

# Local green space assessment

Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum

August 2021



Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum

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## Introduction

This is a local green space assessment to assist the designation of local green spaces within the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan. The Whitburn Neighbourhood Area is mapped in Annex B.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) allows for the designation of land as Local Green Space through neighbourhood plans. Communities may identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

Paragraph 100 of the NPPF states that:

The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

In order to designate Local Green Space in a neighbourhood plan, first an assessment is required that takes into account the green spaces available in the neighbourhood area and compares it to the criteria from the NPPF. The assessment for the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan is based on the Locality toolkit<sup>1</sup>. This described the following process:

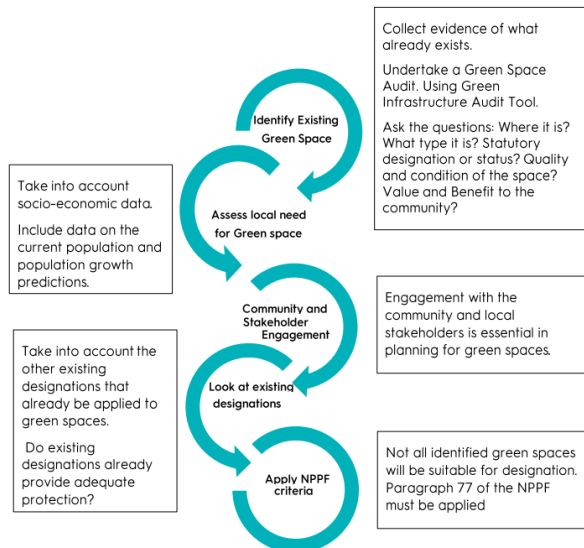


Figure 1 Local green space assessment process

<sup>1</sup> <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/making-local-green-space-designations-neighbourhood-plan/>

## Existing green space assessments

South Tyneside Council has conducted various assessments that provide existing evidence on green space within Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum. These are:

1. Playing Pitch Strategy Strategy (2019)
2. Green Infrastructure Strategy (2013)
3. Open Space assessment and addendum (2015 and 2019)

These assessments will now be explained below.

### *Playing Pitch Strategy*

The following playing pitches are present in Whitburn:

Site	Management	Sport	Use
Cricket Ground	Whitburn Cricket Club	Cricket	Club
Cornthwaite Park	Council	Bowls, tennis	Community
Whitburn C of E Academy fields	School	Cricket	School and public use, but unused by community
		Hockey	Limited community use
		Rugby union	Community use but unused
		Tennis	School use only
		Football	School and public use
Whitburn Village Primary School	School	Football	Community use only during school holidays
Cleadon Lane sports ground	Council	Football	Community
Charlie Hurley Centre	Disused - former training ground of Sunderland AFC	Football	No current public use

### *Green Infrastructure Strategy*

The GI Strategy lists the following spaces:

GI type	Location
<b>Parks and open spaces</b>	Cornthwaite Park Village Greens at North Guards and Front Street Whitburn Windmill Open space west of Church Lane and south of Front Street Recreation Ground at North Guards
<b>Allotments</b>	At Lizard Lane At Kitchener Road South of Front Street North of Myrtle Avenue

<b>Provision for children and Young people:</b>	Playground at Mill Lane / Kitchener Road Playground within Cornthwaite Park
<b>Formal outdoor sports facilities with public access</b>	Football fields at Cleadon Lane Cricket Grounds at Mill Lane At Whitburn Academy Whitburn Golf Course
<b>Outdoor sports facilities without public access</b>	At Marsden Primary School At Charlie Hurley Centre
<b>Cemeteries</b>	Cemetery at Mill Lane Graveyard at Church Lane
<b>Natural and semi-natural greenspace</b>	Whitburn Country Park Marsden Old Quarry Undeveloped coast in the south of the neighbourhood area
<b>Sites with high and medium biodiversity value</b>	Undeveloped coast Whitburn Point Nature Reserve Green fields south of Shearwater/ Firing Range Local Wildlife Site
<b>Wildlife corridors</b>	Undeveloped coast Green belt west of village Connection to the north of the neighbourhood area

