

Allerdale LDF Core Strategy

FROM
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
TO
SPATIAL OPTIONS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The first steps in the preparation of Allerdale's Local Development Framework were the preparation of a comprehensive Evidence Base in order to highlight the priority issues which the LDF must address, and consultation on those issues and certain broad strategic options to address them.
- 1.2 The identification of those priority issues led directly to the formulation of a Spatial Vision for Allerdale which encompasses the aspirations of other local strategies but, more importantly, addresses the main issues and how they may be overcome or ameliorated. The next step was to translate this spatial vision into Strategic Objectives which form the link between the high level vision and the detailed strategy.
- 1.3 This process is now complete and Allerdale's priority issues, high level Vision and Strategic Objectives are now sit down in a working document available on our website. This document also includes notes on the consultation that was undertaken, and the final Priority Issues, Vision and Strategic Objections incorporate the results of that consultation.
- 1.4 The Government's Planning Policy Statement 12 "Local Spatial Planning" states at paragraph 4.3;

"The Strategic Objectives form the link between the high level vision and the detailed strategy. They should expand the vision into the key specific issues for the area which need to be addressed, and how that will be achieved within the timescale of the Core Strategy."

- 1.5 We must, therefore, now go on to consider our Delivery Strategy which will form the basis for policy in the LDF Core Strategy, and other subsequent DPDs. PPS12 goes on to say at paragraph 4.36;

"Core Strategies must be justifiable; they must be;

- founded on a robust and credible evidence base; and
- the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives."

Paragraph 4.38 says;

"The ability to demonstrate that the Plan is the most appropriate when considered against reasonable alternatives delivers confidence in the strategy. It requires the Local Planning Authority to seek out and evaluate reasonable alternatives promoted by themselves and others, to ensure that they bring forward those alternatives which they consider the LPA should evaluate as part of the plan-making process. There is no point in inventing alternatives that are not realistic ..."

- 1.6 It will be seen therefore, that the alternative spatial strategies should be:

- Reasonable;
- Realistic;
- Potentially generated by others than the LPA;

There is no guidance as to what “Reasonable” and “Realistic” mean. This leaves Local Planning Authorities in something of a quandary. To exclude some alternatives because they are not considered reasonable might exclude options which have been put forward by others, or, it could exclude options which are “marginal”. After all, how do you know if an alternative is “reasonable” without some form of assessment? In order to get over this issue in a transparent way Allerdale proposes to generate a wide range of alternative options, which may include unreasonable or unrealistic options and to carry out a ‘first sieve’ to create a shortlist of reasonable alternatives which will be subject to a ‘second sieve’ of more rigorous, formal assessment to generate a preferred option. The whole of this process to be open and transparent in order to show stakeholders and consultees that the alternatives we assessed were comprehensive.

2. **Generating the List of Alternative Spatial Options**

2.1 In generating the first, wider list of alternatives, Allerdale acknowledges that there is no point in assessing options which are totally unrealistic, and it is possible to discard such without rigorous assessment and without controversy. For example, if we chose to include as an option “An extreme Urban Regeneration Priority Option” which sought to direct all Housing and Employment Development into Workington and Maryport, (which are designated as Regeneration Priority Areas in the Regional Spatial Strategy) that would be considered unreasonable in excluding the whole of the rest of the Borough from future development.

2.2 Accordingly, our wider list for a First Sieve includes alternatives which:

- Are generated by other local strategies, e.g. the “Energy Coast” Masterplan and the Sustainable Communities Strategy;
- May not be obviously “unreasonable” or “unrealistic” at first glance; and
- Were included in Allerdale’s original issues and options consultation of 2006.

2.3 The criteria to be used in the “First Sieve” should not be as rigorous as those which will be used to generate our preferred Spatial Option in the ‘Second Sieve’. The following assessment criteria are proposed and are simply aimed at identifying those alternatives which are broadly reasonable;

- They must allow for some scale of development in all the Sustainable Communities Strategy’s “Localities”
- The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment must indicate that the housing element of the Alternative is broadly deliverable.
- There must be a degree of confidence that the required infrastructure is in place or will be in place to enable the alternative to be delivered.

2.4 The criteria proposed for the ‘Second Sieve’ in the generation of a preferred option need to be more rigorous and comprehensive, expanding on the

deliverability issues and bringing in, issues of “fit” with the strategic objectives and other strategies, issues of viability, community consultation and sustainability appraisal, as follows:

- (1) Does the Alternative deliver the Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives?
- (2) Does it fit with other local strategies?
- (3) Does it fit a “likely” population projection?
- (4) Does it fit the RSS?
- (5) It is deliverable viz market demand, infrastructure, SHLAA, and employment land in the Localities?
- (6) Is it viable? It is deliverable in normal market conditions?
- (7) Accessibility : Does it improve accessibility to services?
- (8) Sustainability Appraisal; including environmental impact, Habitats Regulation Assessment and Climate Change.
- (9) Flexibility : is the Alternative capable of dealing with changing circumstances?
- (10) Monitoring : are the essential key elements of the Alternative capable of being monitored?
- (11) Consultations : does it meet the aspirations of local communities?

2.5 We now move on to generate the “Wide List” of Alternative Spatial Options.

3. **The “Wide List” of Spatial Options**

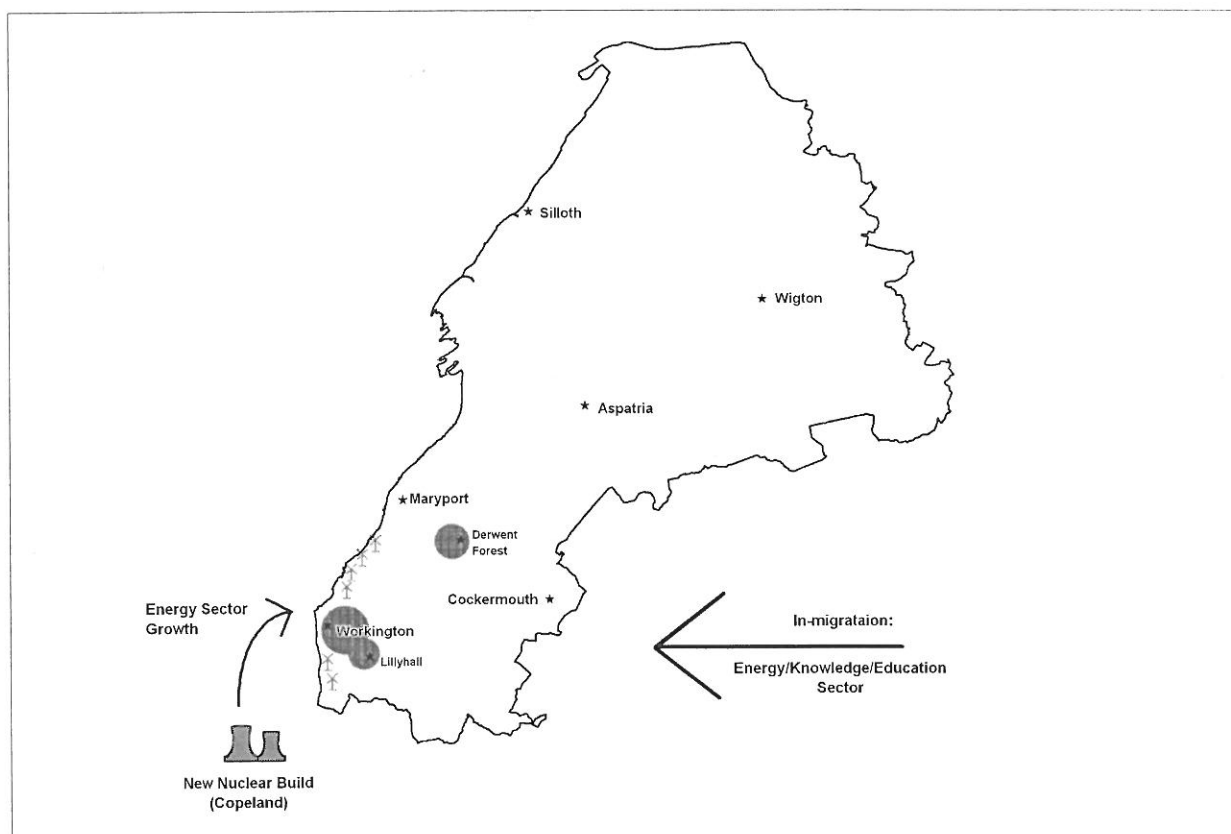
3.1 We have decided that the Spatial Options to be the subject of the “First Sieve” should be drawn wider than may be considered “reasonable” at first sight. They will then be subject to assessment against the broad criteria in paragraph 2.3 above. Our First List of Spatial Options follows below. The Options are given a title, the Key Elements are explained including the source of the Option. There is a Key Diagram to illustrate the Option graphically and finally the assessment against the criteria in paragraph 2.3, which will generate our shortlist.

