



Contact Us

Phone: 0345 853 094

admin@hollandassetmanagement.co.uk

www.hollandassetmanagement.co.uk



Welcome to Ashington in Northumberland

Introduction

Ashington is one of the principal towns in South East Northumberland, with a population of around 28,000 and a strong identity shaped by its industrial and mining heritage. Historically known as a major coal-mining community, the town has evolved into an important residential, commercial and employment centre serving surrounding communities.

Located approximately **15 miles north of Newcastle upon Tyne**, Ashington benefits from its position within the wider North East economy. Its location provides access to Newcastle, the Northumberland coast and surrounding employment centres, while the reopening of the **Northumberland Line** has significantly improved the town's regional connectivity.

The town combines a traditional centre with a growing range of **retail, leisure, education, employment and community facilities**. Key local assets include **Woodhorn Museum**, which celebrates Northumberland's mining heritage, and **Queen Elizabeth II Country Park**, providing extensive opportunities for walking, wildlife and outdoor recreation.

Ashington is also experiencing a period of significant change. New transport links, town-centre improvements, education facilities and leisure developments are contributing to the town's transition from its traditional industrial past towards a **more diverse and modern local economy**.





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Ashington, Northumberland – Investment Overview



Ashington is emerging as a **key investment and regeneration location in South East Northumberland**, supported by major transport improvements, town-centre regeneration, new education facilities, business infrastructure and housing investment. The town's investment proposition is increasingly strengthened by its reconnection to the regional rail network and its position within Northumberland's wider economic growth programmed.

Northumberland Line – Major Investment Catalyst

The reopening of the **Northumberland Line** has significantly strengthened Ashington's investment position. Direct passenger services between **Ashington and Newcastle** resumed in December 2024, with the line reaching more than **1.3 million passenger journeys by 2026**. The service takes approximately **35 minutes between Ashington and Newcastle**. The new rail connection is creating an important **economic development corridor**, improving access to employment, attracting investment and making Ashington more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors.

£34 Million Town Regeneration Programme



Ashington is benefiting from approximately **£34 million of town-centre regeneration investment**. The programme is focused on creating a more attractive and active centre while improving connections between the new railway station and the town's commercial areas.

Two particularly important projects are:

- **Wansbeck Square Gateway** – improvements designed to create a stronger gateway between Ashington Station and the town centre.
- **Portland Park Cinema and Restaurants** – a major new leisure and hospitality development intended to increase footfall and strengthen the town-centre economy.

Both projects moved towards construction in **spring 2026**, marking a significant new phase in Ashington's regeneration.



Ashington, Northumberland – Investment Overview

Business and Employment Investment

Ashington has an established business base, particularly in **manufacturing, engineering, logistics and industrial activity**. Wansbeck Business Park and surrounding employment locations provide an existing platform for further business expansion. Northumberland's current economic strategy is placing greater emphasis on **advanced manufacturing, clean energy, digital and AI, life sciences and high-value employment**. Ashington is well positioned to benefit from these wider investment priorities because of its improved rail connectivity and proximity to the wider North East economy.

Education and Skills Investment:



A significant investment is the new **Northumberland College Net Zero Campus at Wansbeck Business Park**, which is scheduled to open in **autumn 2026**. The facility is intended to strengthen skills and training linked to the **green economy and future industries**. This is particularly important for investment because it can improve the local skills base, support employers and help attract businesses requiring appropriately trained workers.

Housing and Development Potential: Ashington is also benefiting from new investment in housing. In February 2026, the **North East Combined Authority announced £22 million to unlock 1,122 new homes across the region**, including brownfield sites in **Ashington, Blyth and Stobswood**. The combination of new housing, improved rail connectivity, education investment and town-centre regeneration creates the conditions for **population growth and increased demand for residential and commercial property**.

