

# Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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## Stage 3

### Presentation Report Part A November 2013

The purpose of this presentation report is to record the progress of work undertaken by the 8 Topic subgroups, showing the relationship and influence they have on each other and the need for the transition into a shared vision for the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan.

This document is strictly for internal use only.

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## **Healthcare and Care for the Elderly Subgroup**

In examining the provision of health services and the requirements of older people, the issues reviewed covered the availability of health services in Ponteland including primary care, dentists, opticians, pharmacies, podiatry, physiotherapy and alternative therapies as well as hospital led services based in Ponteland.

Housing specific for older people was examined as well as residential care and sheltered housing. Information was collected on activities for older people and the availability of suitable public transport.

Engagement included GPs and Patient Forums as well as older people and older people's groups and community organisations.

### **Health Issues**

Among the key health issues identified are a lack of availability of appointments to see GPs and the capacity of the existing Primary Care Centre to expand to cater for any further population growth. There is a concentration of services in one specific place and with poor access to transport and parking which leads to lack of provision in other parts of Ponteland, particularly in Darras Hall. Any future development will need to include transport provision.

Any potential closure or reduction of services outside of the primary care setting, (e.g. walk in centres) will have an impact on current services in Ponteland.

There is a lack of provision of NHS Dentists

### **Older People**

Over 35% of the population in Ponteland is over 60, with 13% of these being over 75. A further 23.5% fall into the 45-59 category. There has been a 19.5% increase in those over 60 in the past ten years and a 33.5% increase in people over 75. Therefore any future development in Ponteland will need to reflect this.

Footpaths and pavements that are safe to use and accessible road crossing for older and less mobile people are key issues, as are sensible bus routings and raised kerb bus stops. The only available public toilets are at Merton Way Car Park.

There is an inadequate supply of housing for older people which can have an impact on their health and well being. The lack of two bedroom houses prevents older people from being able to downsize and to stay in Ponteland where they have community ties.

Apart from the grant funded Friday Hopper bus, there is a lack of appropriate transport for older people.

The link between keeping fit and being healthy is well established. Leisure activities for older people are well provided at Merton Hall and church organisations. Although Ponteland Leisure Centre has activities that are suitable for some older people, user groups feel that more specific activities would be beneficial.

## **Healthcare and Care for the Elderly Subgroup** continued

### **Conclusion**

Suitable and accessible transport for older people and provision for capacity and access to a GP are vital and any future housing provision in Ponteland needs to reflect that.

The sub group prepared a scoping document examining what services are currently available in Ponteland, both in health services, i.e. GPs, Hospital led outpatients, dentists, opticians, podiatrists, pharmacists and a range of additional services, and services, activities and housing provision and transport for older people.

Local organisations and groups were consulted, although these were mainly verbal and therefore not documented, and additions and amendments were made to both the scoping document and the evaluation.

An evaluation was drawn up and further consultation is being made on both this and the scoping document. This includes repeat consultations that can be documented and with further organisations.

Those consulted or being consulted includes:

- Older People including Ageing Well in Ponteland
- GPs/Patient Forums
- Residential Care Home Managers
- Valley Care (Telecare providers)
- Age UK
- Domiciliary Care providers
- Merton Hall
- Memorial Hall
- United Reform Church
- Methodist Church
- Ponteland Leisure Centre
- Ponteland Community Partnership
- U3A
- County Councillors

The main issues identified to date are the lack of suitable and accessible transport for older people and the lack of capacity and access to a GP. Both GPs surgeries are at capacity and appointments times to see a GP can be up to three weeks. Both these issues are vital and any future housing provision in Ponteland needs to reflect that.

*Report supplied by Veronica Jones and read by Alma Dunigan*

### **Summary of comments and questions raised in response:**

The number and location of dropped kerbs should be considered in long term plan

Are the 2 GP Practices in Ponteland working to full capacity and would any increase of population due to new homes put pressure on their services. How easily would they be able to adapt?

Should some new homes be designed for special needs requirements?

