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1

Introduction

This discussion paper is the first stage in the process of preparing the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). Its purpose is to set out the context for the preparation of the DPD and raise awareness of, and interest in, the issues that need to be addressed.

The Site Allocations DPD forms Part 2 of the Allerdale Local Plan. The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD forms Part 1. Together Parts 1 and 2 will provide the planning framework for the Borough over the next plan period (2011 - 2029).

The Site Allocations DPD supports the delivery of the policy framework set out in Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD by identifying sites for a range of uses across the Borough - including housing, employment, retail, leisure, health, education, community and open space.

The Council welcomes your comments on any of the topic questions set out in this discussion paper. We welcome any other comments you may have on the site allocations process.

The consultation responses received in connection with this Discussion Paper will help inform the both scope of the Site Allocations DPD and also the Council's approach to formally identifying sites.

Where to view the documents

You can view the Site Allocations DPD Discussion Paper and associated documents:

- Online: www.allerdale.gov.uk/siteallocations
- At the Council offices:
 - Workington: Allerdale House, New Bridge Street
 - Maryport: Town Hall, Senhouse Street
 - Wigton: Customer Service Centre, Market Hall, Church Street
 - Cockermouth: Customer Service Centre, Fairfield car park
- At public libraries:
 - Aspatria Library: The Brandshaw
 - Cockermouth Library: Main Street
 - Maryport Library: Lawson Street
 - Silloth Library: Solway Community School,

Liddell Street
Wigton Library: High Street
Workington Library: Vulcans Lane

the Council's offices at Allerdale House, Workington. Office opening are 8:45am - 5:00pm Monday to Thursday and 8:45am - 4:30 pm on Fridays.

How to Comment

To comment on the Site Allocations DPD Discussion Paper you can

- Download the comments form from our website:
www.allerdale.gov.uk/siteallocations
and email the completed form to:
siteallocations@allerdale.gov.uk
- Request a hard copy of the comments form from:

**Planning Policy
Allerdale Borough Council
Allerdale House
Workington
Cumbria
CA14 3YJ**

Or by telephoning **01900 702610**

Comments forms should be returned by post to the above address or handed in at

Although it is preferable if comments are submitted on the comments form, emails or letters to the addresses listed above are also welcome.

Please contact the Planning Policy Team by email at siteallocatons@allerdale.gov.uk or by telephoning 01900 702610 if you would like more information on the consultation, help making a comment or you would like this document in an alternative format.

All comments regarding the Site Allocations DPD discussion paper must be received by 22 November 2013, no later than 4 pm.

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Objectives

The Site Allocations DPD constitutes Part 2 of the replacement Allerdale Local Plan. It follows on from the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD, which forms Part 1.

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD sets out the framework for Site Allocations DPD by:

- Identifying the settlement hierarchy for the Borough comprising of five tiers:
 - Principal Service Centre
 - Key Service Centres
 - Local Service Centres
 - Limited Growth Villages
 - Infill/Rounding Off Villages
- Setting out the future role, function and spatial objectives of each of the five tiers of the settlement hierarchy
- Indicating the level of housing and employment development for each of the five tiers of the settlement hierarchy

As the strategic policy framework is set by Policy S3 of the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD, the Site Allocations DPD will be restricted to two

principal roles:

1. Identifying sites for allocation within the
 - Principal Service Centre
 - Key Service Centres
 - Local Service Centres

This will be done in accordance with the role function, spatial objectives and level of development set out for each tier as indicated in policy S3. A broad range of uses such as housing, employment, open space and nature conservation will be considered.

2. Defining revised development boundaries for the Principal and Key Service Centres, Local Service Centres and Limited Growth Villages

Allerdale Borough Council is at the first stage in the production of the Site Allocations DPD. This stage involves three separate pieces of work:

- (a) Establishing the type of sites for which land must be found and the issues to be addressed
- (b) Establishing the methodology for the assessment of sites
- (c) Establishing the scope of the

Sustainability Appraisal and assessment methodology

(a) Establishing the type of sites for which land must be found and the issues to be addressed

This Discussion Paper has been produced for consultation to help establish the scope of the Site Allocations DPD. It sets out the spatial issues for each key topic area that are identified in the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD and the types of sites that could be allocated and designated.

(b) Establishing the methodology for the assessment of sites

A Site Assessment Methodology document has been produced for consultation. Its purpose is to set the framework and criteria for the assessment of sites.