Strategic Location:

Ashington has strong connections to the wider North East through the **A189 Northumberland Spine Road**, with access to the A1 and A19. It is also within reach of **Newcastle International Airport and the Port of Blyth**, strengthening its position for logistics, manufacturing and business investment. The town's improved rail connection adds another layer to this connectivity, making Ashington increasingly attractive to businesses seeking access to both **regional labour markets and transport infrastructure**.

Key Investment Indicators

Investment driver	Latest position
Northumberland Line	Over 1.3m passenger journeys since reopening
Ashington regeneration	Approximately £34m
Wansbeck Square Gateway	Major 2026 regeneration project
Portland Park	Cinema and restaurant development
Net Zero Campus	Opening Autumn 2026
New housing funding	Part of £22m regional programme
Main road connectivity	A189, A1 and A19
Economic strengths	Manufacturing, logistics, services and emerging green economy
Future growth sectors	Clean energy, advanced manufacturing, digital/AI and life sciences



Ashington, Northumberland – Growth Sectors

Ashington's growth is increasingly being driven by **advanced manufacturing, engineering, clean energy, electrification, digital technology and skills development**. These sectors are supported by wider investment across South East Northumberland and Northumberland's new Economic Strategy 2035

1. Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering

Advanced manufacturing and engineering are among Ashington's strongest growth opportunities. The town already has an established industrial base, with companies such as AkzoNobel and engineering businesses operating locally. Northumberland's advanced manufacturing sector includes more than **4,250 companies**, generating approximately **£7.5 billion in manufacturing GVA** and £10 billion in exports. Recent investment by **QCD Precision**, which moved to a new Ashington facility and added manufacturing equipment in 2026, demonstrates continuing demand for engineering capacity. The company supplies components to aerospace, automotive, defence, energy, heavy industrial and marine markets



2. Clean Energy & Offshore Renewables

Clean energy and offshore renewable energy are major emerging sectors for the wider South East Northumberland economy. Northumberland's Economic Strategy 2035 identifies **offshore renewable energy** as one of the county's priority sectors. Ashington can benefit through the wider supply chain, particularly in **engineering, manufacturing, fabrication, maintenance and specialist services** supporting offshore wind and energy infrastructure. The nearby Northumberland Energy Park is already supporting major energy investment, including JDR Cables' large subsea cable manufacturing facility.

3. Electrification & Green Manufacturing

Electrification is becoming an important part of the region's industrial transition. Northumberland Energy Park and surrounding South East Northumberland sites offer opportunities linked to **battery technology, electric vehicles, power infrastructure and green manufacturing**. For Ashington, this creates potential for businesses within the **industrial and manufacturing supply chain**, particularly companies providing components, engineering, maintenance and technical services.





4. Digital, AI & Data Infrastructure



Digital and AI are now priority growth sectors in Northumberland. The county's Economic Strategy 2035 specifically identifies digital and AI as sectors with potential to generate high-productivity growth. The wider South East Northumberland area is also benefiting from the emerging **North East AI Growth Zone** and major data-centre investment. The nearby development ecosystem includes the **£10 billion Blackstone/QTS data-centre campus**, creating potential demand for construction, engineering, energy, digital infrastructure and specialist supply-chain businesses. Ashington is therefore positioned to benefit indirectly from this expanding technology cluster through **business services, technical employment and supply-chain opportunities**.

5. Green Skills & Technical Education

A significant supporting growth sector is **technical education and green skills**. The new **Northumberland College Net Zero Campus at Wansbeck Business Park** is scheduled to open in autumn 2026. It is intended to provide training aligned with the emerging green economy and future industrial requirements. This is particularly important because the availability of a skilled workforce can help Ashington attract and retain businesses in **engineering, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing and other technical industries**.

6. Logistics & Industrial Services

Ashington's established industrial areas, including Wansbeck Business Park, provide a base for manufacturing, distribution and business services. The town can also benefit from its position within the wider South East Northumberland industrial corridor, which has strong road connections and access to nearby ports and major employment locations. The newly launched **Northumberland Strategic Investment Site (N-SIS)** further strengthens the wider area's industrial proposition. The 77-hectare site is planned for up to **3.25 million sq ft of industrial space** and is intended to attract advanced manufacturing, energy and other major industrial occupiers.