## **Education & Youth Activities Subgroup**

### **Educational Excellence**

The partnership feeder system exceeds the civil boundary of Ponteland and serves the surrounding rural community. 4,713 households in the parish with 1,765 children aged up to 15 yrs (16.2%)

<b>Belsay, Heddon, Ponteland and Whalton First Schools</b>	4/5-9 age
Feed into <b>Richard Coates Cof E Middle School</b>	
<b>Darras Hall, Stamfordham and Heddon First School</b>	5 -9
Feed into <b>Ponteland Middle School</b>	
<b>Richard Coates Cof E and Ponteland Middle</b>	9-13
Feed <b>Ponteland Community High School</b>	13-18
Locations refer to map	

### **Schools are now Businesses**

Due to the existing partnership and cooperation of the schools the feeder system provides each school with projected numbers/forecasts for the following years. Any shortfall can be taken up by residents primarily from Newcastle.

2013 data shows pupils outside of the area attending Ponteland Schools

Primary 178

Middle 220

High 582

### **Implications of Increased Housing/Population**

This does depend on how much and how soon. With a trickle increase on current building the schools can cope with market forces dictating population numbers in schools.

Up to 350 new houses would cause schools to start excluding pupils from outside the catchment area (Newcastle)

Houses being built in the Callerton area by Newcastle City Council would threaten local schools. Moving to 850 new houses "**Location**" being built in the civil parish (200-250 children) would put pressure on all schools to provide for local children only depending on the existing footprint of the schools, condition of buildings and how fit for purpose they were- could have an impact on the existing feeder system. This could be the time that consideration is given to changing to a 2 tier system of education or re-designating existing schools. At the High/middle site there is room for expansion with little disruption, the same on the Darras hall site.

Reorganisation to a 2tier generates significant change. One secondary school (11-18) on the current High & Middle site plus 3 new (3-11) primary one at the edge of Darras Hall and others in village.

### **Influence on Transport**

It is recognised that the timing of the school day causes a mass movement of pupil population, parents & carers, school buses and cars causing at these peak times highway congestion and parking issues in and around any of these school locations. We inherit schools that serve 2 settlements divided by the A696.

## **Education & Youth Activities Subgroup Continued**

### **Draft Policy Statement Education**

To ensure that any development in the civil parish of Ponteland and the surrounding hamlets is supported by sufficient quality of school places and high quality of education provision is maintained

The provision of education in Ponteland currently serves the children of the residents of the civil parish and the wider community feeder schools outside this boundary. Schools operate under an agreed system and priority to attend under this arrangement should be encouraged before pupils outside the County of Northumberland.

### **Youth Activities “out of hours”**

Group looked at two areas of existing activity provision

- Range of structured activities for all ages ( 5-18 )
- Very limited unstructured activity

### **Discussions with the Youth**

Party in the Park Yr 12 upwards

Summer school activity at the High School Yr9, Yr11

### **Others**

Parents, Police & Support workers and Youth Service

### **Observations**

Youth that attend public schools out of the area tend to travel further to reach the activities of their choice.

### **Future Plans**

Skate Park is under construction and will be available in January 2014

A kick about area is in the planning stage between Ponteland Community Partnership, High School and the Police. Funding is needed for this.

Youth club facility is only open 2 days per week at the moment, the Youth Service and the Police are working on opening this facility an additional day with volunteers supporting.

Discussions are ongoing with the Head teacher at the High School to use their facilities out of hours and to provide Year 12 with a youth leadership training/qualification; this would allow youth supervision on the High School site.

No provision is available for young who live outside Darras Hall or the village this leaves these totally disadvantaged due to the poor public transport system and almost totally dependent on car drivers.

### **Group’s future work**

To investigate the provision available in Hexham and make some kind of comparison of need.

### **Issues**

The local Police Officer is actively involved with other agencies to resolve part of the youth problems in the area by increasing the opportunities available for the youth.

*Report supplied and read by Alma Dunigan*

### **Summary of comments and questions raised in response:**

The plan to move Ponteland school system from 3 tier to 2 tier was fought against a few years ago and Northumberland County Council have confirmed they have no plan to change the outcome.