3.2 **Option One : “Transformational Growth”**

Key Elements:

- Generated from the “Energy Coast Masterplan

- Entails transformational growth in the residential and commercial sectors, substantially beyond the scale envisaged in the RSS, and beyond current trend.
- Assumes at least one new-build nuclear power station in West Cumbria.
- Entails substantial growth in the energy, nuclear and education sectors focussed in Workington, Lillyhall, Derwent Forest as well as in Copeland.
- Entails transformational scale of residential development in Workington (including 'Port Derwent'). Major mixed development, including 1600 dwellings, to south of River Derwent substantially beyond current and historic trend.
- Supports and substantially enhances Workington's role as the principal urban service centre of West Cumbria.
- Allows for development throughout the Borough to a scale potentially beyond historic trend, at the discretion of the LPA.
- Assumes substantial increase in in-migration to West Cumbria, generated by growth of jobs in the energy/knowledge/education sectors.



3.3 First Sieve Assessment

- (i) **Localities:** Allows for some scale of development in all Localities, potentially beyond trend, at the discretion of the LPA.
- (ii) **SHLAA:** sufficient land is notionally available to deliver this Alternative.
- (iii) **Infrastructure:** there is evidence to show that current infrastructure is inadequate to serve this scale of development in Workington, Lillyhall and Derwent Forest and that there is little prospect that the necessary infrastructure improvement will or can be made in the timespan of the LDF.

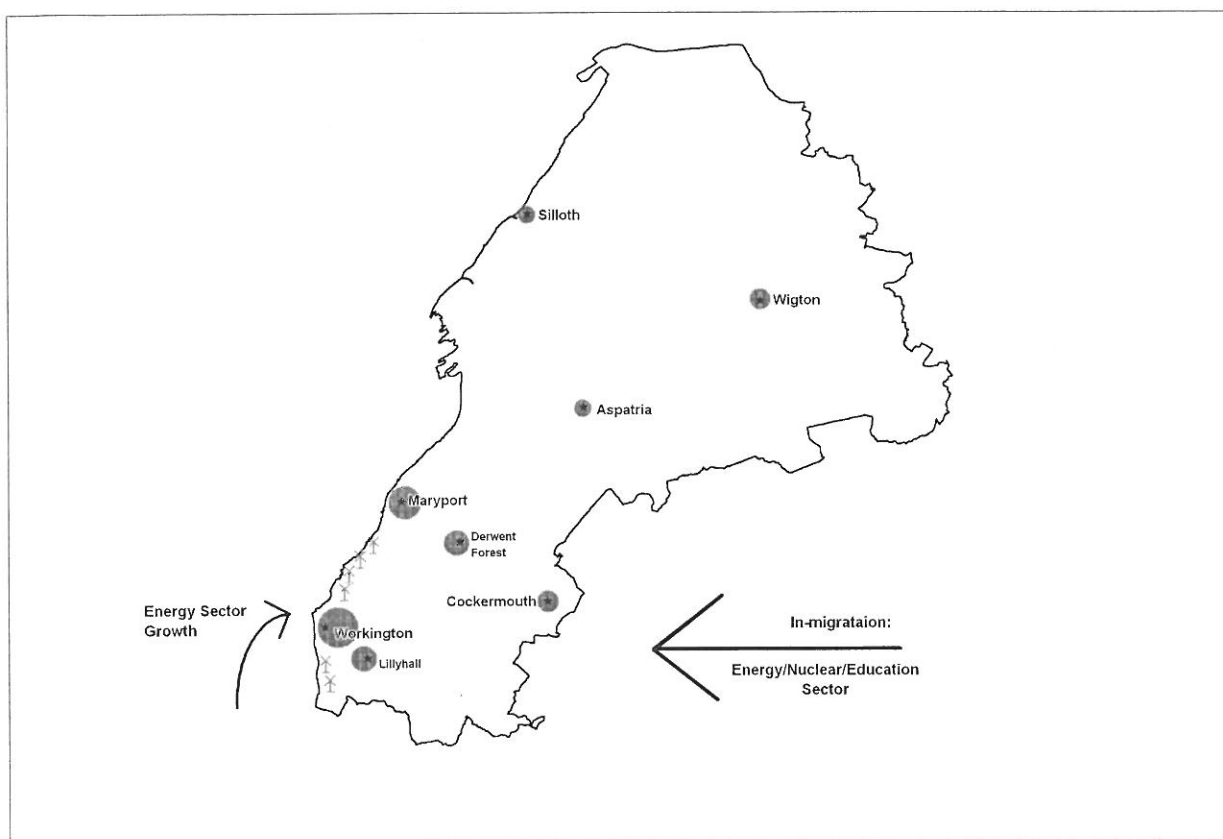
Carry Forward to Shortlist?

No

3.4 Option Two : “Substantial Regeneration Focussed”

Key Elements;

- Entails growth moderately beyond the scale envisaged in the RSS (less than Option 1).
- That extra growth to be focussed in Workington and Maryport, which are designated as part of the West Cumbria Regeneration Priority Area in RSS.
- Elsewhere, growth (potentially beyond trend) to be focussed into the Key Service Centres to encourage sustainable patterns of growth.
- Entails substantial growth in the energy, nuclear and education sectors focussed in Workington, Maryport, Lillyhall and Derwent Forest, (as well as in Copeland).
- Allows for part of Port Derwent and Derwent Forest in the Plan Period.
- Supports and enhances Workington’s and Maryport’s roles as the principal service centres for Allerdale.
- Assumes increased in-migration to West Cumbria generated by growth in energy, nuclear and education sectors.
- Supports and enhances the roles of Cockermouth, Wigton, Silloth and Aspatria as Key Service Centres but restricts development in the rest of the rural areas.



