

Core Strategy

Issues and Options consultation

September 2006



Issues and Options

Introduction

In 2004 the government introduced a new planning system through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. This requires all Local Planning Authorities to produce a Local Development Framework in order to replace the old Local Plans that were in place.

The LDF will be, unlike the previous Local Plans, made up of a number of separate documents. The first Development Plan Document to be produced within the Local Development Framework (LDF) will be the Core Strategy. This will outline the main issues and principles that are to be worked towards and how these will be achieved.

In order to examine the issues and options, which should be addressed in the Core Strategy a number of consultation methods were undertaken in 2006. The main topics that arose within these consultations focused around issues of housing, particularly affordable housing, local services, employment issues with regards to the location and type of any possible future employment sites, proposed new developments (particularly housing) and any suggested measures for sustainability during the development itself as well as measures that could be implemented following completion and the protection of landscapes throughout the borough.

Core Strategy: Issues and Options Document, September 2006

The first step taken in the consultation process took place in September 2006 when Allerdale Borough Council produced a Core Strategy Issues and Options report. Within this document there were 68 questions produced in order to give the public an opportunity to comment on the basic principles and policy approaches that were set out within the paper. With the document there were two comment forms produced, these took the form of a full 68 question survey and a summary questionnaire containing 39 questions this was based on full questionnaire.

Following the distribution of the questionnaires 65 responses were received. Below is a summary of the results obtained the percentages discussed are based upon the number of responses received on each question.

The vision for Allerdale as set out within the document is “A community which is innovative and sustainable, and offers all its people, as individuals and in communities, a quality of life which enables them to play a full part in our society, through their work, their leisure, and their social networks.”

Vision

This vision was agreed with by the majority of the respondents (77%), with 57% of those who completed a questionnaire feeling that the vision is a fair reflection on the needs and aspirations of the community. Although there were some comments made stating that there should also be consideration given to issues surrounding landscape protection, matters impacting on climate change and biodiversity, the need for more private housing and some stating that sustainability must be the main goal.

Objectives

With regards to the objectives outlined within the Core Strategy document 2006, 62% found them to be appropriate and 57% found them to cover the long term aims of the district. However there were comments made that suggested further steps should be taken to encourage better public transport and include accessibility to services for rural communities. It was also said that there should be a greater emphasis put on employment issues, recognition should be promoted for the ‘Port of Silloth’. There should be methods taken to ensure new developments are accessible via a range of public transport services and to ensure that traffic growth is limited through the use of sustainable transport means.

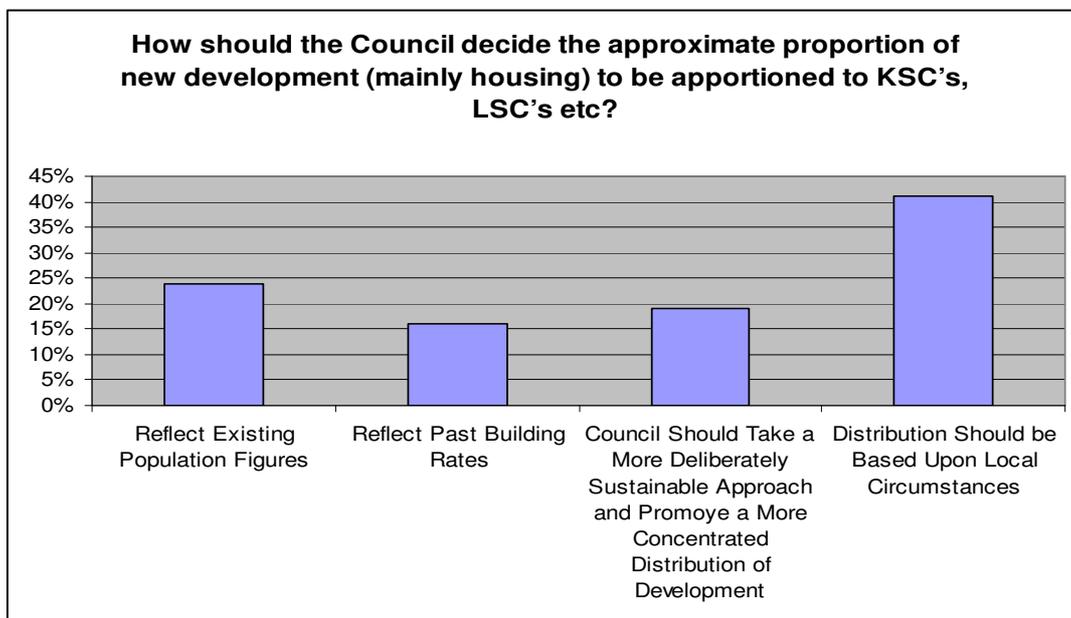
Basic Principles

The document then outlines its Basic Principles and Policy Approaches with the targets and projections that the Council aims to achieve and invite comments on these strategies from the community in order to discover if they consider that any proposed changes and developments are necessary and sufficient to better the area and support future needs.

Scale of Development

The report indicates that The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has specified that a requirement of 267 new dwellings per year will need to be built to meet the future expansion of the community. The response to this was split with 34% agreeing with this statement and 36% stating that the number should be higher in order to boost local economy and underpin regeneration within West Cumbria in the future. In relation to the idea of a housing clearance scheme there were 31% of people in favour of this strategy and 27% stating it should only occur in cases where the property is in a condition that would be too expensive to repair or in a very poor state.

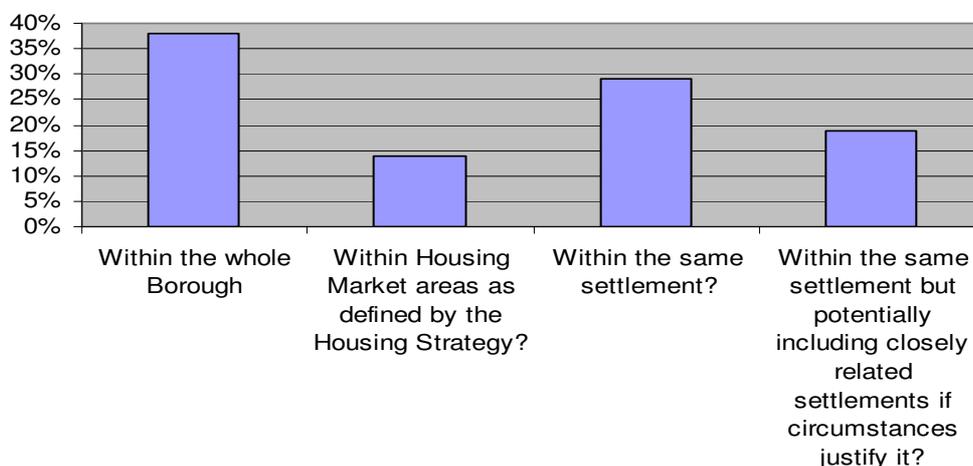
When considering the location of new development the majority of respondents were in agreement that the distribution of the proposed 267 new homes per year should be appointed following the examination of local circumstances (31%), as shown in the graph below.



42% of the respondents were of the opinion that the Core Strategy should include a list of villages or Local Service Centre's (LSC's) where development of an appropriate scale could be located with 35% feeling a list of criteria by which LSC's will be defined later would be more useful.

When considering the topic of development sites on Brownfield or Greenfield land, a sequential test is recommended, during the questionnaire the respondents indicated that they felt this test should be carried out on possible sites throughout the entire borough (23%), rather than just within housing market areas. As shown below.

Q.11 on what geographical basis should the Council seek to implement a sequential approach to the development of Brownfield and Greenfield land, i.e. how widely should the area within which sites will be compared will be drawn? Should it be?



Services

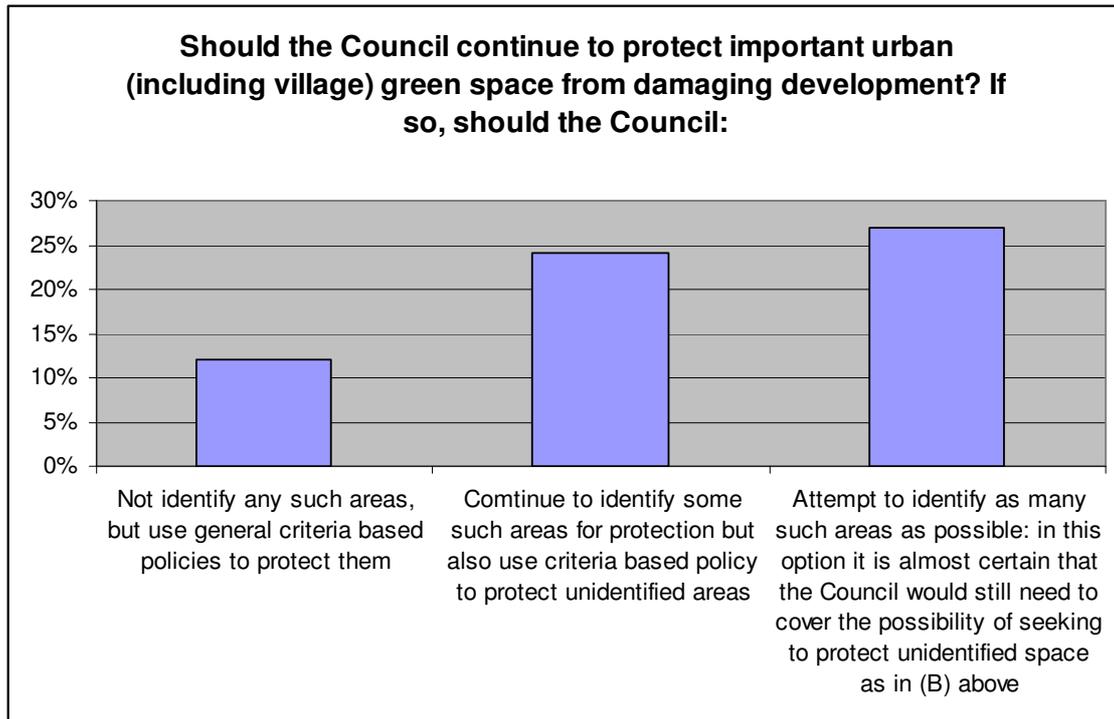
Those completing the survey were asked to rank a number of services in order from 1-8, with 1 being the most important and 8 being the least. The results are displayed in the table below. Rail and bus links were seen as important as accessibility to these services are essential if sustainable development is to be achieved. Also it allows the car use to be reduced as well as congestion on the road. Also commented on was the need to support these local services in order to assist the community in future developments including rural regeneration, diversification and access to communications technology. In order to achieve this, a study of each settlements role and function within the wider community needs to be conducted with reference to accessibility, housing needs, employment provision, local services, retail provision and catchments.

1	Primary School
2	Rail/Bus Link
3	Shops
4	Post Office
5	Village Hall
6	Doctors Surgery
7	Public House/Hotel
8	Church

Open space

When considering the issues surrounding green space/urban landscape the majority felt it necessary that the council should attempt to identify as many green space areas as possible, this would mean that it is

almost certain that the Council would still need to cover the possibility of seeking to protect unidentified space. As depicted in the graph below.

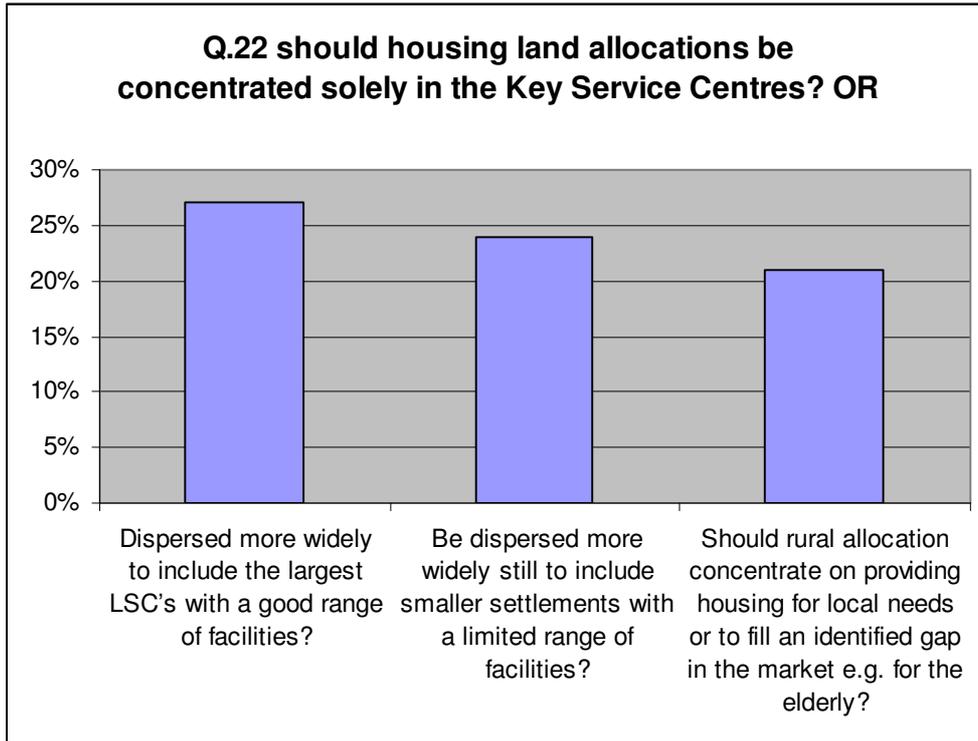


Settlement Hierarchy

60% of respondents feel that the LDF should contain a hierarchy of villages with LSC designation. However there was a split decision amongst the participants as to what should be required of a village in order for it to be designated as an LSC. Among the views were that, there should be no minimum requirement for this, one respondent thought that there has to be a rail or bus link available in order for a village to be classed as an LSC, another believed that there has to be a school in place, with a further participant stating there needs to be shops, with an additional member believing there should be at least 5 of the 8 mentioned in the table above and a further one feeling that there should be a doctors surgery within the settlement for it to be classed as an LSC.