The objective is to ensure that landowners, land agents, developers, statutory consultees and local communities are confident that the proposed approach to assessing sites submitted for consideration will be appropriate,

consistent and transparent.

This document can be viewed online at www.allerdale.gov.uk/siteallocations or any local council office or library.

(c) Establishing the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal and assessment methodology

A SA Scoping Report has been prepared for consultation to ensure that the scope and level of detail of the final SA is appropriate and will cover the key sustainability issues.

It provides a review of plans, policies and programmes that are relevant to the preparation of the DPD and an overview of the Borough from economic, social and environmental perspectives. From this the key sustainability issues have been identified, which in turn have informed the appraisal framework and assessment criteria.

This document can be viewed online at www.allerdale.gov.uk/siteallocations or any local council office or library.

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National Planning policy context

National planning guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan positively to deliver sustainable economic development.

The following guidance has particular relevance to the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD:

Economy

- Identify strategic sites for local and inward investment to support the economic strategy for the area.
- Identify priority areas for economic regeneration and infrastructure provision.
- Review land allocations for employment use and where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used, consider alternative uses.
- Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas.
- Support the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations.

Town Centres

- Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres.
- Allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre.
- Ensure that the needs of retail, office and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability.

Transport

- Protect opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods and/or people.
- Protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice.

Housing

- Meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.
 - Identify a supply of deliverable sites

sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements (with an additional buffer of 20% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land).

- Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15

- Meet the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show people within the plan area over the lifespan of the development plan
 - Identify a supply of deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of sites against locally set targets
 - Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15

Healthy Communities

- Plan positively for the provision of shared space and community facilities and other local services.
- Protect the unnecessary loss of valued

facilities and services that would affect communities' ability to meet their day-to-day needs.

- Facilitate development that will widen provision and choice in education.
- Identify and protect green open space and sports/recreational facilities and land to avoid creating deficits of such provision in local areas.

Climate change, flooding and coastal protection

- The allocation of sites for development within areas at risk of flooding should be the subject of a sequential test to steer development to areas with the least possibility of flooding.

Natural environment

- Allocate land for development with the least environmental or amenity value.
- Protect the different components of the local ecological networks and identify areas recognised by local partnerships for habitat restoration and creation.
- Plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity

and green infrastructure.

- Identify areas of green space of local importance for protection and safeguarding.

Historic Environment

- Plan positively for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment
- Identify land where development would be inappropriate because of its historical significance
- Identify new land and/or sites of archaeological and/or historic significance

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Local Planning policy context

The local policy context for the Site Allocations DPD is set out in the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD, which is the principal (Part 1) document of the replacement Allerdale Local Plan. It sets out the strategic vision for Allerdale over the next 15 years, the required level of housing and employment growth and how that growth is to be apportioned throughout the settlement hierarchy.

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD, has not yet been adopted but is now at a relatively advanced stage. Therefore the following strategic objectives should be regarded as an emerging local policy framework.

Spatial Strategy

- Focus major development in the towns of Workington, Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton, Silloth and Aspatria.
- Enable small-scale development in Local Service Centres with appropriate facilities.
- Support development in Rural Villages that would enable them to maintain a stable and balanced population.

Housing

- Enable a balanced housing market that delivers a mix of housing type and tenure to meet the needs of all communities.
- Recognise the needs to an expanding elderly population.
- Meet the identified needs of gypsy, traveller and travelling show people communities.
- Increase access to affordable housing as part of housing developments and rural exception sites.

Economy

- Provide a wide range of modern, high quality employment sites and premises to meet existing business needs and emerging sectors.
- Support the objectives and projects set out in the West Cumbria Economic Blueprint
- Support the creation of rural enterprise hubs for start up businesses.
- Support the development of further and higher education in the Borough
- Promote the provision of high quality

tourism accommodation and attractions, and support key projects .

- Promote the vitality and viability of town centres, including the night time economy
- Support and retain existing rural services that are important to local communities..

Sustainable Communities

- Locate the majority of development in locations that are accessible by sustainable transport modes.
- Support essential road and rail infrastructure improvements and enable the delivery of the Workington and Maryport transport hubs.
- Promote the role of Workington and Silloth ports as an alternative means of accessing the area for both business and visitors.
- Take into account the need for strategic infrastructure and safeguard identified sites/locations for its delivery

Built Environment

- Ensure that all new development meets high standards of quality of design and

accessibility .

