria are met.
- 5.7 Whilst the local plan contains detailed policies on delivering affordable and market housing, an important role of a neighbourhood plan is to provide local detail, this includes ensuring the provision of a mix of homes to meet identified needs. Evidence at both county and parish levels identifies the need to support the provision of smaller homes to support young families and meet the needs of an ageing population, in particular older households looking to downsize. Policy W2 therefore seeks to support the delivery of plan aim 2 by providing the types of homes that meet locally identified needs.

### **Policy W2: Meeting housing needs**

The mix of housing types and tenures delivered in the neighbourhood area, including the provision of affordable housing, should have regard to and be informed by evidence of housing needs. Evidence includes that contained within the Warkworth Housing Needs Survey (2021), Warkworth Housing Needs Assessment (2022) and the Northumberland Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2018) and any subsequent updates.

Development should contribute to meeting identified needs, particularly through the provision of one, two and three bedroom homes.

### **Second and holiday homes**

- 5.8 Early engagement has identified significant concerns from the local community on the rising numbers of second and holiday homes. The housing needs assessment suggests that 21% of the dwellings in the parish could be now second or holiday homes, although current figures from council tax records are lower than this at 15.9%. Planning permission is not required to change the use of an existing dwelling to a second or holiday home. However, local plan policy

HOU10 requires that within parishes where 20% or more homes have been identified through the most up to date census, as having no usual (permanent) residents, new dwellings will only be supported where they are occupied as a principal residence. As a result, there is no need to repeat this requirement within the neighbourhood plan.

## 6. Distinctive natural, built and historic environment

### Introduction

- 6.1 The natural, built and historic environment is highly valued by the local community. The residents survey results illustrate the importance that is placed on the ability to access the countryside and coast, the setting and views, history and heritage, as well as access to wildlife.

### Natural environment

- 6.2 The parish has a significant level of natural environment designations which include internationally and nationally important sites along the coast as well as local designations (see figure 6). Designations include: the Northumbria Coast Ramsar Conservation Wetland, the Northumberland Marine and Northumbria Coast Special Protection Areas, North Nurthumberland Dunes Special Areas of Conservation, three sites of special scientific interest (Northumberland Shore, Warkworth Dunes and Saltmarsh, River Coquet and Coquet Valley), Berwick to St Mary's Marine Conservation Zone, three local wildlife and geological sites (Amble to Almouth Coast, Hound Dene – Mill Wood, Coquet River – Acklington Park), as well as areas of ancient woodland. The parish also includes part of the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