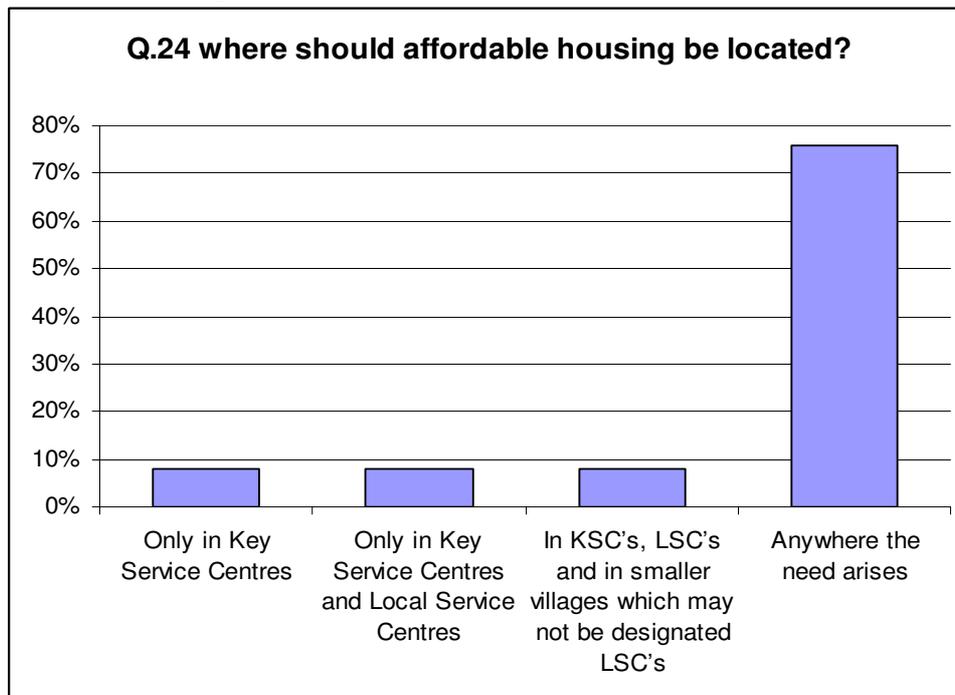
21% of those who took part in this survey felt that the LDF should be more restrictive than the Local Plan in terms of reducing the number of villages in the borough in which development should be allowed. Also 55% of respondents believe that development boundaries should be drawn around Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres in order to control development and the other 45% considered that a criteria based policy would be sufficient enough for this purpose.

When asked to consider the location of housing land allocations the participants generally felt that this should be dispersed more widely across the borough as opposed to being solely positioned within Key Service Centres, as shown below.

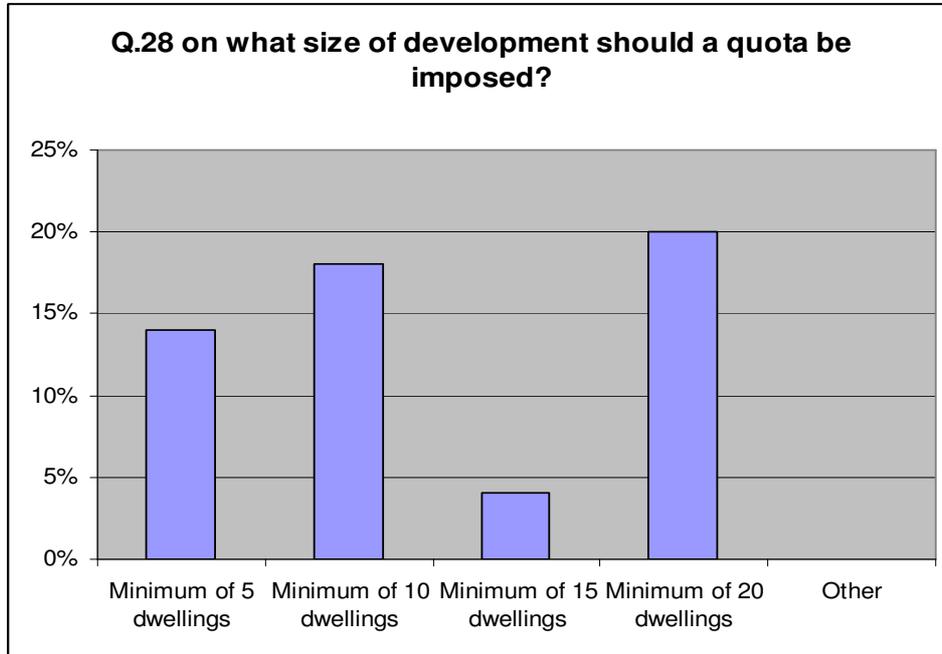


However, when considering the option of affordable housing there was an overriding feeling amongst the participants, with 56% of those who took part believing that they should be located anywhere where a need arises. As depicted below.

Affordable Housing



In relation to this issue 30% of respondents feel that there should be a quota of 20% of dwellings set aside for the purpose of affordable housing amongst developments. Although there was a split decision as to what size of development that the quota should be imposed on, this is shown in the graph below. With 38% of participants stating that the quota should be lower in rural areas.

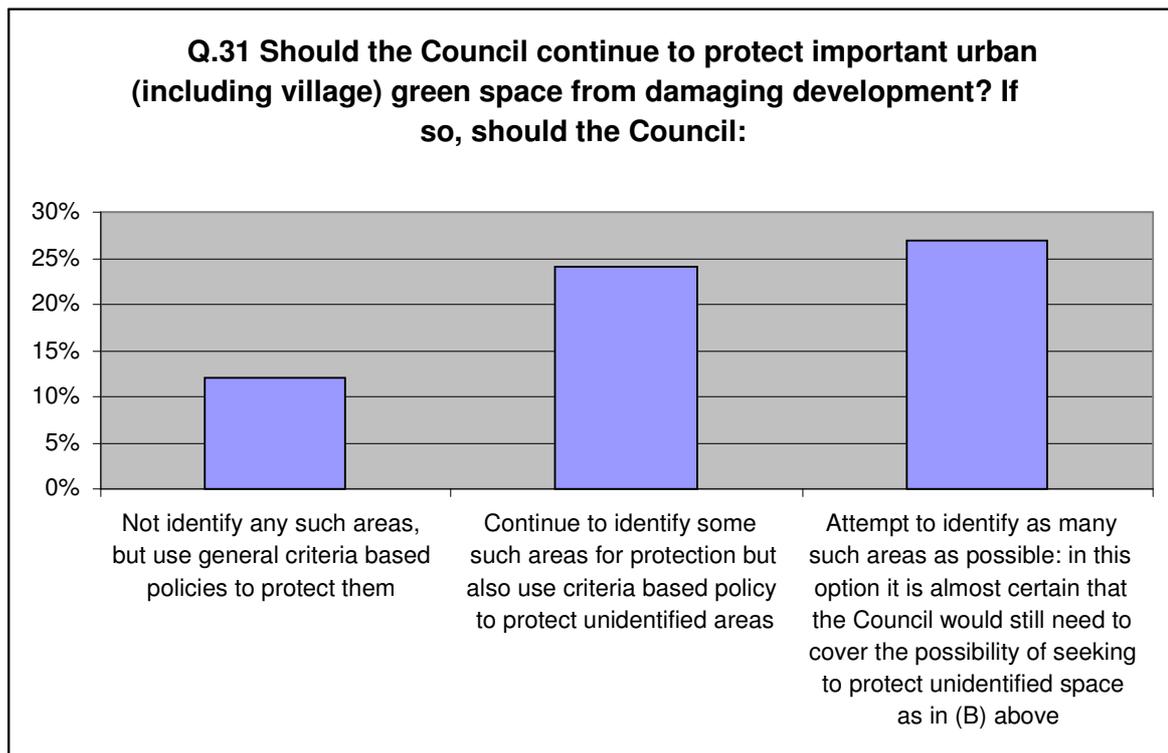


Gypsy and Travellers

With regards to the traveling community, the possible option of a transit site location was brought up in the questionnaire. It was felt among the respondents (71%) that the sites should be set up in a position where there is a greatest need, where as 29% felt that they should be located in the largest urban areas only.

Landscape

It was believed by 42% of participants that the Council should continue to define local landscape designations despite guidance in Planning Policy Statement 7. With 25% of people thinking that the Council should not identify any local landscape designations and rely on general criteria based policies to protect landscapes outside the nationally designated landscapes such as the Solway Coast which is a designated Area of Natural Beauty.



As shown in the graph above, the majority of people who completed this survey believe that the Council should make an attempt to identify as many areas of green space as possible in order to protect them from any damaging development. With the next largest group feeling that the Council should continue to identify areas for protection but also use criteria based policies to safeguard any unidentified areas. With 54% feeling that private land should be protected as green space.

Biodiversity

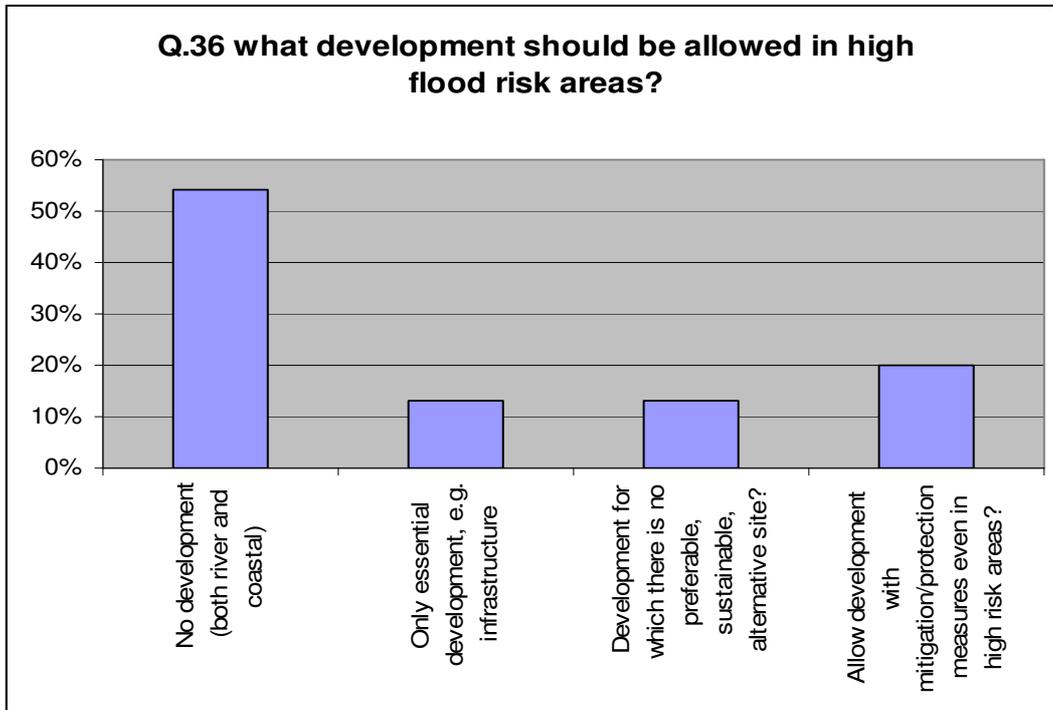
A majority (57%) considered that there should be a more pro-active approach to protecting and enhancing bio-diversity/habitats as part of new developments and 51% thought that the Council should be more active in acquiring, designating and managing more Local Nature Reserves.

There were also a number of locations across the borough which the respondents of this survey felt were worthy of protection for their biodiversity. These were:- Curwen Hall, Mill Field, Harrington marina, areas of beaches and sand dunes, village back lanes, Penneygill, Church Lonning, Village greens, the area between Kirkbampton and Thurstonfield, small clusters of woodland and wedges of land that penetrate and surround Cockermouth.

Flooding

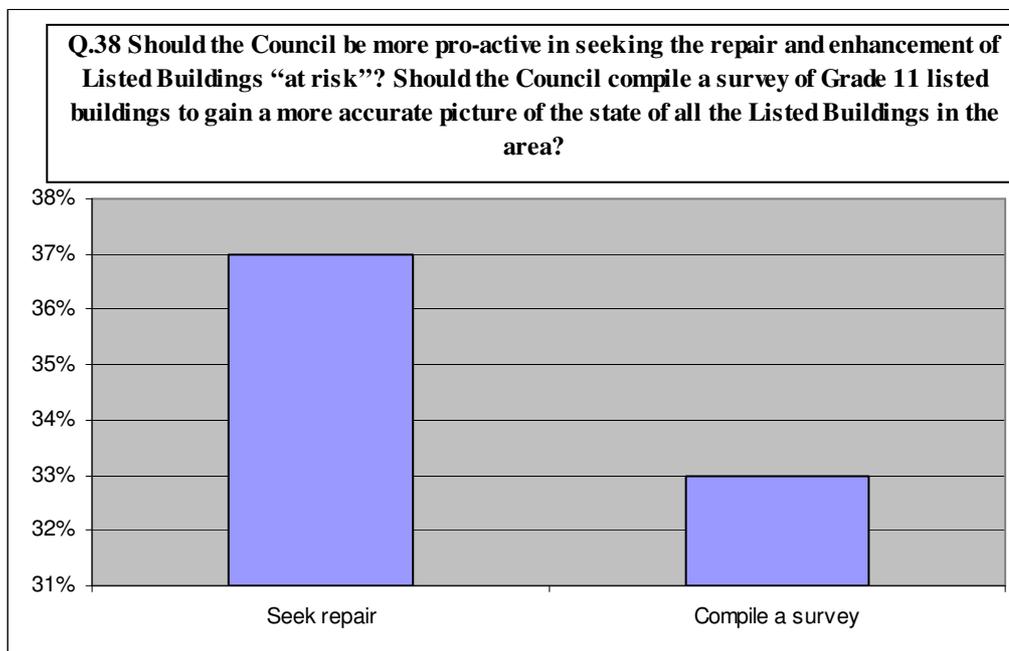
When considering the issue of developing on areas of high flood risk, 40% of respondents felt that no development should occur on this type of site. With 13% feeling that development should be allowed so long as there are

mitigation/protection measures put in place. This is shown in the graph below. Comments made surrounding this topic were that the Council should ensure that PPG25 sequential approach to site selection is applied in all cases in order to ensure the most suitable measures are taken. A number of those who participated in the survey believed that the policy on such matters should be flexible and take into account each particular site as well as the threat it will face subject to climate change



Historic Environment

When considering whether the Council should be more proactive in seeking out the repair of listed buildings at risk 67% of respondents felt this was a positive approach with 33% agreeing that a survey should be compiled to show a more accurate picture of the Grade II listed buildings in the area. A graph of the results is shown below. There were also 46% of participants felt a “Local List” of buildings that merit preservation should be produced.