- Protect and enhance places and buildings of historical, cultural and archaeological importance and their settings.
- Protect and enhance existing social and community infrastructure, such as education, health, cultural and leisure facilities.

Natural Environment

- Protect the natural and historic landscape from unnecessary and harmful development, particularly within the Solway Coast AONB.
- Protect priority habitats and species, from harm and take opportunities to enhance and create habitats.
- Promote opportunities to improve access to the countryside and coast.
- Protect areas of green open space within or on the fringe of settlements that contribute to the character and amenity of the area .
- Enhance green infrastructure by providing and protecting a network of high quality open space.

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Future distribution of development

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD sets out how much new housing and employment growth is needed in the Borough and where it should go in broad terms. This is referred to as the “spatial strategy”.

Spatial Strategy

The spatial strategy sets out the level of future housing and employment growth for the Borough. It also identifies where these - and other types of development e.g. retail, tourism, leisure and education - will be broadly located.

One of the key requirements of the spatial strategy is to deliver sustainable economic growth. In order to achieve this the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD will direct the majority of new development to the main towns as these provide the best range of services, employment opportunities and access to public transport.

However the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD also recognises that smaller rural settlements also have an important role to play in delivering sustainable economic growth and communities. In order to address some of the local need for housing

and support existing services and facilities it is considered that these settlements should also have the opportunity to accommodate small-scale housing and employment development.

Settlement Hierarchy

The spatial strategy has been translated into a settlement hierarchy consisting of 5 tiers: Principal Service Centre, Key Services Centres, Local Service Centres, Limited Growth Villages and Infill and Rounding Off Villages.

Principal Service Centre:

Workington (including Harrington, Seaton and Siddick)

In the emerging settlement hierarchy Workington has been designated as the Principal Service Centre in recognition of its role as the main housing, employment and retail centre. As such it will take the largest share of the future growth and new development in the Borough.

Key Service Centres

Aspatria	Cockermouth
Maryport	Silloth

Wigton

In the emerging settlement hierarchy the Key Service Centres have been designated on the basis that they are the recognised urban centres and offer a good range of services. These towns will take a smaller proportion of growth and new development than Workington but of a scale that will allow them to expand in a sustainable manner and continue to support the rural hinterlands which they serve.

Local Service Centres

Abbeytown	Allonby
Brigham	Broughton
Broughton Moor	Dearham
Flimby	Great Clifton
Kirkbride	Prospect
Thursby	

The Local Service Centres have been selected on the basis of having a shop, school and public transport. It was considered that the presence of these services were a good basis on which to allow modest growth in the areas outside of the main settlements. These villages will accommodate a much smaller scale of new development. The objective here is to facilitate sustainable rural growth, deliver

local affordable housing and support appropriate forms of rural enterprise.

Limited Growth and Infill/Rounding Off Villages

In the emerging settlement hierarchy the Limited Growth and Infill/Rounding Off Villages have been identified by taking the settlements designated as either a limited growth village or an infill village in the current Local plan and applying an additional requirement for each settlement to be located within 2.5 miles from a primary school.

In these settlements a limited level of development will be supported in order to help retain the vitality of these communities.

- Limited Growth Villages

New housing and employment will be restricted to small scale development within the designated settlement limits within the following villages:

Blencogo	Blitterlees
Branthwaite	Bridekirk
Bolton-Low-Houses	Bothel
Crosby	Dean
Eaglesfield	Fletchertown
Glasson	Gilcrux

Greysouthen	Ireby
Kirkbampton	Little Clifton/Bridgefoot
Mawbray	Newton Arlosh
Plumbland	Skinburness
Tallentire	

- Infill / Rounding Off Villages

Settlement limits will be removed and very small scale rounding off and infill development will be directed by a criteria based policy within the following villages:

Anthorn	Blennerhasset
Bowness-on-Solway	Broughton Cross,
Camerton	Crosby Villa,
Deanscales	Dovenby
Hayton	Langrigg
Little Bampton	Mockerkin
Oughterside	Oulton
Papcastle	Pardshaw
Parsonby	Port Carlisle
Torpenhow	Ullock
Waverton	Westnewton

Role of the Site Allocations DPD

In identifying and allocating sites the Site Allocations DPD must be in conformity with

the spatial strategy and the settlement hierarchy set out in the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD .

In the Principal and Key Service Centres tiers of the hierarchy the Site Allocations DPD will identify sites for new housing, employment, retail and other forms of development. The majority of these types of development will be concentrated in these two levels.

