



ALLERDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

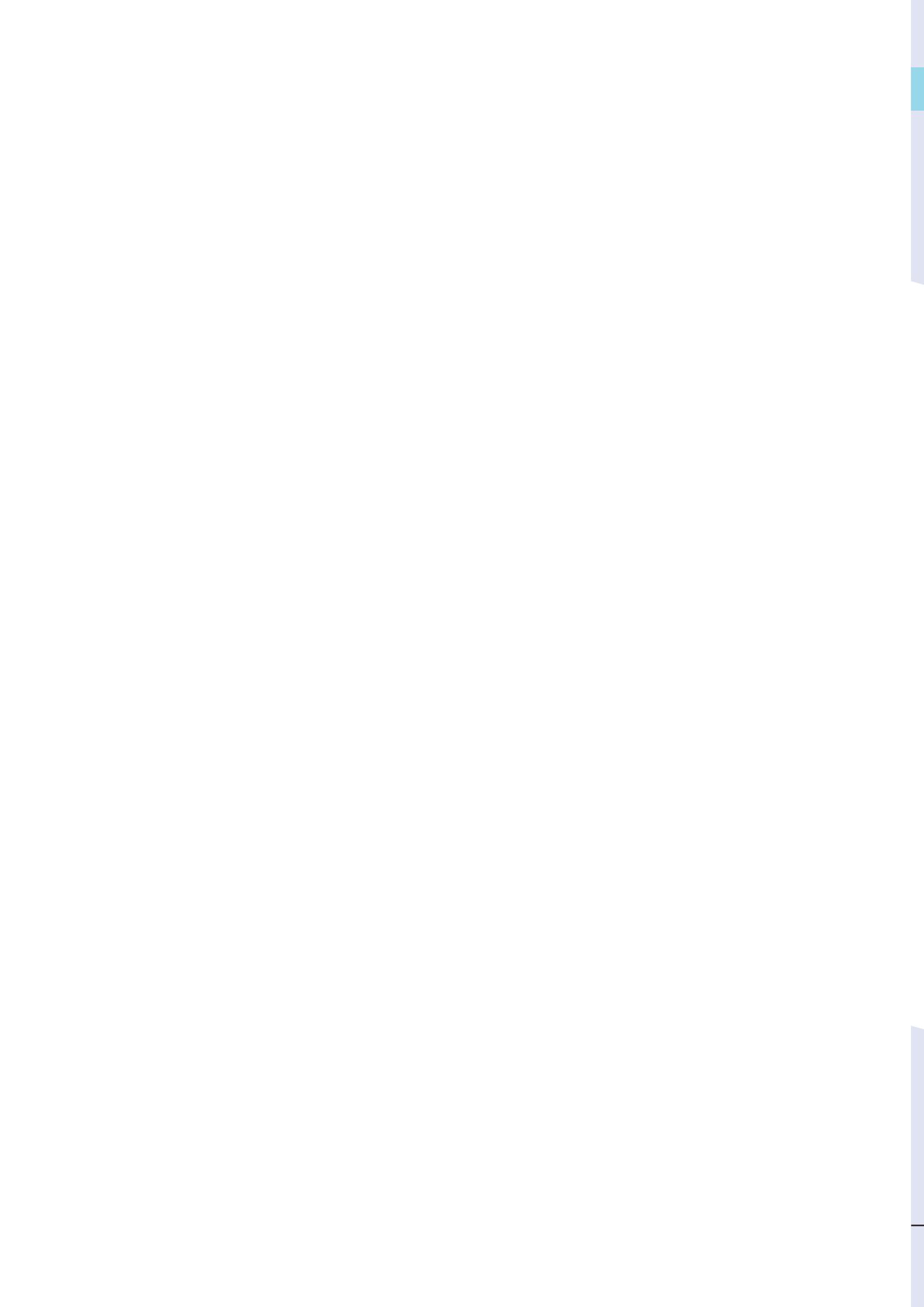


LOCAL PLAN - CONSULTATION

CORE STRATEGY

JUNE 2012





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Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
AAP	Area Action Plan
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAP	Biological Assessment Plan
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Assessment Method
CCMA	Coastal Change Management Area
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
CS	Core Strategy
CSH	Code for Sustainable Homes
DM	Development Management
DPD	Development Plan Document
GI	Green Infrastructure
GPDO	General Permitted Development Order
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
HMA	Housing Market Area
HMO	House of Multiple Occupation
HRA	Habitats Regulation Assessment
KSC	Key Service Centre
LDF	Local Development Framework
LDO	Local Development Order
LDNP	Lake District National Park
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LPG	Liquid Petroleum Gas
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MWDF	Minerals and Waste Development Framework
NNB	Nuclear New Build
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSIP	National Significant Infrastructure Project
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
RIGGS	Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphologic Sites
RSS	Regional spatial strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAM	Schedule of Ancient Monument
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SUDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage System
TPO	Tree Protection Order
WCRS	West Cumbria Retail Study
WHS	(Hadrians Wall) World Heritage Site



What is the Local Plan?

Allerdale Borough Council is preparing a Local Plan - a series of documents that will replace the Allerdale Local Plan that was adopted in 1999.

The Local Plan will determine how the planning system will help to shape your community, as part of the National Planning Policy Framework. The Plan is the Council's main collection of planning policy documents outlining the spatial strategy for the local area and contains the planning policies for managing development proposals through the planning application process.

There are a number of different types of documents within the Local Plan including:

Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

These are statutory documents that provide the basis for all planning, development and conservation decisions in Allerdale. The principal document is the **Core Strategy**. Other DPDs can include Development Management Policies, Neighbourhood Plan Policies, a Proposals Map and Area Action Plans.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Detailed guidance on various planning matters with explanations and more detail on policies within the Development Plan Documents, SPDs can include design guides, area development briefs and master plans.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

SAs are now an integral part of producing planning documents and are designed to promote sustainable development through improved integration of sustainability considerations in the preparation and adoption of plans.

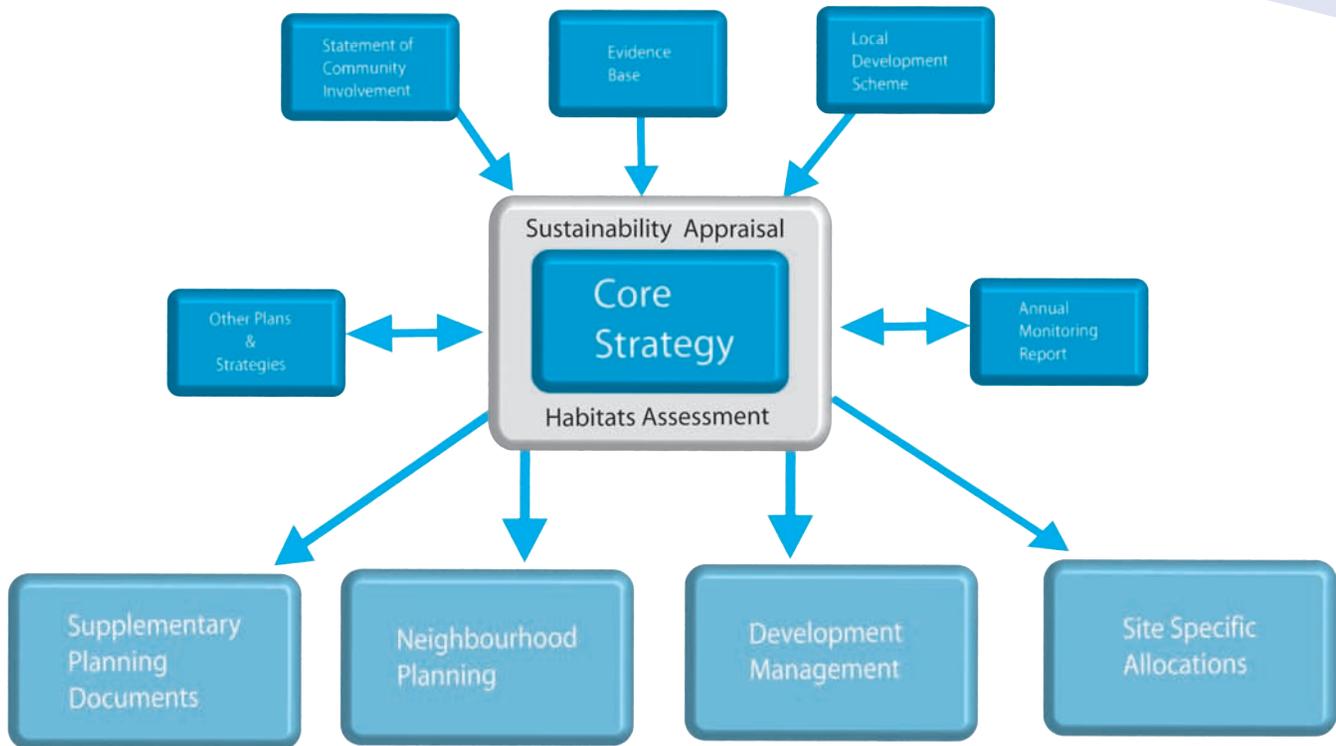
Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs)

Allerdale publishes an annual report on the wider social, economic and environmental position of the Borough, and monitors the effectiveness of plan policies.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

This is the Council's statement on how the local community and others will be involved in the preparation of the Local Plan and the consideration of planning applications. It will be a key test of soundness at examination.

Allerdale Local Plan - Core Strategy



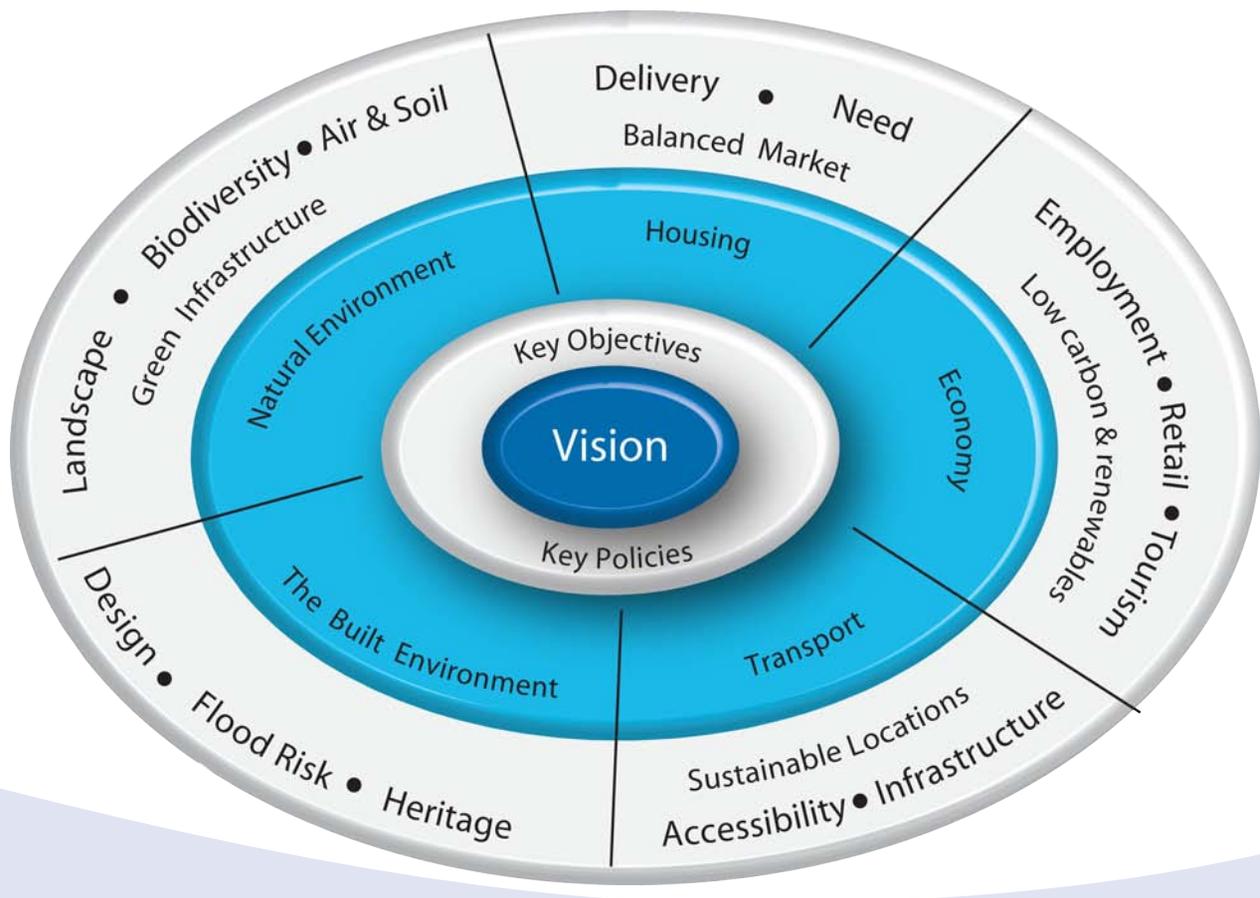
Role of the Core Strategy

The Core Strategy will be the principal document of the Allerdale Local Plan and the most important, setting out the strategic vision of how Allerdale is expected to evolve over the next fifteen years.

The Core Strategy illustrates the Council's vision, strategic objectives and the broad spatial strategy to guide future development and growth in Allerdale. It will be the starting point for the determination of planning applications and is supported by other documents relating to the allocation of land and more detailed development management policies.

It will guide the aspirations of not only Allerdale Borough Council but also other key service providers and stakeholders, whose input will be essential to the successful implementation of the Strategy.

The policies in the Core Strategy and other documents will eventually replace all of the remaining policies in the Council's current Local Plan that have not previously expired.



What Else is it Delivering?

The Local Plan will bring together and integrate many policies and programmes that have an influence across the Borough. There are a large number of plans and strategies that will be central to the Local Plan and will help to shape the policy direction in the various documents.

The Local Plan and especially the Core Strategy will consider strategic planning issues facing the Borough and in so doing will help deliver the wider vision and priorities set out in Future Generation: A Strategy for Sustainable Communities in West Cumbria. Together with the Cumbria Sub-regional Spatial Strategy, the Allerdale Local Plan as a spatial planning framework, can help provide the key spatial expression of the Sustainable Community Strategy, delivering its social, economic and environment priorities and outcomes. After each policy a row in the compliance table provides a clear link to the section of the sustainable communities' strategy that is addressed.