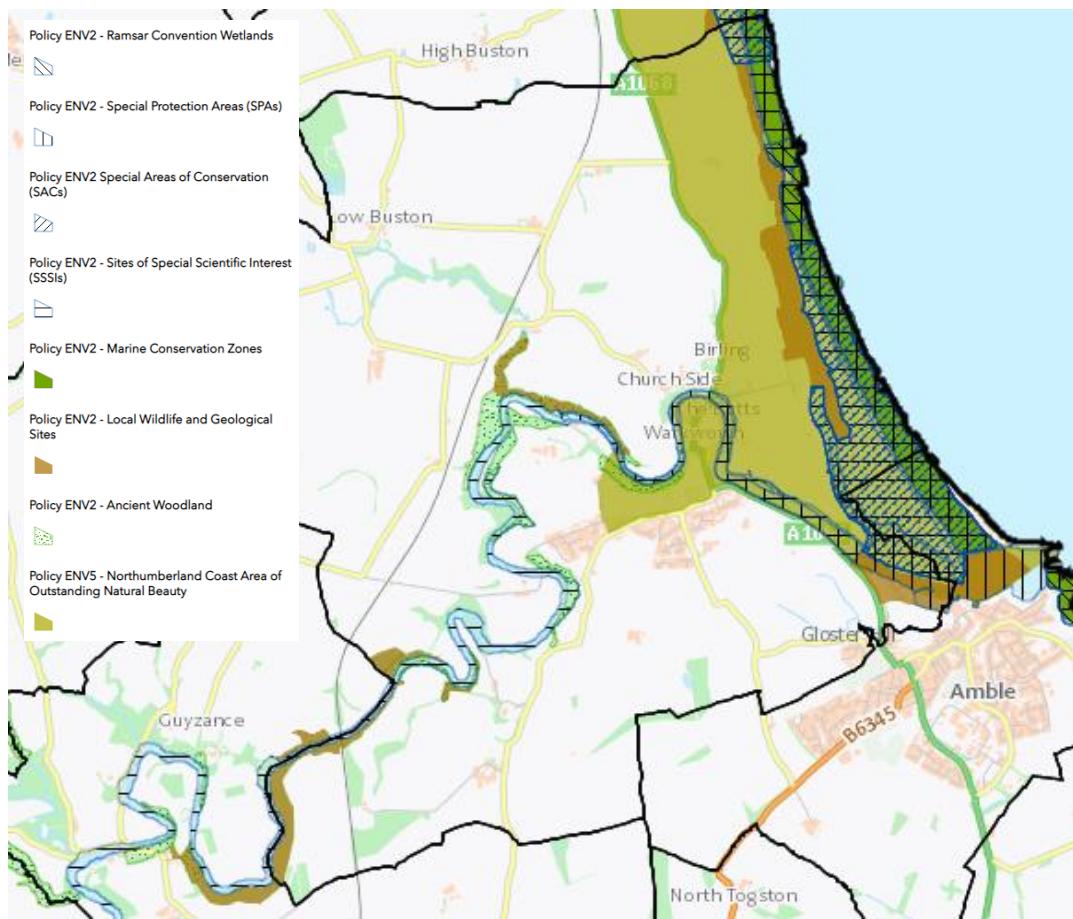


Figure 6: Natural environment designations

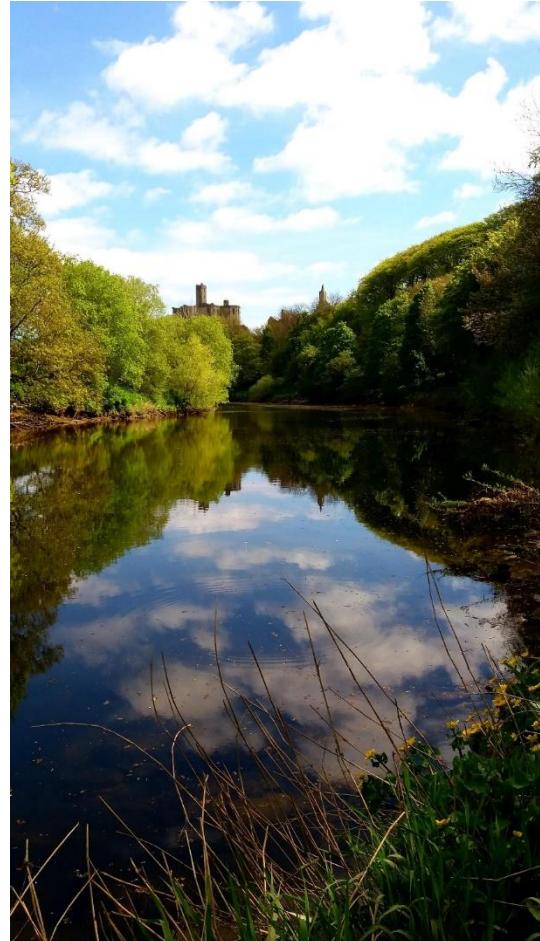
- 6.3 The local plan includes policies to ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, particularly policies ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4 and ENV5. Policy ENV1 requires the character and significance of the distinctive and valued natural environment to be conserved, protected, and enhanced. Policy ENV2 defines criteria against which planning applications will be considered to ensure they minimise their impact and secure a net gain for biodiversity. It

also requires developer contributions to the coastal mitigation service relating to potential impacts on internationally designated sites from new housing and tourism development.