In the Local Service Centres tier the Site Allocations DPD will identify a smaller number of sites for housing and employment development, of a scale that is appropriate to the size of the settlement. This process will involve redefining the boundaries of these settlements.

In the Rural Villages tier the Site Allocations DPD will also involve redefining the boundaries of some of the larger settlements that have been defined as Limited Growth Villages.

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Housing

Supporting the delivery of the housing strategy set out in the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD is one of the most critical issues to be addressed in the Site Allocations DPD.

The Core Strategy DPD sets a target of 5,471 dwellings (which equates to an annual delivery of 304 dwellings) and 54 hectares of employment land (which equates to an annual delivery of 3 ha) over the plan period 2011-2029.

One of the key challenges will be to identify a sufficient number of sites to accommodate this development, whilst at the same time ensuring that environmental impacts are minimised.

Principal and Key Service Centres

The majority of housing development will be directed to the major urban centres. The proportion split of the overall growth is as follows:

Workington	35%
Maryport	12%
Cockermouth	10%
Wigton	10%
Aspatria	4%
Silloth	3%

Sites will need to be identified to meet the housing growth target for each town. Here the Council has an option to either allocate a fewer number of larger sites to meet this requirement or to allocate a greater number of sites of different sizes.

The advantage of fewer larger sites is that they have good economies of scale, which improves economic viability and the potential for developer contributions for things such as affordable housing and community facilities.

The advantage of the approach for a larger 'basket' of sites is that it allows a wider geographical spread of housing development throughout the settlements, rather than concentrating development in one or two locations which may reduce the level of impact.

Discussion Topic: HO1

Should the housing requirement for the principal and key service centres be met by allocating a range of different sized sites or should the Council concentrate on identifying a fewer number of larger sites?

Local Service Centres

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD proposes a smaller amount of housing development be directed to the Local Service Centres of Abbeytown, Allonby, Brigham, Broughton, Broughton Moor, Dearham, Flimby, Great Clifton, Kirkbride, Prospect and Thursby.

Whilst the level of development will be much lower than that in the Principal and Key Services Centres, with the 11 villages combined accounting for 20% of the overall growth, the level of housing provision in these villages will make an important contribution to the overall target.

Therefore the delivery of housing identified for the Local Service Centres is key to fulfilling the overall housing strategy. On this basis it is proposed that small sites are identified for housing development within these villages in the Site Allocations DPD.

Discussion Topic: HO2

Do you agree with the approach to allocate small housing sites in the local service centres?

Rural Villages

The level of development identified for the Rural Villages within the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD is much lower than the previous tiers. The key objective is to ensure the ongoing sustainability of those villages by providing local affordable housing and help preserve local service provision, particularly rural village schools.

However there is a diverse range of villages within this tier. The level of development that would be considered proportional and acceptable for one village may not be appropriate for another. Therefore the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD makes a distinction between the larger and smaller Rural Villages in this tier.

The larger villages, Limited Growth Villages will have settlement boundaries that will allow small-scale expansion. In addition to allocating sites for development, a further role of the Site Allocations DPD is to review settlement boundaries. The proposed methodology for the review of settlement boundaries is set out in Chapter 7 of the 'Draft Site Assessment Methodology' document.

The smaller villages, Infill/Rounding Off Villages, would not be given a settlement boundary. Applications for housing within these villages will be subject to a policy included in the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD that sets out appraisal criteria. Scheme will be restricted to very small scale 'infill' or 'rounding-off' development.

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Employment

The economic strategy contained within the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD seeks to secure long-term sustainable growth in the Borough by providing the right types of employment sites in the right places to encourage inward investment and support the development of local enterprise. The strategy seeks to maintain and review a rolling supply of high quality employment land.

A key objective is to facilitate economic growth and regeneration along the industrialised west coast area, particularly in the towns of Workington and Maryport. It also seeks to support and assist in the diversification of the rural economy in the eastern and northern parts of the Plan Area.

The economic strategy set out in the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD also permits the de-allocation of underused employment land. National planning policy guidance states that local planning authorities should not seek to protect employment land and/or sites that have no reasonable prospect of being developed for that purpose and that alternative uses should be considered.

In addition to allocating new employment sites a further role of the Site Allocations DPD is to review the existing portfolio of allocated employment land identify sites that could be de-allocated. The proposed methodology for the review of settlement boundaries is set out in Chapter 8 of the 'Draft Site Assessment Methodology' document.