A key role of the Plan is also to develop a clear and effective relationship between the policies and proposals of the plan and other Council documents such as the Council Plan, Housing Strategy and locality plans; in addition to the County level Local Transport Plans and other key strategies such as those on health, communities and education. The Local Plan will also directly deliver or help to deliver the objectives of these and other strategies related to Allerdale.

Furthermore, it will assist the delivery of other strategies and policies such as the economic strategy Britain's Energy Coast: A Masterplan for West Cumbria and the emerging Economic Blueprint.

Evidence Base

The Local Plan is supported by a number of evidence base documents that the Council has referred to in the preparation of policies. These documents will accompany the Plan and will be part of the final submission and as such will be subject to public examination.

Evidence has been developed in all the key areas of policy and studies carried out covering; housing, employment, retail, climate change and energy, transport, environment, communities and infrastructure. Allerdale's evidence base documents are listed in the compliance tables after each of the relevant policies and can be found online at www.allerdale.gov.uk/localplan.

We also welcome your comments on these documents as part of the wider consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal

A sustainability appraisal (SA) identifies and evaluates the impact of a plan on the economy, community and environment. The SA is produced alongside the new plan and suggests ways to avoid or reduce any adverse impacts arising from the plan as well as maximising

positive impacts. Undertaking a sustainability appraisal of the Core Strategy & Development Management Policies DPD is a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

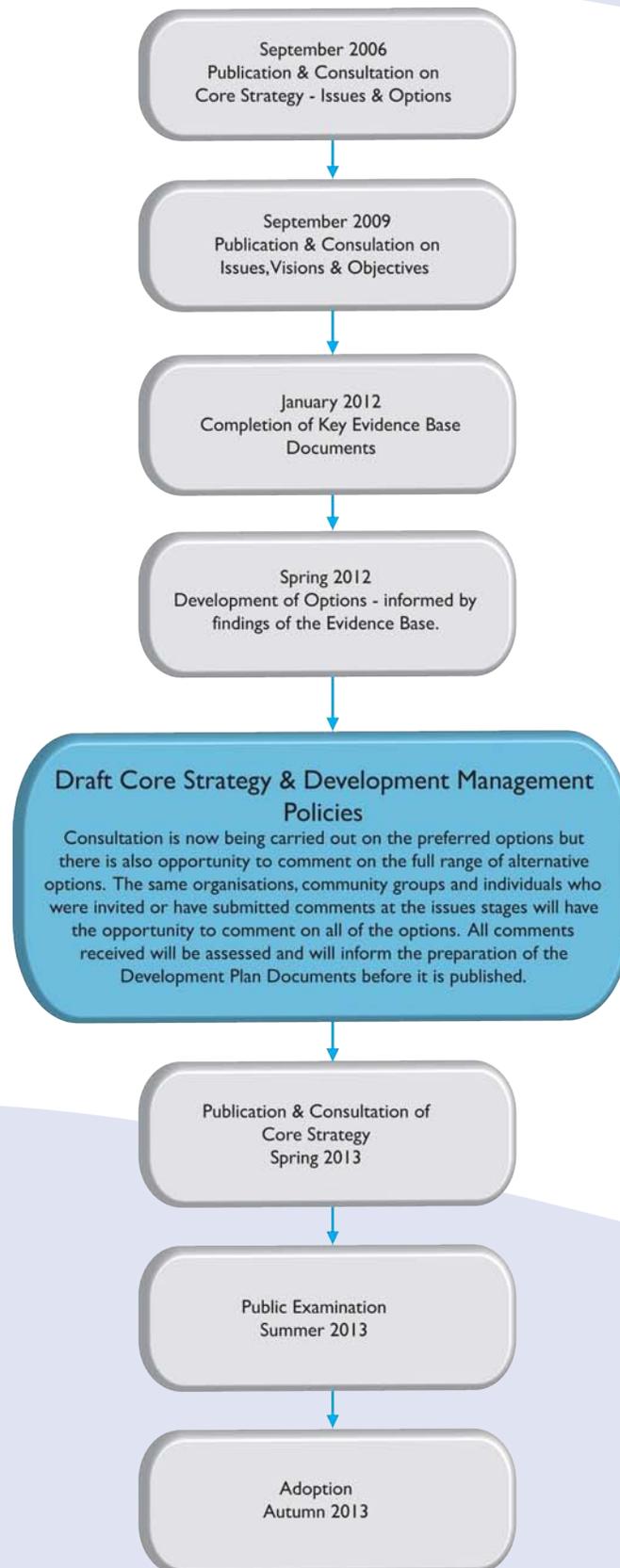
To be effective, the sustainability appraisal must be an integral part of the plan making process and inform the development of alternative options. At the start of the plan preparation a sustainability appraisal scoping report was prepared to provide a baseline report covering the plan area and will identify the sustainability issues which a development plan document would have to address. This also sets out the sustainability appraisal framework, which is used to assess the options as they develop. Consultation on the scoping report is carried out with the statutory consultees as specified in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and appropriate stakeholders, by sending a copy of the document and where necessary by holding individual meetings. The public consultation of the SA is undertaken along with that of the planning policies and your views are also sought on this document and its approach.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

Under Regulation 48 of the Habitats Regulations 1994 an Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required when a plan would be likely to have a significant effect on a European wildlife site. The scope of the AA will depend on the location, size and significance of the proposed plan. Scoping on the need for an AA is undertaken at the same time as the SA scoping report and is published for comment at the same time. If an AA is considered necessary then it will be published in conjunction with the full sustainability appraisal for a particular finalised Local Development Document. Natural England is the only statutory consultee with respect to Appropriate Assessment; however, the Council may consult with other organisations that could have an interest in the AA process, depending on the scope.

It should be noted that an Appropriate Assessment is a self-contained step in a wider decision making process, required by the Habitats Regulations. The conclusion of the Assessment should enable the Local Planning Authority to understand whether a proposal or plan would adversely affect the integrity of European wildlife.

Where we are now?



Over the past few years the Council has been working on the production of the Allerdale Local Plan. We produced an Issues and Options document and consulted on it in 2006 with an additional consultation on an updated document in 2009. During these two periods of consultation we gathered a wide range of feedback from local communities, businesses and organisations on the emerging vision and objectives of the Borough. Together with national policy and local evidence these views and comments have helped to shape our 'Preferred Options' for the future of Allerdale, which are the subject of this latest consultation.

Each policy within this Core Strategy 'Preferred Options' document includes an introduction and description of the policy approach. In addition each policy is also linked directly to other policy areas, national policy, evidence, strategic objectives and includes reference to corporate strategies. Some cross-referencing to other policies in the development plan is also provided, but it should be noted that all policies within the development plan are mutually dependent and should be read together as a whole.

How can I get involved?

We would like to involve as many people as possible in producing the Allerdale Local Plan. To help encourage both communities and individuals to have their say we will be holding a number of exhibitions, surgeries and workshops during the consultation period to promote the Plan and answer any questions.

You can view the 'Preferred Options' for Core Strategy, Development Management and associated documents

- Online at www.allerdale.gov.uk/localplan
- At the Council Offices and customer service centres
- At any library in Allerdale
- At the public displays which will be touring the Borough.

We would prefer you to tell us what you think by using the on-line form at www.allerdale.gov.uk/localplan, however, you can also make your comments by filling in a form which is available to download, in libraries, customer service centres, or on request from us. Emails and letters would also be welcome.

Alternatively if you would like more information on the consultation, help making a comment or, if you would like this document in an alternative format, you can contact a member of the planning policy team using the following details;

localplan@allerdale.gov.uk
Planning Policy Department
Planning Services
Allerdale Borough Council
Allerdale House
Workington
Cumbria, CA14 3YJ
T: 01900 702610
F: 01900 702848

The consultation period runs from 1 June 2012 to the 31 July 2012.

Core Strategy Consultation Questions

If you have any comments or questions we would like to hear from you. There are also questions located throughout each document relating to topic and policy specific issues that we would particularly like to get your opinion on.

What happens next?

Following this consultation, we will consider your views, together with any new evidence collected, to develop the final version of the Core Strategy and Development Management documents. There will then be a further opportunity for you to comment in early 2013 before the document will be submitted to Government. There will then be an examination of the submitted policy document by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State in 2013. The Examination in Public involves, amongst other things, checking that the documents have been produced in accordance with national planning guidance and our sustainable community strategy and that it is justified by evidence. Where the Core Strategy and Development Management Document are judged to be sound it can be formally adopted by the Council.

ALLERDALE: A SPATIAL PORTRAIT

Allerdale is located in Cumbria in the northwest of England and is bordered to the west by the Solway Firth and Irish Sea, and to the north across the Solway, Scotland. Within Cumbria, Allerdale's neighbours include Carlisle City Council and Eden District Council to the east and to the south Copeland and South Lakeland District Councils. The southeast quarter of the Borough is covered by the Lake District National Park.

Allerdale Local Plan Area excludes the national park, covers an area of 763km², and has a population of approximately 88,000 on a slightly increasing trend.

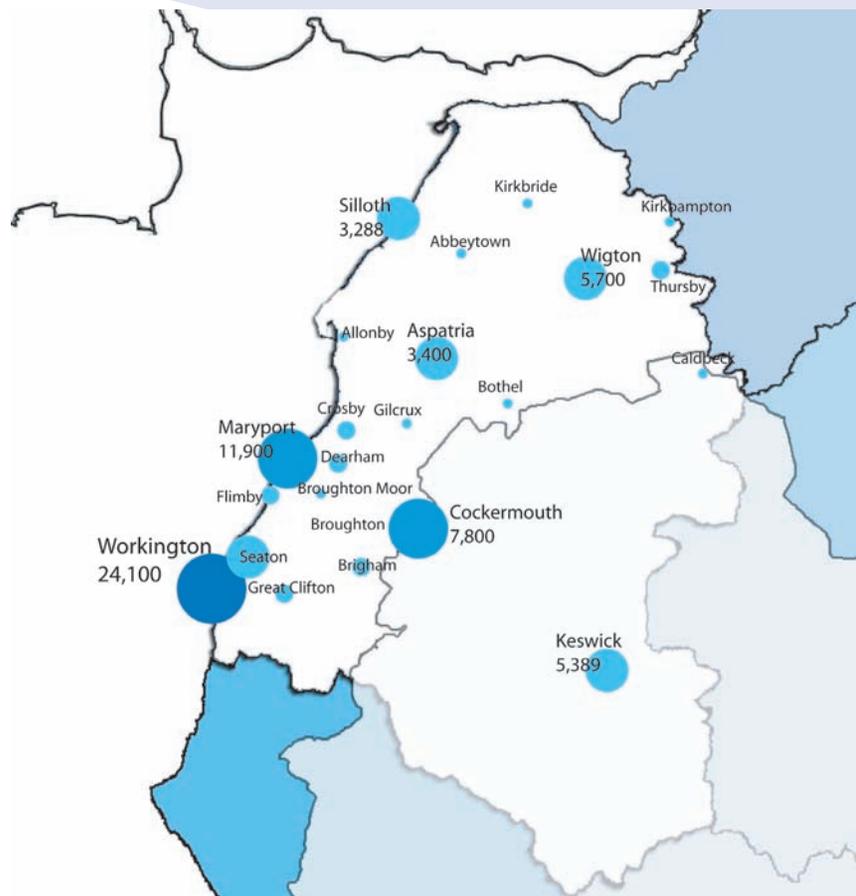


Figure 1: Settlement Population

The Borough is predominately rural in nature with an overall population density of 75 people per square kilometre compared to an average 480/km² in Northwest England. This is most noticeable in the north where settlements are small and dispersed, while the main urban centres are located in the south. Around 64% of the plan area's population live within the six larger settlements, with the remaining 36% of people living in local centres, the smaller rural settlements and in rural areas. The range of settlement size, by population, is presented on the map above (Population Census 2001).

Demography

Allerdale has an aging population driven in part from significant levels of out migration of young people within the 18-30 age group and changes to life expectancy. The declining number of people under 15 years of age highlighted in the table below has serious implications for the working age population in future. Without significant in migration of people of working age Allerdale will experience a shortage of workforce that could have a detrimental impact on economic growth and future prosperity.

Table 1: Age Profile 2001-2009

	2001		2009		Change 2001-2009	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Aged 0-15	31,200	19.2	28,500	17.4	-2,700	-8.7
Working age (16-64)	103,100	63.3	103,500	63.1	400	0.4
Retirement age (65+)	28,500	17.5	32,000	19.5	3,500	12.3

Office for National Statistics

The issue of an aging population is not uniform across the Borough with the rural north and areas around Silloth tending to have a greater number and proportion of elderly people (ONS and Census 2001).

The majority of Allerdale's population is white with 4.3% of the total population from black & minority ethnic groups (Mid-2010 Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics).

Deprivation

Allerdale is a Borough of contrasts, some areas, particularly in and around Cockermouth are considered to be some of the least deprived areas in the country with a high quality of life. This is compared to some neighbourhoods in the south of Workington and in Maryport which rank amongst some of the most deprived parts of the country. Indeed, parts of Moss Bay in Workington ranking within the top 1% most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK (Index of Multiple deprivation 2010).

Housing

There are approximately 45,000 houses within Allerdale. The vast majority are owner occupied. Around 17% of homes are rented from a housing association or social landlord, which is significantly more than the national average. The privately rented sector accounts for just 6% of dwellings. (Census 2001)

The average house price in Allerdale is £156,000 (Streetvalue 2011), however, it varies considerably between parishes from a low of £99,000 in Maryport to an average of over

£291,000 in Bridekirk. Furthermore, the Allerdale Strategic Housing Market Assessments (2011) demonstrate that despite the variation in house prices and incomes across the Borough affordability is a severe problem across the Borough.

Access to affordable housing is a key issue within Cockermouth, the surrounding villages and also within the rural settlements in northern Allerdale. Whilst higher concentrations of affordable homes are present within the main urban centres of Workington and Maryport, there is an imbalance between existing provision of social housing type and the needs of the population. The need for housing renewal and improvement is also a feature in many of Allerdale's settlements with areas suffering from low demand, empty properties and declining condition.

A joint 2008 study by Allerdale and Cumbria Councils into the needs of Gypsy and Travellers across the county reported that currently Allerdale sees the highest level of unauthorised sites within Cumbria. The study identified 24 authorised pitches within the Borough at that time, with an anticipated need for 23 additional pitches by 2016 (Cumbria Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2008).

The Allerdale Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment demonstrates that the availability of suitable housing land across the Borough is not generally considered to be an issue.