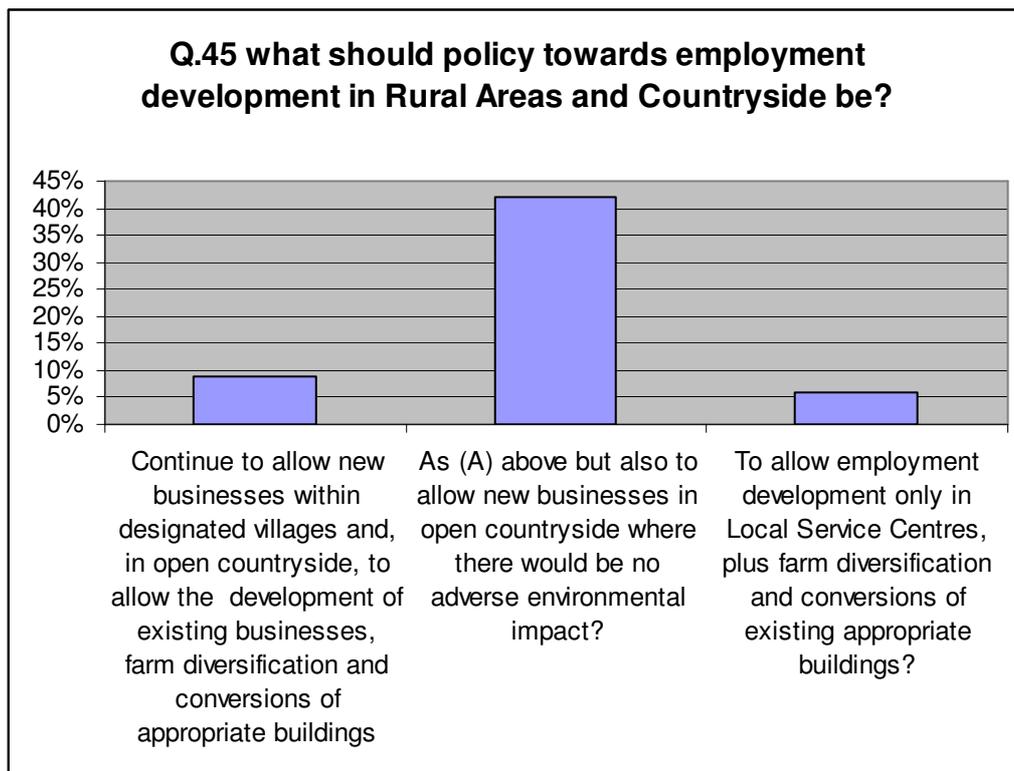


Also mentioned were sites that people thought would justify designation as new conservation areas. These were:- Workington’s Old market, Clifton Hall, Curwen Hall, Castles and old buildings throughout the district, Maryport Harbour, Aspatria, the centre of Broughton, Wigton, harbours, coastlines and Allerdale market towns

Employment Land

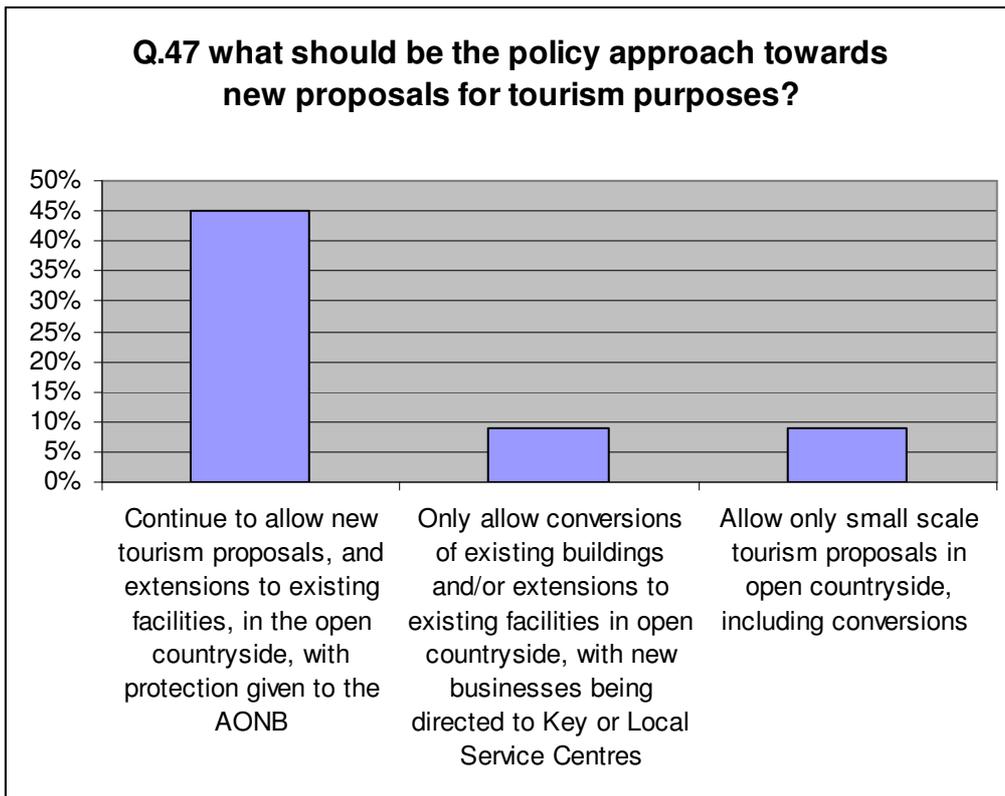
29% of those who completed the survey felt that land should be allocated in line with the requirements set down in the RSS. However, 25% were of the opinion that it should be allocated in order to retain a generous supply of employment land. In keeping with this there was a general consensus among the respondents that there needs to be a more flexible approach to the types of employment sites being created, with 55% agreeing the council should focus on a wide range of sources. Which 40% of respondents agreed should be situated throughout the borough. This is as

opposed to the option of focusing on specific business sectors such as the high tech, knowledge-based or manufacturing services. Comments made surrounding this topic are based upon the need for a diversity of employment prospects in order to create a breadth of opportunities to encourage skills sharing. Comments were also made stating that the employment sites are required across the whole borough as well as in the main towns and larger villages. 23% of the participants judged there to be too much employment focused on the site at Lillyhall. 40% feel that there should be new businesses allowed in open countryside provided that there will be no adverse impact on the environment (as depicted below), with 37% believing that there should be conversions allowed throughout rural areas in order to allow for the diversification of farmland etc.



Tourism

When asked about issues relating to policy approaches on developments in tourism 43% of respondents felt that there should be an approach made by policy to provide new tourism services and allow extensions to current facilities in open countryside. The results of this question are shown in the graph below.



Retail

When asked whether or not Allerdale council should continue to promote Workington Town Centre as the main comparison retailing location in West Cumbria, the response was 56% yes. This shows a lot of support for this option; however some comments were made stating that this should be undertaken, but that it should be done in conjunction with other towns throughout the borough. In particular that Workington should have a complementary role with Whitehaven and Maryport, and should meet the needs of its catchment area. With 37% suggesting that when losing expenditure from one town centre to another there should be initiatives put in place to try and “claw back” that expenditure through further promotion of the retail trade. There were also 43% of respondents who believed that the Council should produce a list showing “Primary Shopping Streets” where non retail uses should be resisted if they begin to adversely affect the retail character of the street. Also 38% of those who participated were of the opinion that residential uses should be encouraged in town centres.

Sport

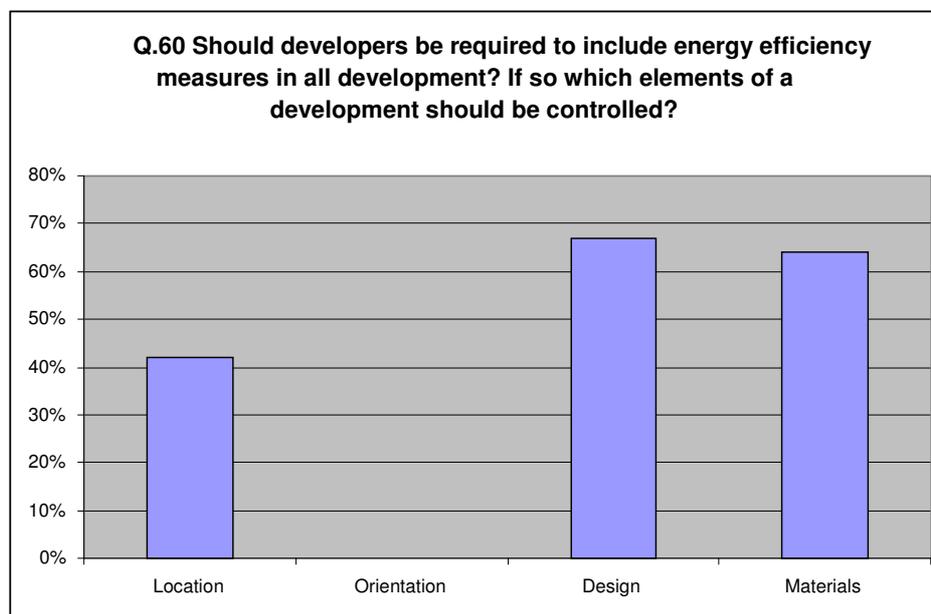
In general there was a strong feeling amongst the participants that there is a lack of sporting centres in the borough with only 20% of respondents stating that the existing leisure facilities are of the right quality and are in the right places. With 37% indicating that there is a shortage of sports and recreational facilities in certain parts of Allerdale it is clearly an issue which requires attention.

Play areas

49% of respondents thought that it is necessary for the Council to be more proactive in improving the provisions of children's play areas throughout the borough. However there are comments from those who undertook the survey stating that implementing play areas within new developments will or may cause disruption to current residents especially at night times when there may be issues with people using the play-area as a meeting place causing disruption through noise nuisance which may result in the existing residents feeling uncomfortable. Although 62% of those who completed the survey felt that housing developers should provide appropriate children's play areas within developments of a certain size.

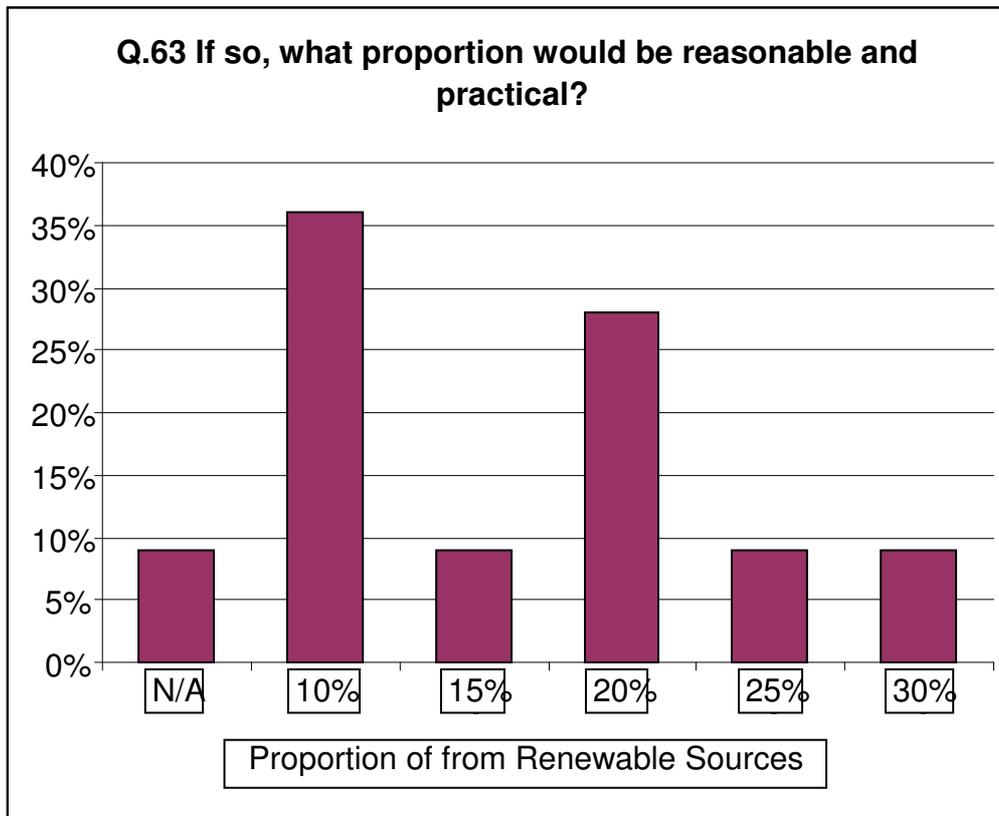
Recycling and energy efficiency

When considering the issue of whether recycling facilities should be included in new developments, 71% of respondents agreed that this would be a positive initiative and 73% believed that the use of recycled materials should be encouraged in all developments. Also 71% of people who returned the survey are of the opinion that planning policy should encourage the use of locally sourced materials in developments. The respondents also commented as to which areas of the development should be required to include energy efficient measures. The graph below shows that the large proportions of people surveyed believe that the design (71%) and materials (69%) are the most important areas in need of control.