Discussion Topic: EM1

Are there any underused employment sites within the Plan Area that are suitable and appropriate for another form of use?

Principal service centre

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD seeks to direct the majority of employment development to the key employment sites within the Workington area, namely the Lillyhall Estate, Port of Workington and Derwent Howe.

This approach is underpinned by the need to deliver sustainable economic growth. In order to be sustainable, growth must be located in places where adequate infrastructure exists and close to the main centres of population in

order to reduce the need to travel.

Key service centres

However it is recognised that employment land is also needed in the other Key Service Centres of Maryport, Wigton, Cockermouth, Silloth and Aspatria. This is to ensure that there is a sufficient geographical dispersion of sites, which will provide a greater choice of development locations and most importantly, fulfil local business needs.

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD recognises that in some towns sites will need to be found to address a shortfall in employment land whilst in others, the issue of unsuitable and poorly-performing sites needs to be addressed.

Discussion Topic: EM2

Are there any sites in the Key Service Centres that would be suited to employment uses?

Rural Areas

The Plan Area includes a large rural hinterland, which extends across the eastern and northern

areas. The 'health' of rural communities is heavily dependent on having a strong rural economy that provides both employment and local services.

Employment studies suggest that there is a need to provide land in rural locations for the development of small scale business 'start up' and 'incubator units', that would support sustainable rural economic growth.

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD sets out the role of the Rural Villages with regards to employment development:

- Within Local Service Centres and Rural Villages, the provision of small employment units that serve local and community needs and the development of multi user 'work hubs' .
- In the open countryside, extensions to existing dwellings to enable the creation of 'live work' units

Discussion Topic: EM3

Are there any sites in the Local Service Centres or Rural Villages that would be suited to employment uses?

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Retail

The retail strategy set out in the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD seeks to maintain and enhance the vibrancy of town centres and high streets within the Plan Area. Part of this strategy is to ensure that they are the default location for new retail development.

Outside of the town centres, the retail strategy seeks to protect and enhance the provision of local services. This involves supporting suburban shopping parades and rural village shops.

Town centre retail sites

One of the Council's key priorities is to ensure that the town centres within the Borough are vibrant with healthy retail sectors and that local high streets and traders are supported. From a planning perspective this means ensuring that new retail development is focussed and directed to town centres wherever possible and restricting out-of-town retail to those types which require such a location.

This follows national planning guidance, which states that edge-of-centre and out-of-town

development should only be permitted in circumstances where there are no suitable and available sites or premises within the town centre area.

The Site Allocations DPD has a key role in supporting this objective, by identifying a range of suitable sites in order to meet the scale and type of retail development needed.

Discussion Topic: RT1

Are there any developed or undeveloped sites within the centres of the Principal and Key Service Centres that are suitable for either small, medium and large retail use?

Edge-of-centre retail sites

Whilst the Council will adopt a 'town centres first' policy with respect to retail proposals, inevitably scenarios will arise where suitable and/or available land cannot be found, or where the type of retail (e.g. bulky goods) requires an out-of-centre location.

To ensure that the full retail needs of the area can be met the Council will need to identify and allocate a range of suitable edge-of-centre sites. These must be in a location that is both well connected and up to 300m from a primary shopping area.

Discussion Topic: RT2

Are there any developed or undeveloped edge-of-centre sites within the Principal and Key Service Centres that are suitable for either small, medium and large retail use?

service centres.

The Site Allocations DPD has a key role to play in this regard by identifying land that could be used to provide shops within the local service centres.

Discussion Topic: RT3

Are there any sites within the local service centres that are suitable for small scale retail use?

Rural retail

Rural retail facilities are important as they promote local social interaction, provide for day-to-day needs and reduce the need to travel. Therefore they are seen as constituting a sustainable form of development, providing they are of an appropriate nature and scale.

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD seeks to support, improve and protect rural shops in the local service centres that serve rural catchments, providing they do not undermine provision in the nearby key

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Tourism, leisure and culture

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD sets out a firm commitment to support tourism, leisure and cultural development in appropriate locations.

The Site Allocations DPD has a role to play in supporting the tourism, leisure and cultural development strategy by identifying suitable sites. Whilst seeking to encourage new attractions it is also recognised that there is a shortage of hotels and visitor accommodation within the Plan Area. This is an issue the Local Plan seeks to address.