*Open Space Assessment and Addendum*

The Open Space Addendum shows the following green spaces:

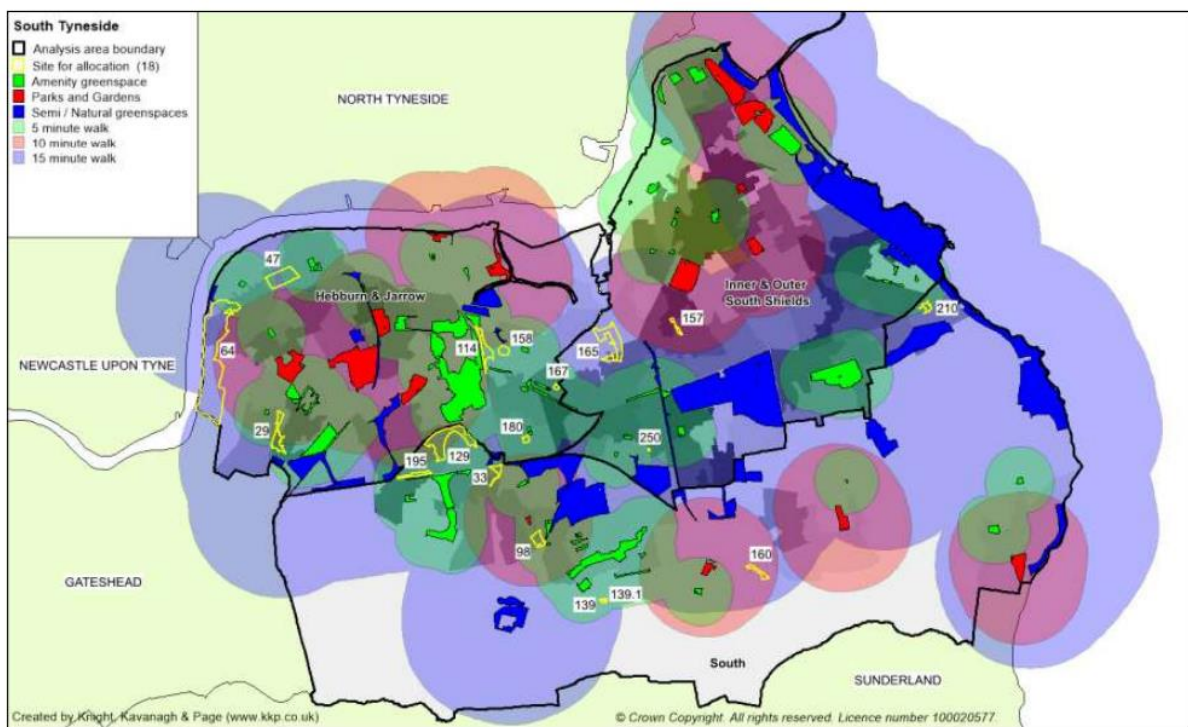


Figure 2 Green Space map Whitburn

The 2015 Green Space Standards report also maps allotments:

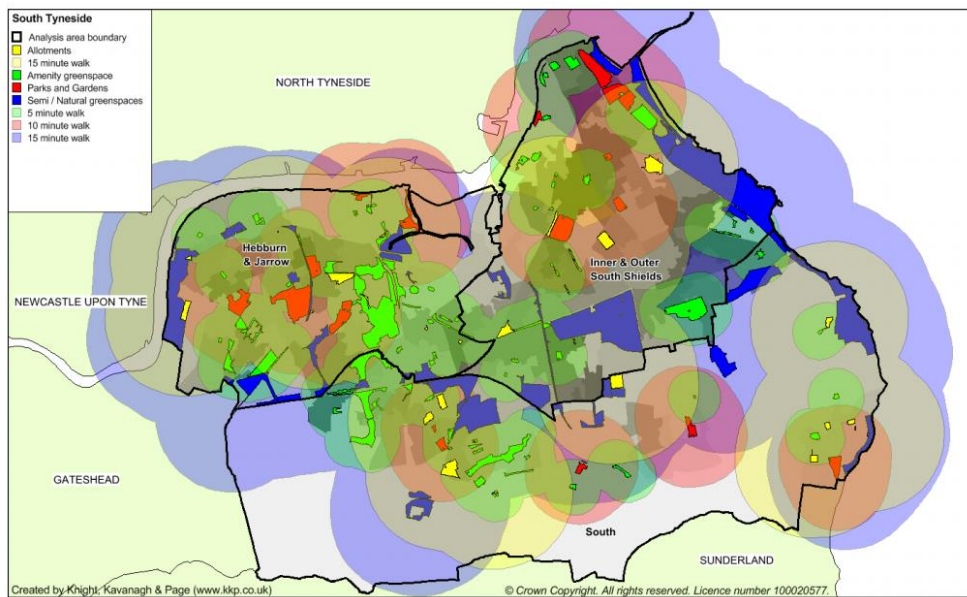


Figure 3 Allotments map Whitburn

Other existing evidence is formed by the Monitoring Engagement in the Natural Environment Survey<sup>2</sup>. This shows the areas within Whitburn that were visited by respondent between 2009 and 2019. The areas included are: Marsden Quarry, Marsden Grotto, Whitburn coastal park, Whitburn Point Nature Reserve, the coastal path on various locations, Cornthwaite Park, Wellhouse Farm and areas along Mill Lane (concerning the latter it is uncertain which green spaces these are).



Figure 4 MENE map for Whitburn

<sup>2</sup> <https://defra.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=2f24d6c942d44e81821c3ed2d4ab2ada>

Furthermore, the Magic map<sup>3</sup> shows designations:

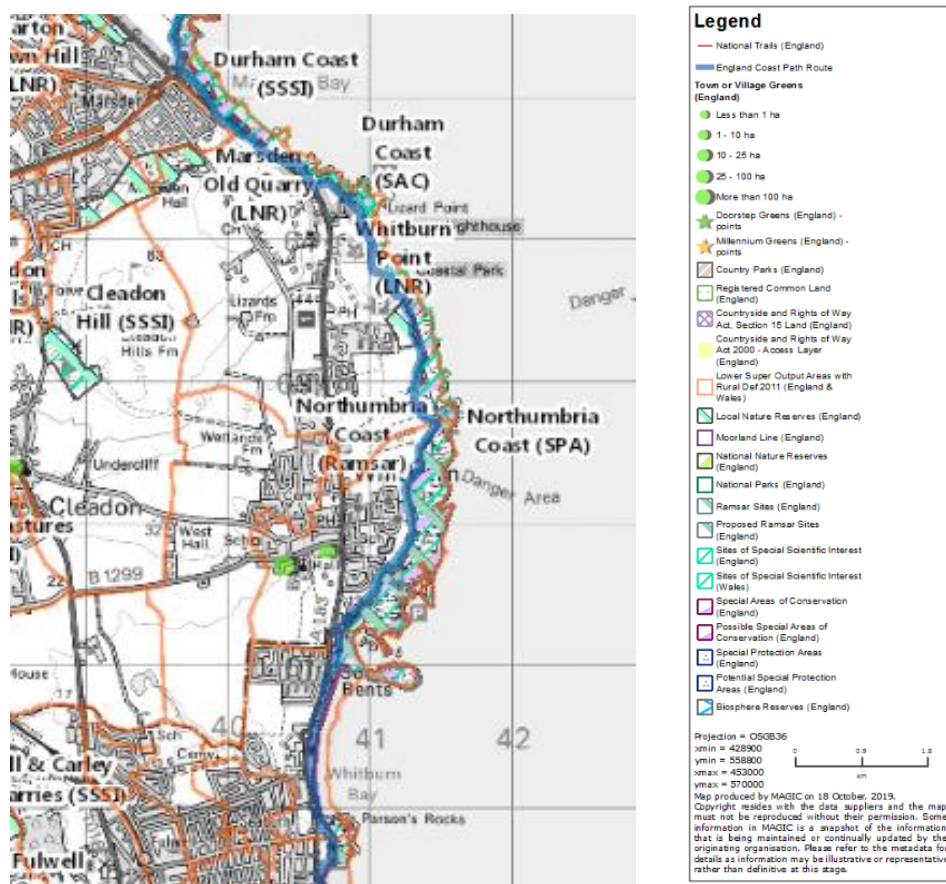


Figure 5 Designations

The map shows that Whitburn contains two village greens (also see Figure 6) and a section of the England coast path. It also includes Local Nature Reserves (Whitburn Point LNR and Marsden Old Quarry LNR), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Durham Coast SSSI), A Special Protection Area (Northumbria Coast SPA), a Ramsar site (Northumbria Coast Ramsar) and a Special Area of Conservation (Durham Coast SAC).

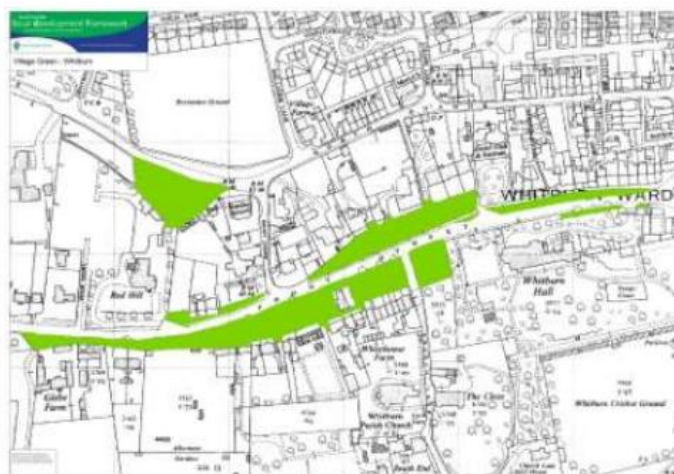


Figure 6 Whitburn village greens

<sup>3</sup> <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

Furthermore, the ORVal tool<sup>4</sup> (Outdoor Recreational Value) also shows important green spaces in Whitburn that are highly valued and receive many visits. For instance, in the MSOA of South Tyneside 018, which includes Whitburn and a small part of Marsden, the recreation welfare values of the outdoor spaces mapped are estimated at £7,907,372 per year<sup>5</sup>. The number of estimated visits is 1,922,439 per year.



<sup>4</sup> <https://www.leep.exeter.ac.uk/orval/>

<sup>5</sup> This is a figure describing the monetary equivalent of the welfare enjoyed by individuals as a result of having access to a greenspace. In economics this welfare value is often alternatively called an 'economic value' or a 'willingness to pay'.



## Local need assessment

South Tyneside's open space assessments show that the south of South Tyneside, which includes Whitburn, has a relatively low provision of parks and gardens (0.36ha per 1,000 population, compared to 0.68 for South Tyneside as a whole). It has a higher than average provision of natural and semi-natural green spaces. However, the standards report shows that some green spaces are of low quality. This includes allotments in Whitburn and Cornthwaite Park (provision for young people and children).

If population grows in the future, for instance as a result of allocations in the Local Plan, then further green space provision may be necessary.

South Tyneside's GI Strategy also identified the GI assets within the neighbourhood plan and on the basis of this assessment, identified the potential to improve the following assets:

- Potential to improve biodiversity: Whitburn Coastal Park and the Leas;
- Potential to improve provision for children and young people at the recreation ground (corner of Wellands Lane and North Guards).

