



## **How the Local Plan is in conformity with the Northumberland National Park Management Plan 2016 to 2021**

The Northumberland National Park Management Plan is the management plan for Northumberland National Park Authority. This Management Plan is a partnership document setting out how the statutory National Park purposes and the socio-economic duty will be delivered. It sets a long-term vision for the area. It is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, every five years. The current Management Plan 2016 sets out our strategic aims and outcomes for the period of 2016 to 2021. It also defines the “special qualities” identified for Northumberland National Park.

As a background, the statutory purposes and duty of National Parks are:

- 1) *To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and*
- 2) *To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public.*

In addition there is a statutory duty on the National Park Authority in pursuing these purposes

*To seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities*

This document sets out how the Publication Draft Local Plan is in conformity with the Northumberland National Park Management Plan.

## 1. Vision

The Local Plan uses the same vision as the Management Plan.

### Our Vision

‘Northumberland National Park will be a truly welcoming and distinctive place, easily accessible to all. Its inspiring and changing landscapes, characterised by open spaces, tranquillity, diverse habitats, geology and rich cultural heritage, will be widely recognised and valued. The living, working landscape will contribute positively to the well-being of the thriving and vibrant communities in and around the Park.’

The Management Plan (2016-2021) outlines five strategic aims to achieve this vision, these are:

**Aim 1 – A Welcoming Park:** To put people and their connections with the landscape at the heart of the National Park.

**Aim 2 – A Distinctive Place:** To manage, conserve and enhance the distinctive natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.

**Aim 3 – A Living Working Landscape for Now and the Future:** To adapt to change by applying new approaches, together with traditional techniques.

**Aim 4 – Thriving Communities:** To ensure the thriving and vibrant communities have a strong sense of place and an economy grounded in the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.

**Aim 5 – A Valued Asset:** To ensure the National Park is valued as a local, regional and national asset, with influence beyond its boundaries that is worth looking after now and for generations to come.

As outlined in Chapter 3 of the Publication Draft, these aims have been translated into strategic priorities and spatial objectives for the Local Plan.

## 2. Strategic aims

***Aim 1 – A Welcoming Park:*** *To put people and their connections with the landscape at the heart of the National Park.*

The management plan explains that this aim relates primarily to the second purpose of National Parks, promoting opportunities for the public to enjoy the special qualities

of the Park, but also to protect those special qualities. It also relates to accessibility of the Park to a wider and diverse audience.

The Strategic policies have been drafted to support sustainable development and to conserve and enhance the Park's special qualities. This aim promotes public enjoyment of the special qualities and therefore these special qualities should not be harmed by poor planning decisions. The policies have also been designed to be flexible enough to ensure that the infrastructure needed to support these visitors is not restricted. Strategic Policy ST1 and ST2, as well as Community facilities and Infrastructure (Policy DM1) and Transport and Accessibility (Policy DM9) are particularly relevant policies that support this aim. Therefore, taken as a whole, the policies of the Local Plan meet the thrust of this aim.

***Aim 2 – A Distinctive Place:*** To manage, conserve and enhance the distinctive natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.

The local plan policies have at their heart the protection and enhancement of the special qualities of the Park. As well as the strategic policies which seek to achieve this (Policies ST1 and ST2), there are also specific policies relating to the special qualities such as Habitats, Biodiversity and geodiversity (Policy DM10) and Landscape tranquillity and dark skies (Policy DM11), and Historic landscape assets and built heritage (Policy DM14) and Archaeological Heritage (Policy DM15). The Local Plan is in conformity with this management plan aim.

***Aim 3 – A Living Working Landscape for Now and the Future:*** To adapt to change by applying new approaches, together with traditional techniques.

The Management Plan explains that this aim relates to new and better sustainable land management, making a contribution to achieving sustainable development and responding to climate change. It also aims to support sustained and economically viable business growth which sensitively make use of the National's Park's special qualities.

Sustainable development is at the heart of the proposed strategic policies, seeking to ensure the spatial strategy delivers development in places that are more sustainable, including encouraging development in locations that already have existing infrastructure capacity. Strategic Policy ST1 sets out the types of development that are considered to constitute sustainable development and among other things reducing waste and greenhouse gas emissions through improved energy efficiency and conserves the quality and quantity of natural resources. Policy DM7 relates to

the rural economy and diversification which aims to support sensitive business growth. The draft policies are in compliance with this management plan aim.

***Aim 4 – Thriving Communities:*** To ensure the thriving and vibrant communities have a strong sense of place and an economy grounded in the natural and cultural qualities of the National Park.

The Management Plan explains that this aim reflects that communities in and around the National Park have a strong connection to and appreciation of the National Park and need to be fully engaged in shaping its future. It also requires people to have opportunities to work and live in resilient communities.

The process of producing the Local Plan has involved the community from the start. This is outlined in the Statement of Community Involvement (2017). Young people have also been involved in giving the Authority their thoughts (See consultation statement). Strategic policies ST1 and ST2 have consideration for the communities, for example ensuring the health and well-being of local communities are not harmed by development, likewise access to local services and community facilities will be supported (Policies ST1 and DM1). The proposed policies are in conformity with this aim of the Management Plan.

***Aim 5 – A Valued Asset:*** To ensure the National Park is valued as a local, regional and national asset, with influence beyond its boundaries that is worth looking after now and for generations to come.

The Management Plan explains that the National Park is widely recognised for its environmental, social and economic contribution particularly to North East England. The value of the National Park is also clearly demonstrated.

Poor planning decisions can harm the special qualities of the National Park and therefore it is essential that policies are sufficiently robust enough to ensure that the valued asset of the National Park is protected. The Publication Draft Local Plan policies all seek to conserve and where appropriate enhance those widely recognised special qualities to ensure the National Park.

**Conclusion: The Publication draft policies have been designed to relate closely and conform with the aims of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan.**