In line with the principles of sustainable development, preference will be given to provision with the Principal and Key Service Centres. Accessibility by public transport is a key consideration.

Discussion Topic: TLC1

Are there any town centre or edge-of-centre buildings and/or sites within the principal and key service centres that are suitable for tourism, leisure and cultural development?

However, the strategy recognises that in some circumstances tourism, leisure and cultural development may require a rural location. Therefore, there is a level of flexibility within the policy framework to allow such proposals to be supported, provided that they satisfy stringent criteria in relation to scale, size, environmental impact and sustainability.

A further role of the Site Allocations DPD document would be to identify and designate the major tourism, leisure and cultural attractions in the Plan Area. This approach could be beneficial as it would provide a focus and steer for future investment activities whilst ensuring that future expansion and/or improvement schemes are not constrained by the use of adjacent land for other purposes.

Discussion Topic: TLC2

Are there major tourism, leisure and cultural attractions that should be identified and safeguarded?

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Health, education and community

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD seeks to ensure that local communities are supported by adequate healthcare, education and municipal facilities. Although Allerdale Borough Council is not responsible for the delivery of health and education services, it does have an active role to play in supporting the providers of those services.

With regards to municipal facilities the Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD makes a firm commitment to their improvement and protection, particularly in rural areas.

Healthcare, education, training and skills

The Site Allocations DPD could support delivery of the strategies of social care, health care, education, training and skills providers by identifying suitable sites that would enable the expansion of existing facilities and/or the provision of new facilities elsewhere.

Discussion Topic: HEC1

Are there any sites/buildings that you would wish to be considered for social care, health care, education, training and skills purposes?

The Site Allocations DPD can also assist by proposing suitable forms of reuse for sites that have been identified as being surplus to requirements.

Discussion Topic: HEC2

Are there any sites/buildings currently used for social care, health care, education, training and skills purposes that are likely to become surplus to requirements?

Community facilities

The Site Allocations DPD can help facilitate the delivery of new facilities by identifying and safeguarding suitable sites.

In terms of this Discussion Paper, community facilities can constitute the following (although the list is not exhaustive) :

- Public halls
- Places of worship
- Libraries
- Police Stations
- Fire Stations
- Day nurseries/crèches
- Doctors Surgeries

- Dental Practices
- Museums
- Art Galleries

Discussion Topic: HEC3

Are there any sites, buildings (or existing buildings that could be expanded/extended) that should be considered for the provision of community facilities?

Inevitably scenarios arise where they are no longer needed and/or fit-for-purpose. In these circumstances the only viable option is to secure an appropriate re-use in order to avoid land/buildings falling into disrepair and detracting from the visual amenity of the area. The Site Allocations DPD could be used to identify suitable beneficial forms of re-use.

Discussion Topic: HEC4

Are there any sites currently used for community facilities purposes that are likely to become surplus to requirements?

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Transport

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD recognises that the provision of a fit-for-purpose and sustainable transport network within Allerdale is essential for improving accessibility and delivering economic growth.

Allerdale Borough Council has an important role in supporting the implementation of the Local Transport Plan, which is produced by Cumbria County Council in its role as the local highways and transport authority, and the investment plans of Network Rail, who own and operate the rail infrastructure.

A further role of the Site Allocations DPD is to safeguard existing strategic transport infrastructure and protect the locations and/or routes identified for new infrastructure developments

Discussion Topic: TR1

Are there any other strategic transport infrastructure projects that have not been identified in the Core Strategy that need to be considered?

A key objective of the Local Plan is sustainable economic development and ensuring that jobs, shopping, leisure, facilities and services are accessible by public transport walking and cycling. This involves giving the highest priority to cyclists and pedestrians:

- Extending the network of existing routes
- Protecting and enhancing existing routes

The Site Allocations DPD could assist in both identifying new and safeguarding existing pedestrian and cycling routes. An additional benefit of this approach would be that it would provide a focus for investment and maintenance of these routes.

Discussion Topic: TR2

Are there any cycling and walking routes that should be delineated and safeguarded within the Site Allocations DPD?

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Open space and recreation

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD recognises the importance of open space and recreation areas to local communities and provides a strong policy framework for their creation and protection.

Recreational open space

The Council intend to designate open space that is used for recreational purposes. These are important community resources that can contribute to healthy lifestyles and facilitate social interaction. Such sites include:

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural green space
- Equipped play areas
- Outdoor sports courts and pitches

Amenity open space

The Council also intend to designate amenity open space, most commonly found in residential areas, with a primary purpose of safeguarding the character of the area and providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work.