Along with this idea of incorporating energy efficient measures into developments 77% of respondents stated that developers should be required to submit energy statements with all planning applications (other than domestic extensions) in order to see what energy efficient methods have been undertaken during construction. 58% of people also felt that new developments should be required to produce a portion of its energy from

renewable sources. The proportions which they felt were reasonable are shown below.



Transport

54% of respondents believe that the majority of future developments should be directed towards areas where the most sustainable methods of transport are available. Such as cycle routes and footpaths. However, this may be an issue with regards to safety and reliability of the various methods, such as the extent of the bus networks and cycle ways within the major towns.

Also when questioned with regards to the car parking standards, 37% of those who took part believed that there is need for more parking in town centres. This was seen to be a particular issue in Maryport. Suggested solutions to this issue were that the Council should stop planned closure of existing car parks, be more expensive in town centres and be more flexible pricing policy, allow more time to park with also having more free short term parking, monitor the use and demand of such services, eliminate traffic wardens and produce some park and ride facilities.

These results show a very sustainable outlook by those who completed the survey with many indicating the need for location of new homes near to public transport methods and the use of local and recycled materials within housing developments as well as producing recycling facilities within developments.

Full details of this survey results are contained in appendix one.

Allerdale Outlook Magazine

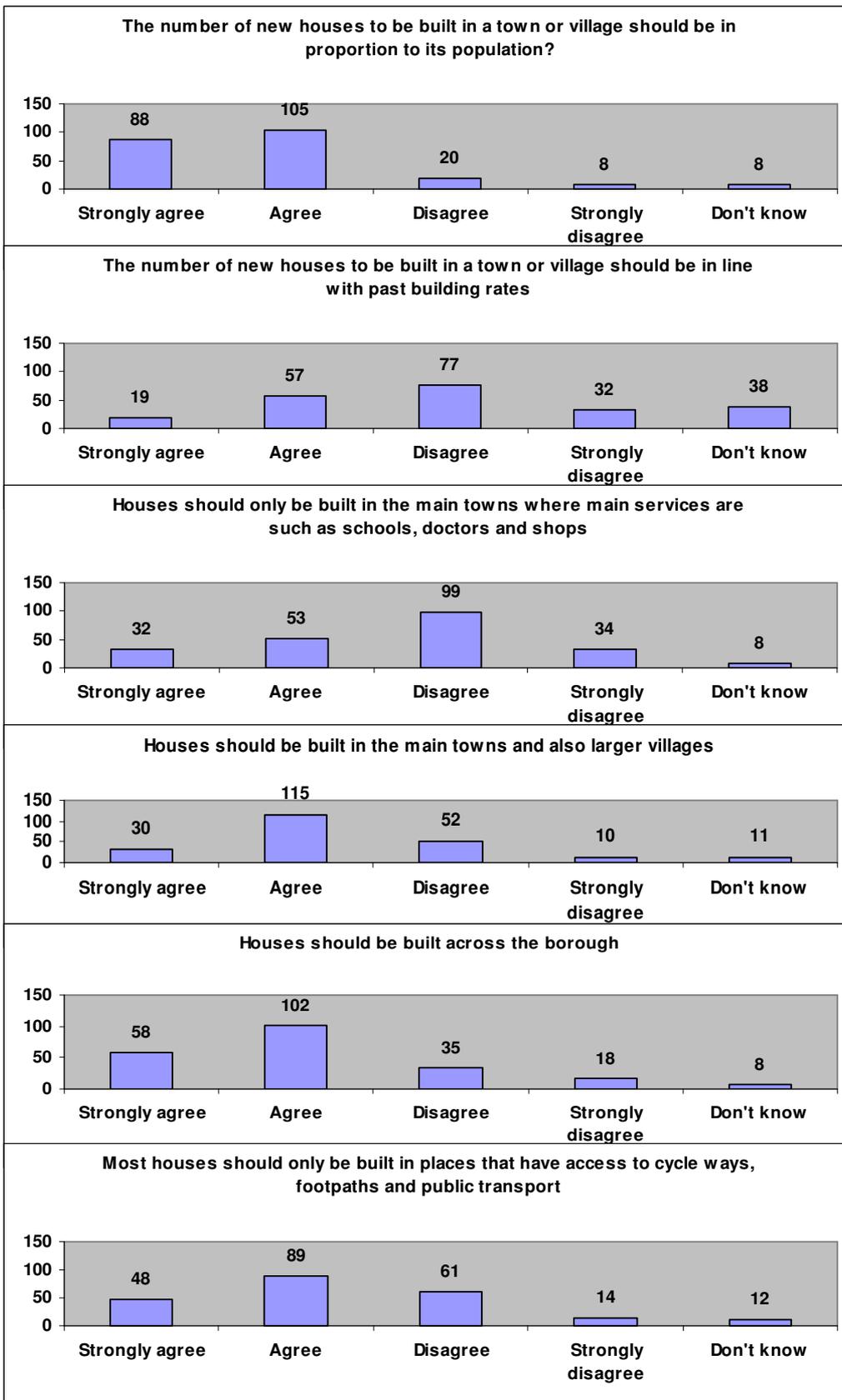
In the 2006 autumn edition of the Allerdale Outlook Magazine a similar questionnaire to that contained within the Core Strategy document was published. This offered the readers the chance to complete the survey giving an incentive of the chance to win a luxury hamper. There was a much higher feedback rate for this version of the survey, with 239 questionnaires being completed and returned.

This questionnaire focused on the issues surrounding housing, in particular affordable housing, services provision, employment, recycling facilities, recreational facilities, children's play areas, areas of green space and areas of historical interest.

The survey opened by asking for views regarding the possible location of 267 new homes per year proposed in the RSS. The majority of respondents held the view that the number of new houses to be built should be in proportion to its population with 84% of the group agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. This was followed by 67% of the participants stating that the new homes should be located in the main towns and larger villages. The graphs below show the results of the question in full.

Q.1 The Government dictate that the Council can allow, on average, 267 new houses to be built in Allerdale each year. Where do you think this housing

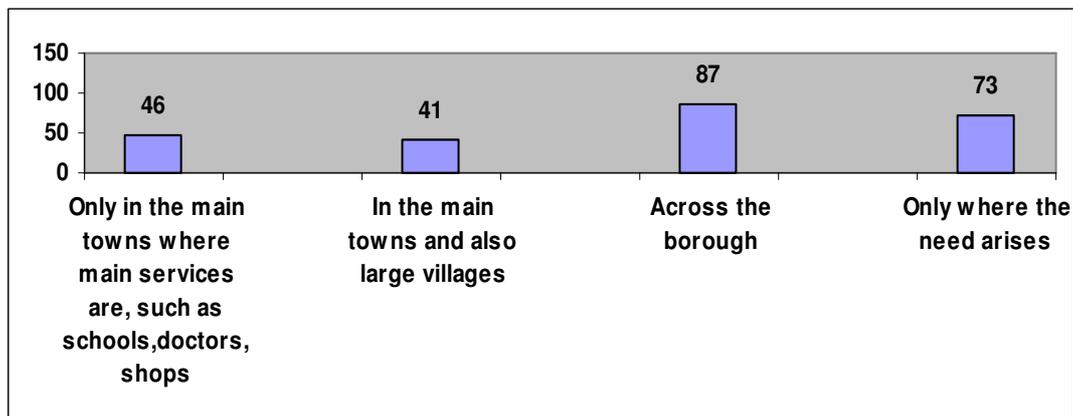
should be built?



Affordable housing

With regards to where affordable housing should be developed, the majority of the respondents (35%) agree that there is a need across the whole borough and developments should occur where the need arises (30%) and not just within the larger towns or villages, as shown in the graph below. The need was stated to be across the whole borough and shouldn't be limited by criteria of services and facilities but assessed on a case by case basis.

Q.2 Where do you think affordable housing should be built?



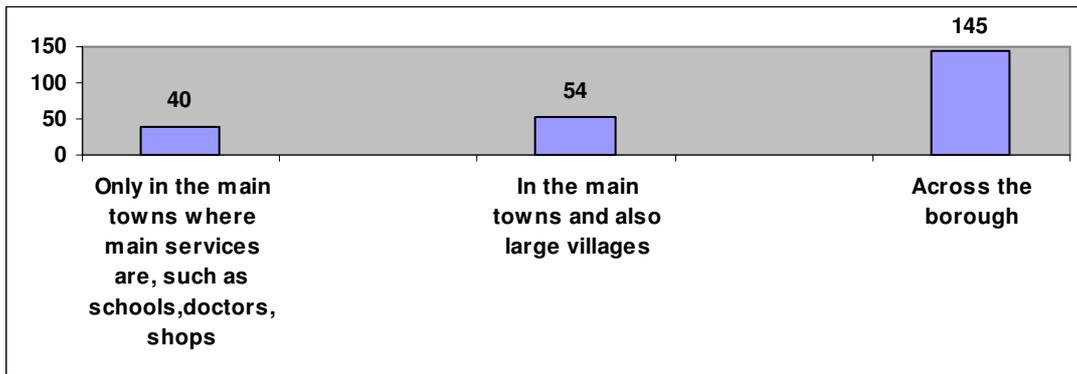
When ranking the importance of public services around the borough the results found that, to the people who had returned the survey, the most important service was the Primary School, followed by Rail/Bus Links, Doctors Surgery, Post Office, Shops, Village Hall, Church and then Public House or Hotels.

Other services mentioned as being important to local villages and towns through this survey were Play Areas, Sports and Leisure facilities, a Police Station, Library, Youth Club, Hospital, Recycling Facilities, Access to Banking, Street Cleaning, Cycle Routes, Community Centres, Fire Station, Phone Box, Public Conveniences (better, open and clean), Post Box, Optician, Better Lighting, Adoption of Roads, Flood Warnings, Tourist Information, Farm Shop/Local Market, Ambulance/Air Ambulance, NHS Dentist, Bowling Green and Job Creation.

Employment Land

The first survey discussed within this report found that 41% of respondents thought any new employment sites should be spread across the borough and not just located in Key Service Centres. This opinion is mirrored within this questionnaire which found that 61% of respondents were of the same belief, as shown below.

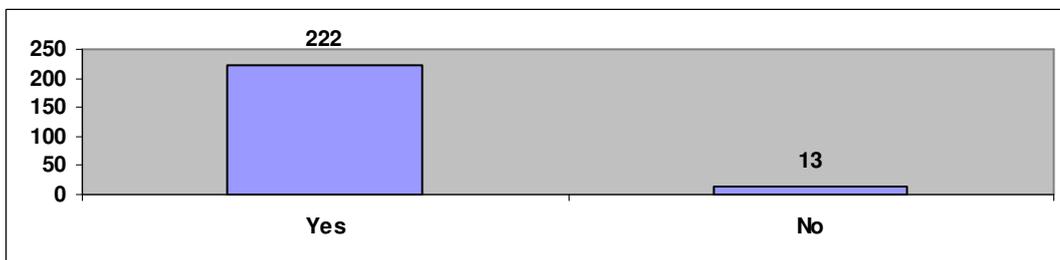
Q.4 Where should employment sites be located?



Recycling

As depicted by the graph below 94% of the respondents from the Outlook survey believe that developers should be made to provide recycling facilities for new developments. This is nearly as strong as the view held by 97% of those surveyed in the first document. Showing that many of those within the community hold a positive attitude towards sustainability and recycling.

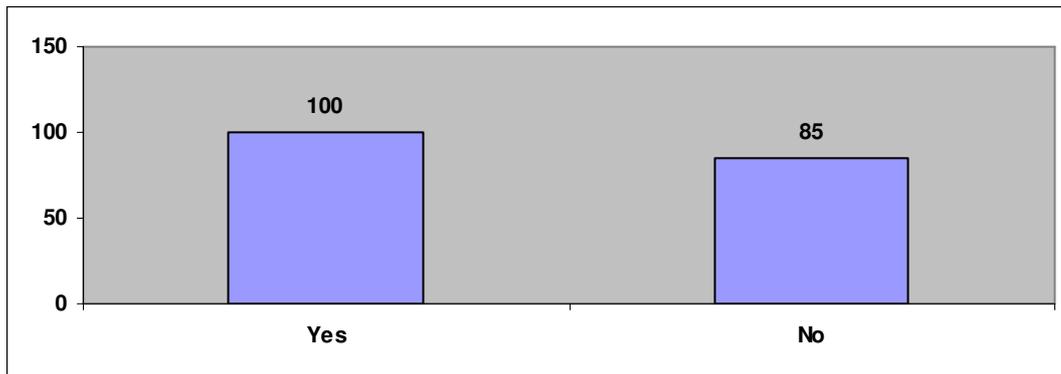
Q.5 Should building developers be made to provide recycling facilities for new developments?