## **Natural Environment, Open Spaces & Habitats Subgroup**

The group met 4 times over the early summer, and their reports are lodged on the website. We had decided that our main priority would be to ascertain the ownership of the open spaces within the Parish, and to review the current status of wildlife within those habitats. We realised that open space, and therefore the wildlife that it sustains, would come under increasing pressure from a growing population and an increase in the infrastructure resulting from new houses, roads and the like.

### **Wildlife and Habitats**

In order to build up a picture of the existing wildlife population, we were able to access the Environmental Records Information Centre for North East England, which is based at the Great North Museum in Barras Bridge, Newcastle. Additionally, all the information from the Natural History Society of Northumbria goes onto this database.

<http://www.ericnortheast.org.uk/home.html>

This database provides the baseline information for what species exist where, and we were provided with

- a spreadsheet containing all the species recorded for the Parish,
- a map of the sites of nature conservation interest, including SSSI's, and so-called Local Sites (e.g. Dissington Old Brick Pond, and Benridge Bog), and
- a map of the habitat data for the Parish, which includes deciduous woodland, undetermined grassland, grazing marsh, etc.

Additionally we have obtained from the Environment Agency, a list of the fish species to be found in the River Pont during July of this year.

The Northumberland Wildlife Trust maintains a database of where various species are found, and this is available to members. Information about bat populations within the Parish is detailed within the various surveys carried out for planning applications, and also via the National Biodiversity Network : <http://www.nbn.org.uk/Home.aspx>

Natural England has a 'Magic Map' facility for accessing data relating to both land classification and species presence : <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/maps/> and were also responsible for the original list ( 1975/76) of species for the Darras Hall SSSI.

Data about bird species within the Parish is held by the BTO as part of the Atlas database.

### **Open Space**

The Group has a set of footpath maps for the Parish, but is still awaiting a definitive list of Town Council owned land. We know of Ponteland Park, but details of the other bits of land have not been forthcoming.

Sustrans maintains the list of cycling routes that pass through the Parish.

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map?lat=56.54737192673878&lng=-3.142090281250036&zoom=5&route-type=all-routes&filters=>

The five schools in the area, the Ponteland Golf Club and the Leisure Centre, all have open space for recreation and this is clearly seen on the PTC sponsored maps that exist in Broadway and Main Street. There is a copy of the original map lodged with the Town Council.

**Natural Environment, Open Spaces & Habitats Subgroup** Continued

Allied to this topic, but not strictly part of public open space, is the Green Belt, the boundaries of which can be found at

[http://northumberland.limehouse.co.uk/events/17889/popimage\\_d17991e2562.html](http://northumberland.limehouse.co.uk/events/17889/popimage_d17991e2562.html)

At our last meeting, we put forward our list of key issues which we considered needed to be given special attention in stage two, prioritising our top three.

*Report supplied and read by David Butler*

**Summary of comments and questions raised in response:**

There is a huge diversity of flora and fauna and any development should be considered with regard to its effect on existing species.

However it is considered that a density of housing with gardens provides the potential for a greater diversity of species.

Implications of density of housing and percentage of space allocated to gardens.

## **Retail Facilities, Business & Employment Subgroup**

Andrew Tucker and Christopher Brummitt had a meeting with David English and Rob Naples on 18 September, where we were directed to the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan Economy/Business Group's work. This is a good starting point, which provides useful guidance. Christopher is working through that document and picking up on the areas that correlate with what we need to do for Ponteland.

We have identified the following areas that need attention:

1. We need to draw conclusions about:

- Parking
- Bypass
- Zoning master plan - when shops become available how to target suitable uses/ office space/ under used buildings.
- Merton Way/Broadway viability.
- Expansion/consolidation of Pontelands' commercial area.
- Services/highways implications restricting development in centre.
- Restrictions/opportunities for development within the Conservation Area.
- Alternative sites for an industrial estate releasing land for housing and/or a business park?
- Develop a use classification plan identifying type of business use of premises to highlight under/over provision.
- Retail/employment statistics and demographic breakdown of employers/employees. Any sources?
- NCC input for business use/ rates/ employment/ empty premises/ revenue lost from empty premises.

