

## LONGHOUGHTON PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP

### Minutes of meeting held Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at the Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre

- 1 **Present:** Adrian Hinchcliffe, Peter Bromley (part), Chris Thomas, Carole Green, Eleanor Phillips.

**In Attendance:** Jo-Anne Garrick, Rob Naples.

**It was noted that Chris Thomas was now a Parish Councillor**

**Apologies:** Bryan Ellis, Andrew Willmott, Aimee Passmore, Councillor Wendy Pattison.

- 2 **Progress Statement** – Members noted the statement and outlined the tasks to be undertaken by the meeting.

- 3 **Minutes of Previous Meetings held 18.11.21**– The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

- 4 **Matters Arising**

**The Background Papers** had been updated for all the changes agreed and the overlapping items with the Northumberland Local Plan. **This is complete.** It was also noted that further changes will be made to the Background Papers following the adoption of the Northumberland Local Plan. This will include the removal of references to the former Alnwick policies.

**Application had been made to Locality (AECOM) for the Master Planning package** for the sites agreed. The application went in in December 2021 and was approved by Locality in early January 2022. The second draft Masterplan was received on 15.07.22

**Application to Locality for a further grant for the employment of Jo-Anne Garrick Ltd.** Approved and received.

**Consultation on the draft Boulmer Settlement Boundary.** The Consultation on the Boulmer and Howick settlement Boundaries took place in February 2022. **All responses received were in favour.**

**Prepare the Pre-Submission draft of the Neighbourhood Plan.** This to include appropriate local policies on renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and Greenways. In the case of Greenways it was that the principles of greenways are included in the Neighbourhood Plan but the detail will be the subject of a separate proposal. The first draft of the Pre-submission draft Plan has been received but is awaiting decisions on the housing sites that are to be developed.

**Progress the Strategic Environment Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment.** The Strategic Environment Assessment is being undertaken by AECOM. They cannot progress the review until the outcome of the Master Planning package is known on the housing sites and decision taken on which to take forward. Equally, the Habitats Regulations Assessment cannot be started by NCC until decisions are made on the future housing sites.

- 5 **Housing Sites**

For this item members reviewed the Masterplan proposals put forward by AECOM before coming to a decision on which sites to take forward into the Neighbourhood Plan.

## 5.1 Background Issues

### Housing Needs Surveys

The Housing Needs Survey and Housing Needs Assessment which were undertaken for the development of the Neighbourhood Plan both concluded that there is a need for new housing in the Parish that is affordable by the local population and that there is a need for smaller houses of one, two and three bedrooms for existing families to upsize or downsize according to their needs and time of life. Our preference is that estates should be of a restricted size and a mixture of affordable and market houses, to buy or rent rather than being segregated.

### Minimum Targets for New Houses.

The Northumberland Local Plan has set the Parish a minimum target of 88 new houses to be built in the twenty year period from 2016 to 2036. Progress towards achieving this minimum threshold can be seen below:

Built since 2016	73*
Planning Permission Approved	9
Planning Applications being considered	<u>6</u>
TOTAL Assuming the requested planning applications are approved	88
• Subject to scrutiny and confirmation	

From the above analysis it can be seen that the Parish has almost reached the minimum target of 88, although eight of the new properties are holiday lets.

## 5.2 Housing Site Assessment

In order to fully understand the capacity of the plan area to deliver housing to meet the identified needs a housing sites assessment process had undertaken. The Housing Site Assessment Background Paper covers the whole process of the identification of an initial 20 possible housing sites and the filtration process which resulted in only 10 sites being identified as having potential for housing. The views of the local community and landowners were sought on the outcomes of the site assessment process in June 2021.

Initially the following sites were identified for consultation:

Howick	3 sites were assessed and 2 sites were identified as having the potential for housing development.
Boulmer	5 sites were assessed and 2 sites were identified as having the potential for housing development.
Longhoughton	12 sites were assessed and 6 sites were identified as having the potential for housing development.

## 5.3 The results of the Consultation held in June 2021.

Overall 118 responses were received. 80% of the responses supported or generally supported the proposals especially for affordable housing and small but there was some concern on the sites and other issues.

In Longhoughton many expressed the view that the open fields to the south of Station Road should be retained as an open space. They argue that this space is important at the gateway to the village and it is an important part of the setting of the village. Boulmer residents considered that any new

housing should be restricted to 'permanent occupation' and Howick residents and the landowner did not see the need for any new housing sites.

In view of the opinions expressed in the Consultation the Steering Group decided to further reduce the potential housing sites to five as follows:

Longhoughton:	4 sites - Johnnie Johnston Site (L6), The former Recreation Ground (L8), South of Station Road (L11) and South of Boulmer Road (L12).
Howick:	None
Boulmer :	1 site - South of Bowmere (B3).