3.5 First Sieve Assessment

- (i) **Localities:** Allows for some scale of development in all localities.
- (ii) **SHLAA:** Sufficient land is notionally available to deliver this Alternative.
- (iii) **Infrastructure:** It is not entirely clear whether the necessary infrastructure is available especially at Lillyhall and Derwent Forest. However, there is some prospect that such infrastructure could be in place by the end of the Plan Period.

Carry Forward to Shortlist?

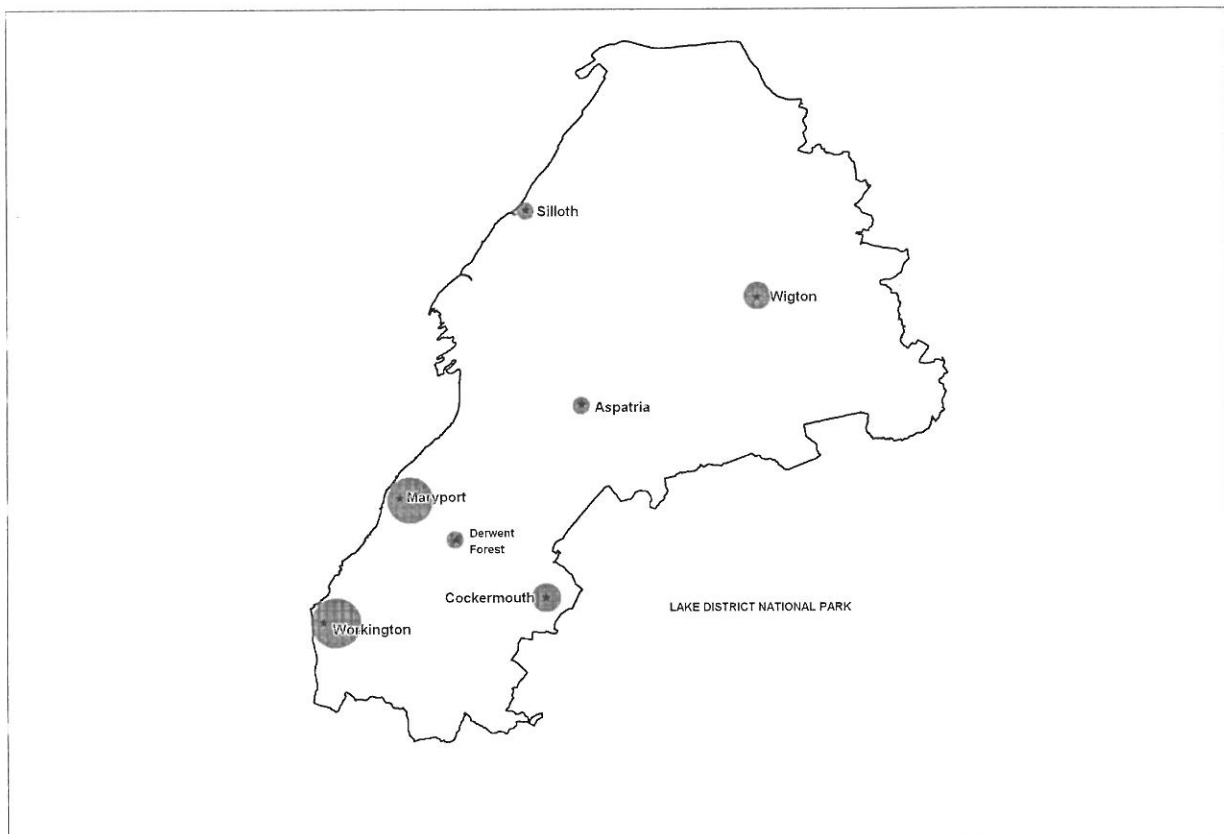
Yes (but marginal)

3.6 Option Three : “Urban Focus/Maximum RSS”

Key Elements:

- Broadly aligns with RSS but uses housing target of 287 units p.a. as a minimum.
- Concentrates most development (60%) into the Regeneration Priority Area, Workington/Maryport.

- Entails all other development (40%) to be concentrated into the other 4 Key Service Centres, potentially beyond recent trend.
- Only essential development in Local Service Centres and elsewhere.
- Allows for “modest” beginning of both Port Derwent and Derwent Forest to be phased towards the end of the Plan Period.
- Supports and enhances Workington’s and Maryport’s roles as the principal service centre for Allerdale.
- Supports and enhances the roles of Cockermouth, Wigton, Silloth and Aspatria as Key Service Centres.
- Severely restricts development outside Key Service Centres.



3.7 First Sieve Assessment

- Localities:** Allows for some scale of development in all Localities.
- SHLAA:** Sufficient land is notionally available to deliver this Alternative.

- (iii) **Infrastructure:** As with Option 2, it is not entirely clear that necessary infrastructure is available, but there is reasonable prospect that such will be available by the end of the Plan Period.

Carry Forward to Shortlist?

Yes

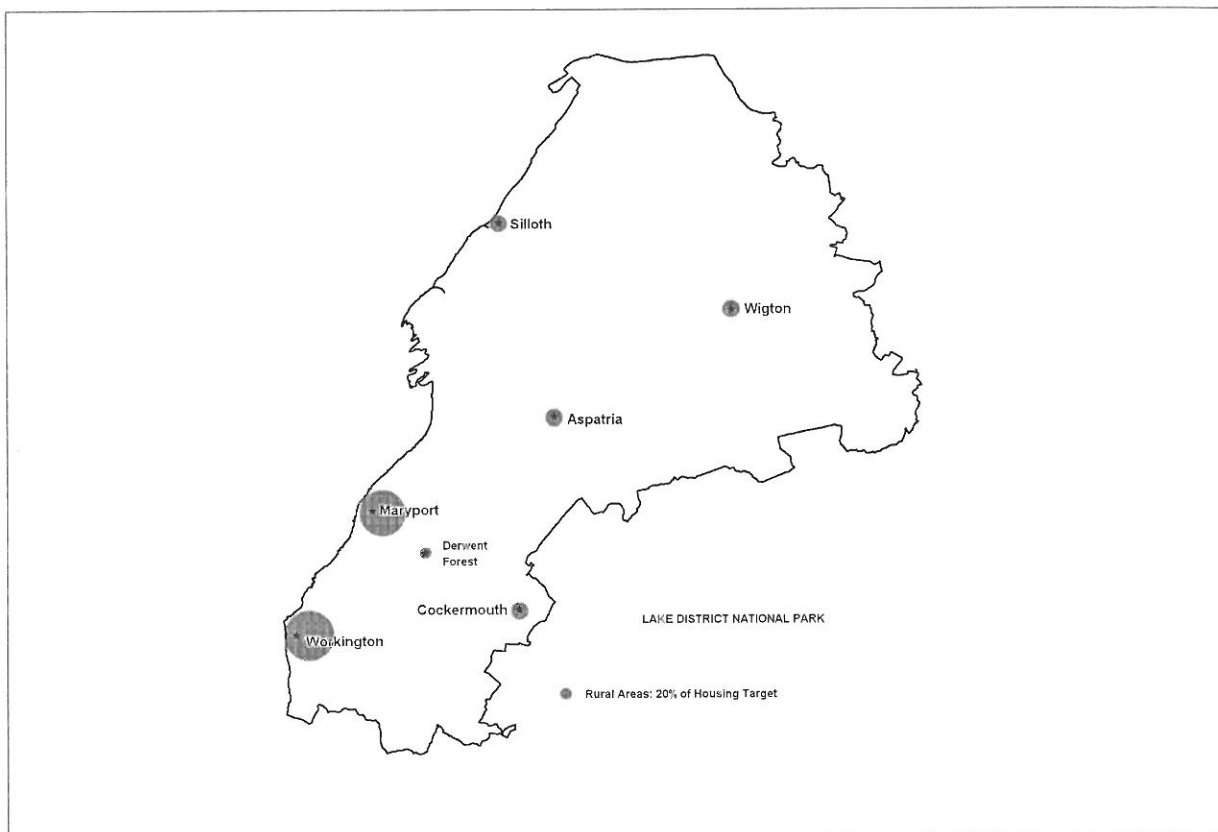
3.8 Option Four : “Sustainable/Balanced Growth/Max RSS”