Economy

Household incomes vary across the Borough and are highest in Cockermouth where there is a median household income of £27,806 (CACI paycheck 2011). This is still below the national average of £29,000. The lowest household income is in Maryport at £20,513. In 2011 workplace earnings within Allerdale, were also below the national average at £424 while resident earnings are above the national average at £525. This reflects the number of service sector enterprises in the district and the popularity of Allerdale as a place for those in professional occupations to live. Those in professionals are often involved in occupations outside the Borough related to the nuclear activities at Sellafield. Of the 9,200 Sellafield workers over 1,400 live in Workington (15%), while Cockermouth and Maryport are also important locations for workers (Britain's Energy Coast – Investment Strategy: Nuclear Topic Paper 2011).

The total number of people in Allerdale claiming out of work benefits for the year ending August 2011 stood at 12.0% of the working age population. This is slightly below the national rate of 12.3%. Rates vary across the Borough and are highest in Maryport and Workington. Over the last decade rates have fallen steadily in all areas however they have subsequently started to climb since 2008 as a result of the economic crisis.

Employment type in Allerdale is largely dominated by manufacturing and construction, the public sector and the retail and service sector (including hotel, leisure and tourism sectors). In the rural north, agriculture is still an important sector for employment and the economy. At the time of the Employment Land Review Update (2012) Allerdale had 100 ha of

employment land with the main employment areas found in and around the main towns of Allerdale. A clear hierarchy of premises is on offer with quality mixed industrial/commercial premises found at Lillyhall which is a strategic industrial location in West Cumbria. Other strategic considerations are land at Derwent Howe and the Port of Workington. Additionally, higher quality office locations are at Dovenby Hall Estates and Lakeland Business Park.

Local industrial units are also available at Glasson in Maryport however the quality in these premises is often poor. Modern units of reasonable quality can be found in Wigton, with further units available in other rural areas, but these are often subject to poor infrastructure and other constraints.

On a quantitative level there appears to be an adequate supply of employment land, however, there are variations between sectors. In particular, there is poor supply of office floor space and B8 uses with delivery of quality premises often hampered by land values in the area.

Retail



Workington is West Cumbria's principal shopping centre and is the highest performing centre in terms of retail performance. It has a wide choice of shops and a good representation of national high street retailers, particularly for comparison goods. It has a broad catchment area, attracting a large number of visitors from other towns in West Cumbria. The town centre has a below average representation of convenience goods stores and despite a recent £50million redevelopment, it suffers an above average level of vacant shops.

Other town centres within Allerdale perform a more supportive role, offering key services to local and visitor populations. Cockermouth town centre performs well for its size and has a good independent trader offer, a good range of cultural activities and a vibrant evening economy. Maryport town centre is very accessible with a good town centre occupancy rate but there are very few national retailers and a poor range of comparison goods stores. Wigton is a historical market town and a key service provider for residents in North Allerdale, however it loses a high level of retail trade to the nearby city of Carlisle. The smaller towns of Aspatria and Silloth are limited in opportunities to expand their retail offer due to their size, low population and, in the case of

Silloth, poor accessibility. However both have important roles to play as local service providers.

The West Cumbria Retail Study (2009) identified a significant level of need for further retail development within Allerdale over the plan period, with both Cockermouth and Maryport having significant requirement for additional convenience goods floorspace in the near future.

Healthy Living and community safety

Life Expectancy varies considerably across Allerdale, with 12 years difference between Moss Bay (Workington) residents, who have an estimated life expectancy of 72 years, and those of Wampool ward (Northern Allerdale), who have an estimated life expectancy of 84 years, with highest life expectancies being found within northern rural areas overall (Office for National Statistics).

Levels of illness are focused within the more deprived areas of Allerdale, while overall, 37.1% of Allerdale residents are suffering from a limiting long-term illness compared to the national average of 33% (Population Census 2001). The more deprived areas of the Borough also suffer from higher levels of obesity and tend to have lower levels of adults participating in sports and other exercise.

Air quality is generally good within Allerdale and is not considered to be a significant issue for the area, despite a couple of small peaks in pollutants within Workington and Wigton (Neighbourhood Statistics).

Crime levels within Allerdale are generally well below the national average and are generally on a falling trend. The Borough is largely considered to offer a safe environment for its residents (Neighbourhood Statistics/Cumbria Constabulary).

Education

There are a total of 7 local authority secondary schools in the plan area. GCSE grades across Cumbria have constantly been higher than the national average for many years running, and this is reflected in Allerdale.

In terms of higher and further education, Allerdale does not compare as favourably to the national average. Amongst the working age population, 16% have a qualification of NVQ5 or above, this is only slightly lower than the average for the north-west (17%). Of the total 16-74 year olds, 4% are in further education as full-time students. There are issues of underperformance in the more deprived areas where up to 38.2% have no qualifications and only 3.2% have NVQ levels 4/5 qualifications (Cumbria Observatory).

There are a number of education establishments in Allerdale, including the Energus campus and Lakes College (West Cumbria) at Lillyhall, and a number of other sites across the Borough.

These establishments contribute to the local and regional economy and prosperity, and play a central role in providing vital skills and training for continued economic development, especially for the nuclear, and renewable sectors as well as enhancing the education and training of the population of Allerdale and West Cumbria.

Natural Environment Assets & Landscape

Allerdale enjoys a rich natural environment, recognised on an international, national and regional scale. Parts of Allerdale form part of the Lake District National Park, while the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers the coastal strip north of Maryport and over the border into Carlisle. The far north of the Borough and the Solway Firth are also internationally designated as Special Conservation Areas and Special Protection Areas to be afforded the highest levels of protection. There is also an extensive spread of Sites of Special Scientific Interest across the Borough, which are covered by strict national standards of protection.



Open Space

The Allerdale Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study identified 462ha of open space. Generally Workington is the only town to enjoy a surplus of formal open space with deficits identified within all other towns, particularly within Wigton, while provision for young people was highlighted to be especially lacking across the whole Borough. Open space is generally of a high quality and, despite identified deficits

within towns, the rural nature of Allerdale means that most residents have easy and convenient access to the open countryside (Allerdale Open Space Audit 2008).

Biodiversity

Allerdale provides a range of important habitats for a number of key protected species. Coastal areas are recognised as being home to Natterjack Toads and the Small Blue Butterfly. Great Crested Newts, Otters and Red Squirrels are also found throughout the plan area. Parts of Allerdale in and around the Dean Moors are recognised as a Hen Harrier protection zone and the marshes of northern Allerdale provide important habitat for wild geese and swans (Cumbria County Council Biodiversity Data Network).

Historic Environment

There are over 1,500 listed buildings and 80 scheduled ancient monuments in Allerdale. In addition there are 21 conservation areas that generally fall into three different categories – historic urban centres; coastal villages; and traditional rural farming villages. Areas of Northern Allerdale are also designated as part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and, as such, are afforded high levels of landscape and archaeological protection.

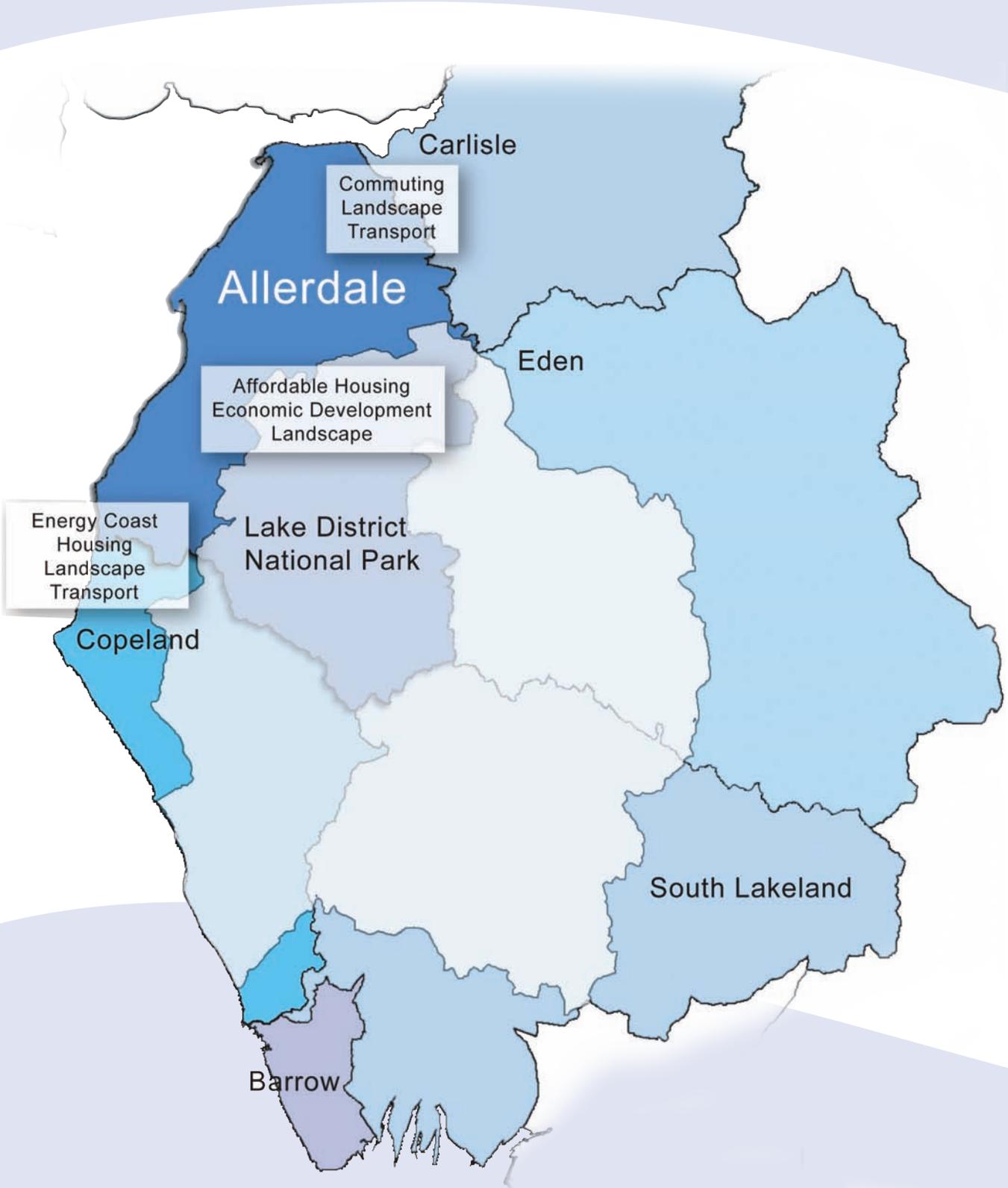
Transport

Allerdale is somewhat remote from national transport networks. Connections to its nearest motorway, the M6, are either along the A66(T) via Keswick and Penrith or north via Carlisle along the generally poor quality and de-trunked A595. Journeys from the main urban centres of Allerdale can often take up to an hour just to get access to national transport networks.

Rail services run along the West Cumbrian Coastal Railway, connecting to the West Coast Main Line at Carlisle and Lancaster (via Barrow). Most towns in Allerdale, with the exception of Cockermouth and Silloth, are serviced by the railway. Key service centres within Allerdale are generally well connected by bus. Services within more rural settlements vary with some villages, particularly the larger local centres being well served while others, particularly in the north of the Borough, may only see a very limited service.



Levels of car ownership vary across the Borough. In most rural areas the majority of households have access to at least two cars. In urban areas however, particularly along the coastal strip between Workington and Maryport, significant numbers of households have no access to a car. In parts of Moss Bay in Workington this figure is as high as 60% (Office for National Statistics).



Allerdale Borough Council has prepared the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies by working together with neighbouring local planning authorities and partners to ensure effective strategic planning and coordination of issues that have implications across administrative boundaries.

Allerdale now has a duty to cooperate in the preparation of development plan documents outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Localism Act 2011. The Act requires the Council to engage '*constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis*', while, national planning policy expects local authorities to plan cooperatively on strategic issues and provide evidence of successful strategic cross boundary cooperation for examination.

Although much of the plan preparation process preceded the Localism Act and NPPF, the Council has a strong history of collaboration in strategic planning, with adjoining districts, at county and regional level through both Structure Plans and Regional Spatial Strategy.

In considering the cross boundary issues in Allerdale, it is vital to understand the important outside influences on parts of the Borough.

Regional and County collaboration

Cumbria County Council acts as the strategic authority for the area and deals with those planning issues that have a bearing across the whole of Cumbria.

The County have an important role in the preparation of the Cumbria's Sub Regional Spatial Strategy. This sets out the spatial planning framework to assist local development plans in the facilitation of the Community Strategy for Cumbria. This countywide strategy aims to achieve an integrated approach to delivering a prosperous and sustainable future for the whole of area.

The County Council produces the Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF) for Cumbria, which forms part of Allerdale's development plan. This document identifies and allocates a number of land uses related to waste management facility, minerals extraction sites and any areas of search, expansion of minerals sites, and ensures that these areas are appropriately protected from any form of potentially compromising development. Mineral Safeguarding Zones identified within the MWDF will be included within the Allerdale Local Plan Proposals Map.

Cumbria County Council is also the Highways Authority for all non-trunk roads within Allerdale and the rest of the county. As such, the County has a duty to produce a Local Transport Plan that outlines how transport infrastructure shall be enhanced and maintained across the county. Transport policies within the Allerdale Local Plan have been developed to assist in the implementation of the aims, objectives and policies within the Local Transport Plan.

Furthermore, the County Council plays an important role in the development and collection of

strategic evidence that is important for development of planning policy across the individual Borough councils. Key evidence has been developed covering population and economic forecasts, housing, education, transport, renewable energy capacity, work on landscape character, and natural habitats and endangered species. The County also provides expert development management consultation responses for planning applications on topics such as education, ecology, archaeology and highways impacts that can often be too costly for Borough councils to provide.

Local collaboration

Copeland

Allerdale and Copeland face similar economic issues, such as the decline of key industries, poor transport and infrastructure, as well as a reliance on the existing nuclear industry and prospects for new ventures. As a result of the shared issues both Councils are working jointly to implement the aims and objectives of the Britain's Energy Coast Masterplan; a document that outlines a number of sustainable methods for regenerating and diversifying the West Cumbrian economy. Furthermore, both Councils in conjunction with Britain's Energy Coast are working to provide an Economic Blueprint to deliver the aspirations of the Energy Coast. The development of a shared economic strategy is vital to achieving economic growth and cooperation between both Councils is of great importance. A great deal of work has also been undertaken to coordinate strategies regarding the role of major employment and educational facilities.