## Community consultation

During the Whitburn family fun day in Cornthwaite Park on Saturday 30 June 2018, the Forum had a stand that included a large map of the neighbourhood area. Residents were invited to place stickers on those green spaces they value the most. A poster was displayed that explained about designating local green spaces and included the reasons for why a community might value them: for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.

The map in Figure 8 was the result of this consultation event. Please note that the colours of the stickers are random and do not denote anything specifically.

The map shows that residents value the following green spaces in particular:

- Cornthwaite Park
- The undeveloped coast, including the firing range
- Marsden old quarry
- The horses' field north of Shearwater
- Recreation Ground (north of North Guards)
- Undeveloped green belt surrounding the village



Figure 7 Poster on local green spaces



Figure 8 Community map

## Existing designations

Some of the green spaces in the village are designated as:

- Village greens
- Green Belt
- Biodiversity sites (SSSIs, SACs, SPAs, Ramsar sites)
- Conservation area
- England Coast Path
- Village park (no formal designation)
- Sport pitch (no formal designation)
- Allotment (no formal designation)

## Local green space assessment tool

Based on community consultation and existing green space assessments, the following sites have been assessed to be included in the forthcoming neighbourhood plan as a designated local green space:

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Cornthwaite Park	Easting = 440599 Northing = 561353	Park, green space, children's play area, community events
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Conservation area Village park Playground	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, recreation, history, wildlife, tranquillity	Yes

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Undeveloped coast	Various; green spaces east of urban area towards coast, stretches from north to south of neighbourhood area	Open green space
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
England Coast Path (part)	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, recreation, history, wildlife, tranquillity	No: extensive tract

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Whitburn Coastal Park	Easting = 440982 Northing = 563874	Open green space, managed by National Trust
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Proposed Area of High Landscape value in draft Local Plan. Souter Lighthouse: Heritage Asset	None	None

NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, recreation, history, wildlife, tranquillity	Yes

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
The Leas	Easting = 440716 Northing = 564307	Open green space, managed by National Trust
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Proposed Area of High Landscape value in draft Local Plan English Coast Path (part)	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, recreation, history, wildlife, tranquillity	Yes

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Whitburn Point Nature Reserve	Easting = 441219 Northing = 563394	Nature reserve Limited public access Managed by National Trust
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Local Nature Reserve	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Wildlife	Yes

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Rifle Ranges	Easting = 441141 Northing = 562510	Old rifle range with historical features. Used by birds from Northumbria SPA. No public access.
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Green Belt	None	None

Local List Local wildlife site		
<b>NPPF criteria</b>		
<b>Close to the community it serves</b>	<b>Demonstrably special to local community</b>	<b>Local in character and not extensive tract</b>
Yes	Yes History, wildlife	Yes

<b>Site details</b>		
<b>Site name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description and purpose</b>
Recreation Ground	Easting = 440159 Northing = 562228	Green field used a recreation ground or play field
<b>Checklist</b>		
<b>Designations</b>	<b>Allocations</b>	<b>Planning permissions</b>
Conservation Area	None	None
<b>NPPF criteria</b>		
<b>Close to the community it serves</b>	<b>Demonstrably special to local community</b>	<b>Local in character and not extensive tract</b>
Yes	Yes Recreation, history	Yes

<b>Site details</b>		
<b>Site name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description and purpose</b>
Marsden Old Quarry	Easting = 439482 Northing = 564504	Old limestone quarry, which is now a nature reserve and used as recreation
<b>Checklist</b>		
<b>Designations</b>	<b>Allocations</b>	<b>Planning permissions</b>
Local Nature Reserve	None	None
<b>NPPF criteria</b>		
<b>Close to the community it serves</b>	<b>Demonstrably special to local community</b>	<b>Local in character and not extensive tract</b>
Yes	Yes Beauty, recreation, history, wildlife, tranquillity	Yes

<b>Site details</b>		
<b>Site name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description and purpose</b>
Horses' Field	Easting = 440766 Northing = 563422	Open green space, undeveloped coast, holds horses. No public access but community watches / feeds horses from boundary. Used by curlew.

Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Green Belt Green Infrastructure Corridor Undeveloped coast In between two Areas of High Landscape Value	None yet; proposed allocation in the draft Local Plan for housing	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	No Field that holds horses. Community visit to look at / feed horses, but no public access and not a local green space as such.	Yes

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Whitburn Pond	Easting = 440338 Northing = 561861	Pond and green space
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Village Green Conservation Area Local List	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, recreation, history	Yes

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Village green north and south of Front Street	Easting = 440469 Northing = 561751	Grass verges and open green space along Front Street. Part of the character of the conservation area. Picnic green used for community events. Other parts south of Front Street include heritage assets of local importance.
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Village green Conservation Area Local List	None	None

NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, recreation, history	Yes

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Agricultural field east of Mill Lane	Easting = 440570 Northing = 563434	Open field, used as agricultural land
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Green Belt Adjacent to Cleadon Hills Area of High Landscape value	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, tranquillity, wildlife	No: extensive tract

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Fields separating Whitburn from Seaburn	Easting = 440375 Northing = 561417	Green fields separating the village of Whitburn from Seaburn, west of Cornthwaite Park
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Green Belt	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, tranquillity	No: extensive tract

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Fields separating Whitburn from Cleadon	Easting = 439798 Northing = 562450	Green fields, west of Whitburn, that are separating the village of Whitburn from Cleadon Contribute to the neighbourhood area's character.
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Green Belt	None	None



NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, tranquillity	No: extensive tract

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Wellands Farm	Easting = 440234 Northing = 562404	Green field used for agricultural purposes
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Green Belt Adjacent to Cleadon Hills Area of High Landscape value	None yet; allocated in draft Local Plan for housing	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, tranquillity, wildlife	No: extensive tract

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Playground at Mill Lane / Kitchener Road	Easting = 440644 Northing = 563615	Playground
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Green Belt Playground	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Recreation	Yes

Site details		
Site name	Location	Description and purpose
Whitburn Windmill	Easting = 440732 Northing = 562571	Whitburn Windmill and open green space around it
Checklist		
Designations	Allocations	Planning permissions
Local List	None	None
NPPF criteria		
Close to the community it serves	Demonstrably special to local community	Local in character and not extensive tract
Yes	Yes Beauty, recreation, history	Yes

## Sites to be brought forward

There are 11 sites that meet the criteria for designation as Local Green Space. Three of these are also sites used for recreational purposes (Playground at Kitchener Road, Recreation Ground and Cornthwaite Park). It is proposed to include these three sites as recreational facilities in the neighbourhood plan, as part of a policy offering protection to these, amongst other recreational facilities.

It is proposed to bring Whitburn Windmill forward as a heritage asset, meaning that the surrounding green space will be afforded protection as well.

The village green at Front Street includes multiple green spaces and verges. It is proposed to bring the sites west of Church Lane and south of Front Street forward. These parts are used for recreational purposes and include heritage assets. Other parts are grass verges, which are an important part of the conservation area, and will be protected as Village Green. However, these are used less by the community.

The following sites are being brought forward for local green space designation in the Neighbourhood Plan (see map in Annex A):