Sports Facilities

As shown below there are a lower number of people declaring a shortage in sports facilities across Allerdale than in the original survey with 54% stating that this is an issue as opposed to the 78% who declared this opinion within the first consultation questionnaire. As shown below.

Q.7 Is there a shortage of sport and recreation facilities in certain parts of Allerdale?



However, with the results of the second survey came a listing of areas where there could be more or better facilities. The table below shows where these locations are and how many of the respondents suggested the particular locations.

Location	Number of Respondents
Wigton	14
Cockermouth	11
Rural Areas	11
Maryport	8
Keswick	7
Workington	6
Aspatia	5
Thursby	3
Abbeytown	3
Little Clifton	2
Silloth	2
Northside	1
Borrowdale	1
Rosley	1
Stainburn	1
High Harrington	1
Dearham	1

Play Areas

With reference to the issues of childrens play areas there was again a response stating there is a need for such facilities, the table below demonstrates the areas where these are required and the number of respondents who brought up each particular location. The comments received about this issue were also very positive with many stating that they are in

favour of play areas being developed along with new developments as it provides residents of all ages with somewhere to socialize. As well as fears of the safety at present for those who do not have access to a play area and so are forced to play on or around the street.

Location	Number of Respondents
Various Areas of Workington	17
Various Areas of Cockermouth	7
Various Areas of Maryport	4
Little Clifton	4
Keswick	4
Wigton	4
Eaglesfield	4
Bruoghton Moor	2
Seaton	2
Bridgefoot	2
Silloth	2
Great Broughton	2
Tallentire	2
Torpenhow	1
Abbeytown	1
Brigham	1
Rosley	1
Westward	1
Woodside	1
Braithwaite	1
Little Broughton	1
Plumbland	1
Tallentire	1
Dearham	1
Caldbeck	1
Lorton	1
Dovenby	1
Camerton	1
Papcastle	1
Aspatria	1
Everywhere With Schools	1

Within this survey it was found that 87% of respondents have an area of green space that is important to them and they think should be preserved. A large number of areas were mentioned including:- Hall Park, Curwen Parks, The Cloffocks, Caldbeck Common, Village Green, Little Clifton; High Harrington, Recreation Field, Abbeytown, Great Broughton Village Green,

Allonby Dunes area, Branthwaite, Harris Park, Town field, Keswick, Sea Brows, Mawbray, Millennium Green Maryport; Jubilee Walk, Wigton; Derwentwater Foreshore, Memorial Gardens, Cockermouth, Blencogo playing field, the fells and coast, Camerton Brickworks, Strawberry Howe, Tarn Close running track, Silloth Green, Millfield, Ellerbeck Wood, Fitz park, Keswick, Tweed Mill Lane, Harrington Nature Reserve, Village Green, Gilcrux, Hayton Village Green Allerby Village Green, Crosscanonby Village Green, St. Mungo's Park, Aspatria, Cockermouth Cemetery, The Greenway from Bellbrigg Lonning to Cockermouth Fire Station, Fitz park, Cockermouth, Kirkbride, The Lees, Oulton, Hope Park, Keswick, round Derwent River, Village Green, Thursby, Crow Park, Keswick, Borrowdale, behind Nelson Thomlinson School, Wigton.

It was also found that 78% of those who returned the survey saw a part of Allerdale's towns and villages as being important to the local area. These were listed as being:- Curwen Hall, Portland Square, Keswick Museum, Moot Hall, Maryport Docks, Listed Buildings in Blennerhasset and Torpenhow, The Cloffocks, Keswick Town Centre, Hall Park, Millfield, Priest's Mill, Caldbeck, The Hawk, Caldbeck. Maryport Maritime and Roman Museum. Pardshaw Crag and Meeting House. Wigton's Georgian and Victorian Heritage. The Kirkstile and St. Oswald's Church, Dean. Curwen Castle. The Quayside/Harbour, Workington, Maryport Harbour Wordsworth House, Silloth Harbour, Grange in Borrowdale, Waterloo Street, Brewery Lane, Cockermouth, Wyndham Row, Calva Hall on the River Marron. Silloth Airfield. Cockermouth Castle and Market Place. Bromfield Church, Wigton Fountain, Roman Fort at Old Carlisle. Main Streets Broughton, Brigham and Keswick. Kirkgate, Main Street, Cockermouth. Hayton Castle, Aspatria Market Hall, Crosscanonby Parish Church. The Battery Museum, Lighthouse and local churches Maryport. St. Philip's Church Yard, Eaglesfield. Dovenby, Embleton, Fleming Square, Maryport Crofton Arch, Isel. Youth Hostel, Cocker and Derwent River area.

Parish Council Meetings

There were two separate Parish Council Meetings held in order to discuss the issues and options for the Core Strategy. The first of which was held at the Greenhill Hotel on the 16th October 2006 and the second at Broughton Craggs Hotel on the 19th October 2006.

In attendance at the first meeting at the Greenhill Hotel, Wigton was, Sue Silvester (clerk to Thursby/Ousters and Allerby Plumbland/Bassenthwaite), John Hine (Vice Chair at Thursby), Donald Graveson (Wigton Town Mayor), Elizabeth Key (clerk to Wigton town Council), M.Abbott (Allhallows Parish Council Chair), W. Wise (Holme St. Cuthbert Parish Council), R. McFarfowl (Clifton Parish Council), M. Pearson (The Old School Willan St Grayton), Carole Watson (Holme St. Cuthbert Parish Council), Linda Housby (Holme St. Cuthbert Parish Council).

The meeting began with a presentation about the new LDF system which was then followed by a more detailed explanation regarding the Core Strategy Issues and Options. The council's representatives were then divided into two groups with one discussing the issues and options surrounding housing and the other discussing those around employment.

The main issues raised by the group discussing the matters of housing were surrounding the prices of properties in the area. It was indicated that the current prices are significantly higher than what local wages can afford. This has resulted in local people being forced to move away from their places of employment to the larger towns where they can afford somewhere to live. This causes knock-on effects such as the age of the population in rural areas being tilted towards older age range.

The options suggested to tackle this problem were related to ensuring that restrictions are put on future developments so that new houses can be affordable for future generations coming onto the property ladder. Also discussed was the issue of buy to let properties which was said to be in need of attention as it is reducing the availability of the housing stock which could be affordable to locals.

The most important facilities were seen by this group to be the school, post office and shop. However, it was believed that the building of additional developments would not necessarily support any existing facilities within a settlement as the view is that the majority of people would purchase the bulk of their goods at main shopping centres in surrounding towns.

The group who were discussing the issues surrounding employment factors and possible options for these felt that any new businesses should have to have a locational need within the community. It was also said that

there should be no new businesses allowed to be created in open countryside. Those existing businesses currently in place should be allowed expansion based upon their individual merits as there is a need to develop local business. It is thought that there is a need to be flexible due to there being a variety of needs and larger units may not be suitable so the use of existing buildings may be better. As there is an issue that outside investors may not stay for the long term, there is a need to develop local businesses. With the loss of major employers in the area there is a great problem facing the work force and skills base.

The location of industries was said to have its own agenda which means the issue of developing a skills base is important and the option of using financial carrots in order to influence decisions on the locations of new businesses. But it was important to ensure that the scale of any new development will be in proportion to the setting that it will be in. It was discussed that small scale tourist developments should be encouraged with the need to extend the main summer season in order to bring in an income over a longer period. With there being a waiting list for the existing caravan sites it can be seen that interest in the area from tourists is high. It was also stated that the conversion of existing buildings should be encouraged along with diversification of properties and land. However it was outlined that the transport and access to local villages and towns will be large factors in limiting the types of businesses that are attracted to different areas. For example Cumbria, especially the Allerdale borough is quite remote from the motorway network.

The second Parish Council Meeting took place at the Broughton Craggs Hotel in the South of the borough on the 19th October 2006. The main topics discussed during this meeting were housing, employment and the location of employment and services.

In attendance at this meeting was Albert Marcs (Allonby Parish Council) William Doughton (Allonby Parish Council), Brian Lancaster (Broughton Parish Council), K. Smart (Broughton Parish Council), R. Dobie (Broughton Parish Council), B. Graham (Broughton Parish Council), JM. Percival (Dearham Parish Council), K. Rogers (Dearham Parish Council), R. Curtis (Little Clifton Parish Council), I. Elliot (Little Clifton Parish Council), E. Auld (Caldbeck Parish Council), Anne Cartmell (Caldbeck Parish Council), Alan Winship (Dean Parish Council), Peter Hillam (Brigham) and Sue Hannah (Cockermouth Partnerhip).

The outcome of issues discussed within this second meeting highlighted many of the same issues raised in the previous meeting. For instance, it was outlined that the location of new house builds should be based upon the needs of the community in order to sustain the villages by providing a mix of housing types to cater for all people in all situations. It was thought that there is too much pressure from having an excess of executive housing and second homes creating pressure on the market. It was again thought that conversions should be allowed and that there should be work with the parishes in order to be able to identify the need and allow

developments where necessary. It was also considered that the use of control tenure such as equity share housing may be a positive step forward in helping people to get onto the property ladder and have the option of buying the home once they are in a position to do so.

The suggestions coming from the second meeting stipulate that there should be encouragement toward the growth of local businesses with the assumption that there will not be sufficient investment coming from outside of the county. There needs to be a flexibility surrounding the location of employment sites in order to ensure that they are not all located in main towns. There was also seen to be a need to promote tourism year round, as although it only pays low wages on a seasonal basis, it does support shops, facilities and promotes the landscape. It was raised that there is a need to attract more long-stay trippers as opposed to those who just come for the day in order to gain a higher spend in the area. Grants and support for existing businesses was also an issue raised as it is more difficult to gain than those given to startups.

It was seen that support needs to be given to local businesses through policy by taking into account the local impacts. It was thought that farm diversification should be allowed across the borough with a flexible policy being provided between new builds and conversions, urban concentration and limited choice for rural businesses. It was said that there is too much retail creep onto employment sites that take the trade away from town centres. There was also a comment made surrounding the issue of providing for the work force and skills base available, which has been a concern since the removal of the major firms in the county. This lack of job opportunities results in a loss of young people in the area, causing an aging population in many settlements.

It was also said that there are a lack of hotels around the borough, but it was commented that in order for more hotels to be built there needs to be a sustained demand. Although it could be argued that there is a demand for more hotels to be built as it was stated that currently local events are not able being supported by the levels of infrastructure and the number of hotels in the area. It was also mentioned that they are being run by volunteers on an ad hoc funding basis. With this in mind it was stated that transport is a major issue and the attraction of inward investment is required in order to improve the current system.

The two meetings hold some similarities with parishes in both the north and south of the borough recognizing some of the same key issues facing the Allerdale area. The issue of affordable housing being needed across the borough in order to keep in the younger section of the population is also something which was raised within the surveys discussed earlier and is clearly a matter of high importance. As was the need to spread the employment sites across the borough and attract a diversified range of employers into the area in order to provide a variety of opportunities to the residents. These were also key issues brought up by many of those who completed both the questionnaires that were undertaken.

CN Focus Group

Allerdale Borough Council asked the company CN Research to carry out a focus group on their behalf in order to consult with members of the public from across the borough on key planning issues. This was conducted on the 8th November 2006 at the Broughton Craggs Hotel near Cockermouth. The aim of this focus group was to explore and gather feedback on key planning issues surrounding future development, local facilities, affordable housing, employment and renewable energy.

The focus group consisted of 11 adults (6 males and 5 females) from a cross-section of postcodes through the Borough. The benefits of conducting focus groups is that you delve deeper than the responses you can gain from written questionnaires and get a grasp of the thoughts, priorities and attitudes of the participants toward various topics.

The group as a whole was firstly asked to express their views on the topics and was then broken down into four smaller groups and given a set of cards listing facilities. They were then asked to rank these facilities in order of which they felt were most important and explain their decisions to the rest of the group.

All groups listed Local Employment and Affordable Housing in their top three most important services, with three out of the four groups seeing them as the top one and two, showing that they are obviously priorities which need to be considered. Where as Public Houses/ Hotels were placed at the bottom of each of the groups lists.

There were also suggestions made by the groups to create multi-functional uses from some of the buildings within settlements. For example, using village halls as a possible site for a doctor's surgery or sporting facilities. The local pubs could be seen as potential community halls, providing 'all sorts of activities'. Churches were also seen as multi-functional, possibly providing cafés and shops.

During discussions it was found that there was a general dissatisfaction with the planning service and planning policy surrounding the issue of affordable housing with a need for affordable housing in all areas being highlighted. This is an issue leading to the loss of the younger section of the population in many areas throughout the borough, resulting in an ageing population.

Also brought up was the lack of a transport infrastructure that would be suitable for industrial uses. The development of IT services and software industries were seen as a possibility in order to better industries. The development of such facilities could also be used as an incentive to attract in new businesses and employment opportunities.

Along with this was the issue of expanding tourism, which has also been mentioned during the use of other research techniques, in order to

attract a year round income. This was suggested to be possible through a project such as the Eden project. This would help in attracting visitors to the area away from attractions such as the Lake District.

With regards to location, it was said that there is development required throughout the borough in both housing and industrial aspects, with a number of businesses closing resulting in the need of investment within the area. Issues were raised that developments should focus on the community not just on individual businesses. Similarly it is seen that affordable housing should be placed in locations where there is a need in order to keep young people in the area.

Facilities which were seen as important by this group were: youth facilities, childrens play areas, facilities and services for the elderly, Village/town halls, Sports facilities/complexes, affordable rural transport, employment, recycling facilities, affordable housing and housing association properties, doctors surgery, shops and post office. With pubs, churches and village halls viewed as multi function facilities.