Additionally, to support the economic strategy both Councils have developed a shared evidence base incorporating local factors and scenarios with County population, retail and economic forecasts. Also we have produced a shared suite of documents relating to employment and housing land, nuclear activities, viability and Community Infrastructure Levy.

As the nuclear industry is by far the largest employment sector across West Cumbria decisions regarding future resources and new nuclear ventures are centrally important to Allerdale's economic strategy. Allerdale and Copeland continue to work closely together and with partners on current proposals to build a new nuclear power station at a site adjoining Sellafield and associated infrastructure. Nuclear New Build could have a major impact on both areas; during construction, at least 5,000 extra workers will need access to the Sellafield site and will also require accommodation within the local area, construction materials are likely to be imported via the Port of Workington and rail network.

The Council's have also cooperated on other important topics such as the number and locations of housing, transport and Landscape. Copeland Borough Council will shortly be publishing their development plan for public examination and Allerdale will continue to work cooperatively on strategic issues.

Lake District National Park

Some parishes and towns in Allerdale, including Keswick, Caldbeck and Embleton fall under the planning jurisdiction of the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNP). In these areas Allerdale Borough Council is not the planning authority and the LDNP has developed its own development plan. Allerdale works closely with the Park authority to ensure that cross boundary issues are reflected and the most appropriate solution provided. A key area relates to housing where a cross boundary solution has been developed to meet the need for affordable housing of the sparsely populated parishes in the main settlements in the Park, such as Caldbeck. Additionally Allerdale has worked to provide where necessary a joint solution to economic development, employment and landscape issues.

Carlisle

Carlisle is the County's only city authority and is the principle economic and service centre for Cumbria. It stands as a key transport interchange for both the motorway system and national rail networks. Given that Carlisle serves as a major economic and service centre, there is significant commuting from Northern Allerdale, for both employment and the greater service offer of the city. Considering the location, level of interaction and number of shared issues cooperation between Allerdale and Carlisle is vital to ensuring complimentary policy and strategies are developed. Key topic areas relate to the location of housing, employment, landscape and transport. As both Allerdale and Carlisle are currently working on the development of their local plan cooperation is required on evidence and is something that has been undertaken through all county level evidence base documents

ALLERDALE VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision

By 2028 Allerdale's communities will be sustainable, prosperous, safe, healthy and vibrant. The economy will be strong, diversified and well connected, with a growing and highly skilled population, with high employment, building on skills and opportunities in the nuclear, energy and tourism sectors.

It will be a place that is adaptable to the challenges of climate change, has a diverse and extensive network of green infrastructure, unspoilt landscape and coastline, accessible for all, with a natural environment that protects and delivers areas rich in biodiversity.

It will be a place where all sections of society have access to affordable, well designed homes designed to meet a range of needs, close to jobs, services and public transport, where historic environments are protected and enhanced and sustainable development, investment and successful regeneration has created prosperous towns supported by sustainable rural communities.

Workington - will have retained and enhanced its role as Allerdale's principal residential, educational, leisure, cultural and commercial centre. Taking advantage of its port and rail links it will have been a focus for major development delivering a stronger employment base, housing renewal and greater choice of housing as well as a vibrant town centre with an expanded night time economy.

Maryport - will have enhanced its role as a key residential, employment and visitor centre, ensuring deprivation has been reduced significantly. The town will be a key tourist destination building on its coastal location, rich Roman and Georgian heritage and environmental assets.

Cockermouth - will have retained its vibrant town centre and high quality historic environment. The housing market will be more balanced with greater access to affordable housing and wider job opportunities. The town would be more resilient to the risk from flooding through the delivery of appropriate infrastructure.

Wigton - will have developed its role as the principal housing, commercial, employment and educational centre in North Allerdale. In particular the role of the town centre and the condition of its historic fabric will have been enhanced, such that it meets the majority of the retail and service requirements of its catchment population.

Silloth – will have taken advantage of its close proximity to the Solway Coast AONB and its historic environment, and enhanced its tourism role. The local community will have a more balanced age structure, with greater access to employment and services as well as maintaining and enhancing the role of its port.

Aspatria - will have enhanced its role as a key centre serving its rural hinterland by offering a greater mix of housing, employment opportunities and range of services and making greater use of its rail links.

Rural Areas - will be made up of thriving, sustainable communities with improved access to employment opportunities and greater diversity in the local economy. Availability of affordable housing will have increased and existing services will have been retained and in places enhanced, whilst at the same time, the quality of the local environment has been protected and enhanced.

Strategic Objectives

Climate Change and Sustainability

- SO1a Focus major development in Workington and encourage complementary and additional development in Key Service Centres of Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton, Silloth and Aspatria. Small-scale development will be supported in Local Service Centres with appropriate facilities.
- SO1b Ensure that towns and villages remain sustainable, with a stable and balanced population, accessible and meet a range of community needs.
- SO1c Support and encourage construction methods that seek to reduce energy consumption, use renewable energy sources, minimise waste and encourage recycling.
- SO1d Promote renewable and low carbon energy production in the Borough.
- SO1e Facilitate the best use of land and protect the most versatile agricultural land from development.

Housing

- SO2a Enable a balanced housing market that delivers a mix of housing type and tenure to meet the needs of all communities.
- SO2b Support housing renewal in Workington and Maryport.
Ensure a deliverable supply of housing land that meets the needs of the community and local economy.
- SO2c Increase access to affordable housing as part of housing developments and rural exception sites.
- SO2d Support independent living for older people and people with disabilities by ensuring housing is adaptable for changing and varied needs.

Economy

- SO3a Diversify the urban and rural economic base of the Borough to enable a prosperous mixed, low carbon economy, including creative knowledge based industries, specialist engineering, energy and tourism sectors.
- SO3b Encourage the development of business clusters, building on expertise in the energy sector, to produce high value jobs and ensure the timely delivery of essential infrastructure to support economic growth, in particular Nuclear New Build.
- SO3c Promote Lillyhall as a strategic employment site, encouraging the growth of nuclear technology and research clusters while building on its existing education and skills role through the Nuclear Skills Academy and the Lakes College (West Cumbria) campus.
- SO3d Provide a wide range of modern, high quality employment sites and premises to meet existing business needs and emerging sectors.
- SO3e Support opportunities for home working, creation of rural enterprise hubs for start up businesses and proposals that contribute to farm diversification.
- SO3f Lobby for improved broadband connections, especially in rural areas.
- SO3g Support the development of further and higher education in the Borough and improve educational attainment and skills to meet the needs of existing and future employment opportunities.
- SO3h Promote the principles of sustainable tourism, the provision of high quality accommodation and attractions, and support key projects such as Derwent Forest, and Roman Maryport.
- SO3i Promote the vitality and viability of town centres, including the night time economy and support the retention of existing rural services.
- SO3j Enable the long-term sustainability of the ports at Workington and Silloth by supporting appropriate port related activities and lobbying for improved road and rail links.

Transport

- SO4a Locate the majority of development in locations that are accessible by a variety of modes of transport, particularly public transport, walking and cycling and reduce the need to travel.
- SO4b Support essential road and rail infrastructure improvements required to deliver economic growth and nuclear new build.
- SO4c Work with partners to improve sustainable transport, especially between Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres.
- SO4d Improve access to jobs, services, education, and the wider countryside on foot, by cycle, public transport and ICT access.
- SO4e Develop and maintain safe, efficient, high quality, modern and integrated transport networks with good internal links and connections to key routes including A66,

- M6, and West Coast mainline.
- SO4f Enable the delivery of the Workington and Maryport Interchanges.
- SO4g Promote the role of Workington and Silloth ports as an alternative means of accessing the area for both business and visitors.

Built Environment

- SO5a Ensure that all new development meets high standards of quality of design, energy efficiency, safety, security and accessibility, and relates well to existing development, enhances the public realm and develops locally distinctive quality places.
- SO5b Protect and enhance places and buildings of historical, cultural and archaeological importance and their settings.
- SO5c Protect and enhance existing social and community infrastructure, such as education, health, cultural and leisure facilities.
- SO5d Enhance green infrastructure by providing a comprehensive network of high quality open space such as parks, gardens, natural green spaces and allotments.
- SO5e Minimise the risk from flooding and support the incorporation of mitigation measures as part of the overall design solution.
- SO5f Mitigate against the effects of air, water and soil pollution/contamination, and noise and odour nuisance.

Natural Environment

- SO6a Protect the natural and historic landscape, including Ancient woodland and geological assets, from unnecessary and harmful development, particularly within the Solway Coast AONB.
- SO6b Protect priority habitats and species, notably the Natura 2000 sites from harm and take opportunities to enhance and create ecologically diverse habitats in all locations.
- SO6c Promote opportunities to improve access to the countryside and coast.
- SO6d Ensure high levels of water, soil and air quality are retained and where necessary improved.
- SO6e Promote a comprehensive network of green infrastructure, incorporating multi-functional green and blue spaces both within developments and linking across settlements and the Borough.

Q1) Do you think that the vision reflects the issues, challenges and opportunities facing the Borough? Are there other issues that should be addressed?



STRATEGIC POLICIES



STRATEGIC POLICIES

Community Views

1. The majority of respondents agreed with the plan vision and objectives;
2. Respondents agreed that climate change is a major issue that needs to be reflected in the objectives and policies of the Plan;
3. The majority of development should be located in the main urban centres where there is access to services and other forms of transport;
4. Consultation revealed a general level of support for providing employment land of various levels of quality to meet the needs throughout the Borough;
5. Consultation highlighted the lack of a skill base as a key issue for many employers in Allerdale. Many people linked the skill gaps to poor economic performance and lack of growth opportunities;
6. Consultation suggested that policy should encourage the use of locally sourced materials and sustainable techniques in new developments;
7. The majority of people were in favour of the generation of energy from renewable sources using the full range of technologies.

S1 - Sustainable Development Principles

Key issues

- Sustainable development is a key objective of the planning system;
- Safeguarding natural and built environment and conserving natural resources are key national and local objectives;
- Encouraging sustainable construction methods can help improve sustainability;
- Support is needed for sustainable communities by ensuring access to affordable housing, employment, leisure and recreation opportunities;
- Encourage the use of other forms of transport other than the car;
- The Plan should seek to reduce the need to travel;
- The promotion of healthy and skilled communities is a key objective.

Introduction

The purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development is about making sure that people can satisfy their basic needs in the present, while ensuring that future generations can also look forward to the same quality of life. There are three interconnected 'pillars' of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These pillars need to be considered together to deliver development that is truly sustainable, and the planning system has a pivotal role in ensuring sustainable solutions. The Local Plan is the key tool to achieve this aim and therefore it is important that we develop an overarching policy to promote sustainable development in all its forms throughout the Plan.



S1 Preferred Option - Sustainable Development Principles

The Core Strategy will promote sustainable development as a core principle. All new development within Allerdale will be of a high standard, sustainable and sympathetic to the needs of both local communities and the environment.

The key principles will:

- Promote high standards of design that make a positive contribution to the local area and ensure that existing natural and built environmental assets would not be adversely affected;
- Ensure the efficient use of land and infrastructure, prioritising the reuse of previously developed land and buildings and remediation of contaminated land;
- Ensure the physical, utilities and social infrastructure in the locality is adequate or in circumstances where it is considered inadequate, it will be provided or upgraded to the required level as part of the development scheme itself;
- Promote new development that helps to retain existing jobs and the creation of new job opportunities;
- Minimise the impact on natural resources, avoid pollution and incorporate the principles of sustainable construction to contribute to energy efficiency, renewable or low carbon energy, waste reduction/ recycling and the use of sustainably sourced materials;
- Reduce water consumption and wastage, minimise the impact on water resources and water quality, manage flood risk and maximise the use of sustainable drainage schemes;
- Preserve and enhance the diversity and distinctiveness of Allerdale's towns, villages and landscapes including the conservation and management of buildings, sites and areas of architectural, historic or archaeological importance and their setting;
- Protect, maintain and enhance the range and vitality of habitats and species to create a viable ecological network;
- Ensure development does not result in problems - or increase in existing problems - of traffic congestion or danger on the local road network or at accesses onto the highway;
- Promote sustainable, well designed and accessible places that respect the setting and character of the surrounding area, that are adaptable to meet changing needs and reduce crime, antisocial behaviour and the fear of crime;
- Provide decent homes that meet the changing needs of households over time;
- Promote inclusive, cohesive and empowered communities and encourage community involvement in the design, development and management of places;
- Promote health, well-being and active lifestyle by protecting, maintaining and enhancing green space, a network of green infrastructure, sports and recreation facilities;
- Support the local economy and businesses by providing opportunities for lifelong learning and skills development;
- Minimise the need to travel, promote and increase the opportunities to make necessary journeys by foot, cycle or public transport;

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- Promote greater self-containment of settlements by contributing to communities that are supported by adequate services, cultural, sporting and leisure activities, a diverse range of employment opportunities, physical and social infrastructure and transport options.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy approach will provide an overarching framework for the promotion of sustainable development in all decision making for the Allerdale Core Strategy. As a result it performs strongly in terms of the sustainability objectives and as such it is clearly determined to be the most sustainable.

Justification for preferred option S1

This policy would set out general principles all proposals should consider in order to deliver a sustainable form of development. Including an overarching policy on sustainability ensures the principles of sustainable development are established as a core theme. The approach will establish sustainable development as a leading principle in all aspects of the strategy, providing a comprehensive policy framework in one overarching policy as opposed to being spread across the document.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1c, SO1e, SO3a, SO5a, SO5e, SO6a, SO6b, SO6e, SO3e, SO3h, SO5f, SO6d
National Planning Policy Framework	4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change, 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.2, 6.3, 6.7, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan Priorities	2, 4
Evidence Base	-
Links to Core Strategy Policies	This relates to all policies within the Core Strategy

Alternative policy options

S1a Do not include an overarching sustainable development policy

An alternative approach would be to not include an overarching sustainable development policy. Under this option the policy framework would rely on national policy and other elements of policies contained in the Core Strategy to provide the context. This was not selected as a preferred option as delivering sustainable development is a key principle in the Core Strategy as well as in national policy, therefore to not reflect this in the plan would not facilitate delivery.

S2 - Adapting and Mitigating the Effects of Climate Change

Key issues

- Climate change considerations should be integrated into all spatial planning considerations;
- The Plan should ensure that the natural and built environment is resilient and adaptable to climate change;
- Secure new development that minimises vulnerability and provides resilience to climate change;
- New development should take account of the impact of climate change during the design process and incorporate greater use of renewable energy and energy efficiency;
- We should seek to minimise, the impact of future development on climate change, through the implementation of sustainable development principles.