- 6.4 Policy ENV3 requires the conservation and enhancement of the landscape of the county. Policy ENV4 seeks to protect tranquillity, dark skies and a sense of rurality. Policy ENV5 contains specific requirements for development within the Northumberland Coast AONB to ensure its special qualities are conserved and enhanced. Given the level of protection for the natural environment within the local plan, it is not considered necessary to include further policies within the neighbourhood plan.

### **Local green space**

- 6.5 Green spaces are a vital part of a vibrant and healthy community and are of great importance to the character and identity of a place. They are valued for a wide range of reasons including visual amenity; historic significance; recreational value; tranquillity; and richness of wildlife. Uncontrolled changes to green spaces can irrevocably alter their special character or intrinsic value. Through early engagement on the plan the local community identified several valued spaces across the parish.
- 6.6 The NPPF enables neighbourhood plans to designate areas of local green space for special protection, thereby preventing development on these sites other than in very special circumstances<sup>14</sup>. These spaces do not need to be publicly accessible but must be in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve as well as being demonstrably special to them, holding a particular local significance. The designation cannot be applied to an extensive tract of land.



- 6.7 The sites listed in policy W3 and shown on the policies map are proposed to be designated as local green spaces as they meet the criteria set out within national policy and guidance. A local green space background paper<sup>15</sup> has been prepared to outline the reasons why the sites are of particular importance to the local community and to explain the process that led to their proposed designation.

#### **Policy W3: Local green space**

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

- LGS01 Playing field between Morwick Road and Warkworth Castle  
LGS02 The Stanners Riverside Area

<sup>14</sup> Paragraphs 101-102

<sup>15</sup> Available on the Warkworth Neighbourhood Plan website <https://www.warkworthnp.org/>

- LGS03 The Butts Riverside Area
- LGS04 Play area near school
- LGS05 Warkworth Castle Grounds
- LGS06 Warkworth Cricket Pitch
- LGS07 The Burgage plots including allotments/ community garden
- LGS08 Millennium garden
- LGS09 Football pitch, Beach Road
- LGS10 Rotary Way
- LGS11 The Braid, near Amble
- LGS12 Warkworth Golf Course
- LGS13 Warkworth School playing fields
- LGS14 St Lawrence Church grounds
- LGS15 Black Bridge area
- LGS16 Land between back of Morwick Road and Mill Walk Woods
- LGS17 Land surrounding the playing field, castle and cricket pitch
- LGS18 Birling Gap (adjacent to cemetery, behind Beach Road car park)
- LGS19 Rigg and furrow field, west of Warkworth Castle

### Protected open space

- 6.8 In addition to local green space designation, neighbourhood plans can also protect other areas which are valued for their local amenity value and for formal and informal recreational purposes, but which do not meet the detailed allocation criteria for designation as local green space. Following the assessment of the green spaces within the parish it was concluded that there was not a need to identify further protected open space in addition to those allocated and protected within the local plan (see figure 7).