Key Elements:

- Broadly in line with RSS but uses housing target of 267 units per annum as a minimum.
- Generated from ‘Issues and Options’ Document September 2006; which looked at this as “a more deliberately sustainable approach.”
- Entails these approximate proportions:

Workington/Maryport	:	55%
Cockermouth	}	
Wigton	}	: 25%
Silloth	}	
Aspatria	}	
Rural Areas	:	20%
- Supports and enhances Workington’s and Maryport’s roles as the principle service centres for Allerdale.
- Supports other KSCs but will entail restricting development in Cockermouth and Wigton below historic trend. *
- Allows for moderate scale of development in rural villages but below historic trend. *
- Potentially allows for the early phases of Port Derwent and Derwent Forest, towards the end of the Plan Period, if market circumstances allow and delivery begins.

* Historic trend here is House Completions 1998-2003, i.e. pre-Interim Housing Policy which has significantly skewed the dwelling completion figures.



3.9 First Sieve Assessment

- (i) **Localities** : Allows for some scale of development in all Localities.
- (ii) **SHLAA** : Sufficient land is notionally available to deliver this Alternative, although there may be very local shortages.
- (iii) **Infrastructure** : There are no obvious infrastructure constraints to prevent the delivery of this Alternative, especially if Cockermouth is restricted below trend.

Carry Forward to Shortlist?

Yes

3.10 Option Five : “Existing Population Distribution/Max RSS

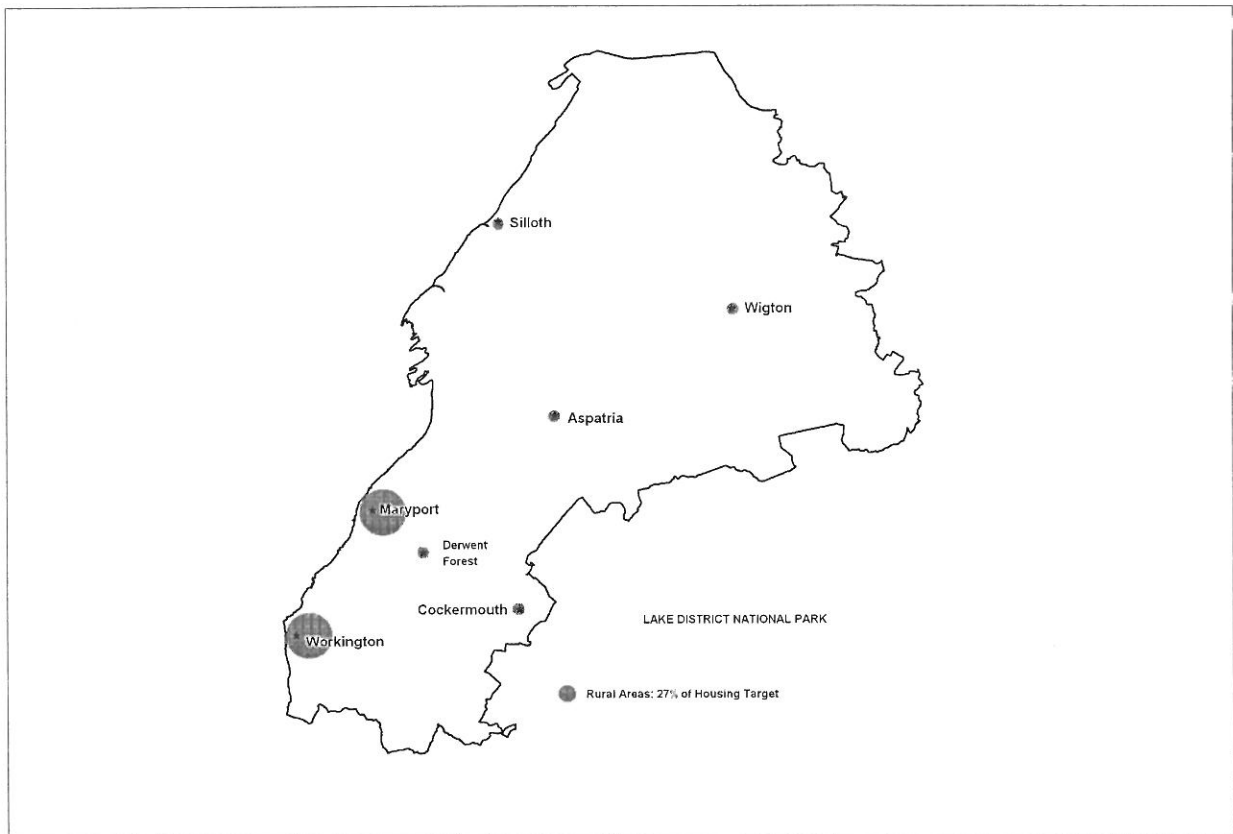
Key Elements:

- Broadly in line with RSS but uses housing target of 267 units per annum as a minimum.
- Generated from ‘Issues and Options’ Document September 2006.

- Proportions of growth in line with existing population as follows:

Workington/Maryport	:	50%
Cockermouth	}	
Wigton	}	: 23%
Silloth	}	
Aspatria	}	
Rural Areas	:	27%

- Supports Workington's and Maryport's roles as the principal service centres for Allerdale.
- Supports other KSCs but will entail restricting development in Cockermouth and Wigton below historic trend.
- Outside KSCs, the scale of development in rural areas would be higher than historic trend : allows a large number of LSCs.
- Potentially allows for the early phases of Port Derwent and Derwent Forest, towards the end of the Plan Period, if market conditions allow.



3.11 First Sieve Assessment

- (i) **Localities** : Allows for a scale of development in all Localities.
- (ii) **SHLAA** : Sufficient land is notionally available to deliver this Alternative.
- (iii) **Infrastructure** : There are no obvious infrastructure constraints to prevent the broad delivery of this Alternative. There may be local constraints in certain rural communities and a limit to growth in Cockermouth.

Carry Forward to Shortlist?