All those who took part were in favour of renewable energy and energy conservation, both topics of discussion within the questionnaires discussed earlier. However it was noted in this group that there is too much focus being put on the use of wind farms. With no link being made between the wind farms and the local people in terms of where the energy is going. It was cited that tidal energy is the best possible asset that could be utilized by the council when implementing renewable energy systems.

Also brought up during the session was the perceived split between the coastal towns and the inner rural areas of the borough with no connection or communication made between the two. The suggestions made by the members of the group were to therefore invest in roads and transport networks between the two in order to prepare the region for development of industrial and tourism services.

The main priorities highlighted within this focus group were the issues surrounding employment and housing.

Environment Focus Group

This second focus group was conducted on the 7th December 2006. A number of topics were created from the questions found within the Core Strategy report.

During this discussion, those attending were split into two groups. The first of which looked into matters concerning the Strategic Principles contained within the Core Strategy document and consisted of Brian Irving (AONB), Richard Pearse (FOLD), Kate Willshaw (CWT), Dorian Lathan (EA) and Jeremy Parsons (CCC). The second group was to look into matters surrounding Sustainable Design and consisted of Rose Wolfe (AONB) Pauline Goodridge (Carlisle City Council), Jill Perry (FOE), Betty Kent (Civic Trust), Peter Daley (ABC) and Pat Joyce (ABC).

Group one discussed the strategic principles with regard to the location of development, issues surrounding flooding, Brownfield/Greenfield sites and the natural built environment in terms of landscape, biodiversity and areas of green space and the historic environment.

In terms of where the location of developments should be, the group highlighted that the Council should only make decisions following the assessment of the demand and need of the area. The group stated that the Authority needs to look at the local market characteristics and take a shift in emphasis from historical patterns towards a more sustainable pattern of development. Suggestions of how to address this were, for example, to promote locally sourced materials as far as legally possible and to spread developments in order to encourage the use of public transport within the borough.

When considering the issues surrounding flooding and developments within possible flood risk zones the group came to the conclusion that any possible development that has been proposed within a flood risk area should be given a decision relating to the risk and probability of an event. However any decision made should also factor in the issue of climate change. It should also be taken into account whether the land proposed for the development is a Brownfield or Greenfield site.

The RSS has set out a guideline for the Allerdale Borough Council that 80% of housing completions should be carried out on Brownfield sites. The group concluded that when considering the use of Brownfield or Greenfield land for new developments it is necessary to take into account not only the value of the Greenfield land, but any issues of contamination that may arise from the use of Brownfield land, the possible use of rural Brownfield land and the ideas that the use of Greenfield land may be preferable due to its biodiversity and archaeological significance.

The old Local Plan protects landscape outside the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with various designations such as Areas of Landscapes of County Importance or Locally Important Landscape Areas. However, recent Government guidance supports a different approach, which is the use of Landscape Character Assessment and criteria based policies. The group discussed whether the Council should still consider the local landscape designations. The suggestions were that the setting is as important as the historical context of a site and that buffer zones should be used around the world heritage site.

In terms of issues surrounding biodiversity in the region it was agreed that the Council should undertake a proactive approach to areas of this nature in protecting and enhancing biodiversity and habitats as part of new developments. However it was stated that there are gaps within the data on such measures, and questions were raised regarding the reliability of developer's reports on such issues.

The final topic that the group considered is the matter of green space within villages and towns in the borough and whether the Council should take measures in protecting these sites. The outcome was that these areas should be protected and that the Council should use Parish plans as guidelines for the data and aspirations that they may have for such areas. It was also indicated that private sites of green spaces should be protected along with village ponds and greens.

The second group looked at the issues surrounding Sustainable Design and how far the Council should insist on sustainable design principles within new developments. It did so under the topics of Recycling, Energy Efficiency, Sustainable Locations, Cycle ways and Footways, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), Open Spaces and Historic Environments.

In terms of recycling facilities the group agreed that there is a need for small recycling sites close to homes as the production of recycling facilities for individual houses will require larger plot sizes. The promotion of locally sourced materials was again advised to be supported as far as legally possible. Also stated is the possible use of existing materials, especially where the site has existing buildings that cannot be re-used, the materials should be taken from those buildings and used where possible among new developments.

The issue of promoting the use of energy efficiency was largely supported. Especially in conjunction with the need for affordable housing as this will help in reducing bills. It was also agreed that there is a need to implement energy efficient methods through the use of building regulations among new developments. With a suggestion that every new building should be required to use energy efficient means. However there were issues raised with regards to the viability of renewable energy sources, along with questions being raised concerning the noise produced by domestic turbines and the impact that wind turbines have on things such as the migratory patterns of birds. Having a 20% efficiency target for all housing and possibly a higher one for commercial buildings was a suggestion, although this would require the production of energy statements throughout the area in order to be able to achieve this successfully.

In regards to the sustainable locations issues, the members of the group suggested the Council should consider spreading the developments in order to encourage the use and expansion of public transport. However, those matters depend on who is living where and how many have access to private transport. Although there is the problem that public transport methods are not viable in remote rural areas and so this initiative may have to concentrate on main centres such as large towns and villages. Also the use of public transport is a particularly difficult method for people to use when faced with activities such as shopping.

The use of cycle ways and footways holds a number of issues according to the members of the focus group who raised points such as the fear of crime along designated paths with such design issues as lighting

becoming a problem. Along with this is the lack of safe routes surrounding schools and other facilities as well as the lack of storage facilities at destinations. It was also felt that a reduction in parking spaces may encourage the use of alternative means of transport in the area although this could cause problems for residents and car owners traveling long distances.

With regards to SUDS there was the case made that all sites should have them constructed as a starting point unless ground conditions are unsuitable. It was said that SUDS should be promoted where surface water is a problem and also where issues of contaminated land and contaminated surface water arise, especially if there is storage on site. These measures will be able to produce a method of removing surface water from the site through replicating the natural system via inputting of devices such as reed beds. This will have a low environmental impact and be able to be used in a cost effective manner.

Also when considering the historic environment it was understood that a compilation of a local list would be useful and should be compiled involving groups such as local civic trusts with the need to look at post war developments such as Westfield for protection.

Housing Focus Group

This was a workshop undertaken on the 20th November 2006 at St.Micheal's Church for housing agencies. Over the course of the day there were two discussion groups. In group A there was Elsa Brailey (Derwent and Solway), Andy Thompson, Anthony Collier, Helen Lewis (Carlisle City Council), Janet Carruthers (Story Homes) and Judith Derbyshire (Cumbria Rural Housing Group). In discussion group B there was Anne-Marie Willmot (Impact Housing), Diane Gorge, Graham Howarth (Westfield Housing Association), Paul Boustead and Rachel Lightfoot (Story Homes).

The session began with a brief introduction and presentations on an overview of the Local development Framework followed by one on the issues and options that were to be discussed. There was then a break and then the first discussion group was held.

With regards to the RSS's prediction of a requirement of 267 new homes to be built each year the group highlighted that there has been an increase in need for both affordable housing and also to support regeneration throughout the borough. Therefore it was put forward that there needs to be a higher number of new homes built every year than the proposed 267 from the RSS. In relation to the location of these new homes it was stated that there should be a balance of demand against sustainability and that smaller villages need to be included in schemes. It was also discussed that Brownfield and Greenfield sequential tests should be confined to housing market areas. The members also stated that there should be some flexibility to the use of areas at risk to flooding while avoiding using functional flood plains. It was outlined that settlement hierarchies should be influenced by community needs and not just facilities.

It was noted that it could be sustainable to refurbish existing buildings that are of a poor standard, rather than to demolish them, though the association of Registered Social Landlords (RSL) is based upon the use of new housing so at present there is not much planned refurbishment throughout the area.

With reference to affordable housing it was said again that this should be provided where there is a need and that the locations of such developments should be spread across the borough as opposed to being concentrated within any particular area. In order to find out where there is specific need; advertising should be undertaken to parish councils stating what is on offer. It was also stated that the need of such matters should be looked at over a period of time and not just in a particular snapshot of an area. With single affordable homes being for local need only. It was also assumed that there is a need to provide open market housing as it was predicted that affordability will get worse.

On matters surrounding sustainability the group stated that new homes should be built to an EcoHomes standard in order to combat issues of energy efficiency. EcoHomes tackle this issue on a number of fronts, for example, prior to construction it should be required that there is an environmental impact assessment produced with regards to what materials will be used, an ecological value of the site and the buildings footprints. Another standard is that sites should be built close to a public transport network, cycle storage and local amenities. With regards to this any renewable energy sources used have to be reasonable and proportionate to the development.

With reference to recycling the group agreed that facilities should be provided within developments, although there will need to be consideration in respect to the issues surrounding the management of such facilities. It was also said that there needs to be a consistent approach to these matters.

Discussion group B took place in the afternoon of this session, following a presentation on affordable housing and sustainable design.

When considering the scale of development the group again stated that the figures displayed within the RSS do not reflect the needs of Cumbria and are more concentrated on city regions. It was therefore put forward that there is a need for a higher figure of new homes to address the housing market imbalance especially the intermediate housing stock.

When discussing the topic of implementing a clearance strategy it was declared that there is a surplus of one bedroom flats throughout the borough which are not popular and are inflexible and so could be targeted for clearance. It was also stated that it would be more sustainable to refurbish existing housing stocks as opposed to demolishing them. The RSL, however, is based upon a strategy of new build and so not a lot of refurbishment will take place due to the cost of buying out existing owners.

The housing agencies also discussed the ideas of concentrating development in Maryport and Workington in order to support any growth that may occur through regeneration strategies. Making them an attracting place where people would want to come and live and work. This would also encourage investment from businesses into the area creating more job opportunities within the borough.

There was an idea suggested of grouping villages together in rural areas in order to sustain existing services. In this group schools and post offices were seen as the most important. The funding from the RSL is based upon sustainability principles such as access to facilities and public transport. However, there is a greater need to develop criteria in order to include amenities, public transport, housing needs and Brownfield and Greenfield sites. When looking at what may influence allocations of development, facilities were seen as the most important over access to jobs and housing needs. The group also discussed the need for a different approach to the sequential test on Brownfield and Greenfield in urban and rural areas with an emphasis that Brownfield will impact on the rural areas and worsen the housing situation. Also Brownfield land has reclamation costs which have implications for viability of affordable housing.

With regards to development boundaries across the borough it was suggested that there should be clear guidance given right down to the lowest level in order to provide a clearer outline of what is or isn't allowed in specific areas.

In terms of affordability it was said among the group that developments need to be near facilities and close to public transport as people who are elderly or on a low income have a greater need to be near such services as they may not have access to private transport. However, there is the issue of scattered settlements leading to issues of the service availability and the viability of extending current public transport networks. Similarly it was discussed that there should be cycle ways and/or Footpaths provided in larger developments but again there is the issue of viability and a network would have to be created in order for the scheme to be successful. The issues surrounding these types of properties were raised with reference to S106 agreements which were said to be very rigid and difficult to implement as people see a house as an investment and so do not want the resale value or occupancy of their home restricted. It was said that the single affordable case should be based on whether the applicant already lives or works in the community and has an affordable problem.

In terms of putting quotas on the number of affordable houses to be built in new developments, it was stated that the number should reflect the needs of the locality and should therefore be required to be flexible. However, it was believed a clear starting quota would ensure consistency, but should vary between rural and urban areas. During this group the RSL felt the quota should start at 50% while the private house builders suggested a figure of 20%. Although it was stated that another approach could be taken to discount prices on other units on the site with 20% being the minimum quota but

therefore allowing flexibility to provide more or less depending upon the local housing needs.

When talking about the renewable energy issues surrounding new developments there were a number of thoughts surrounding the topic, such as design issues and regulations and the cost of these, conservation area standards, the practicality of the cost of £5,000 for solar panels for each dwelling. This would be reflected in the price of the house and questions its affordability. The RSL have stated that they are already completing new builds to the standard of EcoHomes, however outline that this does demand more land for each dwelling, creating another debate as to the viability of land space against energy efficiency.

Also it was said that new homes and developments need to be near facilities in villages and towns along with being close to public transport networks. However, there is the issue of scattered settlements leading to problems regarding the opportunities available and the viability of extending current networks to meet needs. Although, another point that was raised was the use of development boundaries in order to limit the amount of development that could take place in or around a settlement.

Staff Consultation

This was another workshop which took place on the 28th September 2006. On this day there was a presentation on the LDF and Core Strategy – Issues and Options and then a presentation on the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Following the three presentations the participants were split into three groups in order to discuss issues and options surrounding housing, employment and sustainability.

At the consultation meeting was, Richard Evans, Sian Tranter, David Chennells, Robert Ward, Steve Long, Steve Robinson, Ben Brinicombe and Jim Askew (all from the Regeneration department). Diane Gorge, Sharon Owen, Matt Smith, Louise Kelly, Kerry McCartney, Peter Bales, Jill Elliott, Jeff Eaton (all from the Housing department), Julie Ward, Les Sheperd, Debbie Keir, Trevor Gear, Rebecca Wilson, Carla Cox, Joe Broomfield and Alex Roberts (all from the Sustainability department).

In terms of sustainability it was discussed that there needs to be a hierarchy produced of those towns and villages which have a minimum level of facilities. With reference to renewable energy there was the issue raised relating to the potential conflict with historic buildings along with the possibility for noise nuisance to properties and businesses in close proximity to the sites of wind farms, for example. It was stated that all new developments should be required to be designed in order to maximize all energy measures and the usage of locally produce materials should be encouraged, however not made compulsory.