These five sites were the subject of the Masterplan request to AECOM in December 2021.

## 5.4 Masterplan Proposals by AECOM

### Proposals

AECOM had produced initial draft Masterplan proposals for the following site including the potential for the following house numbers:

Johnnie Johnson site (L6)	6
The Former Recreation Ground (L8)	14
South of Station Road (L11)	40
South of Boulmer Road (L12)	36
Boulmer (B3)	17
Total	113

### 5.4(a) Site L6 Johnnie Johnston Site

#### Site Assessment

This is the site on Burnside which was the former Johnnie Johnston sheltered housing complex. The site is now owned by Northumberland County Council. The housing site assessment concluded that the site is in a good location within the centre of the village and appears developable and would benefit from Master planning.

#### June 2021 Consultation.

In the case of this site there is an expectation that the site will be restored to housing.

#### Masterplan assessment

Constraints:

- Proximity to public car parking at the Co-Op and Community Centre
- To comply with the Existing settlement pattern.
- Road network bounds two sides of site
- Existing vegetation

Opportunities

- Strengthen the urban form along Park Road and Trenchard Way.
- Improve streetscape quality along Park Road.
- Create community park.
- Create linkages with surrounding village.

Masterplan Proposals

- Six two storey terrace dwellings in keeping the prevailing style in the street.
- Create community parkland to contain new planting, seating and play facilities.
- Green connection – informal winding paths connecting with the wider village greenway network.

- Community Centre connection.
- New dwellings to have appropriate screen planting for privacy and improved setting of parkland.
- Feature trees at the road junction forming a gateway into the park from the north.
- Create a community plaza in the area of the Co-op and the refurbishment of the Streetscape.

#### **Steering Group Comments**

One member had concerns that there should be sufficient provision for vehicle parking so that there is no congestion. Also the member was concerned that the way in which the six properties are proposed alongside Park Road this would block the view into the proposed open/wooded area for the existing properties on that side of Park Road. Could the properties be arranged in a better way but not to impinge upon the proposed open space. These points would be passed back to AECOM. Members did comment that this proposal is not just about housing but is looking at the whole environmental package including links to nature, links to the greenway network, encouraging walking and cycling and creating a pleasant central area in the village for sitting, play and possibly other activities.

A member questioned what we mean by 'affordable housing'. Jo-Anne addressed this question by saying that affordable housing is defined in the NPPF and it includes a range of different types of affordable homes, including rent, starter homes, discounted market housing for sale, shared ownership etc but that it is based on local incomes and house prices.

#### **5.4(b) Site L8 the Former Recreation Ground**

##### **Site Assessment**

Whilst this site is allocated as protected open space within the Northumberland Local Plan, there is a potential for a mixed-use development, including housing, recreation and parking. This site is owned by Northumberland Estates.

##### **June 2021 Consultation**

In the case of this site there was general support for mixed development including housing, recreation and car parking.

##### **Masterplan Assessment**

###### **Description**

The site is located centrally along the eastern edge of Longhoughton. The existing green open space is bounded by the East Moor residential area and Longhoughton Primary School to the west. Land to the east and south are primarily characterised by open agricultural fields. The site is currently used as a play field and form an important amenity area for dog walkers.

###### **Constraints.**

- Existing green open space with high amenity value.
- Currently accessed from Crowlea Road.
- Proximity to Primary School.
- Existing trees.

###### **Opportunities.**

- Provide greenway linkage through the site.
- Provide appropriate density of new housing with quality open space and amenity for residents.
- Create a new residential area with village wide amenity value.

###### **Masterplan Proposals**

- Fourteen dormer bungalows arranged in non-linear format.
- Centralised open space with seating and play area.
- Utilise the Lacey Street footway connection.
- The site to comprise of several greenway connectivity routes serving the housing and the wider village greenway network.

- Construct a broadwalk on the existing SUDs pond developing into planted woodland with seating and views into the AONB.
- Incorporating a village car park with central hedgerow and trees planting and a reinforced grass surface.
- An open recreation area as a buffer between the housing and the car park.
- Road access from East Moor and footway connections to the Primary School.

#### **Steering Group Comments**

The consensus was that this proposal had many merits but it was thought that the area for recreation should be larger and the area for housing marginally smaller. The suggestion was made that the garden sizes could be cut down so that the number of houses could be maintained. It was noted that the term 'dormer bungalow' had been used but there is an expectation that the number of bedrooms may be one, two or three and dormers may not be needed with all the bungalows. The proposal included the suggestion of a greenway up the east side of the properties in East Moor. This was not intended and AECOM would be asked to remove it. Subject to these comments members thought this was a good proposal.