Yes

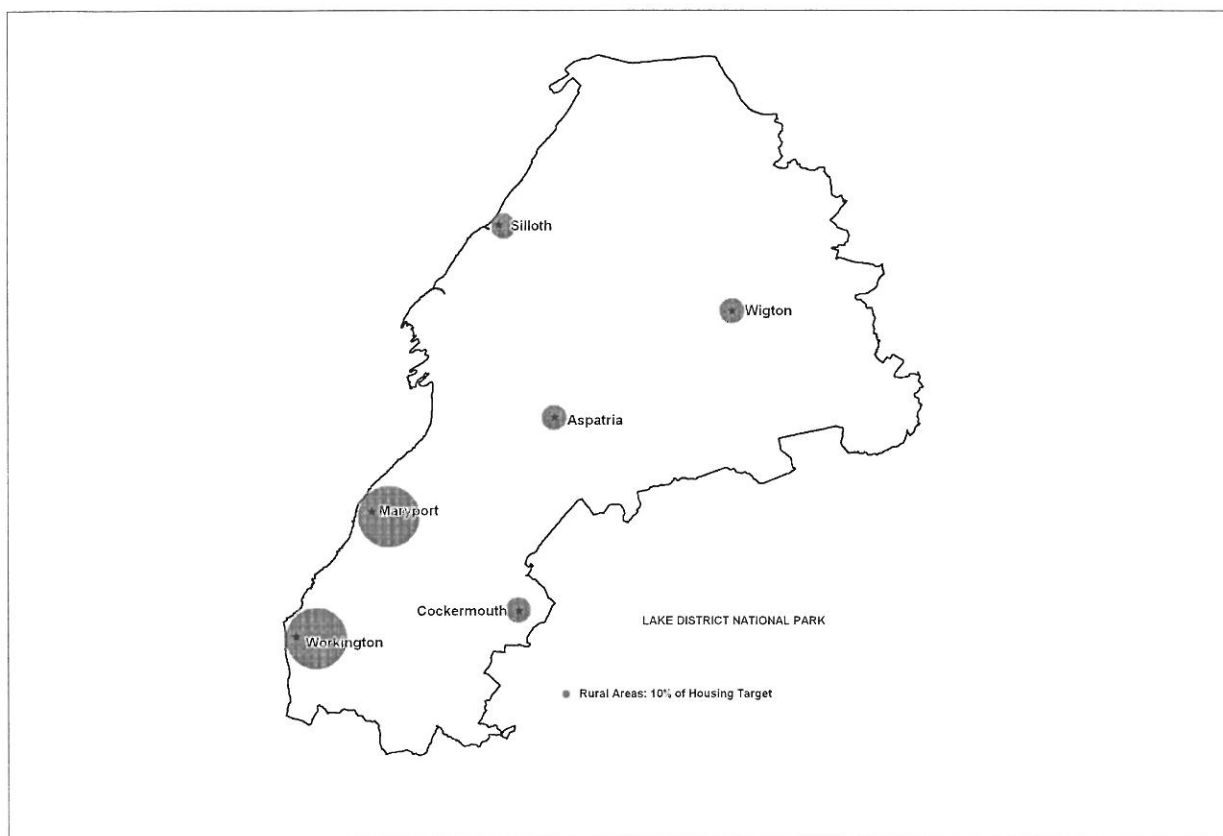
3.12 Option Six : “Regeneration Focussed : Strict RSS”

Key Elements:

- Entails strict interpretation of RSS target of 267 units per annum as a maximum figure.
- As with Option 2, growth to be focussed in the Regeneration Priority Area, Workington/Maryport and in other KSCs with minimal development outside KSCs. Proportions of new development approximately as follows:

Workington/Maryport	:	60%
Cockermouth	}	
Wigton	}	: 30%
Silloth	}	
Aspatria	}	
Rural Areas	:	10%

- Enhances the roles of Workington and Maryport as Principal Service Centres.
- Allows moderate development in other KSCs but potentially below historic trend in Cockermouth and Wigton.
- Severely restricts development in Rural Areas well below historic trend, with only larger villages as LSCs, and essential development only in most rural communities.
- Scale of development (with existing commitments) does **not** allow for any residential part of Port Derwent or Derwent Forest to begin during the Plan Period.



3.13 First Sieve Assessment

- (i) **Localities** : Allows for some scale of development in all Localities.
- (ii) **SHLAA** : Sufficient land is notionally available to deliver this Alternative.
- (iii) **Infrastructure** : No obvious problems of infrastructure, especially if development in Cockermouth and the Rural Areas is restricted below trend.

Carry Forward to Shortlist?

Yes

3.14 Option Seven : “Sustainable/Balanced Growth/Strict RSS”

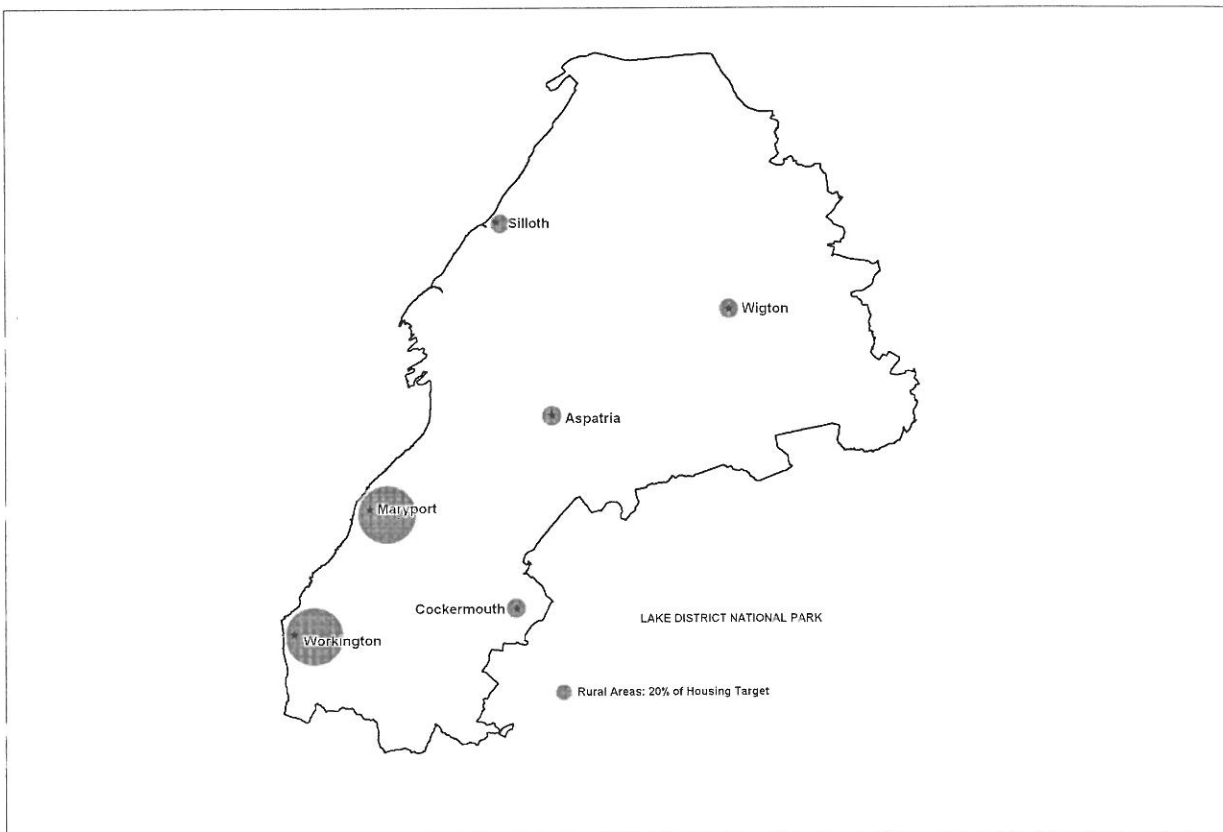
Key Elements:

- Similar to Option 4 but entails strict interpretation of RSS Target as a maximum figure.
- Entails these approximate proportions:

Workington/Maryport	:	55%
Cockermouth	}	
Wigton	}	: 25%
Silloth	}	

Aspatia }
Rural Areas : 20%

- Supports and enhances the roles of Workington and Maryport as the Principal Service Centres of Allerdale.
- Supports moderate development in other KSCs but with development in Cockermouth and Wigton restricted well below historic trend.
- Allows development outside KSCs, close to historic trend.
- Scale of development, with existing commitments, does not allow for any residential element at Port Derwent or Derwent Forest.