Introduction

The Local Plan will provide strategic guidance as to how the Borough will contribute towards national and European objectives that aim to reduce carbon emissions; the principle cause of global warming, by setting out policies aimed at addressing climate change.



It is important to note that as well as planning to mitigate and reduce the impacts of climate change, we must also recognise that some level of climate change is now unavoidable. There is therefore a need to start adapting to the predicted impacts we are likely to see in the future.

In order to reduce the Borough's carbon footprint, policies will seek to, amongst other things, support development to maximise renewable & low carbon energy development, support the transition to a low carbon economy; actively support energy efficient improvements to existing buildings and avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding.

S2 Preferred Option - Adapting and Mitigating the Effects of Climate Change

This policy will seek to ensure that the impact of new development on climate change is mitigated and that a comfortable, liveable environment can be ensured across Allerdale by adapting to the effects of climate change. This includes the following principles:

- Maximise resilience to climate change through design, location, layout and sustainable construction;
- There will be no risk to people and property as a result of flooding and future development will not undermine existing flood defences or other flood alleviation methods;
- Provide additional measures through natural shade and cooling in the built environment, provision of a network of green infrastructure and planting to compensate for carbon dioxide emissions;
- Ensure the ability of habitats and species to adapt to climate change is not affected and if appropriate, compensatory habitats should be provided;
- Facilitate the resilience of landscape character overtime as a result of changes in climate;
- Protect soils, water sources and water quality in order to ensure they are resilient to climate change;
- Support the opportunity for local food production and farming to reduce the District's contribution to food miles by avoiding the best and most versatile agricultural land where possible;
- Explore new economic opportunities in farming, tourism and other sectors that may be presented as a result of changes to the climate.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy ensures that the impact of climate change on the natural and built environment is taken into account in all decision-making and therefore performs strongly in terms of many of the sustainability objectives. Although, policy material is provided by the topic based policies the final wording of S2 could be strengthened to provide explicit emphasis of the importance in; ensuring a comfortable, liveable environment; facilitating resilience in landscape character over time; as well as facilitating new economic opportunities presented by climate change. The alternative option relies on national policy and fails to ensure that principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation are fully taken into account in decision-making.

Justification for preferred option S2

This policy would set out general principles which should be taken into account in order to ensure that the impact of climate change on the natural and built environment is minimised. This approach recognises the importance of climate change and the role planning has in promoting mitigation and building resilience. It also ensures that climate change is addressed as an overarching theme as it impacts upon all the policy areas contained in the Core Strategy. As the policy establishes strategic level principles, it relies on other policies to provide detail in terms of delivery.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1b, SO1e, SO3a, SO3b, SO3d, SO3e,SO3f, SO3h, SO3i, SO4d, SO5c, SO3c, SO3g, SO3j, SO4b, SO4e, SO4c
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 2 - Ensuring the vitality and viability of town centres; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 5 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure; 7 - Requiring good design; 8 - Promoting healthy communities, 9 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1,6.2,6.3,6.4,6.5
Allerdale Council Plan Priorities	This relates to all the Allerdale Council Plan priorities
Evidence Base	Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012), Projections Paper – Projecting Employment and Housing Change (2011), Britain's Energy Coast – Investment Strategy: Nuclear Topic Paper 2011.

Alternative policy options

S2a - Do not include an overarching policy on the adaptation to or mitigation against climate change

Under this alternative option the policy framework would rely on national policy and other elements of policies contained in the Core Strategy to deliver the objectives. This was not selected as a preferred option as climate change is a key principle in the Core Strategy as well as in national policy, therefore to not reflect this in the plan would be detrimental to delivery.

S3 - Delivering a Sustainable and Diverse Local Economy

Key issues

- Economic development is a key pillar of sustainable development
- National policy requires an approach that facilitates and promotes development of employment land by making suitable quantity and quality available;
- A good supply of high quality premises is required in order for Allerdale to meet economic aspirations;
- Improving infrastructure is key to improving economic activity;
- Town centres have a important role to play in the economic future of Allerdale;
- Allerdale is rural in nature

Introduction

A key objective of the Local Plan is to facilitate Allerdale's economic strategy to ensure that we successfully grow and diversify the Borough's economy. Britain's Energy Coast, a master plan for West Cumbria was published in 2007, with the key objective to provide a focused strategy for both the public and private sector partners to build on the area's existing expertise in the nuclear industry and deliver the national priorities of tackling climate change and securing the nation's energy supply, while also transforming and diversifying the West Cumbria economy.

West Cumbria is the UK's most important location for nuclear and related activities, including environmental remediation, engineering and decommissioning. The nuclear industry provides around 37 % of West Cumbria's Gross Value Added (GVA) and accounts for 22% of jobs in the area. The aim of the Energy Coast is to capitalise on the £8billion investment in new nuclear facilities and maximise the opportunity to diversify in to other nuclear sectors. In 2011, partners started work on the West Cumbria Economic Blueprint that aims to take the Masterplan a step further forward by developing these themes in a delivery plan and provide a focus for both public and private investment. The Blueprint is expected in 2012. A key message emerging suggests that there is a need to focus on the sectors and activities in which West Cumbria has competitive advantages, which will yield the greatest economic benefits and which offer the greatest diversification potential. This will involve combining strengths in the area's world-class research capacity, its business base, its people (and their skills) and the area's abundant natural resources. Specific sectors that provide an opportunity for West Cumbria include:

- "Clean Tech"/ Low Carbon Industries
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Nuclear Decommissioning – an opportunity to export expertise
- Nuclear New Build Expertise – an opportunity to export
- Growth in Supporting Sectors – the "whole economy" benefits
- Construction
- Retailing
- Business and Professional
- The Visitor Economy Services

- The Arts and Cultural Activities
- Leisure
- Education
- Transport and Distribution
- Health
- Agriculture and Forestry

Although the nuclear industry makes a substantial contribution to the local economy the Borough has a strong and well established manufacturing sector not related to nuclear. These include for example the chemical industry, steel production, footwear manufacture and the construction industry. It is important that these well established businesses are supported to complement the Energy Coast agenda and to ensure a more diversified local economy. In addition the rural economy has an important role in the Borough in terms of the agricultural sector, tourism and small rural businesses.

S3 Preferred Option - Delivering a Sustainable and Diverse Local Economy

Provide land and premises of the right quality, scale and location to meet the needs of both emerging new sectors and for the expansion of existing businesses-

Improve communications within the area as well as nationally and internationally, both in terms of transport infrastructure and broadband connections.

Enhance the role of town centres by improving the retail, cultural and leisure offer and quality of the built environment.

Support the delivery of high quality tourism attractions and accommodation as well as key projects such as Derwent Forest and Roman Maryport

Support the delivery of training programmes through the provision of up to date facilities, in particular, supporting the role of Energus and Lakes College (West Cumbria), as part of the Energy Coast Campus

Sustain the rural economy by supporting farm diversification, work/live units, re-use of existing buildings as well as providing sites and premises in appropriate locations.

Sustainability appraisal

In general the policy performed strongly against the sustainability objectives, particularly in comparison to the alternative option. There are a few small areas of uncertainty identified relating to the potential impact on landscape and biodiversity as a direct result of new economic development, however, these will be considered in more detail with the findings of the HRA and any direct impacts will be dependent on location.

Justification of Preferred Option S3

The preferred policy approach aims to pull together a strategic overview of the elements that will contribute to achieving this objective. Securing the delivery of a diverse and sustainable economy in West Cumbria is a key aim of both the public and private sector. It is considered appropriate to emphasise its importance to the development strategy by the inclusion of this strategic policy.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO2a, SO3b, SO4b, SO4c, SO4d, SO4e, SO4f, SO5c, SO5e, SO5f, SO6c, SO6d, SO6e, SO1b, SO1c, SO1d, SO3f, SO3g, SO5a, SO5d
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 2 - Ensuring the vitality and viability of town centres; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 5 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure; 7 - Requiring good design; 8 - Promoting healthy communities, 9 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1,6.2,6.3,6.4,6.5
Allerdale Council Plan Priorities	2, 3, 4
Evidence Base	Allerdale Infrastructure Deficit Plan (2011), Annual Monitoring Report

Alternative policy option

S3a Do not include a strategic economic overview

The policy context would be provided by individual policies contained in the Local Plan, depending on the type and location of the proposed development. This was not selected as the preferred option as it was considered that a strategic overview was required in order to achieve the central vision and objectives of the plan.

Key issues

- New development often requires significant infrastructure to enable sustainable development;
- National policy requires a local approach to developer contributions;
- It is important to provide a clear indication of requirements to provide greater developer certainty;

Introduction

A planning obligation is a binding agreement entered into between a Local Authority and a developer /landowner or the offer of a specific undertaking by a landowner. Such an obligation may require the developer/landowner to carry out certain works, or to provide, or contribute towards the provision of measures to mitigate the negative impacts of their development and to ensure that the development contributes towards the sustainability of the area.

S4 Preferred Option - Developer Contributions

The Council will work with partners to deliver infrastructure, services and community facilities to improve the sustainability of its communities. In accordance with the provisions set out within national policy, the Council will require new developments to secure infrastructure improvements which are necessary to make the development acceptable by planning condition or obligations.

Planning obligations may also be required for the maintenance payments, to meet the initial running costs of services and facilities and to compensate for the loss or damage caused by the development

The infrastructure, facilities and services to which development may be required to contribute include:

Physical infrastructure

Transport improvements (including public transport)

Car parking

Footpaths and cycle ways

Drainage infrastructure

Flood risk management

Waste management

Broadband networks

Low carbon energy and renewable energy infrastructure

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Social Infrastructure

Affordable housing
Education provision
Community facilities (including health, police)
Local employment and training initiatives

Green infrastructure

Green Infrastructure, including public open space, plays and sports facilities
Nature conservation and mitigation measures
Environmental improvements
Public realm (including public art)

This list is not exhaustive.

It is the Council's intention to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) provided it is satisfied that it can be done without compromising development viability. The Community Infrastructure Levy will be subject to a separate Development Plan Document.

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on developer contributions will be prepared which will set out the formulae and charges which the Council would seek to apply in relation to planning obligations.

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will support the delivery of the strategy for development. It will be a "living" document and subject to regular updating. The Delivery Plan will provide a base for the SPD and for the introduction of a CIL.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy aims to provide greater certainty for developers relating to planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy, the policy option performed strongly against all sustainability objectives. As there was no reasonable alternative, the preferred option was the most sustainable option.

Justification of Preferred Option S4

The preferred option provides greater certainty for developers in terms of the intended use and scope of planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy. Both mechanisms will be a central tool to ensure the delivery of infrastructure required to support the overall development of sustainable communities.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO2a, SO3b, SO4b, SO4c, SO4d, SO4e, SO4f, SO5c, SO5e, SO5f, SO6c, SO6d, SO6e, SO1b, SO1c, SO1d, SO3f, SO3g, SO5a, SO5d
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 2 - Ensuring the vitality and viability of town centres; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 5 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure; 7 - Requiring good design; 8 - Promoting healthy communities, 9 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1,6.2,6.3,6.4,6.5
Allerdale Council Plan Priorities	2, 3, 4
Evidence Base	Allerdale Infrastructure Deficit Plan (2011), Annual Monitoring Report

Alternative policy option

There is no alternative option as national policy requires Local Authorities to set out general policies about the principles of the use of planning obligations in their Local Plan.

Q2) Do you have any comments on the strategic overarching policies (S1-4)?

S5 - Level of Growth

Key issues

- There is a need to constrain non-essential development in the open countryside
- A key aim of the plan is to ensure a geographic spread for both housing and employment development, and maximise access to jobs, service and education
- Policies should reduce the need to travel and maximise the use of alternative forms of transport
- A central aim of the Plan is to create sustainable mixed communities, address housing affordability
- Planning policy should prevent displacement of young people from rural areas, support rural services and deliver housing in smaller rural settlements

Introduction

The Spatial Policies of the Core Strategy are central to delivering the Vision and Objectives. These are split into two sections, the level of growth (S5), and the distribution of growth through the Spatial Strategy for Allerdale (S6-9). The level of growth sets out the growth of both housing stock and employment land that is required in order to meet our strategic objectives over the plan period.

S5 Preferred Option - Level of growth

4560 dwellings (304 per year) and at least 45 hectares of employment land (3 hectares per year)

This level of growth will be distributed in accordance with the settlement hierarchy and role of the settlements within the hierarchy set out in policies S6 and S7 as well as the principles contained in policy S9

Allerdale Borough Council will seek to maintain and review a rolling provision of at least 15 hectares of employment land representing five years' worth of high quality, unconstrained land.

Due to the long term nature of the core strategy the annual average growth figures could be exceeded if justified by evidence of need, demand, infrastructure capacity and fit with spatial strategy. The level of uptake in land will be reviewed annually to ensure that the housing trajectory and employment allocations are responsive to changes in economic and market conditions.

Sustainability Appraisal

Both the preferred option and the alternatives considered raised a number of areas of uncertainty in terms of impact, these include the impact on landscape, biodiversity, capacities of existing facilities, services and utilities, use of land, quality of the built environment and generation of greenhouse gas emissions. However, all of these impacts relate more to the final location of development and can be addressed at later stages of the plan making process. The preferred options contained potential strengths against the sustainability objectives and as a result the preferred options were determined to be the most sustainable.

Justification of Preferred Option S5

Housing

The preferred option is based on alternative option S5d, below, which combines up to date population, household formation and economic forecasting to provide a more comprehensive approach. However, we have a lower level of housing requirement than option S5d but higher than the Regional Spatial Strategy. In arriving at the proposed level of growth a number of factors have been taken to account:

- The preferred option has taken account of potential land availability and infrastructure capacity to deliver this level of growth. It has been set against past levels of house completions which give some guide to the capacity of the construction industry to deliver and the level of market demand.
- The preferred option allows for a rebalance in the age structure of the District's population by accommodating people of working age moving into the area.
- By going above the Regional Spatial Strategy figures it allows the flexibility and opportunity to maximise the delivery of affordable housing and to respond to and support growth in the local economy.
- The preferred option has taken as a mid point between alternative options S5c and S5d

Employment

The preferred option is to ensure that there is a flexible rolling five year supply of land available for employment uses. The level of provision for this option is derived from the Employment Land Review Update Report, based on a combination of indicators of the future requirement for different sectors of employment land, and allowing for flexibility and choice within the market. Based on the high estimated requirement it is estimated that 47 hectares of employment land will be required over the plan period, with a rolling 5 year bank of at least 15 hectares. The higher rate land requirement has been used to compliment the overall plan growth strategy and ensure that the Council plan for proposed nuclear new build as well as other development across Allerdale. This target would provide the scope and flexibility to ensure suitable availability of unconstrained employment sites, reflecting the commercial demand, in addition to

the future aspirations of the Energy Coast and Council priorities.