#### **5.4 (c) Site L11 South of Station Road**

##### **Site Assessment.**

The site assessment identified that the site could be suitable for a mixture of housing and open space including important green linkages but given the location and size of the site, it was considered essential that any future development should incorporate a large amount of open space. This site is included in the SHLAA Listing at Site 9316 and part of 9317 and is outside the existing settlement boundary which is included in the Local Plan.

##### **June 2021 Consultation.**

In relation to this site many residents expressed the view that the pastures immediately to the south of Station Road are an important feature of the entrance and exit to Longhoughton from Alnwick and they should be preserved without development.

##### **MasterPlan Assessment**

The Masterplan identified the following **constraints** for the site:

- The rural village setting along Station Road.
- The topography of the site
- The ridgeway towards the centre of the site
- Access.

The masterplan also identified the following opportunities.

- Safeguarding the rural setting and arrival to Longhoughton along Station Road.
- Set new residential buildings on low ground to the south of the site below the ridgeline
- Provide shelterbelt tree planting along the railway line.

Masterplan proposals:

- Retail the pasture alongside the south Station Road to protect the gateway setting.
- Forty residential dormer bungalows constructed in non-linear alignment on the lower ground south of the ridgeline. This would incorporate a central open green area.
- The road access would be from South End.
- Establish a green buffer zone south of the ridge, along the railway line and right around the site.
- Utilise the existing bridleway for access by foot and cycle and conversion to a greenway.

##### **Steering Group Comments**

Access to this site was always going to be a difficult issue. If access is from Station Road it would destroy the pasture adjacent to Station Road which residents consider should be untouched. The Masterplan proposes access from South End which is possible but it would involve cutting across an area which is proposed as a Public Open Space. Members noted that the topography of the area has

a ridge that would hide the location of the proposed housing from Station Road and further planting of trees would provide a shelterbelt. The existing bridleway could be upgraded to a greenway to provide foot and cycle access to the estate. Members expressed concern about the size of this estate (forty house) and there was a view that it was too large. Above all members were concerned that this was a new area for development currently outside the settlement boundary and do we really need to be pursuing this option when we already have other sites within the settlement boundary.

#### **5.4 (d) Site L12 South of Boulmer Road.**

##### **Site Assessment**

The Site Assessment identified that this site has the potential for mixed use including housing, open space and greenway. It is smaller than SHLAA 9318 but is still large and extends beyond the existing settlement boundary for Longhoughton and is within the AONB. The Assessment concluded that a smaller site that incorporated a large amount of open space and a greenway has the potential to be suitable for development. The site is owned by Northumberland Estates.

##### **June 2021 Consultation**

In the case of this site there was concern that access from Boulmer Road was an issue and that the road side pavement needs considerable development to provide for the safety of pedestrians walking or cycling into Longhoughton.

##### **Masterplan Assessment**

Constraints.

- Mature tree and hedgerow vegetation along Boulmer Road.
- Water course along the northern boundary.
- Topography of the site.
- Access to the site.

Opportunities.

- Safeguarding the rural setting and arrival to Longhoughton along Boulmer Road.
- Create linear parkland with greenway connections.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity along Boulmer Road.

Proposals

- 36 dormer bungalows arranged in non-linear alignment.
- Incorporate a community green with seating and play equipment.
- Greenway connection to the wider village network.
- Access from Boulmer Road.
- Woodland buffer screen planting to the periphery of the site.
- Existing road edge boundary planting to be retained as an important element of the setting of Longhoughton.
- Pathways would provide safe access for pedestrians but it would be necessary to cross Boulmer Road to gain access to Longhoughton.

##### **Steering Group Comments**

Members recognised that access to this site was also an issue. The proposed access from Boulmer Road is not ideal due to its width and the volume of traffic going to RAF Boulmer. There could be an alternative access from South End but this would require a larger site that covers a greater area to the south. It was noted that this site is outside the existing settlement boundary and within the AONB. Boulmer Road has a very narrow pavement which needs widening for greater foot use. However, the Masterplan proposal includes the creation of a footpath on the south side of Boulmer Road that would avoid the use of the existing footpath but it would still mean that for residents on foot going into the village, Boulmer Road would need to be crossed.

Members considered that the topography of this site is difficult due to having a north east facing steep slope but it was pointed out that a greenway is needed across this area from South End to Boulmer Road and the development of this site may enable this need to be realised. One member thought that this was a good proposal but overall the Members questioned whether this site is needed for development during this planning period.