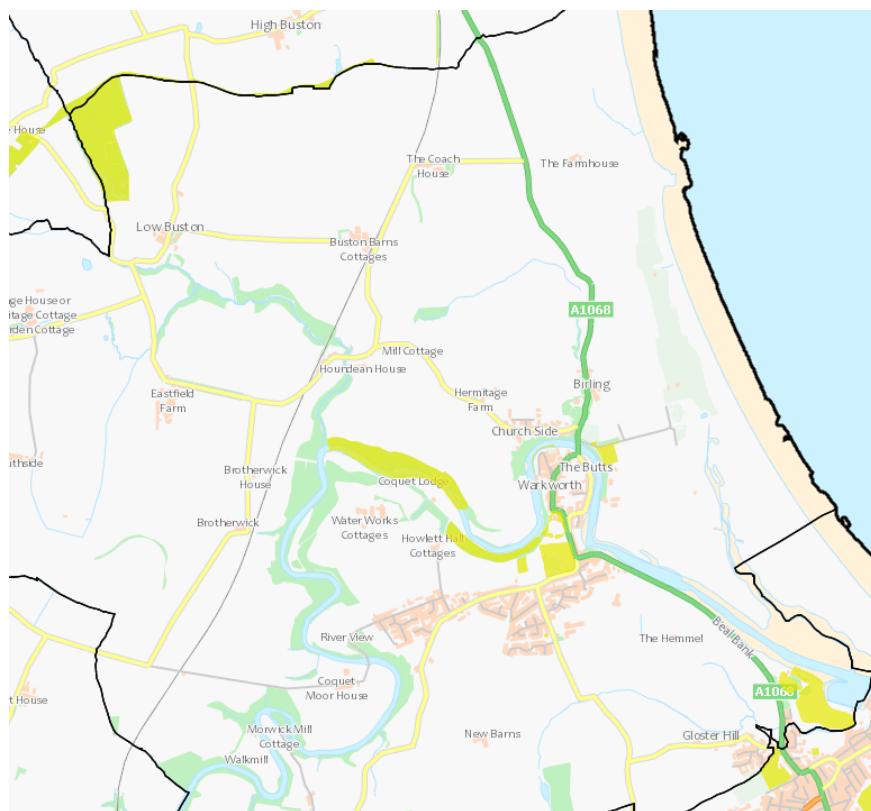


Figure 7: Extract from the local plan policies map showing areas of protected open space

## Heritage assets

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



- 6.10 The historic assets of Warkworth Parish are a vital part of its identity. There are 128 nationally protected buildings, structures and sites on the National Heritage List for England in Warkworth Parish. This includes 122 listed buildings/ structures, four of which are grade I listed (Warkworth Hermitage, Warkworth Castle Walls with gateway tower and attached buildings, the Donjon Warkworth Castle and the Church of St Lawrence) and two are grade II\* (Warkworth House Hotel and the forecourt wall, railings and gates to Bridge End House). There are also six scheduled monuments<sup>16</sup> (Low Biston Medieval Settlement, Warkworth Castle Hermitage, Warkworth Castle Motte and Bailey Castle, Cup and Ring marked rock – 430m north of Morwick Hall, St Mary Magdalene's medieval chapel and associated earthworks, and Warkworth Bridge and defensive gateway). Warkworth also includes a conservation area. In addition to the designated heritage assets, there are currently over 150 additional sites, monuments and findspots in the Northumberland Historic Environment Record listed for Warkworth Parish, which are not designated.

- 6.11 Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and the NPPF requires them to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance<sup>17</sup>. Also, that planning decisions affecting a heritage asset are required to be based on a sound understanding of the significance of the asset and the impact of the proposal on that significance. Local plan policies ENV7 and ENV9 provide protection to designated and non-designated assets across Northumberland, the significance of which could be affected by new development. It is not necessary to repeat this protection within the neighbourhood plan. As part of the preparation of the plan consideration was given to the identification on non-designated heritage assets. The conclusion was that the assets that are non-designated will be protected though other policies in the plan, particularly policies W1 (design), W3 (local green space) and W4 (Warkworth Conservation Area). Further information is contained within the non-designated heritage assets background paper<sup>18</sup>.



<sup>16</sup> Three of the scheduled monuments are also listed buildings

<sup>17</sup> Section 16

<sup>18</sup> Available on the Warkworth Neighbourhood Plan website <https://www.warkworthnp.org/>