2. Analyse the feedback from the public consultation questionnaire. Possibly consider a more detailed questionnaire for businesses in Ponteland for specific issues which we need to bring out for further development, possibly outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Identify where we need support and help, where to find it, and then bring in suitable specialists to assist.

We need to specifically look at problems within Ponteland centre, and business generally related to the wider rural area within the 'parish'... where development opportunities may arise, e.g.: whether a bypass would enable the relocation the industrial estate, whether a business park would be viable and whether either or both would weaken the centre. We are looking for any suggestions to expand or develop these topics.

Christopher has tried to get some input from The Business Forum but so far nothing has come forward. Perhaps the Forum needs more time to establish itself and decide what it needs from Ponteland.

Christopher has also tried to talk with the main employers but it is proving very difficult to arrange interviews at convenient times.

The group has not been able to meet and this is very much down to people finding the time. However, individuals within the group are starting to pull the information together.

**Retail Facilities, Business & Employment Subgroup** Continued

*Report supplied and read by Andrew Tucker*

**Summary of comments and questions raised in response:**

The nature of any new business facility/park should be considered from multi tenanted site to industrial units.

The distance any business site would be from centre of Ponteland so that it would not affect vista of Ponteland but benefit from local employment and employee's access to local services.

Reference to the proposed allocation of space to be designated business. Meadowfield Estate is 4.7 hectares and a further 3 hectares is proposed on green belt.

## **Transportation Subgroup**

Heavy goods vehicles, tourist traffic and especially schools traffic continue to cause environmental and safety problems on the A696 and North Road as well as Thornhill Road, Broadway in Darras Hall and Callerton Lane. Then of course there are always road works and services needing to dig up the highway.

Traffic volumes have increased substantially creating a greater need for a bypass. The A696 Trunk Road runs through the centre of Ponteland village and the presence of heavy goods traffic in particular in the main streets is giving rise to environmental and safety problems. The last significant improvement to traffic in Ponteland took place 23 years ago with the opening of the Callerton Lane Link Road, (Rotary Way). This removed a substantial amount of commuter traffic from the village centre but there are still significant highway and environmental benefits to be gained through the provision of the A696 Ponteland bypass.

The A696 through Ponteland serves a number of purposes; it is the principal route through the Town and is part of the A696 Trunk Road from Newcastle to Jedburgh and beyond. It also serves as part of the village centre, being the historic Main Street with a number of commercial businesses along its length. There are also fairly high pedestrian flows at certain points across Main Street. The County Council has introduced more zebra crossings to help pedestrian flow.

With the approval of expanded Army Training Activities at Otterburn, this road has come under further pressure and the competing demands for the road space are being considered within the Local Transport Plan. There are also specific requirements of army convoys that need to be incorporated in any potential schemes. The County Council, former Borough Council and the current Town Council are keen to see improvements to the Main Street and will need to consider many issues in this plan. Detailed local consultation on specific proposals will be carried out prior to implementation of improvements. In developing any proposals, the Authorities will also ensure co-ordination with any major schemes arising out of the Otterburn Inquiry such as the renewed calls for the Ponteland bypass and the opportunities that can then be created for prioritising space for other road users and improving the environment of the Main Street.

### **Ponteland and the future**

Since occasionally the traffic is backed up some 0.8 of a mile (already observed) it can be estimated that over the coming years the traffic will soon be backed up much further than 0.8 of a mile. Actually this scenario gets worse very quickly as quite a volume of traffic coming from the direction of the airport towards Ponteland wants to turn left at the Rotary Way roundabout towards Darras Hall Estate.

This means that it is entirely likely that the traffic will now be backed up towards the turn off for Dinnington roundabout. This compounds the effect of traffic wanting to head towards Dinnington which means that the traffic in all likely-hood will be backed up to the large Airport roundabout. Once this happens the Airport traffic will be affected so one can see a real traffic jam occurring.

### **Solutions**

The NPG support any measures that will improve safety around the school areas. Such as, providing Shuttle Buses, Road Improvements, Strict enforcement using ANPR cameras, making the road safer for cyclists and pedestrians, provide more car parking, or even moving the schools to Rotary Way. Leaving space for Car parking, Businesses, Housing and Leisure space.