3.15 First Sieve Assessment

- Localities** : allows for some scale of development in all Localities.
- SHLAA** : sufficient land is notionally available to deliver this Alternative.
- Infrastructure** : no obvious problem of infrastructure, especially if development in Cockermouth and certain rural communities is restricted.

Carry Forward to Shortlist?

Yes

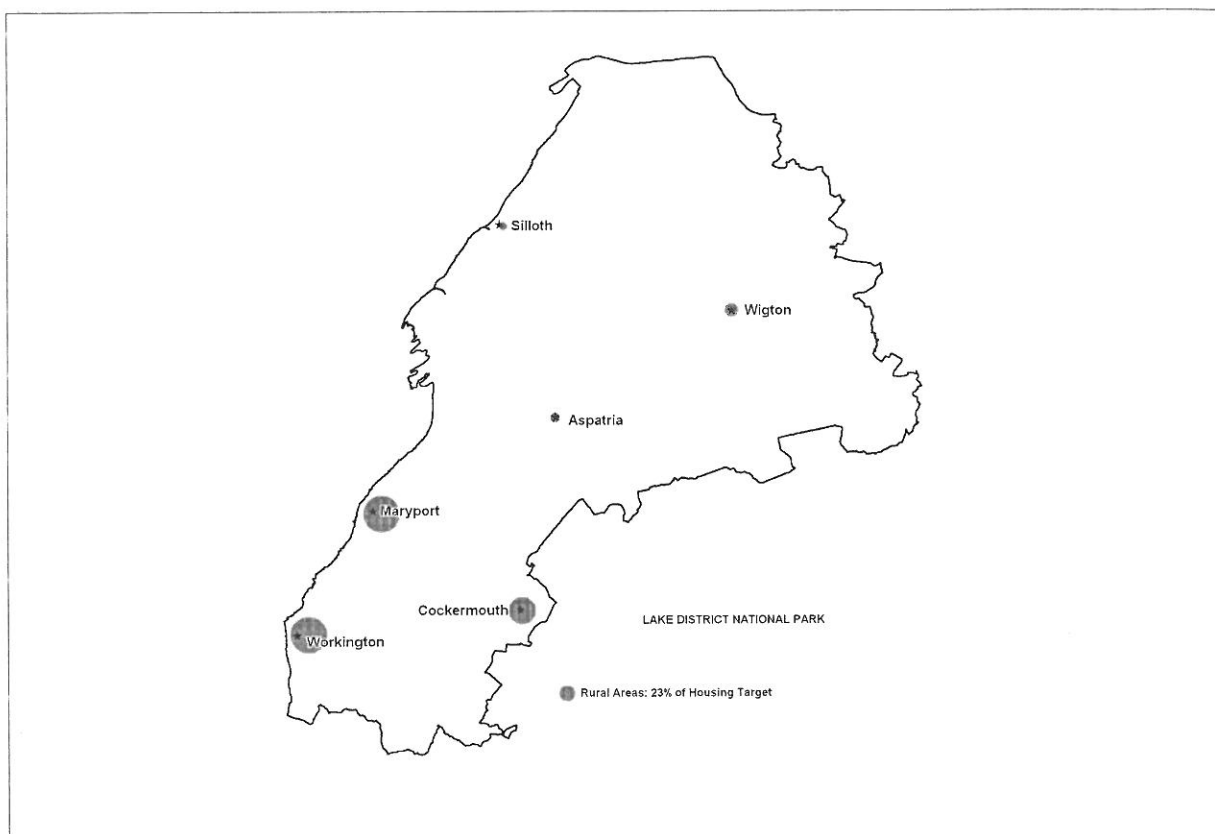
3.16 Option Eight : “Historic Trend : Strict RSS”

Key Elements :

- This Alternative was included in the Issues and Options Document of September 2006.
- Entails strict interpretation of RSS target as a maximum.
- Development distribution in line with trend 1998-2003 (Pre-Interim Policy):

Workington/Maryport	36%
Cockermouth	22%
Wigton	14%
Silloth	2%
Aspatria	3%
Rural Areas	23%

- Entails a more rural emphasis than any other Alternative, with 64% of new housing outside the 2 main settlements.
- Does not allow for Port Derwent or Derwent Forest, (with the scale of current commitments).
- Allows for widespread, scattered designation of Local Service Centres.
- There may be infrastructure/environmental constraints on this scale of development in Cockermouth.



3.17 First Sieve Assessment

- (i) **Localities** : Allows for a scale of development in all Localities.
- (ii) **SHLAA** : Sufficient land is notionally available to deliver this Alternative.
- (iii) **Infrastructure** : There may be local infrastructure problems in Cockermouth and Rural Areas but not such as to prevent the delivery of this broad Alternative.

Carry Forward to Shortlist?