Amenity green space is also often used for

landscaping purposes and can also provide informal opportunities for children's play where there are no other facilities. It includes:

- Informal recreation spaces
- Green spaces and corridors,
- Village greens

Discussion Topic: OS1

Are there any areas of open space that should be identified and protected for recreational and amenity purposes?

Discussion Topic: OS2

Are there any underused open spaces that could be put to better and more effective use?

Allotments

Allotments are protected through the legislative and planning framework within the wider context of a firm national policy to improve the quality of urban green spaces, build sustainable communities and promote healthy living.

There is no statutory minimum or maximum level for the provision of allotment space but public interest in allotments has undergone a recent revival in line with current thinking in relation to healthy eating, organic food and exercise.

Against a backdrop of increasing demand for allotments it is critical to protect allotments from development or a change of use in the future. The increased demand for allotments on a national level raises the question whether the Council should use the Site Allocations DPD to identify and allocate new land for allotment use locally.

Discussion Topic: OS3

Are there any allotment sites that should be identified and protected in order to safeguard them from future loss?

The final issue in relation to allotments is whether there is any land within the Borough that is no longer required for this use. New uses could be identified for allotment sites that have become underused or redundant.

Discussion Topic: OS4

Are there any underused allotment sites that could be reused for more beneficial purposes?

Burial grounds

Burial grounds technically constitute two different kinds: cemeteries and church yards. Churchyards are often small in extent, whereas cemeteries are often laid out on a bigger scale.

On a national level burial grounds are either full or nearing capacity and this is also the case in Allerdale. New land will need to be found to provide additional burial sites either through extensions to existing sites or by identifying new ones. The Council intends to use the Site Allocations DPD to identify potential locations to increase future capacity.

Discussion Topic: OS5

Are there any sites that would be suitable for use as burial grounds?

13

Local wildlife/geological sites and wildlife corridors

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD recognises the importance of Local Wildlife and Local Geological Sites in terms of sustaining important habitats, supporting biodiversity and contributing to the quality of life and wellbeing of local communities.

Local sites are those sites considered to be of significant conservation value and worthy of protection, but are not covered by European and/or national designations such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

National planning guidance states that local planning authorities should identify, map and safeguard components of the local ecological networks including locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity. This also includes wildlife corridors and the 'stepping stones' that connect them.

Local wildlife sites

Local Wildlife Sites are sites that contain rare, local and declining species, habitats and communities and are the best examples of habitat types outside of internationally and

nationally designated sites.

These sites are usually identified in local Biodiversity Action Plans but greater weight can be given to their status if they are designated in local development plan documents. This can help prevent them from being adversely affected as a result of development proposals, either directly or indirectly.

The Site Allocations DPD is an opportunity to review existing designations and to identify new candidate sites, with input from local communities and statutory consultees

Discussion Topic: LWGS1

Do you agree that the Local Wildlife Sites should be reviewed, identified and designated as part of the Site Allocations DPD?

If so, are there any sites that you would wish to be considered for designation?

Local geological sites

Local geological sites may be designated for

the important geological features they contain, for the education value they might provide, for the research potential they have or for their importance as geological features/landscapes.

Local Geodiversity Action Plans are produced that identify sites of interest (Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological sites - RIGGS). However greater weight can be given to their status if they are included in the proposals map in local development plan documents. This formal recognition can help protect them from irreversible damage or loss.

The Site Allocations DPD is an opportunity to review existing designations and to also identify new candidate RIGG sites, with input from local geological societies, groups and statutory consultees

Discussion Topic: LWGS2

Do you agree that the Local Geological Sites should be reviewed, identified and designated as part of the Site Allocations DPD?

If so, are there any sites that you would wish to be considered for designation?

Wildlife corridors

National planning guidance also requires that important wildlife corridors are identified and afforded protection.

A wildlife corridor is a link of wildlife habitat, generally native vegetation, which joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat. These are critical for the maintenance of ecological processes including allowing creatures to move safely with cover from one habitat to another.

The encroachment of the built environment into the countryside or previously undeveloped urban areas can create barriers to the migration of wildlife and sever these corridors.

The Site Allocations DPD has a potential role to play in identifying and safeguarding these important wildlife corridors. Once formally designated and included on the proposals map, weight will be given to their status when determining development proposals that have the potential to adversely affect them.