## **Transportation Subgroup** Continued

### **Policy**

When schools are in operation a 20mph limit should be enforced on the roads outside the schools during school attendance hours.

### **Parking**

Car parking in and around Ponteland is an ever growing problem. Car ownership is increasing year on year and the DoTF (see section T3.1.2 and T3.1.4 for forecast numbers etc) indicate that car numbers will increase, so the current car parking problems will get worse over time.

The problem with traffic is that it affects many other areas within the Neighbourhood Plan and so cannot be treated in isolation. What follows is what facilities there are for parking at this date.

As was mentioned earlier in the Transport report there are ways that traffic and parking can be improved provided some changes take place in Ponteland. A new Bypass will certainly improve traffic flow but will not help the Ponteland car parking facilities or problems. What is required is more land available in the right place. One proposal could be to moving the schools to either side of Rotary Way freeing up land on the Following areas.

### **Access for pedestrians and cyclists**

Studies and subsequent development show that limiting motor traffic and taking the focus away from cars makes streets much nicer places to spend time. With space at a premium in urban centres, removing car parking creates more space for retail and people, and has worked out well for shoppers and retailers alike (will include Hove example). It creates destinations that people want to spend time in and come back to repeatedly and frequently (as opposed to 'nipping in for a quick shop' and making little connection to the surroundings, people and locale).

### **Introduction**

With Ponteland situated so close to such a large and busy development as Newcastle Airport, it will always have an influence on Ponteland in some way. Any Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan cannot ignore the Airport Master Plan (AMP) which includes its future site development proposals. The AMP is written to go up to the year 2030, it is the third development plan produced by the airport, the first AMP covering the period 1994 to 2006 and the second covering the period 2003 to 2016. The AMP has been produced in consultation with the 5 part-owning local authorities including Northumberland County Council.

Ponteland Town Council has representatives are on various airport users committees. A local plan such as the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan cannot hope to influence, to any great extent the AMP.

### **Public Transport**

Ponteland has evolved into a desirable place to live resulting in a healthy demand for housing types to suit demands from a wide range of residents. Ponteland is very much a commuter town with a large traffic flow towards Newcastle in the morning and the reverse in the evening. The schools have also evolved to suit demand and are renowned for their high standards and good results, attracting pupils from a tremendously wide area.

The school run traffic is well known for bringing the area to a stand each school day morning and afternoon, resulting in delays to through traffic on the busy A696 as well as other major roads that feed into the traffic system. A Bus users Group has been set up consisting of Town Councillors as well as the Public and Bus Company representatives. This has achieved some improvements re bus frequency and routing.

## **Transportation Subgroup** Continued

### **Transport Objectives**

Ensure the road system is fit for purpose. If Ponteland is forced to expand then roads must be planned accordingly. No new major developments should be allowed without contributions and agreements to a by-pass incorporating public transport solutions.

Reduce car dependency by improving walking/cycling and public transport provisions. Liaise with public transport providers to ensure services are attractive and help move people from cars to buses when appropriate.

Promote and provide more accurate information for Buses in Ponteland.

### **General Policy Options**

The time has arrived where doing nothing no longer remains an option. It is clear from the evidence base that unless changes occur in and around Ponteland the traffic will become grid locked. It is a possibility that developers may get planning permission to build many more houses in and around Ponteland. So for every 100 houses it is likely to add 49 cars to the problems that exist already within Ponteland.

*A report summary supplied from Transport Group was read by Peter Cowey*

### **Summary of comments and questions raised in response:**

To date a draft proposal has been prepared

Northumberland County Council has agreed that the traffic lights at The Diamond have been designated a 'tipping point' in busy periods which would support the provision of a by-pass.