#### Warkworth Conservation area

- 6.12 The Warkworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2006) summarises the special character and significance of the area. It highlights that there are four distinct areas of different character within the conservation area: the Medieval Core, The Butts, Woodlands, and Station Road.
- 6.13 The appraisal explains that Warkworth Market Place was probably laid out in the medieval period, although there are no documentary records of it. It describes the visually dramatic entrance to the conservation area from Birling, which is created through a heavily wooded area with high banks on either side, emerging to views of the bridge and rising up to the castle on the hill in the distance. The appraisal identifies views from both the modern bridge and the old bridge along the river as impressive and an important part of the setting of the conservation area. The castle and especially the keep are historic symbols of Warkworth, dominating the surrounding, predominately low-lying countryside.
- 6.14 In the medieval core, the narrowness of Bridge Street and the height of the buildings create an enclosed feel. Reference is made to the importance of Dial Place as well as St Lawrence's church and churchyard, particularly its riverside setting. Buildings on Castle Street are identified as being highly individual and varying greatly in age and style, having a key role in the townscape and castle setting. The importance of views from Ember Path to the burgage plots (The Butts) is also highlighted.
- 6.15 The Butts is separated from the historic core by predominately undeveloped burgage strips that lead away from Ember Path. Most properties face onto the river and share common design features which give a unified appearance. Woodlands is a development of predominately inter-war housing. The approach into Warkworth from Morwick Road provides important views of the castle and its grounds, which is an important aspect of the character of the area. The Station Road area is separate from the main village, developed from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, comprising mostly large villas in substantial grounds running down to the river.
- 6.16 The appraisal also identifies the importance of the setting to the character of the area, including: houses on Morwick Road, Magdeline Fields, Birling, Old Cemetery and Old Helsay. St Lawrence Terrace is highlighted as a key unlisted building.
- 6.17 Policy W4 seeks to ensure that new development in or affecting the Warkworth Conservation Area will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting.



#### **Policy W4: Warkworth Conservation Area**

Development within or affecting the setting of the Warkworth Conservation Area, will only be supported where it preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting.

The following are key considerations when paying special attention to the impact of development on the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting:

- a. Maintaining the four distinct character areas of The Medieval Core, The Butts, Woodlands and Station Road;
- b. Reflecting the locally distinctive architectural characteristics, vernacular building forms and materials;
- c. Respecting the prevailing density and form of the area;
- d. The impact on significant views that are important to the character and appearance of the area, including the views: of and from Warkworth Castle, from Ember Path to The Butts, from the old and new bridges, approach to Warkworth from Morwick Road, as well as views from open spaces and riverside walks;
- e. The impact on the setting of the conservation area, particularly that related to residential dwellings on Morwick Road, Magdelene Fields, Birling, Old Cemetery and Old Helsay; and
- f. Retention of boundary treatments, including stone field boundary and garden boundary walls, as well as retaining walls. New boundary treatments should reflect locally distinctive forms and materials.

Special attention should be paid to the impact of development on the following key buildings and structures, which are identified on the policies map and their role in contributing to the significance of the conservation area:

- CA1 Warkworth Castle
- CA2 The Old Bridge
- CA3 The Bridge Gatehouse
- CA4 Church of St Lawrence
- CA5 St Lawrence Terrace



## 7. Inclusive and sustainable community

### Introduction

- 7.1 The planning system has an important role to play in creating and supporting inclusive and sustainable communities. The sense of community and range of shops and services are highly valued by the local community. Concern however has been expressed through early engagement on the growing dependence on tourism and the impact of this on the long-term sustainability of the parish.



### Community facilities

- 7.2 Community facilities are identified in the NPPF as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. These facilities enhance the sustainability of local communities and residential environments.
- 7.3 The NPPF is clear that the planning system should support the development of new community facilities and that valued community facilities should be retained where appropriate<sup>19</sup>. Policy INF3 of the local plan provides protection against the loss of local village convenience shops and public houses. It is acknowledged that planning permission is not always required to change the use of a building or land, and this restricts the ability to secure the continued use of an important facility. The availability of the current level of facilities within the plan area are essential to support the strong sense of community that exists.
- 7.4 Section 2 of this plan highlights that Warkworth has a number of important community facilities. However, the local community are very concerned about access to health facilities, partly because there is no longer a doctor's surgery in the village but also because of the perception that it is more difficult to get appointments at the health centre in Amble, particularly as a result of the level of recent housing development. Feedback also expressed concern about the loss of village facilities since the 1960s when it had a wide variety of local shops.
- 7.5 There is the opportunity through a neighbourhood plan to identify facilities which are of importance to the local community. The buildings identified in policy W5 have been informed by early engagement.