As with the other groups, the issue of providing recycling facilities in new developments was discussed, however questions were raised with regards to problems such as the sites being subject to vandalism, the

generation of trips to deposit materials at the facility and the possibility that people may simply not use them. It was therefore concluded that door step recycling collection would be the most effective method to use.

With the ever growing use of wind farms conflicts can occur, following the development, with the tourism market. For example, in terms of the possible reduction in aesthetic quality that may come from the developments of wind farms along with the issues surrounding the protection of the landscape and the actual level of energy produced and where this is being used. The best location for these proposals was said to be as urban or industrial as possible although these may be unsuitable in terms of wind levels in such areas.

The issue of housing was examined within this group and again the problem of the locations of new developments were discussed and again it was agreed that the developments should occur where there is the greatest need for them and also where there are sufficient facilities to support an increase in the housing stock. It was also outlined that these developments should be concentrated within the main towns and villages throughout the borough. The group had stated that some of the regeneration sites are of poor quality. It was also said that there needs to be an emphasis put on Brownfield sites and also on sustainability issues and transport links. However, when developing contaminated, derelict or Brownfield land there are matters of costs and land value that must be considered. It was also discussed that there is a need for choice of location of development while using areas of focus. Another issue raised is the requirement of the flexibility of the location of affordable housing as the housing markets will change and so plans will need to be able to adapt to fit in where necessary. This could also be dependent upon such factors as local employment opportunities such as Sellafield.

It was also discussed that political priority may lead to the need for a generous supply in the number of locations of employment sites throughout the borough. It was said that the growing migrant workforce will help fill the skills gap in the area and reduce vacancies in some areas of the local economy. Also raised was the need for policies to be used in order to protect existing businesses in the borough, while also promoting tourism in the area.

The topic of the rural economy was examined during the course of this discussion group. It was observed that changes in agriculture leads to a number of redundant buildings. It was also believed that policies should be put in place in order to protect existing businesses. With the options of using work/live units in town centres. Also the promotion of tourism throughout the area with the possibility of supporting the use of caravans and/or chalets was seen as an option which should be encouraged.

When considering the employment sectors within the borough it was said that the knowledge based and IT areas should be given some attention as well as the Council being flexible so that they are able to respond to new or changing initiatives. The members of this discussion group also thought that it would be useful if there was a hierarchy produced that would show which sites

were available and for what uses. Transport was also highlighted as a key issue as connectivity between areas of employment throughout the borough and between rural and urban areas is lacking. Also seen as an issue is retail creep into designated employment sites that take the trade away from town centres. Another issue which was seen as to what should have an influence on policy was the demand or need of specific areas as opposed to have a generic idea for the whole borough.

Summary of Key Issues Raised Throughout

- Affordable Housing

The main issue that was raised throughout all of the consultation processes was the subject of Affordable Housing. It was seen as a major concern as local wages were seen to be significantly lower than what would be required to buy housing in the borough. This was seen to be having knock-on effects throughout the area such as an ageing population in settlements as people are being forced to move to where they can afford to live and are having to leave their place of work behind. Explanations as to how this problem has arisen have been laid at the door of the poor mix of housing in the area with too much executive housing in the area along with pressure put on the local market from tourists buying second homes in the area. This coupled with buy to let is reducing the housing stock available to locals.

In order to combat the issues facing the housing market in the area the different focus groups and council meetings came up with a number of suggestions. For example, it was said that the new builds should be spread across the district and judged regarding the need of an area which is to be judged over a period of time and not simply a snapshot of a particular place. They should also be built near to facilities and public transport to help the sustainability of the development, along with this it was suggested that they be built to the standards of EcoHomes in order to provide a high standard of energy efficiency and therefore reduce cost in bills etc. It was also recommended that the housing supply should include open market as affordability is seen to get worse in the future.

- Employment Land

Another key topic within these focus groups and questionnaires was the issue surrounding employment land. This related to the questions surrounding the location of new developments, the types of employment that will become available and the accessibility to these sites.

The main concerns when looking into this topic were the lack of investment from outside of the county, the loss of major employers throughout the region, the lack of work force and skills base across the district, the lack of transport infrastructure suitable for supporting industries and the issue of retail creep taking up sites that would be appropriate for employment land.

In order to cope with these issues a number of solutions were put forward during the various consultation methods. The suggestions that came from these results were to encourage the growth of local businesses and provide support to the existing firms and companies in the district through

implementing policies to ensure this takes place. With flexible initiatives created to support a range of companies. To promote year round tourism in the area through a project such as the Eden project in order to gain a longer stay clientele which will in turn provide a more sustained income to local businesses. Being flexible when accommodating new businesses was another initiative proposed, this was put forward in conjunction with ensuring any new company had a locational need among the community, Although there should be no new businesses allowed in the open countryside. The development of IT and software industries within the district is seen as a possibility, however among the first questionnaires the respondents were hoping for a diverse range of employment opportunities around the region.

- Recycling and Sustainability

Overall, those who took part throughout these consultations appeared to be very environmentally aware. There were a number of suggestions put forward in each consultation that could be used in order to create more sustainable developments within the district.

The majority of the respondents were very much in favour of the use of renewable energy sources; however it was found that the general feeling among those who took part felt that there has been too much emphasis placed on the use of wind turbines with the locals feeling that they are gaining little benefit. The other possible asset for renewable energy sources would be the use of tidal energy. When conducting new developments it was stated that the use of locally produced materials should be encouraged as far as legally possible along with the use of recycled or recyclable materials. The use of renewable energies among new developments should be proportionate and reasonable to the size. It was stated that the construction of recycling facilities should take place among new developments; however issues were raised as to the possibility of vandalism, the issue of the trips taken to gain access to such facilities and the simple question of whether people will actually use them. It was therefore decided that the use of doorstep collection services would be more beneficial. Also it was suggested that new developments should be placed near to public transport systems to promote the use of such services. However it was stated that there will need to be significant improvement in the current public transport system along with the cycle ways and foot paths in order to make them safe and effective.

- Transport and Communication Infrastructure

This was seen as a major issue amongst the groups, especially when attracting inward investment with a need for investment in roads and transport to develop areas for use by industries and tourism. The main problem is the scattered nature of the settlements in the district, which causes problems when trying to set up new public transport systems as it may not be viable to have bus systems going around such settlements. It may also prove a problem for the residents of villages and towns around the district particularly when shopping as this is difficult when using a bus or rail service. This lack of public transport has resulted in there becoming a perceived split between the coastal towns and those in the inner rural areas; also the lack of

accessibility of the Motorway system causes a remote feeling from the rest of the country.

The suggestions raised on this particular issue were to invest in cycle ways and foot paths, especially in larger developments in order to set up a network of such transport modes. Another idea was to reduce parking spaces in order to encourage the use of alternative means of transport; however this may cause a problem for local residents. Investment and development in the transport infrastructure will be essential in attracting in new businesses into the area enabling a range of employment opportunities for the locals.

- Promotion of Tourism

Throughout the consultation period there was a large emphasis placed on the expansion of the tourist services. It was hoped that in supporting methods to achieve this that it would be able to attract in a year round income for the shops and other local services available as opposed to a short seasonal income. It would be hoped that this could be accomplished by promoting a similar initiative to the Eden project in order to pull in tourists from areas such as the Lake District. This would also be attained through developing the main towns such as Maryport, Derwent Forest and Corus, all of which were cited in the consultations. In order to a longer tourism season initiatives such as allowing diversifications and conversions of existing buildings such as farm buildings should be considered.

- Environment

The main concerns raised when discussing environmental issues around the borough were on matters such as the possibility of renewable energy sources conflicting with historic buildings in the area. Along with wind farms causing problems with tourism and landscape protection as well as the concern regarding the amount of energy being produced. Also with gaps in the data on such matters the issue around site allocation was brought up during consultation.

In order to combat these problems a number of suggestions were made by the participants of the groups, such as making the location of wind farms as urban or industrial as possible in order to reduce the impact on the landscape and aesthetics in the area. Also suggested in line with this was the production of a local list in order to protect historic buildings and sites when new developments arise. The use of buffer sites was also mentioned in order to clearly show where different types of development will be allowed and on what scale so that minimum impacts on the landscape can be achieved. It was said that development on flood plains should be avoided in areas of high risk which should take into consideration the matter of climate change and should remain flexible when considering possible locations It was also stated that a proactive approach needs to be taken to preserve biodiversity around the borough.

The topic of preserving the environmental quality was discussed in a number of the consultations. In particular the use of Sustainable Urban

Drainage Systems (SUDS) was discussed. This approach was considered to provide a cost effective method of removing any unwanted surface water in a manner that would have a low environmental impact on the site, which was stated should be applied to all sites unless the ground conditions are unsuitable. Along with this was the use of different design methods to reduce costs of buildings and conserve areas, this is where the suggestion of developing new buildings to an EcoHomes standard would come into play as they are constructed following environmental impact assessments of materials and recycling facilities, are situated close to public transport systems and are constructed following ecological valuations of the sites and building footprints. However these do require more land to build.

- Services and Leisure Facilities

During the questionnaires undertaken as the first steps of the consultation process the issue was raised by a number of respondents that there is a lack of leisure facilities along with a poor accessibility to public transport and employment sites with the concentration of employment at Lillyhall being highlighted by 24% of the respondents to the original questionnaire. The lack of access to affordable housing was also discussed with house prices being too steep for those on local wage.

The main priorities were discussed as being employment sites and affordable housing numbers throughout the consultation groups, with the suggested production of a hierarchy of those towns and villages with minimal level of facilities in order to paint an accurate picture of what is needed and where. However it was determined that additional development of services such as shops would be unnecessary as most people will still travel to main service centres in order to purchase their goods. It was also stated that locations such as pubs, churches and village halls could be used as multi-functional buildings. It was also declared that a flexible system with regards to schools

Appendix one

Core Strategy Public Consultation results

The following results are based on a return of 35 full questionnaires and 17 summary questionnaires, a total of 52 questionnaires. The percentages are calculated on the amount of response to a particular question.

Answers from full questionnaires are marked (F) and those from full and summary questionnaires are marked (FS).

Q.1 Do you agree with the vision? (FS)

Answer – Yes **77%** No – **4%** No Comment – **19%**

Q.2 is the vision a fair reflection of the needs and aspirations of the community? (F)

Answer – Yes **57%** No – **11%** No Comment – **31%**

Comments

- Need to ensure landscape protection
- Causes impact on climate change and biodiversity
- Need more private housing
- Sustainability must be the main goal

Q.3 Are these objectives comprehensive? (F)

Answer – Yes **57%** No – **23%** No Comment – **20%**

Q.4 Are the objectives appropriate? (F)

Answer – Yes **60%** No - **15%** No Comment – **25%**

Comments

- Encourage better public transport
- Include accessibility
- Greater emphasis on employment

Q.5 Do they provide long term aims? (F)

Answer – Yes **57%** No – **9%** No Comment – **34%**

Comments

- Need recognition of “Port of Silloth”
- New developments must be accessible to a range of transport needs
- Limit traffic growth through sustainable transport

Q.6 Is the RSS requirement for 267 dwellings per year in Allerdale sufficient to meet the needs of the community? (FS)

Answer – Yes **34%** No – **34%** No Comment – **31%**

Q.7 Should Allerdale seek a higher figure in to boost the local economy and underpin regeneration in West Cumbria? (FS)

Answer – Yes **36%** No – **33%** No Comment – **31%**

Q.8 Should the Council; consider implementing a programme of housing clearance, as part of its housing strategy? (F)

Answer – Yes **31%** No – **29%** No Comment – **40%**

Q.9 If so, where and to what scale? (F)

Answer – **27% responded**

Comments

- Only dwellings in poor condition
- Only property which is past saving
- Depends on the circumstances
- Limit the scale
- Only older properties too expensive to repair

Q.10 on what basis should the Council decide the approximate proportion of new development (mainly housing) to be apportioned to KSC's, LSC's etc? (FS)

- A. Should it reflect existing population figures? – **17%**
- B. Should it reflect past building rates? - **12%**
- C. Should the Council take a more deliberately sustainable approach and promote a more concentrated distribution of development? – **13%**
- D. Should the distribution be based upon local circumstances? - **31%**
- No Comment - **27%**

Q.11 on what geographical basis should the Council seek to implement a sequential approach to the development of Brownfield and Greenfield land, i.e. how widely should the area within which sites will be compared will be drawn? Should it be? (F)

- a) Within the whole Borough – **23%**
- b) Within Housing Market areas as defined by the Housing Strategy? – **9%**
- c) Within the same settlement? – **17%**
- d) Within the same settlement but potentially including closely related settlements if circumstances justify it? – **11%**
- No comment – **40%**

Q.12 is there any compelling evidence to suggest that any of the principles for services and facilities should not be followed in Allerdale Borough? (F)

Answer – Yes **51%** No – **9%** No Comment – **40%**

Q.13 Should the core Strategy include a list of villages (LSC's) where development of an appropriate scale could be located or should it merely include the criteria by which LSC's will be defined at a later stage? (FS)

Answer – List Villages **25%** List Criteria **35%** No Comment **40%**

Q.14. which local services are most important? (FS)

Primary School	267
Rail/Bus Link	239
Shops	205
Post Office	194
Village Hall	160
Doctors Surgery	128
Public House/Hotel	109
Church	74
Other (Specify and rank)	
Green space	7
Employment	7
Recycling	1

Q.15 Should the LDF; include a hierarchy of villages within the LSC designation, similar to that within the local plan? (FS)

Answer – Yes **60%** No- **15%** No Comment – **25%**

Q.16 which facilities should, as a minimum, be present for a village to be designated a LSC?