## **Drainage & Flooding Subgroup**

### **Environment Agency Responsibilities**

- Main River management
- Define flood zones
- Reduce likelihood of flooding from rivers and the sea
- Flood warnings
- Other
  - Maintaining water quality
  - Water resource regulation
  - Navigation authority
  - Environmental regulator for water quality other than drinking water supply

### **Northumberland County Council**

- Lead Local Flood Authority for Northumberland
  - Flood and coastal erosion risk management
- Ordinary Watercourse management
  - Regulates the free flow of watercourses by issuing consents or serving notices
  - Maintains highway drainage
  - Investigate flood incidents

### **Northumbrian Water Ltd - Manage and maintain:**

- Foul and combined sewers
- Sewage pumping stations
- Sewage discharges into watercourses and the sea
- Waste water treatment
- Water supply network
- Surface water sewers

### **Riparian Land Owners**

- Own land adjacent to watercourses
  - Maintain watercourse bed and banks including trees and shrubs
  - Clear away debris (even if it did not originate from their land)
  - Allow water to flow without obstruction
  - Accept flood flows
  - Protect their property from flood subject to approval of the risk management authority

### **Surface Water Drainage**

- The Main Rivers in Ponteland Parish are:
  - River Blyth
  - River Pont
  - Callerton Burn
  - Fairney Burn
  - Prestwick Carr drains
- Ordinary Watercourses are:
  - Everything else
- Each managed and maintained by the relevant organisation/people

## **Drainage & Flooding Subgroup** Continued

### **Surface Water Sewer Capacity**

- OFWAT requirement: the sewerage system should not put properties at risk of flooding from 1 in 20 year storm events
- New sewers for adoption are designed to provide a 1 in 30 year protection
- Older sewers may give a lesser level of protection

### **Surface Water Management Plan**

- The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment recommends that a Surface Water Management Plan should be prepared for Ponteland.
- Northumberland County Council is not currently preparing a Surface Water Management plan.
- However the County Council has access to
  - a model identifying low spots and “where water is likely to go”.
  - It is also planning a survey of watercourses which pass through gardens

### **Waste Water Drainage**

- Majority of waste water from Ponteland village, Darras Hall and Medburn
  - pumped by a pumping station at Eland Lane via a rising sewer and ultimately to Howdon Sewerage Works
- Other settlements have
  - own treatment plants which discharge treated water into local watercourses
- A significant number of properties, predominantly in rural locations, are not connected to the public sewer system
  - discharge waste water to septic tanks which typically drain into local soils.

### **Foul Water Sewer Capacity**

- Growing problem with surface water entering the foul sewer network
- Pumping station at Eland lane is close to capacity
- Howdon Treatment works will exceed its consent if all housing increases proposed by regional Local Authorities are implemented
- Northumbrian Water are working with Local Authorities to accommodate the proposed increases
- Reduction of surface water content of the system is a key strategy to achieve this.

### **Flood Risk**

- **Fluvial Flooding** - from rivers and streams
- **Tidal Flooding** - from the sea (*Not Ponteland*)
- **Surface Water Flooding** -run-off from land
- **Sewer Flooding** - from sewers
- **Groundwater Flooding** – rising groundwater
- **Artificial Sources** - Flooding from reservoirs, canals and other artificial sources

### **Fluvial Flooding** - Areas at risk are shown as flood zones

- **Flood Zone 1** – Annual risk <1 in 1000
- **Flood Zone 2** – Annual risk 1 in 100 to 1 in 1000
- **Flood Zone 3** – Annual risk 1 in 100 or greater
- *The effects of flood defences are not taken into account*
- *Other flood sources are not included*

## **Drainage & Flooding Subgroup Continued**

### **Main Flood Zone Areas**

- Narrow corridors either side of the principal watercourses
- Wider areas around the River Pont and the Fairney Burn in Ponteland Village, the Eland Estate and the golf course
- Large areas at Prestwick Carr

### **Flood Defences**

- Large parts of the flood zone in Ponteland village are protected by flood defences
  - Earth mounds
  - Walls
  - Standby pumps
  - Protection is against annual risk of 1 in 100
- Weaknesses still exist which require emergency action during very heavy rain

### **Surface Water Flooding**

- Areas outside flood zones are reported to have flooded in recent years
- Difficult to be certain of sources of flooding
- Northumberland County Council keeps a record of flooding incidents, but flooding of gardens and open areas is not included
- Northumberland County Council is preparing a Flood Investigation Report on the 2012 floods