### Policy W5: Community facilities

The following facilities are identified as having great importance to the local community and are identified on the policies map.

- CF1 Post Office and general store;
- CF2 Warkworth School;
- CF3 St Lawrence's Church;

<sup>19</sup> Paragraph 93

- CF4 Warkworth United Reformed Church;
- CF5 War Memorial Hall
- CF6 Warkworth Cricket Ground.

Where planning permission is required development proposals will be supported which sustain or protect existing shops, facilities and services.

A development that would result in the loss of the valued community services and facilities identified above will be supported where the applicant can demonstrate that:

- a. It is no longer needed in its current form;
- b. A replacement service or facility of sufficient size, layout and quality is to be provided in an alternative suitable location; or
- c. It would not be economically viable or feasible to retain the facility and there is no reasonable prospect of securing an alternative community use of the land or building.

### **Local economy**

- 7.6 Early engagement was clear that existing businesses must be supported, as well as maintaining the conditions necessary to support new businesses. Many of these support mechanisms lie outside the planning process. The local plan includes several policies which recognise the need to deliver economic growth whilst safeguarding the environment and community wellbeing (policy ECN1), support for home working (policy ECN11), support for employment uses within built-up areas (policy ECN11), as well as providing support for the rural economy, including diversification (policies ECN12, ECN13, ECN14). A critical requirement for those residents working from home is the information technology infrastructure. The local plan promotes the importance of access to high quality communications including full fibre broadband (ICT1 and ICT2). As a result, it is considered that the neighbourhood plan could not add any further detail to that contained within the local plan.



## 8. Transport and accessibility

### Introduction

- 8.1 The NPPF encourages a reduction in congestion and greenhouse gas emissions through the introduction of measures which promote a decrease in the number of journeys made by car.

### Sustainable transport

- 8.2 As Warkworth has grown in size, there has been more traffic and this has caused problems with congestion and parking. Volume of traffic and the availability of parking were cited as strong concerns in the residents' survey with 307 (80%) and 240 (63%) responses respectively. This is not something that can be tackled directly in the neighbourhood plan, but in order to ease parking difficulties within Warkworth village, the residents' survey came up with a number of possible actions that were agreed in the recent consultation and have been included as community actions.
- 8.3 The parish of Warkworth contains 46 public rights of way with a total length of some 20 miles. These provide access to coast and country and almost traffic free routes from Warkworth to Acklington and Alnmouth. Some are incorporated into the England Coastal Path and into St. Oswald's Way. There is a well used footpath alongside the river Coquet and the A1068 to Amble. In addition, National Cycle Route 1 passes through the Parish and, apart from in the village itself, provides off road links to Alnmouth, Amble and beyond. Early engagement suggested some improvements to the public rights of way, and these have been included in the community actions.
- 8.4 In accordance with national policy, policy W6 supports development that will improve and extend the existing rights of way network.



#### Policy W6: Sustainable transport network

Support will be given to development that will improve and extend the existing public rights of way network identified on the policies map, allowing greater access to services and facilities for residents and visitors.

The public rights of way network identified on the policies map will be protected from development, unless:

- a. There is a clear and demonstrable justification for the loss of the route; and
- b. A suitable alternative route will be provided within an agreed timescale.