The spatial strategy is central to the delivery of future development in terms of housing and infrastructure and so it follows that employment land growth be directed using the same strategy. The growth strategy, settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy is central to success of the plan and in the achievement of the plans strategic objectives. It is important when developing and delivering this option that provision is made for employment land serving all of Allerdale while ensuring the most sustainable pattern of growth. One drawback of this approach is that it does not plan for exceptions to spatial strategy or businesses requiring specific locations.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1a, SO1e, SO2b, SO2c, SO3d, SO4a
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy, 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5
The Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	Projections Paper – Projecting Employment and Housing Change (2011), Annual Monitoring Report, Allerdale’s Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011, Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment,

Alternative policy option

Housing

S5a Regional Spatial Strategy option- 267 dwellings per year

This option would be to continue with the 267 dwellings per year as set out in the former Regional Spatial Strategy. The Regional Spatial Strategy figure was based on 2005 household projections.

S5b Ten year migration trend- 186 dwellings per year

This approach is trend based and projects forward a continuation of recent historical demographic change. This scenario considers the long term ten year trend of migration change, going back from 2009/10. Across West Cumbria this historical long-term trend has been positive, with particular high levels of internal migration in the first three years of the last decade. Importantly when examining the build rate in the last seven years this annual housing requirement was exceeded in five of them

S5c Five Year migration trend- 111 dwellings per year

This option is identical in approach to the ten migration option except that it takes the more recent five year trend migration data and weights to the more recent year's data. This has an important impact as the last two years 2008/2009 and 2009/2010, have both seen a reversal in total migration. This has the effect of a projected decrease in population in Allerdale. In terms of past build rates this housing target was exceeded in six of the last seven years.

S5d Employment constrained forecast- 497 dwellings per year

This option aligns the baseline economic forecast with the population changes contained in the five year migration scenario. The high level of growth suggested by this approach comes from matching the working age population required to meet the anticipated employment growth in Allerdale. Essentially, as the population of the District is predicted to age significantly over the plan period coupled with the forecast growth of 1,300 jobs during the same time this has implications for the availability of people of working age to fill the jobs created.

The forecasting model then assumes that this shortfall in the workforce will be filled by people moving into the area, thus increasing the demand for housing. In addition to accommodating workers moving in to the area there is also a housing need arising from the trend towards smaller or single person households due to an increasingly elderly population or family break up.

Employment

S5e No specified allocation provision

An alternative approach would be to not include a policy allocating a supply of employment land and maximise flexibility, with the market having full control over provision. This option was rejected as it would be unlikely to conform to national policy, and the Council would have no method to ensure that land was available in areas throughout the Borough following the spatial strategy and the aims and objectives of the core strategy. Furthermore, the Council would be unable to monitor and maintain effective levels of all employment land types, which could lead to shortage and inefficient development over the plan period.

S5f Lower employment requirement

In this approach the Core Strategy would allocate land for employment at a rate based on the lower rate of employment land requirement suggested by the Employment Land Review Update Study. This would translate to 35 hectares of land allocated over the plan period. This method was not selected as the preferred option as it would lack aspiration and fail to cater for market flexibility and choice. Furthermore, this approach would not support the level of housing growth outlined in the plan. It is considered that better alternatives were available and recommended within the employment land study that both factor in future needs of new and expanding business, and so would help facilitate the aspirations and requirements of the economic strategy for West Cumbria.

S5g Unrestricted approach to employment land

This general option to the provision of types of employment land would seek to provide an unrestricted approach to employment land, allowing maximum flexibility, with the market given full control. This was rejected as it would result in development contrary to the spatial strategy and not result in the most sustainable pattern of growth. Furthermore, the approach would result in haphazard development without the necessary infrastructure to support it, and could result in the loss and dilution of important and strategic sites, which would cause further difficulties to achieving the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy.

Q3) Do you agree with the level of housing and employment growth proposed in S5?

Key issues

- There is a need to constrain non-essential development in the open countryside
- A key aim of the plan is to ensure a geographic spread for both housing and employment development, and maximise access to jobs, service and education
- Policies should reduce the need to travel and maximise the use of alternative forms of transport
- A central aim of the Plan is to create sustainable mixed communities, address housing affordability
- Planning policy should prevent displacement of young people from rural areas, support rural services and deliver housing in smaller rural settlements

Introduction

The spatial strategy is crucial in guiding Allerdale's growth (outlined in S5) over the plan period. Together strategic policies S6, 7,8 and 9 set out the broad approach to the location and distribution of development within the Borough. It also defines the role of settlements and the type of development that would be acceptable in the open countryside.

The Spatial Strategy sets the framework for growth and development across Allerdale outlining our hierarchy for service provision and investment, the spatial distribution of housing and employment growth. Further information is provided by the Settlement Hierarchy, which sets out those settlements where growth and investment will be focussed. The Spatial Distribution of growth shares out the overall growth between the settlement levels that are central to the delivery of the strategy. A final policy sets out the aim to manage development in the rural areas by explaining what is accepted and promoted in the open countryside.

S6 Preferred Option - Settlement Hierarchy

Principal Service Centre- Workington

Key Service Centres Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton , Silloth and Aspatria

Local Service Centres- Abbeytown, Allonby, Brigham, Broughton, Broughton Moor, Dearham, Flimby, Great Clifton, Kirkbride, Prospect and Thursby.

Rural Villages- Anthorn, Blencogo, Blitterlees, Bolton Low Houses, Bothel, Branthwaite, Bridekirk, Broughton Cross, Camerton, Crosby, Crosby Villa, Dean, Deanscales, Dovenby, Eaglesfield, Fletchertown, Gilcruix, Glasson, Greysouthern, Hayton, Ireby, Kirkbampton, Langrigg, Little Bampton, Little Clifton, Mawbray, Newton Arlosh, Oughterside, Oulton, Papcastle, Pardshaw, Parsonby, Plumbland, Skinburness, Tallentire, Torpenhow, Ullock, Waverton, Westnewton, Blennerhasset, Bowness on Solway, Mockerkin and Port Carlisle.

We also support the Lake District National Park Authorities adopted Core Strategy policy CS 18 and Supplementary Planning Document- "Housing Provision" adopted October 2010 with respect the Parishes of Ireby and Uldale, Boltons, Westward, and Sebergham

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred option performed strongly against the sustainability objectives in respects to the key aims to ensure that the majority of development is located within existing urban centres that already provide a good range of services, facilities, employment opportunities and access to public transport. Additionally the preferred approach performed well in comparison to the alternative options; however, potential concerns were raised over the potential impact of the development on landscape and biodiversity assets. This was a common concern against all policy options considered, and the preferred option was concluded to be the most sustainable, and especially when considered in comparison with other core strategy policies.

Justification of Preferred Option S6

The preferred option for the spatial strategy (S6, S7, S8 and S9) ensure that the majority of development will be located in the existing urban centres that provide the best range of services, employment opportunities and access to public transport. This approach makes the most use of existing infrastructure, reduces the need to travel and ensures the ongoing sustainability of these centres. However the preferred options recognise that smaller rural settlements, if they are to remain sustainable, should have the opportunity where appropriate to accommodate small-scale infill development. This is designed to help address some of the local need for housing and employment outside the main centres.

The principles underpinning how future growth will be distributed across the hierarchy reflects the role of the settlement, and ensures that the scale of development is appropriate to the size of the town or village and that environmental and infrastructure capacity is accounted for.

Selection Criteria for preferred settlement hierarchy

Principal and Key Service Centres have been designated on the basis that they are the recognised urban centres in the plan area and offer a good range of services. Workington has been identified as the Principal Service Centre in recognition of its role as the main housing, employment and retail centre. This approach reflects the spatial strategies adopted in both the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Structure Plan.

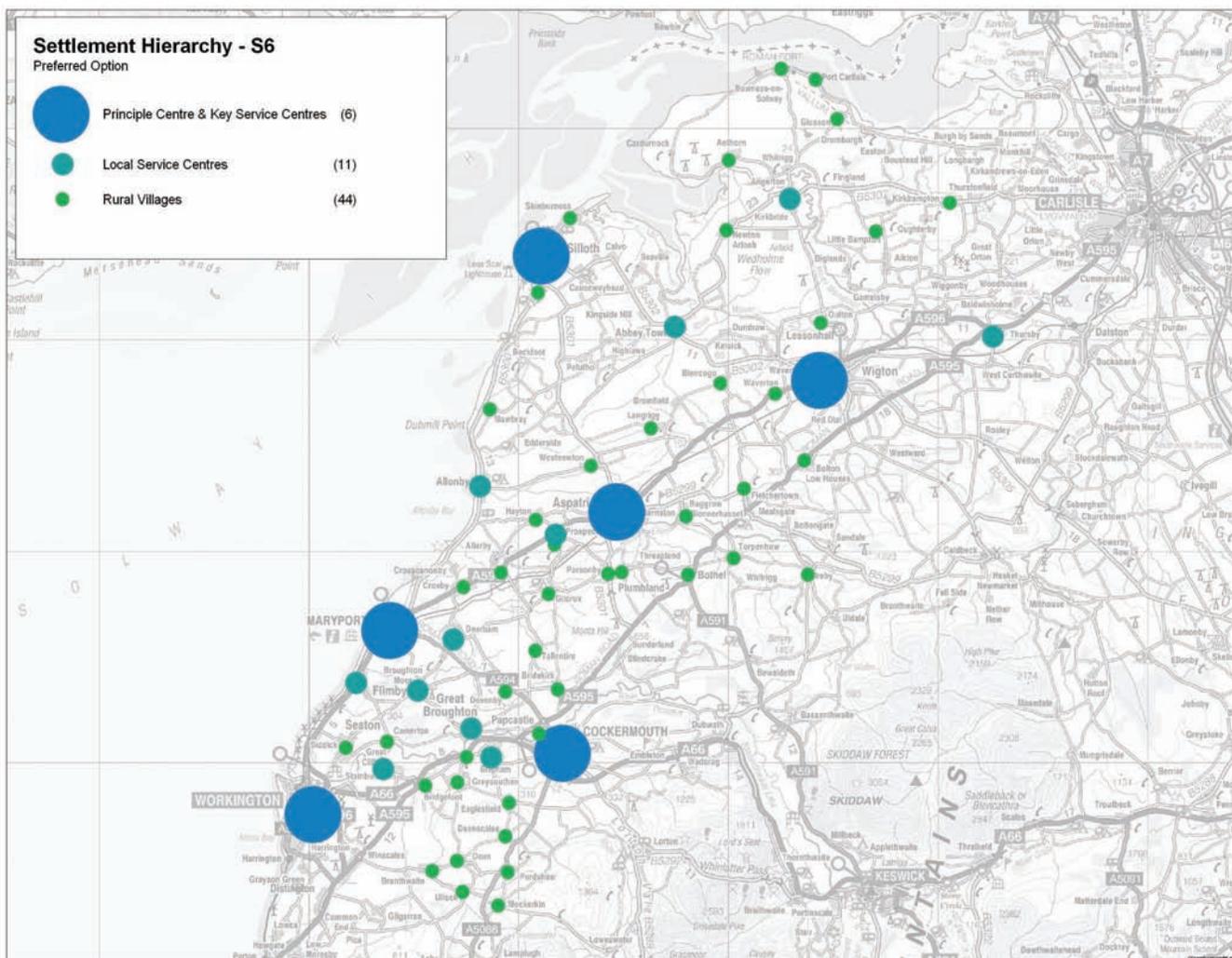
The Local Service Centres have been selected on the basis of having a shop, school and public transport. It was considered that these services were core facilities for a community and a good basis to build future sustainability. This is reflected in the consultation carried out at the Issues and Options stage, when these three services were seen as the most important.

Rural Villages have been identified by taking the settlements designated as either a limited growth village or an infill village in the current Local plan and applying an additional requirement for each settlement to be located within 2.5 miles from a primary school. The aim of this approach is to try and ensure that the smaller rural settlements are retained in the hierarchy to allow small scale infill development that can contribute to the sustainability of these communities.

Given the rural nature of some areas of Allerdale, especially in the north, the local primary school can serve a number of villages. The inclusion of the primary schools as a criteria aims to recognise the contribution schools make to local communities by providing a focal point as well as a community facility.

This approach differs from the other options considered below in that the facility/service is not necessarily located in the village but is shared by neighbouring settlements. This preferred

option is designed to add greater flexibility to the hierarchy for the small rural settlements by acknowledging that the presence or absence of facilities in a particular settlement should not be the sole basis on which a village is named in the spatial strategy.



National Park policy

Essentially through policy CS18 of the National Park's Core Strategy there is an opportunity for existing housing need in those Parishes outside the Park to be delivered within the National Park provided the applicant can demonstrate a local connection or a local affordable need. Caldbeck is designated as a rural centre in the Park's Core Strategy and as such would be a focus for such development. Any dwellings approved under this policy would be subject to occupancy conditions.