Key Growth Sectors

Growth sector	Importance to Ashington	Outlook
Advanced manufacturing & engineering	Strong existing base	★★★★★
Clean & offshore renewable energy	Growing regional opportunity	★★★★★
Electrification & green manufacturing	Emerging supply-chain opportunity	★★★★★
Digital & AI	Emerging regional cluster	★★★★★
Green skills & technical education	Supporting future employment	★★★★★
Logistics & industrial services	Established economic activity	★★★★★

Overall Growth Outlook

Ashington's growth-sector story is increasingly about **industrial diversification and the transition to a higher-value, lower-carbon economy**. Its existing manufacturing and engineering base provides a foundation, while investment in **renewable energy, electrification, AI, data infrastructure and technical skills** is creating new opportunities. The most important point for investors is that Ashington is benefiting not only from projects within the town itself, but from the **much larger South East Northumberland economic cluster** developing around clean energy, advanced manufacturing and digital infrastructure. This gives local businesses and property investors opportunities to benefit from expanding employment, supply chains and demand for industrial and commercial space.



Ashington, Northumberland – Town Regeneration

Ashington is currently undergoing a **£36 million Regenerating Ashington programme**, focused on renewing key town-centre sites, improving connections and creating new facilities that can increase footfall and economic activity. The latest 2026 updates show that the programme has moved from planning into **active construction and delivery**

Wansbeck Square Gateway

The redevelopment of **Wansbeck Square** is one of the main regeneration projects. The original proposal for a large community, youth and cultural facility has been revised because a third-party operator could not be secured.

The project is now being delivered in **two phases**. Phase one will create a new gateway between the **Ashington railway station and Station Road**, with:

- Improved pedestrian routes
- New trees and sustainable planting
- Better lighting and seating
- Attractive public spaces
- Improved links between the station, high street and Portland Park

A second phase will retain part of the site for **future development**, with master planning and market testing underway to identify suitable uses. The council approved a budget of approximately **£7.02 million** for the Wansbeck Square Gateway. The gateway is expected to open to the public in **summer 2027**.



Portland Park Cinema and Restaurants

A major new **five-screen cinema, restaurant units and family-focused leisure and entertainment space** is now under construction at Portland Park. Construction officially began in **May 2026**, making this one of the most significant physical regeneration projects currently underway in Ashington. The development is intended to create a new leisure destination and strengthen the northern end of the town centre. The project is particularly important because it introduces a **new leisure offer** to the town, helping diversify activity beyond traditional retail and encouraging residents and visitors to spend more time in the centre.

Town-Centre Connectivity and Public Realm

A further element of the regeneration programme is improving the **connections between the railway station, high street, Portland Park and other important destinations**.

Planned improvements include:

- Better pedestrian routes
- Highway improvements
- Public-realm upgrades
- Improved accessibility
- New pedestrian wayfinding
- Better connections to education and employment locations



A separate **£3.5 million Ashington Town Centre Highways Infrastructure project** is planned, with construction expected to extend into **2027/28**.

Linking the Railway Station with the Town Centre

The reopening of the **Northumberland Line** has created a new focus for town-centre regeneration. The Wansbeck Square Gateway is specifically designed to provide a stronger and more attractive connection between the new railway station and the high street.

This means regeneration is not simply about individual buildings; it is also about **making the town easier to navigate and improving the relationship between transport, retail, leisure and public spaces**.

Portland Park and Surrounding Public Realm

Improvements around **Portland Park, Grand Corner and Wansbeck Square** are being developed as part of a wider connectivity package. These works are intended to improve the appearance, accessibility and movement around important town-centre locations.