### **Sewer Flooding**

- Adopted sewers are maintained by Northumbrian Water Ltd
- Sewers surcharge when the pipes are full
- Sewers only flood when the manholes are also full and water emerges at the surface
- Northumbrian Water Ltd endeavours to prevent sewer flooding
- Flooding from highway drains is treated as surface water flooding

### **Groundwater Flooding**

- Ponteland largely lies on soils with low permeability which does not hold significant groundwater volumes
- It is possible that some localised rising groundwater has contributed to flooding

### **Water Supply**

- The region is well supplied with water from the Kielder Water which has a comfortable surplus over the next 25 years.
- Northumbrian Water Ltd has an obligation to make water supplies available

### **Issues of Concern for the Neighbourhood Plan 1**

- Surface Water Drainage
  - Increasing impermeable surfaces resulting in increased flows into sewers and watercourses
- Waste Water Drainage
  - Surface water run-off entering waste water drains
  - Eland Lane Pumping Station close to capacity

## **Drainage & Flooding Subgroup** Continued

### **Issues of Concern for the Neighbourhood Plan 2**

- Flood Risk
  - Capital works are still required to improve fluvial flood defences
  - Many reports of flooding in areas which are outside Flood Zones 2 and 3
  - Poor records of flood incidents
  - New development in areas classified as Flood Zone 1 may still be at a high risk of flooding
  - Scepticism about the effectiveness of Sustainable Drainage Systems.

*Report supplied and read by David Hobson*

### **Summary of comments and questions raised in response:**

If housing built downstream would it create a flood risk – it is thought not but would be looked into further.

## **Housing including Affordable Housing Subgroup**

### **Numbers and Proposals Flawed**

- Current info based on RSS which is 16000 population growth. John Blundell's material clearly shows an over ambitious forecast of population increase against ONS data by 8122 to 21322 compared to an increase of 13200 using more accurate trends. This is a 61.5% over estimate
- Figures obtained by AT clearly show Northumberland meeting the RSS targets
- NCC are looking at typically 4-8% population growth in "Service Centres" that is a population increase of a little over 600 in Ponteland, so why do they need 850 houses?
- They have ignored the feedback from the first consultation which downgraded Ponteland from a Tier 1 to Tier 2 and treated it as a Main Town i.e. 10-19% growth
- The draft Core Strategy is putting unfair emphasis on Ponteland (development would be easy to achieve)
- The assumption by all the nearby Local Planning Authorities that their population will increase by migration is fundamentally flawed although they say they and Newcastle are taking housing need from North Tyneside
- The last 3 years delivery figures which give 8 units/year can't be statistically sustainable on such a small sample period in unusual market conditions. The Councils SHLAA methodology states "The average windfall delivery five years previous to the start of the trajectory period will be used to forecast windfall delivery in the future five year period of housing trajectory"
- The council say they are using the 3 year figure for consistency because they don't have 5 year figures for the all areas
- As the SHLAA progresses eventually it will cover a 5 year period but it will be a period of exceptionally low activity as we slowly emerge from the recession
- The current 5 year figure for Ponteland gives between at least 20 units/year
- We think they should be using the most statistically accurate figures available
- An artificially high population prediction together with an unrealistic assumption on delivery will mean that the Council is continually failing to achieve their target leaving the Core Strategy open to challenge by developers

### **Contradictions with their own Documents**

- The KLUIIS shows important landscape features to the south of the proposed deletion site and advised protection of the Green belt at 4
- Clearly the blue coloured emphasis on the A696 cannot be delivered (and is not large enough) but that document suggests looking at sites to the east
- The LCA identifies area 39c as of slightly lower landscape importance
- The proposed intensification of development on the Police HQ site will have an unacceptable effect on traffic in the village and can't be delivered without significant highway improvements, potentially a bypass, which will in turn impact on the Greenbelt
- A longer term plan linked to infrastructure improvements is necessary to ensure that development can take place in the most appropriate places and ensure Ponteland's development continues to be incremental
- The draft Core Strategy is only required to look 20 years ahead but we argue that it is more realistic to plan for a longer period with European Countries typically producing 50 year plans