Yes

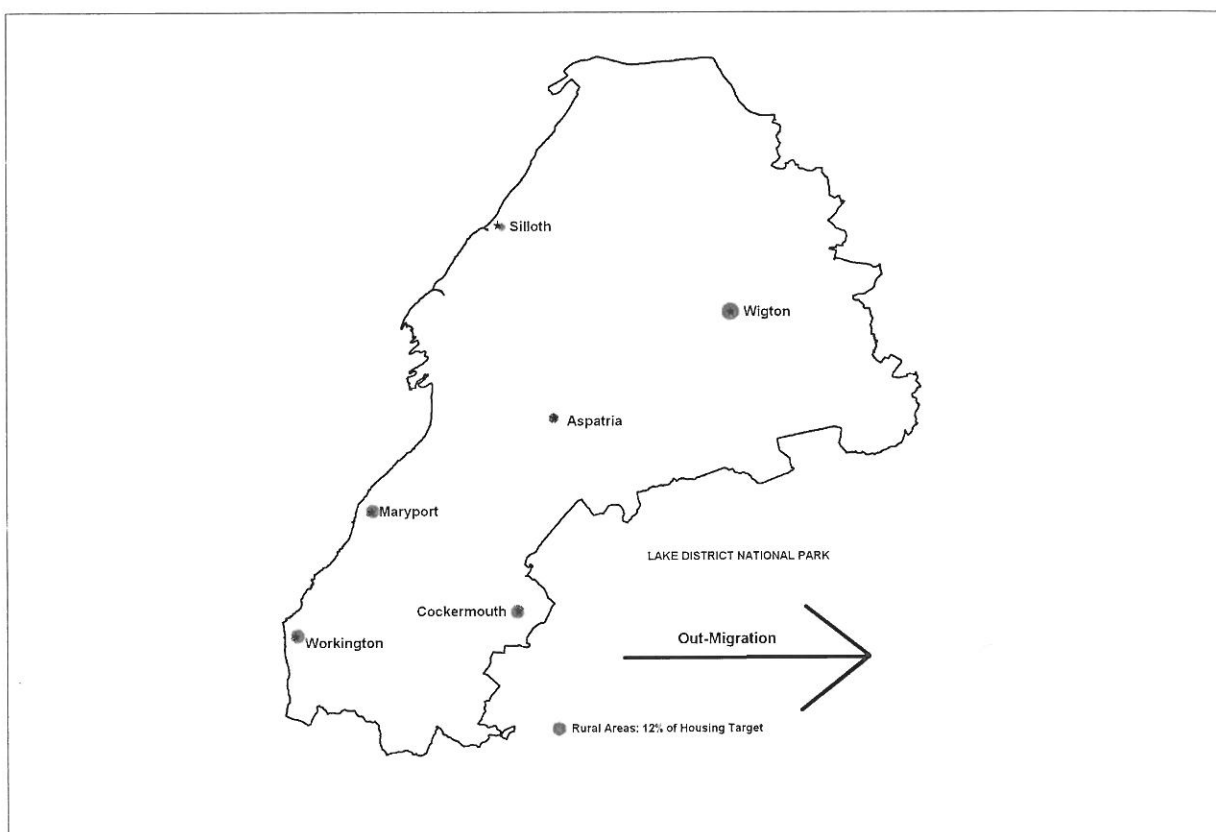
3.18 Option Nine : “Plan for Decline”

Key Elements :

- Generated from “Energy Coast” worst scenario of job-losses at Sellafield, based on cessation of nuclear re-processing and loss of 8000 jobs.
- Assumes significant out-migration in short to medium term covering whole of Plan Period. This leads to absolute reduction in household numbers in southern Allerdale.

- Leads to collapse of housing market in Workington/Maryport Locality, and stagnation in Cockermouth Locality.
- Northern Allerdale not significantly affected. Local housing markets continue to grow in line with historic trend.
- New housing completions fall far short of RSS target and are distributed approximately as follows:

Workington/Maryport	:	10%
Cockermouth	:	10%
Wigton	:	14%
Silloth	:	2%
Aspatria	:	3%
Rural Areas	:	12%
- This totals little more than half the target in RSS.
- The Corus redevelopment in Workington, and the housing elements of Port Derwent development and Derwent Forest cannot be delivered.
- The need for affordable housing would be significantly reduced.
- In the rural areas there would be few developments within the Cockermouth Locality, but closer to historic trend in north Allerdale.
- In Workington/Maryport, high vacancy rate and demolitions leads to net loss of dwelling units.



3.19 First Sieve Assessment

- (i) **Localities** : Does not allow for growth in all Localities.
- (ii) **SHLAA** : More than sufficient land to deliver this Alternative.
- (iii) **Infrastructure** : No obvious infrastructure constraints.

Carry Forward to Shortlist?

No

4. The “Shortlist” of Spatial Options

- 4.1 We have seen that the ‘Widelist’ of Spatial Options encompasses a very wide spectrum of Alternative Spatial Options from what might be considered aspirational growth at one extreme to catastrophic decline at the other. We have already stated that some of these options could be considered to be “unreasonable” in terms of the guidance in PPS12. Nevertheless, it is considered essential to show that these options have been considered.
- 4.2 The First Sieve Criteria have cut our ‘Widelist’ of 9 down to a “Shortlist” of 7, the two extreme Alternatives being discarded. Whilst not meeting the stated criteria in paragraph 2.3 above it is true to say of both discarded Alternatives that there is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that either of these extreme Alternatives is

likely to occur. Both are significantly out of line with historic trend and with official population projections.

- 4.3 We are therefore left with 7 Alternative Spatial Options to carry forward to our Second Sieve, as follows, for the purposes of simplicity and as the real basis of our options appraisal, they are re-numbered:

1. "Substantial Regeneration Focussed"
2. "Urban Focus / Maximum RSS"
3. "Sustainable / Balanced Growth / Maximum RSS"
4. "Existing Population Distribution / Maximum RSS"
5. "Regeneration Focussed / Strict RSS"
6. "Sustainable / Balanced Growth / Strict RSS"
7. "Historic Trend / Strict RSS"

It must be emphasised that whilst each of the above is a discrete option, they are not the only discrete options available within a "reasonable" spectrum. It is quite possible to construct other options from elements of the above. For instance, it is quite possible to create a "Historic Trend / Maximum RSS" Alternative but to do so would make the Alternative Options list far too long. The above shortlist encompasses all the reasonable potential elements of spatial options possible. The emphasis on RSS targets is purely a convenient label to assess what is in reality a wide range of potential development scales and population scenarios.

- 4.4 We must now go on to our Second Sieve, and assess the above 7 Spatial Options against the more rigorous list of criteria in paragraph 2.4. At the time of writing, it is not possible to apply all the criteria e.g. Sustainability Appraisal, but the scoring and assessment of each option will evolve in the next few months as a result of ongoing consultation and formal sustainability.

Assessment as we Move Towards a Preferred Spatial Option

- 4.5 Therefore, at this stage of the assessment no "preferred option" is recommended. However, the assessment of each alternative against each criterion, as positive or negative, together with the accompanying commentary, gives a strong indication of those options considered to be preferable. Consultations and Sustainability Appraisal will, in due course, allow us to choose our 'Preferred Option'.

The Second Sieve

4.6 Option One : “Substantial Regeneration Focused”

Positive	Negative
2 Fits “Energy Coast” Master Plan.	1 Does not deliver these elements of the Vision and Strategic Objectives concerning rural communities.
7 Maximises accessibility of all new development to services.	2 Does not fit Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).
9 Scale of development in urban areas allows for some flexibility.	3 Does not align with any official population projections.
10 Capable of being monitored.	4 Out of line with RSS targets.
	5 Whilst land may be available, there is no evidence that market demand will expand to encompass this scale of growth.
	6 This option is significantly out of line with normal market conditions in West Cumbria.
	9 Option not capable of dealing with rural issues.
	11 Does not meet the aspirations of rural communities.

Commentary: The fundamental issue with this alternative is that there is no evidence to suggest that the population scenario requires, and the resultant expansion of local markets (both housing and commercial) are likely to occur. Also, this alternative completely fails to address the aspirations and problems of rural communities. It is possible that this option could be refined by reducing the focus on KSCs in rural areas and allowing a more scattered distribution in LSCs. However, this would not overcome the issues of population projections and the capacities of local markets to deliver.

4.7 Option Two : “Urban Focus/Maximum RSS”

Positive

- 2 Potentially aligns with Energy Coast Master Plan.
- 4 There is a degree of flexibility in RSS, but any strategy that entails going beyond RSS targets will need to be justified, and at some, admittedly indeterminate, point would become out of line with RSS.
- 7 Maximises accessibility of all new development to services.
- 9 Allows for some flexibility, in encompassing a wide range of potential development scenarios.
- 10 Capable of being monitored.