LGS1: Village Green at North Guards

LGS2: Open spaces at west of Church Lane and south of Front Street

LGS3: Whitburn Point Nature Reserve

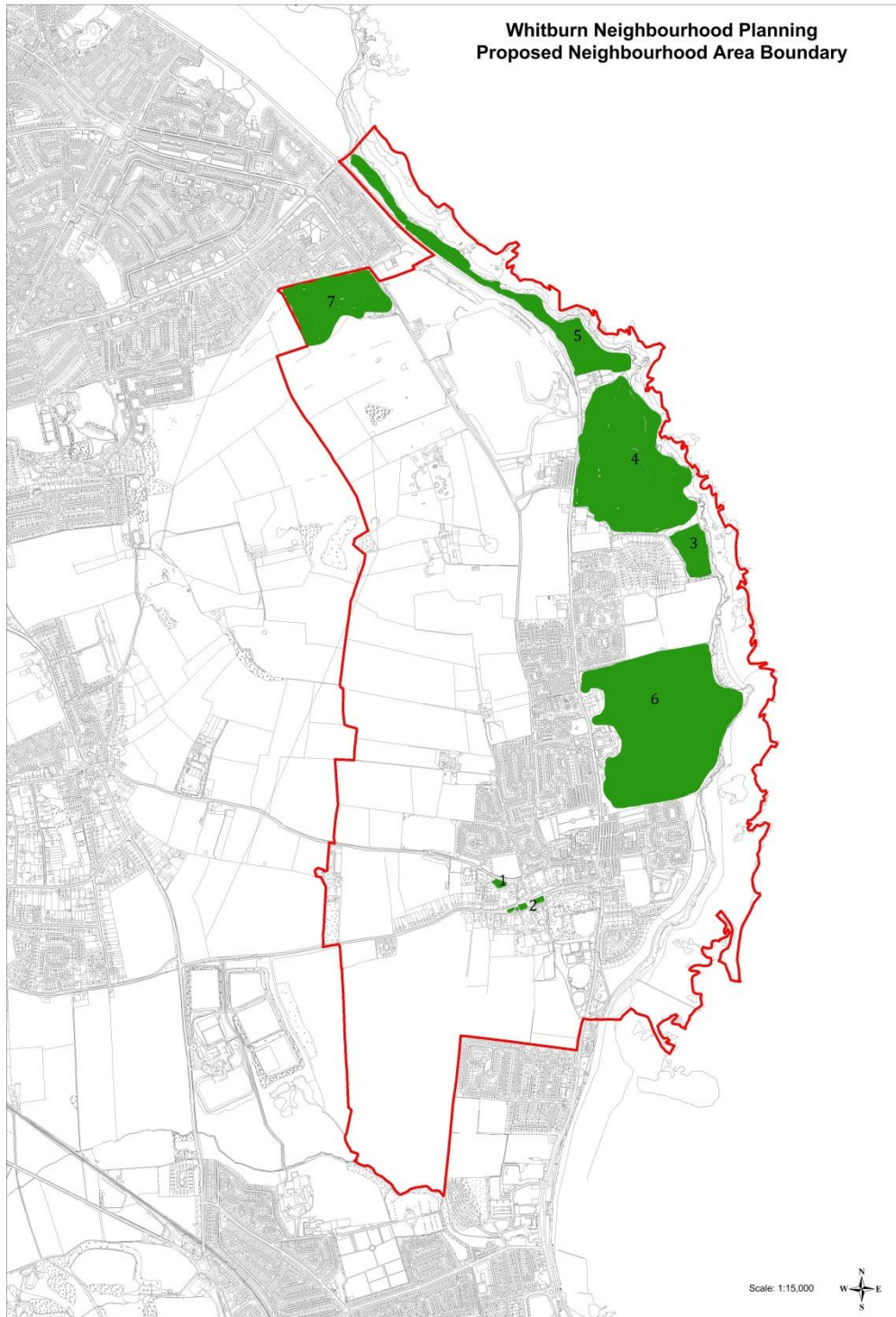
LGS4: Whitburn Coastal Park, Mill Lane

LGS5: The Leas, Coast Road