Comments

- There should be no minimum
- Rail/bus
- School
- Shops
- At least 5 of the 8 mentioned in Q14
- Doctors surgery

Q.17 Should the LDF take a more restrictive policy stance than the Local Plan by reducing the number of villages where development (i.e. principally housing) will be allowed? (FS)

Answer – Yes **21%** No – **54%** No Comment – **25%**

Q.18 Should the LDF follow a similar policy to the IHP? Or perhaps; a slightly more, flexible version of it? (F)

Answer – Yes **17%** No – **46%** No Comment - **37%**

Q.19 Should the LDF draw development boundaries around KSC's and LSC's or rely on a criteria based policy to control the location of development? (FS)

Answer

- Development Boundaries – **35%**
- Criteria – **30%**
- No Comment – **35%**

Q.20 should the choice of LSC's also take into account a geographical criterion if we are to seek a generally even spread of LSC's? (FS)

Answer – Yes **31%** No – **37%** No Comment – **32%**

Q.21 or would such a policy be essentially unsustainable, if the chosen settlements, lacked a good range of facilities?

No responses

Q.22 should housing land allocations be concentrated solely in the Key Service Centres? (F)

Answer – **20%**

OR

- A. Dispersed more widely to include the largest LSC's with a good range of facilities? – **26%**
- B. Be dispersed more widely still to include smaller settlements with a limited range of facilities? – **23%**
- No Comment – **31%**

Should rural allocation concentrate on providing housing for local needs or to fill an identified gap in the market e.g. for the elderly?

Answer – Yes **28%** No – **26%** No Comment – **46%**

Q.23 should the policy for the conversion of existing buildings to residential use be: (F)

- A. As for new build houses: i.e. only acceptable within KSC's and LSC's? – **6%**
- B. In line with current policy in the Local Plan which allows conversion anywhere except with isolated buildings, and, outside KSC's and LSC's only after a commercial use has been shown to be impractical/unviable? – **31%**
- C. As an alternative; as per new build but also to allow unrestricted conversions in smaller villages which may not be LSC's but have a limited range of facilities? – **14%**
- No Comment – **49%**

Q.24 where should affordable housing be located? (FS)

- A. Only in Key Service Centres – **6%**
- B. Only in Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres – **6%**
- C. In KSC's, LSC's and in smaller villages which may not be designated LSC's – **6%**
- D. Anywhere the need arises – **56%**
- No Comment – **49%**

Q.25 should single affordable dwellings continue to be acceptable under the "exceptions site" rule? If so, where should they be acceptable? (F)

Answer – Yes **43%** No – **6%** No Comment – **51%**

Q.26 In order to bring forward more affordable housing on "quota" sites, should a fixed quota be imposed on all housing sites? Or, should quotas be flexible to reflect an identified local need? (FS)

Answer – Yes **15%** No – **58%** No Comment – **27%**

Q.27 it is sometimes said that imposing big quotas of affordable housing on market sites can render the development unviable. If a quota policy is adopted what should the maximum quota be set at? (FS)

- A. 20% of the dwellings – **30%**
- B. 25% of the dwellings – **6%**
- C. 40% of the dwellings – **0%**
- D. 50% of the dwellings – **6%**
- E. Other – 10% of dwellings – **3%**, 45% of dwellings – **3%**

Q.28 on what size of development should a quota be imposed? (FS)

- A. Minimum of 5 dwellings – **14%**

- B. Minimum of 10 dwellings – **18%**
- C. Minimum of 15 dwellings – **4%**
- D. Minimum of 20 dwellings – **20%**
- E. Other

Should the threshold for quotas be smaller in rural areas? (FS)

Answer – Yes **38%** No – **17%** No Comment – **44%**

Q.29 if a need for a transit site is shown, how should the travelling community be provided with accommodation?

- A. Should there be more than one site? (F) Yes – **6%** No – **6%** No Comment – **88%**
- B. Should the site(s) be located only in the largest urban area? (FS) – **29%**
- C. Only where there is the greatest need? (FS) – **71%**
- D. No Comment – **38%**

Q.30 Notwithstanding guidance in PPS 7 should the Council:

- A. Continue to define local landscape designations? - **42%**
- B. Not identify any local landscape designations and rely on general criteria based policies to protect landscapes outside the nationally designated landscapes, i.e. Solway Coast AONB? – **25%**
- C. No Comment – **32%**

Q.31 Should the Council continue to protect important urban (including village) green space from damaging development? If so, should the Council: (F)

- A. Not identify any such areas, but use general criteria based policies to protect them? – **11%**
- B. Continue to identify some such areas for protection but also use criteria based policy to protect unidentified areas? – **23%**
- C. Attempt to identify as many such areas as possible: in this option it is almost certain that the Council would still need to cover the possibility of seeking to protect an unidentified space as in (B) above. – **29%**
- D. No Comment – **37%**

Q.32 should private land be protected as green space? (F)

Answer Yes – **54%** No – **6%** No Comment – **40%**

Q.33 should there be more pro-active approach to protecting and enhancing bio-diversity and enhancing bio-diversity/habitats as part of new development? (F)

Answer – Yes **57%** No – **6%** No Comment – **37%**

Q.34 Should the Council be more active in acquiring, designating and managing more Local Nature Reserves? (F)

Answer Yes **51%** No – **3%** No Comment – **46%**

Q35 Are there undesignated areas of the Borough worthy of protection and enhancement? (FS)

Answers

- Curwen Hall
- Mill Field
- Harrington Marina
- Beaches and Sand dunes
- Village back lanes
- Penneygill
- Church Lonning
- Village greens
- Area between Kirkbampton and Thurstonfield
- Small clusters of woodland
- Wedges of land that penetrate and surround Cockermouth
- All of it

Q.36 what development should be allowed in high flood risk areas? (FS)

- A. No development (both river and coastal) – **40%**
 - B. Only essential development, e.g. infrastructure – **10%**
 - C. Development for which there is no preferable, sustainable, alternative site? – **10%**
 - D. Allow development with mitigation/protection measures even in high risk areas? – **13%**
- No Comment – **27%**

Q.37 Are there any historic areas of Allerdale towns and villages which justify designation as new Conservation areas? If so, where? (FS)

Comments

- Workington's Old market
- Clifton Hall
- Curwen Hall
- Castles and old buildings
- Maryport Harbour
- Aspatria
- Centre of Broughton

- Wigton
- Harbours, Coastlines
- Allerdale Market Towns

Q.38 Should the Council be more pro-active in seeking the repair and enhancement of Listed Buildings “at risk”? Should the Council compile a survey of Grade 11 listed buildings to gain amore accurate picture of the state of all the Listed Buildings in the area? (FS)

Answer – Seek repair – Yes **67%** No – **2%** No Comment – **31%**
 Compile a survey – Yes **46%** No – **6%** No Comment – **48%**

Q.39 Should the Council compile a “Local list” of buildings meriting preservation? (FS)

Answer – Yes **65%** no – **6%** No Comment - **29%**

Q.40 Should Allerdale continue to retain a generous supply of allocated and committed employment land in the LDF?

No responses

Q.41 should land be allocated? (FS)

- A. To retain a generous supply of employment land? – **25%**
- B. In line with RSS requirements? – **29%**
- Or
- C. In line with past building trends? – **17%**
- No Comment – **29%**

Q.42 should employment policy focus on:- (FS)

- A. Specific business needs e.g. high tech, knowledge based, or manufacturing sectors? – yes - **12%** No – **60%** No Comment – **29%**
- B. Should it be more flexible and open to a wide range of employment uses for each site? – **55%**

Q.43 where should allocated employment sites be located? (FS)

- A. In the Key Service Centres only? (Particularly large sites) – **2%**
- B. In key and Local Service Centres, at an appropriate scale? – **31%**
- C. Throughout the Borough? – **40%**
- D. No Comment – **27%**

Q44 is too much employment land concentrated at Lillyhall? (F)

Answer - Yes **23%** No – **29%** No Comment – **49%**

Q.45 what should policy towards employment development in Rural Areas and Countryside be? (F)

- A. Continue to allow new businesses within designated villages and, in open countryside, to allow the development of existing businesses, farm diversification and conversions of appropriate buildings – **9%**
- B. As (A) above but also to allow new businesses in open countryside where there would be no adverse environmental impact? – **40%**
- C. To allow employment development only in Local Service Centres, plus farm diversification and conversions of existing appropriate buildings? – **46%**

Q.46 what should be the policy towards conversions of buildings in the countryside? (FS)

- A. Continue to resist the conversion isolated or remote buildings? – **10%**
- B. Be more restrictive and only allow conversions as part of farm diversification or the expansion of existing businesses? – **17%**
- C. Allow conversions even in isolated and remote areas? – **37%**
- D. No Comment – **37%**

Q.47 what should be the policy approach towards new proposals for tourism purposes? (F)

- A. Continue to allow new tourism proposals, and extensions to existing facilities, in the open countryside, with protection given to the AONB. – **43%**
- B. Only allow conversions of existing buildings and/or extensions to existing facilities in open countryside, with new businesses being directed to Key or Local Service Centres – **9%**
- C. Allow only small scale tourism proposals in open countryside, including conversions – **9%**
- D. No Comment – **37%**

Q.48 should proposals for new-build holiday cottages be treated as tourism or housing proposals? In other words should they be subject to the same sustainable principles as other housing proposals? (F)

Tourism – **20%**
Housing – **34%**
No Comment - **46%**

Q.49 Should Allerdale continue to promote Workington Town Centre as the main comparison retailing location in West Cumbria? (FS)

Answer – Yes **56%** No – **10%** No Comment – **33%**

Q.50 where there is evidence that a town centre is “loosing” expenditure to another town centre, should the Council actively seek to “claw back” that expenditure by promoting further retail development to improve the retail “offer” of the town? (F)

Answer – Yes **37%** No – **20%** No Comment – **43%**

Q.51 Should the Council identify “Primary Shopping Streets” where non retail uses should be resisted if they begin to adversely affect the retail character of the street? (F)

Answer – Yes **43%** No – **9%** No Comment – **49%**

Q.52 should residential use be encouraged in town centres? (F)

Answer – Yes **38%** No – **3%** No Comment - **40%**

Q.53 Are existing leisure facilities (including sports centres) of the right quality and in the right place? (F)

Answer – Yes **20%** No – **20%** No Comment – **60%**

Q.54 is there a shortage of sports and recreation facilities in certain parts of Allerdale? (FS)

Answer – Yes **37%** No – **6%** No Comment – **58%**

Q.55 Should the Council be more pro-active in improving the provision of children’s play space across the Borough? (F)

Answer – Yes **49%** No – **0%** No Comment – **51%**

Q.56 Should the Council continue to require housing developers to provide appropriate children’s play areas within their developments of a certain size? (FS)

Answer - Yes **62%** No – **4%** No Comment – **33%**

Q.57 should new development make a positive contribution to re-cycling by including recycling facilities? Should there be a size threshold which triggers such a requirement? (FS)

Answer – Yes **71%** No – **0%** No Comment – **29%**

Q.58 should planning policy encourage the use of locally sourced materials in developments? (F)

Answer- Yes **71%** No – **0%** No Comment – **29%**

Q.59 should the use of re-cycled materials be encouraged in all developments? (FS)

Answer – Yes **73%** No – **0%** No Comment – **27%**

Q.60 should developers be required to include energy efficiency measures in all development? If so which elements of a development should be controlled? (F)

A. Location? -	Yes	51%	No	20%	No Comment	29%
B. Orientation? –	Yes	51%	No	17%	No Comment	31%
C. Design? –	Yes	71%	No	3%	No Comment	26%
D. Materials? –	Yes	69%	No	3%	No Comment	29%

Q.61 should developers be required to submit energy statements with all planning applications (other than domestic extensions) to show how they have incorporated energy efficiency measures in the proposed building? (FS)

Answer – Yes **77%** No – **0%** No Comment – **23%**

Q.62 should new development be required to generate a stated proportion of its energy requirements from renewable resources? (FS)

Answer – Yes **58%** No – **17%** No Comment – **21%**

Q.63 If so, what proportion would be reasonable and practical? (F)

A. N/A -	23%
B. 10% -	19%
C. 15% -	4%
D. 20% -	12%
E. 25% -	4%
F. 30% -	4%
G. No Comment –	34%

Q.64 should developers be required to submit energy statements with appropriate planning applications, showing how the proposal contributes to meeting renewable energy targets? (F)

Answer – Yes **57%** No – **9%** No Comment – **34%**

Q.65 should the majority of future development be directed towards locations where the most sustainable patterns of transport can be achieved, and where a greater choice of transport mode is available? E.g. public transport, cycleways and footpaths? (FS)

Answer – Yes **54%** No – **25%** No Comment – **21%**

Q.66 should major development incorporate measures to encourage more sustainable patterns of transport, e.g. cycleways, footpaths? Should developers have the option to pay a commuted sum as a contribution to transport infrastructure? What threshold should trigger such requirements for residential and commercial development? (F)

Answer – Yes **63%** No – **11%** No Comment – **26%**

Q.67 should more public car parking be provided in town centres? If so, which towns have a problem? (F)

Answer – Yes 37% No – 26% No Comment – 37%

Comments

- Maryport
- Workington
- Cockermouth
- At railway stations

Q.68 In what ways should the Council use the management of car parks to promote sustainable patterns of movement?

Comments

- Stop planned closure of existing car parks
 - More expensive in town centres
 - More flexible pricing policy
 - More time allowed to park
 - More free short term parking
 - Monitor usage and demand
 - Eliminate traffic wardens
 - Park and ride facilities
- and post offices is required due to the possibility of closures.