### **Emerging Questionnaire Responses**

- 84% of respondents so far do not support 850 houses
- 52% would if it did not require loss of Green Belt
- 88% prefer use of brown field sites (but where are they)
- 70% say housing should not be left to market forces

*Report supplied and read by Will Moses*

## **Conservation & Heritage Subgroup**

### **Conservation Area Character Statement**

- Onto 2<sup>nd</sup> draft
- Will become CACA when adopted
- Until then use as Community Character Statement allows us more flexibility and will be used to influence the Neighbourhood Plan policies
- A Neighbourhood Plan is a way of helping local communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live and work It can be used to
- Develop a shared vision for your neighbourhood
- Choose where new homes, shops, offices and other development should be built
- Influence what new buildings should look like
- Identify and protect important local green spaces
- Central area spatial analysis complete
- Based on 4 axes or Green Approaches
- All green but different e.g. intimate corridors or suburban
- This is the setting of the Conservation Area
- Strong focus on A696 approach which is at the end of the Urban Corridor linking Ponteland to Newcastle
- This is busy, with activities taking place all along the route and the tree lined section at Street Houses gives no sense of the openness beyond
- It is brightly lit at night
- The open spaces at Rotary Way roundabout are the only area of openness in the Green Belt Separating Ponteland from the Newcastle conurbation
- The broad swathe of farmland at Clickemin serves the same purpose and is a living link to Ponteland's agricultural past
- It will include Darras Hall, the Cottage Homes and High Callerton

### **The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (or issues)**

- Extend bdy. to include the old butcher's shop and the milepost
- The house no 8 Darras Road is included but perhaps no 10 should be since both these were built in 1911 for Miss Wakinshaw. No 10 was for her and no 8 was the gardener's house when the plot ran down to the river. The inclusion of one without the other seems perverse
- Removal of street signs, advertising boards and other clutter
- Traffic, particularly at peak (school) times
- Large area of macadam and concrete paving in front of the Blackbird Inn
- Concrete tile roof to the Smithy
- Unsympathetic replacement windows to Bell Villas and elsewhere
- Extend protection to Park (may be issues with this) and approaches?
- Enliven end of Waitrose, possibly in conjunction with Merton Way improvements
- Poor detail on extension to nursery. In future any extension should be clearly subservient to the original building

### **Emerging Questionnaire Responses**

- 93% of respondents support protection of green spaces
- 69% Support removal of street signs and other clutter
- 81% support extension of Conservation Area

*Report supplied and read by Will Moses*

### **Summary of comments and questions raised in response:**

Extension of Conservation area to include Darras Hall but Darras Hall Estates has protection rights however a joint green approach could be appropriate.

## **Alternative Plan Proposal**

Refer to Part B document

## **General Debate**

There are 22 reserved by-pass routes in Northumberland. Most cannot for one reason or another be done and only 6 could be delivered. Of the 6 it is believed only Ponteland meets guidelines of 50 vehicles per hour over guidelines, but this is only at peak times.

How would a by-pass be funded and would this be financed through private investment or by grant aid.

The Alternative Plan displayed was designed to show a more sympathetic and creative approach to the number of 850 houses quoted for Ponteland in the NCC Core Strategy document (worst case scenario). Members were encouraged by recent meetings and discussions with NCC officers which clearly indicated, a wish by all parties, to continue the dialog over suggested housing numbers by the PNPSG.

Concerns over the housing projected numbers against historical data need further exploration; the results of the current questionnaire require analysing and the outcomes feeding into the proposed Alternative Plan. This will move the PNPSG towards a revised Alternative Plan and moving the whole process forward to a consultation with residents.

PNPSG are looking for evidence of firm consideration by NCC of what is most appropriate resolution for long term future of Ponteland.

Deadline for Draft Core Strategy: 2/01/2014

**After Debate, a ballot was called for; In Principle to move with PNPSG Alternative Plan Proposal.**

The voting was 6 in favour and 1 abstention.