LGS6: Rifle Ranges, Mill Lane

LGS7: Marsden Old Quarry

## Annex A: Map of proposed Local Green Spaces



## Annex B: Whitburn Neighbourhood Area boundary

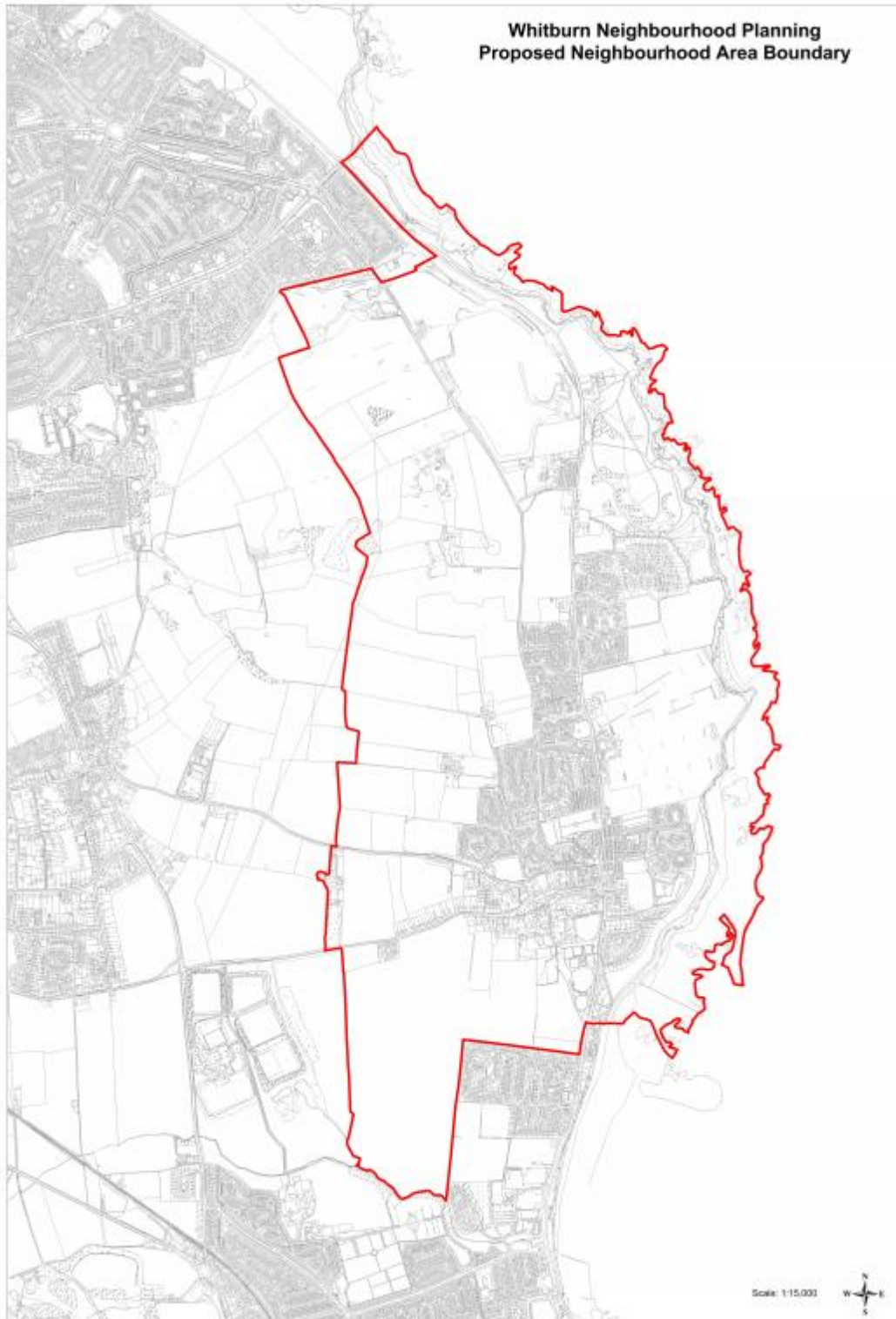


Figure 9 Whitburn Neighbourhood Area