#### **5.4 (e) Site B3 South of Boulmer Village**

##### **Site Assessment**

The overall assessment was as follows. Within Boulmer this site is considered suitable and achievable. However, as it is within the area of outstanding natural beauty and directly adjacent to European and nationally protected sites, the scale, design and ecology mitigation/enhancement will be essential considerations to inform the preparation of an acceptable scheme. Given the need to help rebalance the local community, the type of tenure of the properties will be important.

##### **June 2021 Consultation**

In the case of this site there was concern that any new housing should be restricted to permanent occupation.

##### **Masterplan Assessment**

Constraints.

- Potential for negative visual impact on open scenic and visual setting.
- Ability for the site to accommodate high numbers of units given existing density and surrounding context.

Opportunities.

- Provide connectivity with Bowmere.
- Extend the prevailing character, scale and arrangement of development along Beach View.
- Provide green open space and amenities for residents.

Proposals

- Seventeen dormer bungalows.
- Central open space for seating and play.
- Access and link from Bowmere.
- Woodland screening to the periphery of the site.
- Existing buildings and front gardens continued along Beach View.
- Scale and arrangement of buildings to reflect the existing context.

##### **Steering Group Comments**

Reference was made to the need for new housing at Boulmer. The village has an elderly population and 37.5 percent of houses are holiday lets or second homes. These two features are linked because the purchase of second homes and holiday lets has pushed up the price of housing to a point where local people cannot afford the prices. This has resulted in young families not being able to purchase properties in Boulmer. Members were reminded that the Neighbourhood Plan proposes that all new housing in Boulmer Ward should be for permanent occupation only, and this will be a planning condition.

Members asked for a check on whether the housing at the side of Beach View was actually facing the sea.

Overall members were satisfied with this proposal.

#### **5.5 Sites to be taken forward for development in the Neighbourhood Plan.**

A final assessment of the five sites has been undertaken in the Housing Site Assessment Background Paper taking into account their constraints, access issues and for each their overall potential. The following was agreed.

The Parish has met the housing requirement and as a result of the strategic approach set out in the Local Plan it would be more appropriate to focus on a small number of housing sites within the settlement boundary for Longhoughton rather than the development of one or two larger sites outside the settlement boundary. Boulmer is different because there is a specific need for permanent residents and it is within the proposed settlement boundary.

**The proposed sites to be taken forward into the Neighbourhood Plan are therefore as follows:**

• <b>Johnnie Johnston Site L6</b>	<b>6</b>
• <b>The Former Recreation Field Site L8</b>	<b>14</b>
• <b>Boulmer South Site B4</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

If during the fourteen years to 2036, if this number turns out to be insufficient, there could be a review of the Neighbourhood Plan which could result in a change to the plan and additional land being allocated for housing. Also, the local plan allows for the development of exceptions sites outside the settlement boundary to deliver affordable housing where there is an identified need.

#### **5.6 Status of the Sites not recommended for development.**

The recommendation is that the sites south of Station Road and South of Boulmer Road would not be taken forward in the Neighbourhood plan for development. They would be left as they are for agricultural uses. They would **not** be regarded as 'reserved' sites for future development for the planning process does not allow for that. However, the research that has been done for these two sites is thorough and has identified the key issues for each site that can be uplifted in future assessments of where future housing sites could be located.

#### **5.7 Pastures south of Station Road**

If these proposals are accepted the pastures immediately to the south of Station Road could be considered for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan as Public Open Space or Local Green Space. However, it will have to go through the assessment process to establish whether it meets the criteria.

#### **5.8 Longhoughton Settlement Boundary**

If the proposals put forward in this paper are accepted there will be no need to change the settlement boundary for Longhoughton that is included in the Local Plan.

#### **5.9 Boulmer Settlement Boundary**

A settlement boundary for Boulmer was proposed and consulted on earlier in the year. All comments received were supportive. Also it was proposed that Howick does not have a settlement boundary and there were no objections to this.

### **6 Next Steps**

The following steps were agreed.

- A Update the Background Papers for all the changes agreed and the overlapping items with the Northumberland Local Plan.
- B Update the Housing sites Background Paper for the results of the assessment on the housing sites

- C Inform AECOM on the changes required to the Master Planning Document.
- D Further develop the Pre-Submission draft of the Neighbourhood Plan . This to include appropriate local policies on renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and Greenways and the housing sites. It will also include a policy map.
- E Progress the Strategic Environment Assessment with AECOM and Habitats Regulations Assessment with NCC now that decisions have been made on the housing sites to take forward.
- F Hold informal meetings with NCC (Housing) and Northumberland Estates.
- G Prepare a site assessment for the proposed local green space or Public open space to the south of Station Road.

**12 Any Other Business**

None

**13 Date of the next meeting**

A meeting will be called towards the end of October to review the Pre-Submission draft.