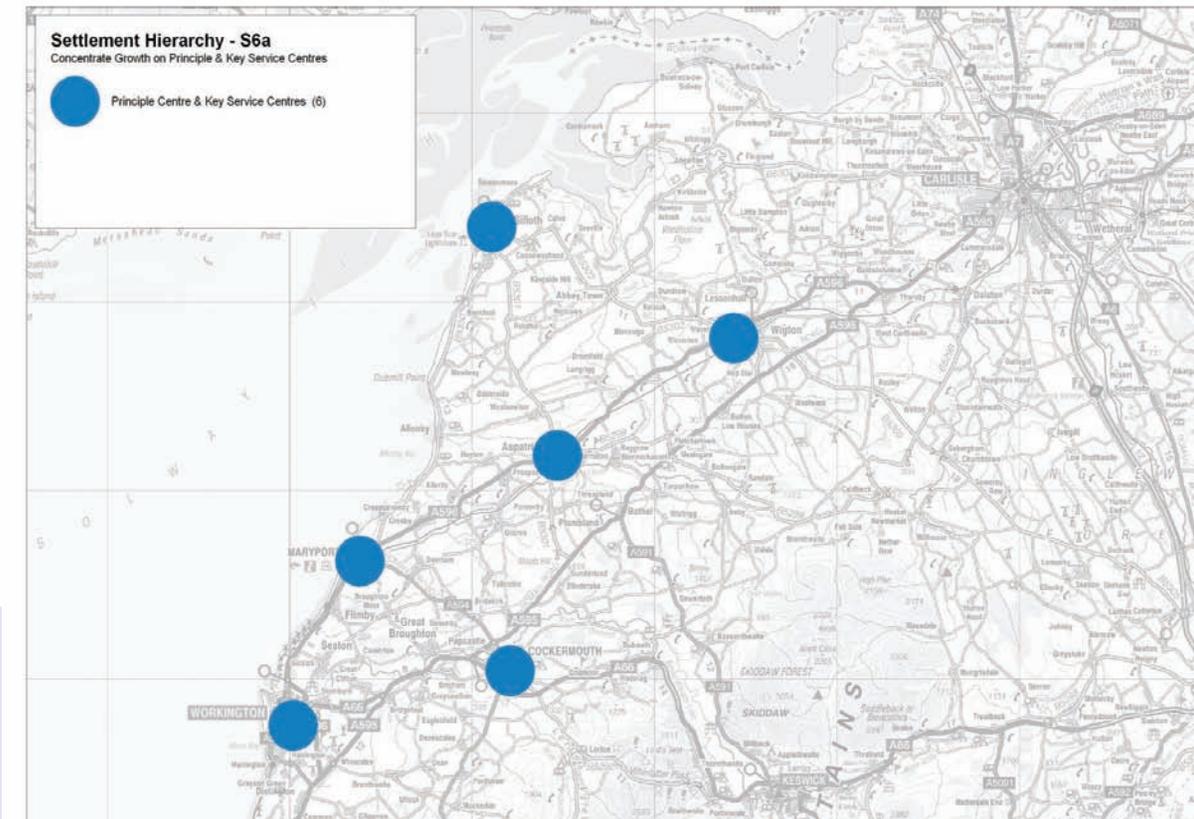
Compliance with other policies and strategies

Spatial Objectives	SO1a, SO3i, SO4a, SO1e, SO2b, SO2c, SO3d, SO4c
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy, 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes ; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Planning Making
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1
Evidence Base	Survey of local services (2011)

Alternative policy options

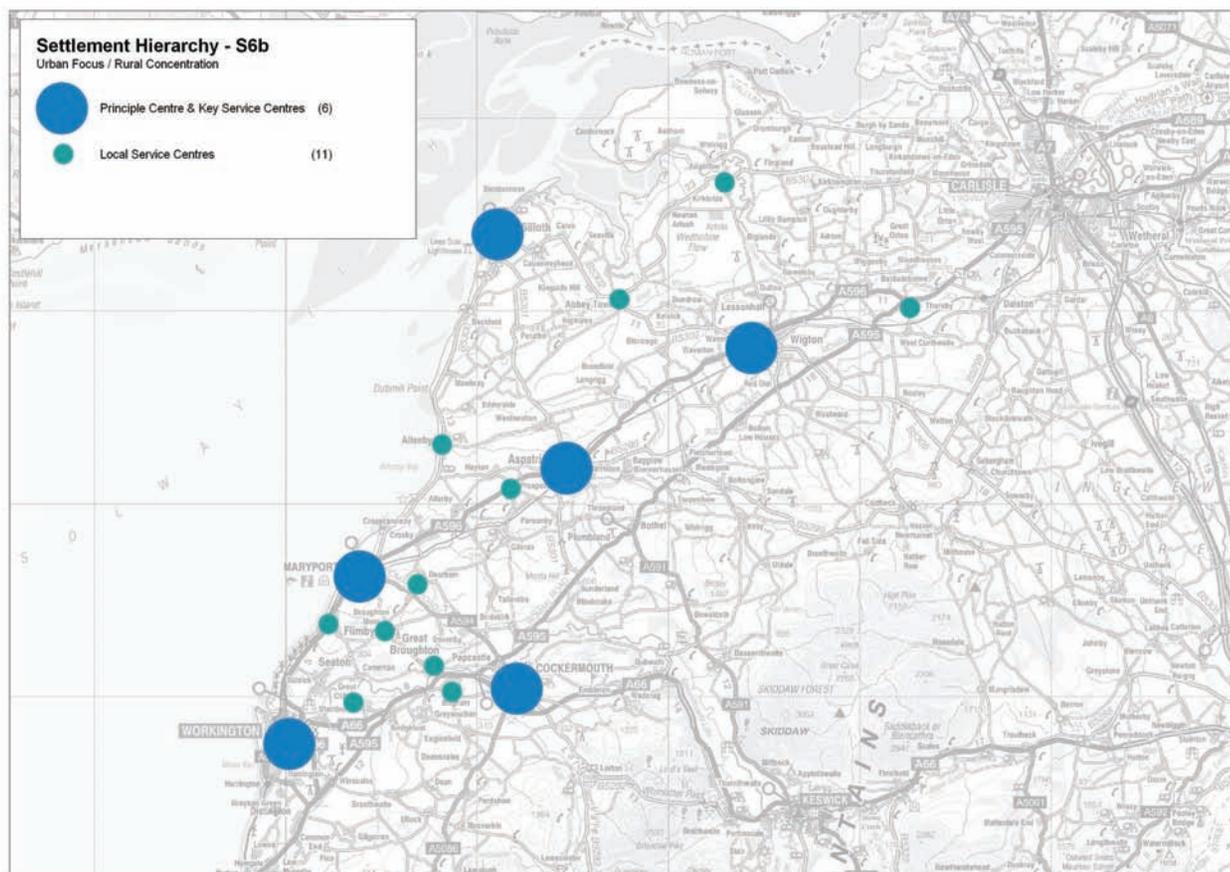
S6a Concentrate growth on Principal and Key Service Centres.

Under this option all development would be located in Workington, Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton, Silloth and Aspatria, with only essential development allowed in the remaining towns and villages.



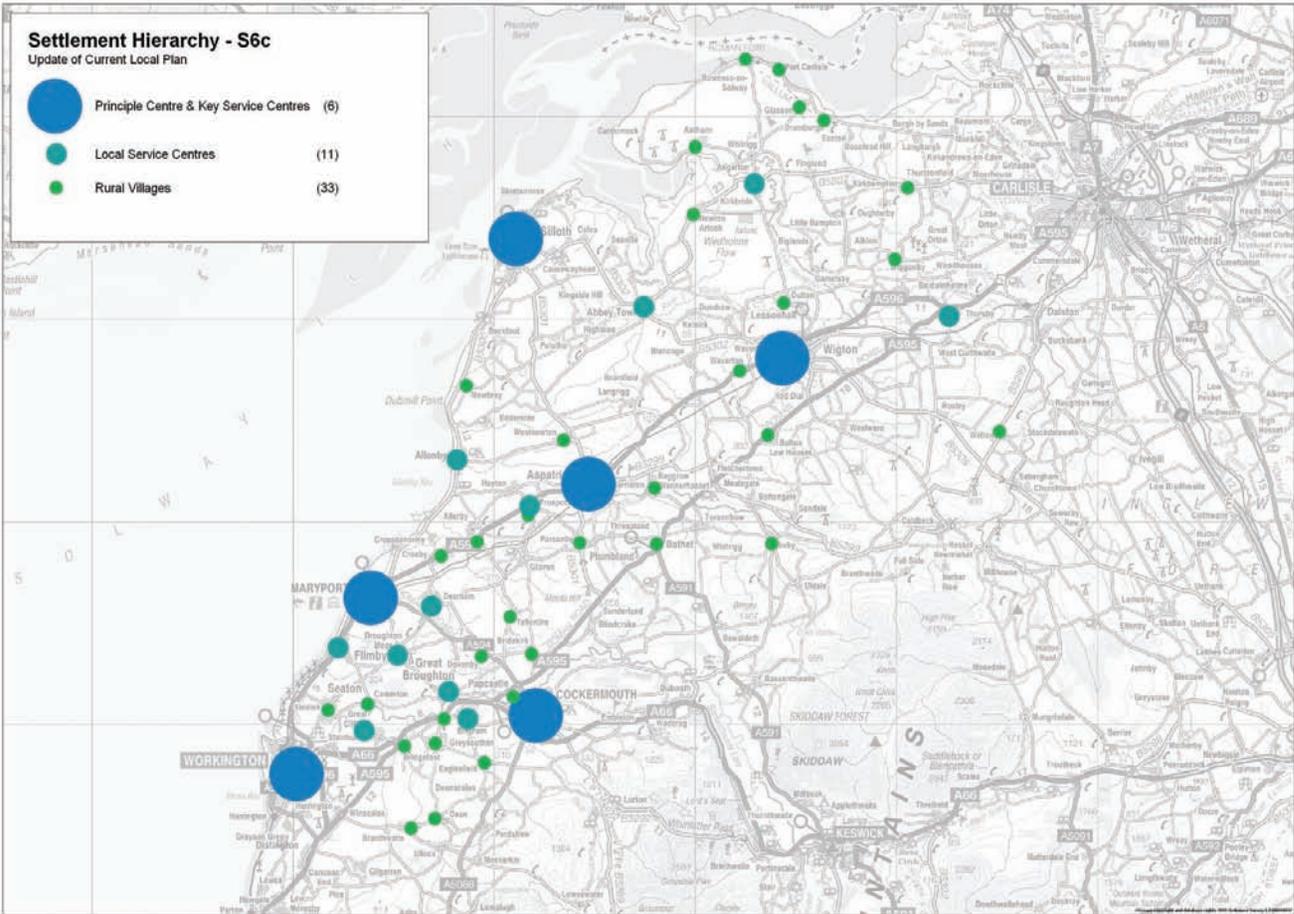
S6b Urban focus/Rural Concentration

This option introduces an additional tier to the hierarchy by designating the larger villages as Local Service Centres. The Local Service Centres have been designated on the basis that they have a shop, school and public transport. Only essential development would be supported in the villages outside the hierarchy. This option therefore consists of a Principal Centre and Key Service Centres as defined in the previous options plus Local Service Centres.



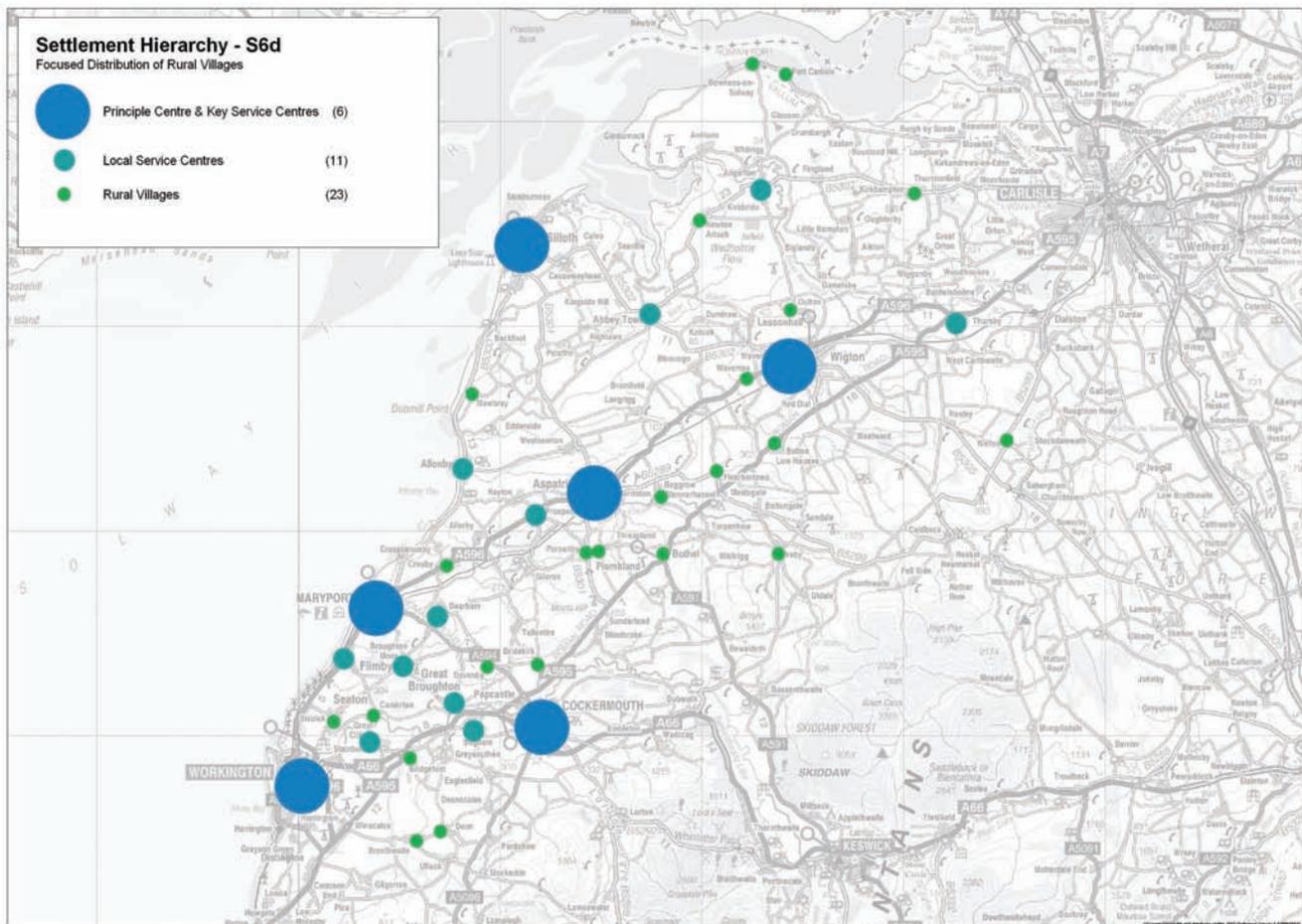
S6c Update of current Local Plan settlement hierarchy

In this option the Principal Centre, the Key and Local Services Centres are the same as the previous options. However a further level is introduced for rural villages. Under this option a settlement is designated as a rural village if it has either a shop, a school or public transport and one of either a public house, church, community hall and sports facility.



S6d Focussed distribution of rural villages

In this option the rural villages are more closely defined compared with the above option, resulting in less than half the number of rural villages. The rural villages in this instance were defined by having four services from a shop, school, public transport, church, public house, and community hall or sports facility or access to public transport and at least two other services. The Principal, Key and Local Service Centres remain the same as previous options



Q4) Do you have any comments on the distribution of development (S6)? Is there another alternative you would like us to consider?