Earlier works around Lintonville Terrace, Woodhorn Road and Portland Park have already delivered improvements including **new lighting, signage, paving, road surfacing and landscaping**

Updated Regeneration Position

Regeneration project	2026 position
Overall programme	£36m Regenerating Ashington Programme
Wansbeck Square Gateway	Moving into construction
Gateway completion	Expected summer 2027
Wansbeck Square budget	Approx. £7.02m
Portland Park cinema	Construction underway
Cinema offer	5 screens + restaurants + family leisure
Town-centre highways	£3.5m programme
Pedestrian connectivity	New routes and wayfinding planned
Future Wansbeck Square site	Further development opportunities being explored

Overall Regeneration Outlook

Ashington's regeneration has now entered its **delivery stage**. The key change in 2026 is that major projects are progressing from planning into construction, particularly the **Portland Park cinema and restaurant development** and the **Wansbeck Square Gateway**

The regeneration strategy is increasingly focused on **connecting the railway station with the town centre, creating new leisure facilities, improving public spaces and unlocking future development sites**. Together, these projects are intended to increase **footfall, spending, accessibility and the overall attractiveness of Ashington town centre**.

This makes the regeneration programme particularly significant for the town's **long-term commercial and property investment potential**, as improvements to infrastructure and public spaces are being combined with new leisure and development opportunities.





Ashington, Northumberland – Education Sector



Ashington's education sector is undergoing **major investment and modernisation in 2026**, centred on the development of the new **£52 million+ Northumberland College Ashington Campus**. The investment is designed not only to improve education but also to provide skills directly linked to the area's emerging employment sectors.

New Northumberland College Ashington Campus

The most significant education development is the new campus at **Wansbeck Park**, which is now well advanced. In May 2026, the main "**Heart of the Campus**" building became wind- and weather-tight, marking a major construction milestone. The campus is scheduled to open during **2026**

The campus will include:

- An **Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Construction Skills Centre**
- Further and higher education facilities
- Digital and technology facilities
- Specialist laboratories and industry-standard workshops
- A Student Life Centre
- Careers, employment and welfare support
- A specialist **SEND hub**
- Commercial facilities for students, businesses and the wider community
- A theatre and auditorium
- Catering and dining facilities

The development is intended to create stronger links between **education, employers and the local economy**





Focus on Future Skills

A key feature of the new campus is its focus on **technical and vocational skills**. Courses and facilities are being developed around sectors with strong employment potential, particularly:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Engineering
- Construction
- Digital technology
- Health
- Business
- Visitor economy
- Sport and wellbeing
- Green and low-carbon industries

This gives Ashington a stronger connection between **education and local economic growth**, helping employers access a more appropriately trained workforce.

Green and Net-Zero Education

The campus is being developed around **net-zero and sustainable construction principles**. Modern Methods of Construction are being used, with components manufactured off-site before being assembled in Ashington. The campus itself is intended to demonstrate sustainable construction while providing education and training for the **green economy and low-carbon industries**. Its location close to the **Ashington railway station on the reopened Northumberland Line** also supports sustainable travel for students and staff.

SEND Provision

The new campus will include a dedicated **special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) hub** for young people and adults.

This is an important addition because it expands access to specialist education and support within Ashington while creating a more inclusive learning environment.

Ashington Academy



At secondary-school level, **Ashington Academy** continues to serve the local community, providing education through secondary school and sixth-form provision. A notable recent development is the academy's designation as the **first Behaviour and Attendance Hub in the North East**. This gives the school a wider role in supporting other schools and sharing approaches to improving behaviour and attendance.

Stronger Links Between Education and Employment

The new college campus is being developed with support from employers and organisations including **Advance Northumberland, AkzoNobel and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**. A partnership with Northumbria Healthcare is also intended to establish a **School of Health**, creating clearer pathways into NHS-related careers. This employer-led approach is particularly important for Ashington because it supports the town's transition towards **advanced manufacturing, engineering, healthcare, digital technology and the green economy**.