## Annex 1 Community actions

### Introduction

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

### Sustainability

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| <b>Community action 1: Energy efficiency</b>  |
| Provide advice and support for homeowners to encourage the insulation of their properties.  |
| <b>Community action 2: Embedding renewable energy</b>   |
| Provide advice and support for individual household initiatives to move from carbon to renewable energy heating and power, such as the installation of solar panels and ground or air source heat pumps |
| <b>Community action 3: Street lighting</b>  |
| Discuss with Northumberland County Council opportunities to turn off street lighting between 1am and 6am.   |

### Distinctive natural, built and historic environment

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| <b>Community action 4: Natural environment projects</b>   |
| Develop projects to enhance the natural environment such as: the creation of community outdoor areas such as woodland/ orchard/ wildflower meadow/ nature reserve; work with Northumberland County Council to leave roadside verges uncut and plant wildflowers; aim to achieve recognition as a wildlife friendly parish (or similar); encourage residents to volunteer as tree wardens. |
| <b>Community action 5: Bridge Gatehouse</b>   |
| Working with building owners, undertake initial work to establish if the Bridge Gatehouse can be repaired and used for the benefit of the residents and visitors.   |
| <b>Community action 6: Warkworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal</b>  |
| Work with the Conservation Team within Northumberland County Council to prepare an update to the Warkworth Conservation Area Character Appraisal.   |

## Inclusive and sustainable community

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| <b>Community action 7: Community centre</b>   |
| Working with land and building owners, explore opportunities to develop a new Community Centre with parking and easy access.  |
| <b>Community action 8: Sport and recreation facilities</b>  |
| Working with Active Northumberland and other stakeholders, explore options to develop sports and recreation facilities, particularly for young people, perhaps within a community centre and improve communication about existing facilities in nearby towns. |
| <b>Community action 9: Children's play provision</b>  |
| Continue with projects to improve existing play areas and develop facilities for older children.  |
| <b>Community action 10: Public seating</b>  |
| Provide additional picnic benches and seating areas in community green spaces in the village and by the river.  |
| <b>Community action 11: Outdoor trim trails/ gym</b>  |
| Explore opportunities to develop outdoor trim trails/ gym   |
| <b>Community action 12: Business hub</b>  |
| Working with Advance Northumberland, landowners and other stakeholders, explore options to develop a business hub/ occasional office facility, perhaps within a community centre.   |
| <b>Community action 13: Tourist facilities</b>  |
| Explore opportunities to develop some tourist facilities at Beach Rd car park to attract visitors to park there.  |

## Transport and accessibility

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| <b>Community action 14: Accessibility improvements</b>  |
| Work with Northumberland County Council, Sustrans and other stakeholders to develop projects which enhance accessibility across the parish, including:  |
| a. Better signage to Cycle Route 1 in both directions in Warkworth Village;<br>b. Provision of cycle parking in Warkworth Village and at Beach Road car park;<br>c. Develop safer walking and cycle routes, for example between Warkworth and Amble, Rotary Way and Cemetery Bank;<br>d. Improving wheelchair and pushchair access to footpaths;<br>e. Develop more footpath linkages between existing rights of way. |

**Community action 15: Car parking**

Work with Northumberland County Council, landowners and other stakeholders to investigate the possibilities of implementing parking enhancements, which might include:

- a. Improve signage to Beach Road and beach car parks. Advertise as free long stay;
- b. Improve parking facilities at Beach Road car park;
- c. Introduce charging or have a 3 hour maximum stay on The Stanners;
- d. Consider options to introduce residents parking schemes e.g. Castle Street, The Butts and Dial Place;
- e. Develop EV charging points at Beach Road Car Park and in Warkworth Village;
- f. Enforcement of no parking on pavements;
- g. Create parking bays on Castle Street to regularise pavement parking.

**Community action 16: Pedestrian safety**

Working with Northumberland County Council assess options to introduce measures to improve pedestrian safety, including: creation of pedestrian crossings, or islands, on Castle St, The Wynd in Amble, and opposite Warkworth School and the designation of a 20mph zone through Warkworth.

**Community action 17: Warkworth Bypass**

Discuss with Northumberland County Council the feasibility of the creation of a Warkworth Bypass.