Negative

- 1 Although this option meets aspirations for the urban areas, it cannot deliver the objectives for rural communities.
- 2 Does not fit with all the aspirations of the SCS.
- 3 Any scale of development beyond that envisaged in RSS, is likely to be out of line with population projections to varying degrees.
- 5 The scale of development in Workington/Maryport is significantly beyond historic trend and there is no evidence to suggest that in the longer term, local markets can deliver this scale of development.
- 6 In normal market conditions elements of this option would not be delivered.
- 11 Does not meet the aspirations of rural communities where development would be restricted below historic trend.

Commentary: This alternative has merit in terms of flexibility, other strategies and is potentially in line with RSS, but there are fundamental negative issues in population projections, capacity of local markets and the aspirations of rural communities. The failure to meet rural objectives could be seen as contrary to RSS.

4.8 Option Three : “Sustainable/Balanced Growth/Maximum RSS

Positive

- 1 Broadly delivers the vision and objectives.
- 2 In line with SCS; at first sight may be considered out of line with “Energy Coast” but this option can deliver the commercial aspects of the master plan and is sufficiently

Negative

- 3 Potentially, out of line with population projections, but to varying degrees.

- flexible to encompass the beginning of the housing aspects, if local market capacity increases.
- 4 There is a degree of flexibility in RSS but any strategy going beyond RSS targets will need to be justified. As per option 2, at some scale, would become out of line with RSS.
 - 5 There are no obvious constraints although the scale of development in Workington/Maryport is above historic trend and market capacity would need to increase.
 - 6 This option is broadly viable but market capacity in Workington/ Maryport would have to improve, at upper end of range of development scales.
 - 7 Generally improves accessibility to services but in rural areas this depends upon distribution of LSCs.
 - 9 There is a degree of flexibility which can encompass some change of scenario, e.g increase in demand for housing.
 - 10 Capable of being monitored.
 - 11 Broadly meets the aspirations of all communities, though in rural areas development would be slightly below historic trend and below aspirations.

Commentary: This alternative has broad merit almost across the board, with some qualifications within certain criteria. It is flexible enough to allow for the potential Energy Coast scenario to begin, if local markets begin to show expansion. The fact that it may be out of line with population projections, to a certain degree, can be justified by the need for flexibility.

4.9 Option Four : “Existing Population Distribution/Maximum RSS

Positive

- 2 Broadly fits with SCS and Energy Coast.
- 4 Broadly fits RSS although any strategy going beyond RSS targets will need to be justified. At some scale would become out of line with RSS.
- 5 There are no obvious constraints, even in Cockermouth this option entails restrictive development below historic trend.
- 6 Broadly deliverable though markets in Workington/Maryport would have to improve at the upper end of the range of scales.
- 7 Improvement generally in accessibility of new development to services but this is partially reduced by increase in less accessible development in rural areas.
- 9 There is a degree of flexibility which can encompass some change of scenario, e.g increase in demand for housing.
- 10 Capable of monitoring.

Negative

- 1 Does not deliver the objective to enhance the role of Wigton.
- 3 Potentially, out of line with population projections but to varying degrees.
- 11 Does not meet the aspirations of Wigton and Cockermouth localities, and may hinder the delivery of affordable housing in Cockermouth.

Commentary: Whilst this alternative has broad merit this is less than with option 3. A distribution based on existing population proportions tends to boost Workington/Maryport and restrict Wigton and Cockermouth below historic trend. The scale of housing in Cockermouth may hinder the delivery of affordable housing. It would be possible to improve the performance of this option by some redistribution of development between the 4 smaller KSCs and the rural areas.

4.10 Option Five : “Regeneration Focused - Strict RSS”

Positive	Negative
3 Aligns with official population projections.	1 Would not deliver the vision and objectives for Wigton and the rural areas.
4 Broadly fits RSS but severe restriction in rural areas may be considered to be contrary to RSS.	2 Does not fit the “Energy Coast” or SCS.
5 There are no obvious constraints to the delivery of this option.	6 The urban focus requires an improvement in the capacity of local markets in Workington/ Maryport. There is no evidence to suggest this is possible.
7 Improves the accessibility of most new development to services.	9 There is little or no flexibility in this option to encompass changing scenarios.
10 Capable of monitoring.	11 Does not meet the aspirations for Wigton and the rural communities.

Commentary: Whilst this option broadly aligns with RSS and population projections it does not perform well against other strategies and our vision and objectives. Furthermore, there is no built in flexibility.

4.11 Option Six : “Sustainable/Balanced Growth/Strict RSS”

Positive	Negative
1 Broadly delivers the vision and objectives though rural distribution may need to change to deliver Wigton objectives.	2 Does not fit well with “Energy Coast” or SCS.
3 Aligns with official population figures.	9 There is little or no flexibility in this option to encompass changing scenarios.
4 Aligns well with RSS.	11 Does not meet the aspirations of Wigton and Cockermouth communities.
5 No obvious constraints to the delivery of this option.	
6 The urban bias of this option will require an improvement in the capacity of markets in Workington/ Maryport, but less than with option 5.	

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|----|---|
| 7 | Generally entails an improvement in the accessibility of new development to services but less so than option 5. |
| 10 | Capable of monitoring. |

Commentary: This option performs in a similar way to option 6 but perhaps less reactively. It broadly aligns with RSS and population projections but a lack of flexibility prevents the delivery of other strategies/scenarios.

4.12 Option Seven : “Historic Trend - Strict RSS”

Positive

- | | |
|----|--|
| 3 | Aligns with official population projections. |
| 5 | No obvious constraints to the delivery of this option except perhaps in Cockermouth. |
| 6 | Is deliverable in normal market conditions. |
| 10 | Capable of monitoring. |

Negative

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Does not deliver our vision and objectives, particularly for Workington and Maryport. |
| 2 | Does not fit the Energy Coast or SCS. |
| 4 | Does not confirm to RSS in that it fails to address the status of Workington/Maryport as a Regeneration Priority Area. |
| 7 | Does not improve accessibility to services. |
| 9 | There is little or no flexibility in this option to encompass changing scenarios. |
| 11 | Does not meet the aspirations of Workington/Maryport to enhance their roles as service centres. |

Commentary: This is the most rural-orientated option of all and so fails to meet basic sustainable principles and fails to enhance the roles of Workington and Maryport. It is considered to be contrary to the RSS. Furthermore, it lacks the flexibility to deliver other strategies/scenarios.

5. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 5.1 We have already said that the above 7 options are not the only options that are available. Some options could be varied to improve their scoring whilst other options could be created by bringing together various elements into different combinations. However, the above are considered to be as comprehensive and wide ranging as is reasonable.

5.2 These assessments and commentaries will now form the basis for consultation. Undoubtedly, some of these options will be further refined. It is intended that following consultation, a final assessment will be made, factoring in:

- More detailed infrastructure assessments
- Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessments
- The final SHLAA sites availability.

5.3 Once this second assessment is complete the Council will choose its preferred option by the end of 2009. This will then be subject to consultation, along with the strategic policies that underpin the preferred option. In the spring of 2010 the Council intends to publish its Proposed Core Strategy as a preliminary to "submitting" the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government by the end of 2010.

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