Tourism & Visitors' Economy

Ashington's visitor economy is based mainly on **mining heritage, cultural attractions, green spaces and its position close to the Northumberland coast.**

Heritage Tourism

Woodhorn Museum is the town's principal cultural attraction, preserving Northumberland's mining heritage and the story of the Ashington Group/Pitmen Painters.

Outdoor Tourism

Queen Elizabeth II Country Park provides walking, wildlife and outdoor recreation around its former colliery landscape. Ashington Community Woodland and Wansbeck Riverside also contribute to the town's recreational offer.

New Leisure Offer

The Portland Park cinema and restaurant development is an important addition because it will introduce a **new evening and all-weather leisure offer**, complementing Ashington's existing heritage and outdoor attractions.

Regional Tourism Context

Northumberland attracted **11.13 million visitors in 2025**, generating a visitor economy worth approximately **£1.582 billion**. Visitor numbers increased by 6.4% year-on-year.

Tourism Outlook

Ashington has potential to develop as a **cultural and leisure base for South East Northumberland**, particularly by combining heritage attractions with outdoor recreation, coastal access and new leisure facilities.





Local Transport

Transport is one of Ashington's strongest areas of recent improvement.

Northumberland Line

The reopening of the **Northumberland Line** has restored direct passenger rail connectivity between Ashington and Newcastle. The project aims to improve access to employment, education and regional markets while supporting investment and regeneration.

Town-Centre Connectivity

The regeneration programme is also improving connections between **Ashington Station, Wansbeck Square, the high street and Portland Park**, making the railway station more integrated with the town centre.

Road Network

Ashington benefits from access to the wider North East road network, supporting connections to Newcastle, Northumberland's coastal towns and employment locations.

Transport Outlook

The combination of **rail, road and improved pedestrian connectivity** is strengthening Ashington's accessibility and is one of the most important factors supporting its regeneration and investment potential.





Housing and Property Market

Ashington continues to offer a **relatively accessible residential market**, with a mix of traditional terraced housing, family homes and expanding new-build developments. The market is supported by improving connectivity, town-centre regeneration and continued investment in employment and education.

Key Market Points

- **Affordable entry point:** Recent NE63 transaction data indicates an average sold price of around **£137,000**, with terraced homes around £107,500 and detached properties around £249,950.
- **Strong regional growth:** Northumberland's average house price reached **£209,000**, with annual growth of **8.3%** in the latest available ONS data.
- **Growing rental market:** Northumberland's average private rent reached **£687 per month**, up **6.5% year-on-year**.
- **Significant housing pipeline:** The development east of Wansbeck General Hospital has capacity for **600 homes**, with **293 still outstanding** in the latest council housing-land schedule.
- **Further expansion:** North Seaton has housing sites for a combined **200 homes** across its two phases.
- **New regional funding:** In 2026, £22 million of regional funding was announced to help deliver **1,122 homes across the North East**, including brownfield housing opportunities in Ashington.
- **Improving demand drivers:** The Northumberland Line, town-centre regeneration and major education investment are improving Ashington's connectivity and amenities.

Investment Outlook

Ashington combines relatively affordable property prices with substantial housing development and improving infrastructure. Its expanding supply of new homes, growing rental market and major investment in transport, regeneration and education provide opportunities across the residential, rental and development markets.

Key Housing & Property Statistics

Indicator	Latest information
Ashington/NE63 average – latest 12 months	~£137,000
Detached – NE63	~£249,950
Semi-detached – NE63	~£162,750
Terraced – NE63	~£107,500
Flats – NE63	~£71,500
Northumberland average house price	£209,000
Northumberland annual price growth	+8.3%
Northumberland average rent	£687 pcm
Northumberland annual rent growth	+6.5%
Large Ashington development – Wansbeck Hospital	600 homes
Remaining homes in that development schedule	293
North Seaton housing site	105 homes
Proposed Coulson Park affordable homes	57
Northumberland housing land supply	6.1 years for decision-making
Northumberland affordable homes delivered 2025/26	283