Discussion Topic: LWGS3

Do you agree that the Local Wildlife Corridors should be identified and designated as part of the Site Allocations DPD?

If so, are there any areas of land that you would wish to be considered for designation?

14

Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people

The Government seeks to ensure fair and equal treatment for the gypsy, traveller and travelling show people communities, in a way that facilitates their traditional and nomadic way of life, whilst respecting the interests of the settled community.

National planning guidance requires that local planning authorities carry out robust assessments in order to determine their future accommodation requirements. These assessments should quantify overall levels of need and any unmet needs for accommodation and subsequently, identify 15 years worth of site/pitch requirements.

There is likely to be problems with unauthorised encampments if provision is not made for sufficient authorised sites to meet identified needs. This may have a detrimental effect on relationships between the settled and Gypsy and Traveller communities.

Additionally, if sufficient sites are not identified then there is a danger that any Gypsy and Traveller planning applications will be decided on appeal and not necessarily in the most suitable or sustainable locations.

The provision of the required number of sites/

pitches needed to meet identified needs in sustainable locations would contribute the Governments' objectives in terms of creating sustainable mixed communities and meeting local housing needs.

The Cumbria Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (2008) and the forthcoming update indicate that there is a need for additional transit and permanent pitches for gypsy and traveller and also additional sites for travelling show people in Allerdale.

In line with NPPF requirements the Site Allocations DPD will identify deliverable sites to provide five years worth of sites and a supply of deliverable sites for years 6-15.

Discussion Topic: GT1

Can you suggest any land that you consider suitable for use gypsy, traveller or travelling show people sites?

15

Heritage assets

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD recognises the wider role that heritage assets play in the economy as drivers of regeneration and tourism.

The overarching policy objective is to conserve and enhance the statutory protected and non-designated heritage assets within the Plan Area.

Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens are nationally designated heritage assets and are protected by legislation. Therefore they are outside the scope of the Site Allocations DPD.

However Local Planning Authorities have the opportunity to identify and designate Local Heritage Assets. These can include buildings, structures and key features (townscape, landscape and archaeological) that are non statutorily protected but are of importance to the local community.

These assets can be afforded a greater level of protection by including them on a Local Heritage List, which provide clarity on the location of these assets and what it is about them that is significant. The inclusion of an

asset on a Local Heritage List enables the Council to encourage sympathetic and appropriate design for any work that would require planning permission.

There are a number of reasons why an asset could be considered important by the community. It could be that it provides architectural interest, is a significant local landmark, or has an association with local historic events and people.

The Council consider that this Discussion Paper presents an opportunity for local communities, stakeholders and statutory consultees to indicate whether they consider they would support the production of Local Heritage List and also to bring any assets to the Council's attention.

Discussion Topic: HER1

Do you think that the Council should identify local heritage assets and produce a Local Heritage List?

If so, are there any assets that you would wish to be considered for consideration?

16

Utilities

The Strategic and Development Management Policies DPD supports the delivery of infrastructure for water supply, wastewater treatment, energy and telecommunications in order to meet the needs of local communities, support their health and well-being and to ensure that development is sustainable.

The identification of priority areas for infrastructure provision is encouraged within the National Planning Policy Framework. This involves collaborative working with utilities providers to identify any infrastructure deficits and how, when and where these should be met.

The Site Allocations DPD has a potential role in identifying and safeguarding areas for new utilities/infrastructure development and/or the expansion of existing services.

The Site Allocations DPD could allocate land for utilities/infrastructure development, in order to do so there must also be a realistic chance of it being developed. Therefore it must be demonstrated that the infrastructure is not only desirable but also viable and necessary.

Discussion Topic: UT1

Are there any sites that should be considered for allocation/safeguarding in order to facilitate the delivery of new (and expansion of existing) utilities and infrastructure provision?

17

Other uses of buildings and land

It is vitally important to consider all types of potential use at this early stage in the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD in order to demonstrate a robust approach and sound methodology moving forward into the subsequent stages.

The objective of this discussion paper is to examine the widest possible range of potential uses of buildings and land. However, there may be some that have not been identified that should be considered for inclusion.

The Council welcome any suggestions in relation to the inclusion of other types of land and uses in the Site Allocations DPD.

Discussion Topic: OT1

Are there any other types of use that have not been covered in this discussion paper that you feel should be included in the preparation of the Land Allocations DPD?

If so, what are these uses?