

Amble Neighbourhood Plan

Terms of reference for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

1 Purpose of the Steering Group

1.1 Amble Town Council has elected to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan. Designation was issued by Northumberland County Council on 4 December 2023. The designated area is the civil parish of Amble.

1.2 The Town Council has agreed to establish a Steering Group to facilitate the plan making process and has delegated authority to the Group for the delivery of all relevant plan-making functions, subject to all formal consultation documents being approved by the Town Council.

1.3 The Steering Group will act as the Project Board for project management and decision-making purposes and will lead the preparation of the Amble Neighbourhood Development Plan (“the Plan”)

1.4 Preparation of the Plan will be led by the Steering Group who will undertake all aspects of plan making up to submission of the Plan to Northumberland County Council.

2 Steering Group objectives

2.1 To produce a sound Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parish of Amble, defining the spatial planning policy priorities identified by the, taking into account all representations made during the process of the plan and having regard to all relevant existing plans and evidence. The Plan will include and be supported by an appropriate delivery plan setting out, where relevant, the means by which these policy priorities may be implemented.

2.2 The Steering Group will:

- provide a locally accountable and representative lead for plan-making;
- agree a project timetable and endeavour to secure compliance;
- agree a project communication, consultation and engagement strategy;
- agree the initial scope of the Plan prior to early public engagement;
- confirm, subject to agreement with the Town Council, the scope of the Plan following analysis of early and subsequent community engagement;
- take note of but not limited to previously identified areas of focus of Green Spaces, Heritage and Conservation within the Parish
- approve all background and evidence based reports prior to publication; agree all consultation documents prior to publication;
- agree, subject to ratification by the Town Council, a final submission version of the Amble Parish Neighbourhood Plan; and
- actively support and promote the preparation of the Plan throughout the duration of the project.

- keep under review the legislative requirements around Neighbourhood Planning to ensure the plan meets requirements
- manage the gathering of evidence necessary to inform areas of the plan

2.3 The Neighbourhood Plan project will run until a Plan has been presented for independent examination. The Steering Group will remain active until the independent examiner's report is published.

3 Steering Group membership

3.1 Membership will be reviewed and confirmed quarterly by the Town Council.

3.2 The Steering Group will comprise:

- up to 12 residents of the Parish, as first invited by the Town Council;
- up to 3 members of Amble Town Council subject to available volunteers;
- with the agreement of the Town Council, additional suitably qualified persons or representatives of organisations may be co-opted.
- Secretary who will carry out duties such as convene and minute meetings.
- Town Clerk: not a member of the Steering Group but will ensure relevant Council procedures are followed and will monitor the project budget.

4 Reporting and communication

4.1 The Steering Group will report a minimum of bi-monthly to the Town Council on their progress on the project.

4.2 The plan-making process remains in the control of the Town Council as local authority and qualifying body. All publications, consultations and community engagement exercises will be undertaken on behalf of Amble Town Council with appropriate recognition of the Town Council's position given in all communications associated with the project.

5 Meetings

5.1 Steering Group meetings will take place a minimum of bi-monthly within Amble Parish and a report will be made at a minimum of bi-monthly to the Town Council

5.2 The Steering Group will elect a Chair and Vice Chair from among the Parish resident members.

5.3 Decisions made by the Steering Group will normally be by consensus at meetings. Each member shall have one vote; the Chair, or person chairing the meeting, shall have a casting vote. A quorum will be 5 members present at the meeting.

6 Support

6.1 The Town Council will ensure appropriate funds for secretarial support are provided for the Steering Group in order to prepare and distribute agendas and papers, to ensure they are circulated prior to meetings, and to record minutes of all meetings.

6.2 Northumberland County Council will provide support and advice as requested by the Steering Group.

7 Conduct

7.1 The Steering Group will follow the code of conduct set out by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life.

7.2 The Steering Group collectively and individually is accountable to the wider community for ensuring that the Plan reflects their collective expectations, through the following principles:

- work with mutual trust and respect, and combine their expertise;
- recognise when their individual roles or interests are in conflict;
- encourage a two-way flow of information, ideas and concerns between residents of the Parish and the Steering Group;
- inform the Steering Group when they find they are unable to deliver agreed actions;
- treat everyone with dignity, respect and courtesy regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability or religion and belief;
- and actively promote equality of access and opportunity.

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