Key issues

- There is a need to constrain non-essential development in the open countryside
- A key aim of the plan is to ensure a geographic spread for both housing and employment development, and maximise access to jobs, service and education
- Policies should reduce the need to travel and maximise the use of alternative forms of transport
- A central aim of the Plan is to create sustainable mixed communities, address housing affordability
- Planning policy should prevent displacement of young people from rural areas, support rural services and deliver housing in smaller rural settlements

S7 Preferred Option - Role of SettlementsPrincipal Centre

Focus for major new development in Allerdale. The principal centre will have the widest range of services in terms of public transport, employment, retail, education and leisure facilities.

Key Service Centres

These towns offer a wide range of services and function as service centres for a wider rural hinterland. These settlements have the ability to serve day to day needs of other settlements in the locality and offer varied range of employment land to meet the needs of local and regional businesses.

Local Service Centres

This tier consists of larger villages with a more limited range of services, but all have a school, shop and public transport. These villages would accommodate a smaller scale of housing development that will help contribute towards maintaining the vitality of the settlement. In addition a small level of employment land may be required to meet local needs for small flexible premises and shared facility units such as workhubs.

Rural Villages

This category is made up of small villages where new housing and employment will be restricted to infill development within the designated settlement boundary. Rural and Community services will be protected and enhanced, while employment opportunities will be small scale to meet appropriate needs while alternative provision such as live work units and small hubs will be encouraged.

The Countryside

Open countryside and villages/hamlets not named in the above hierarchy are areas where new development will not normally be permitted unless exceptional circumstances apply. The types of developments that will be accepted in the open countryside are listed in Policy S8

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred option performed strongly against the majority of sustainability objectives, and it was therefore determined that defining the role of settlements within the Core Strategy would be the most sustainable approach to take.

Justification of Preferred Option S7

The preferred option for the spatial strategy (S6, S7, S8 and S9) ensures that the majority of development will be located in the existing urban centres that provide the best range of services, employment opportunities and access to public transport. This approach makes the most use of existing infrastructure, reduces the need to travel and ensures the ongoing sustainability of these centres. However the preferred options recognise that smaller rural settlements, if they are to remain sustainable, should have the opportunity where appropriate to accommodate small scale infill development. This is designed to help address some of the local need for housing and employment outside the main centres.

The principles underpinning how future growth will be distributed across the hierarchy reflects the role of the settlement, and ensures that the scale of development is appropriate to the size of the town or village and that environmental and infrastructure capacity is accounted for.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Spatial Objectives	SO1a, SO3i, SO4a, SO1e, SO2b, SO2c, SO3d
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy, 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes ; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Planning Making
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012), Survey of local services (2011)

Alternative policy option

S7a Do not define the role of settlements

An alternative approach would be to not define the role of settlements in each tier of the hierarchy. This would leave the roles open and provide a more flexible approach. This option was not considered as the preferred option as it fails to complete the spatial strategy and does not provide a clear indication of what type of development is expected across the hierarchy, therefore it does not provide developers and communities with information they require.

S8 - Development Limits

Key issues

- There is a need to constrain non-essential development in the open countryside
- A key aim of the plan is to ensure a geographic spread for both housing and employment development, and maximise access to jobs, service and education
- Policies should reduce the need to travel and maximise the use of alternative forms of transport
- A central aim of the Plan is to create sustainable mixed communities, address housing affordability
- Planning policy should prevent displacement of young people from rural areas, support rural services and deliver housing in smaller rural settlements

S8 Preferred Option - Development Limits

New development will be concentrated within the physical limits of the towns and villages identified in the settlement hierarchy (see Core Strategy policy S6). The scale of development proposed will be expected to be commensurate to the size of the settlement and reflect its position in the settlement hierarchy. Preference will be given to the development of previously used land and buildings or vacant and underused land.

Within development limits proposals for new development, including conversions, will be acceptable provided that:

- (i) The development is of a scale and design which will not detract from the character of the settlement;
- (ii) The development includes acceptable arrangements for car parking and access;
- (iii) The development will not put undue strain on existing local infrastructure;
- (iv) The site of the proposed development is not considered to have significant amenity value;
- (v) The site is not considered to make a significant contribution to the character of the settlement in its undeveloped state.

Proposals outside these areas will be treated as development in the open countryside.

Development beyond development limits will be restricted to:

- (i) Housing essential for farming, forestry or the operation of a rural based enterprise
- (ii) Housing meeting the rural exceptions policy
- (iii) An appropriate diversification of an existing agricultural or forestry activity
- (iv) A recreation or tourism proposal requiring a countryside location
- (v) Facilities essential to social and community needs
- (vi) The replacement of an existing dwelling
- (vii) A suitably scaled extension to an existing building
- (viii) The conversion or reuse of a suitable existing building
- (ix) Other development requiring a countryside location due to technical or operational reasons

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred option was identified to achieve sustainability strengths in most areas. These included the benefits of ensuring good access to services and facilities, and benefits for emissions and local air quality. Without this policy approach, the SA considered there to be risks resulting in potential inappropriate development that is out of scale in terms of the settlement hierarchy, resulting in potentially reduced access to services and facilities and therefore an increased need to travel.

Justification for Preferred Option S8

This option would outline the inclusion of a development limits policy, which would support the settlement hierarchy policy in the core strategy and provide a policy context for the settlement boundaries indicated in the site allocations DPD document.

It would support the sustainable development objectives of the core strategy, by focussing development in appropriate locations that minimise the need to travel and protecting environmental resources and landscape character. It would also serve to make a clear differentiation between the areas identified for development and the open countryside and ensure that the scale of development in defined settlements reflects their position in the hierarchy.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO6a, SO1d, SO1e, SO3e, SO3h, SO3i
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy, 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes ; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Planning Making
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2; 6.3; 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	-

Alternative policy options

S8a Do not include a policy on development expected within and out with development limits

This option would be to not include a development limits policy. The principle of directing development to sustainable locations, such as towns and larger villages, and resisting non-essential development in the open countryside is set out in national planning policy. However, it was considered reliance on national policy would not provide sufficient context to support the settlement hierarchy in the core strategy – particularly in ensuring that the scale of development proposals within defined settlement reflects their position in the hierarchy, in terms of role and function.

Q5) Do you have any comments on the role of the settlement tiers, and open countryside (S7 and 8)?

Key issues

- There is a need to constrain non-essential development in the open countryside
- A key aim of the plan is to ensure a geographic spread for both housing and employment development, and maximise access to jobs, service and education
- Policies should reduce the need to travel and maximise the use of alternative forms of transport
- A central aim of the Plan is to create sustainable mixed communities, address housing affordability
- Planning policy should prevent displacement of young people from rural areas, support rural services and deliver housing in smaller rural settlements

S9 Preferred Option - Distribution of Growth

Principal Centre	35%
Key Service Centre	39%
Local Service Centre	20%
Rural Villages	6%

The level of growth will be allocated across each tier of the settlement hierarchy based on the role and size of the settlement as well as its environmental and infrastructure capacity.

In order to meet both strategic and local needs employment land will be distributed across the Borough broadly following the pattern outlined above taking into account:

- the importance of the current strategic and successful employment sites to the overall strategy for Allerdale’s economic future;
- the existing pattern of supply;
- the need for flexibility, choice and churn in the market.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach was identified as having sustainability strengths in most areas; including, benefits of ensuring good access to services and facilities, and emissions and local air quality, through focussing most development within the main urban centres. It also ensures continued access to small facilities and vibrancy of more rural communities through enabling of small-scale infill development. Without this policy approach, there were considered to be risks resulting in potential inappropriate development that is out of scale in terms of the settlement hierarchy, resulting in potentially reduced access to services and facilities and therefore an increased need to travel.

Justification of Preferred Option S9

The preferred options for the spatial strategy (S6, S7, S8 and S9) ensure that the majority of development will be located in the existing urban centres that provide the best range of services, employment opportunities and access to public transport. This approach makes the most use of existing infrastructure, reduces the need to travel and ensures the ongoing sustainability of these centres. However the preferred options recognise that smaller rural settlements, if they are to remain sustainable, should have the opportunity where appropriate to accommodate small-scale infill development. This is designed to help address some of the local need for housing and employment outside the main centres.

The principles underpinning how future growth will be distributed across the hierarchy reflects the role of the settlement, and ensures that the scale of development is appropriate to the size of the town or village and that environmental and infrastructure capacity is accounted for. This approach ensures that sustainable development remains a central theme of the strategy.

The preferred option for the distribution of employment follows the central spatial strategy set out above, however, given the nature of the Borough's employment offer and the need to ensure that land is provided to meet both strategic and local needs employment land will be distributed across the Borough and will broadly follow the level of growth.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Spatial Objectives	SO1a, SO1e, SO2b, SO2c, SO3d, SO3i, SO4a
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy, 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes ; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Planning Making
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	Issues and options consultation, SHLAA, Allerdale's Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011, Employment land and Premises study, survey of village facilities (2011) Public transport data (2011) Local Transport Plan, West Cumbria Economic Blueprint.

Alternative policy options

Housing

S9a Population driven distribution

The distribution of growth could be based solely on population of the settlement rather than a combination of factors such as role and size of the settlement in the hierarchy, environmental and infrastructure capacity. This approach would result in the percentage share of growth changing in the Local Service Centres to 14% overall and rural villages to 12% overall.

Employment

S9b Unrestricted approach to employment land

This option to the provision of types of employment land would seek to provide an unrestricted approach to employment land, allowing maximum flexibility, with the market given full control. This was rejected as it would result in development contrary to the spatial strategy and not result in the most sustainable pattern of growth. Furthermore, the approach would result in haphazard development without the necessary infrastructure to support it, and could result in the loss and dilution of important and strategic sites, which would cause further difficulties to achieving the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy.

Q6) Do you agree with the distribution of development set out in the preferred option (S9)?

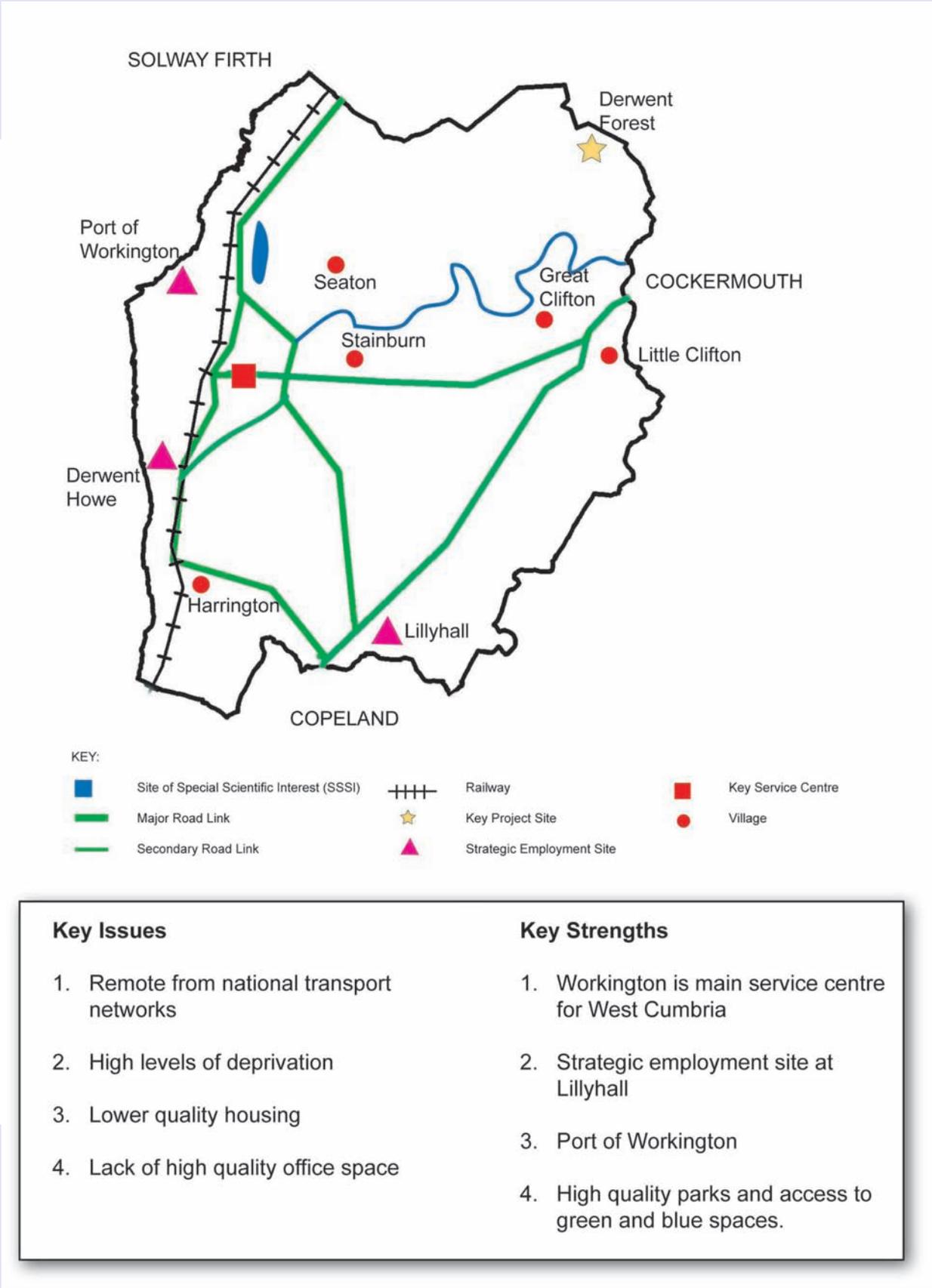
Introduction

The previous chapters have set out the overall strategy for the Borough of Allerdale, including the vision, objectives and strategic policies for the plan area as a whole. However, given the diversity of issues and opportunities across the Borough, a series of sub area policies have been developed within a geographical context to highlight and address the strategic priorities of each locality.

The Borough has been divided into six sub areas, based on localities developed by the West Cumbrian Strategy for Sustainable Communities. Each locality has its own distinctive character, strengths and issues that are reflected in these locally specific policies. The areas are as follows.

S10	-	Workington
S11	-	Cockermouth
S12	-	Maryport
S13	-	Wigton
S14	-	Silloth
S15	-	Aspatria

S10 - Workington



Key Issues

1. Remote from national transport networks
2. High levels of deprivation
3. Lower quality housing
4. Lack of high quality office space

Key Strengths

1. Workington is main service centre for West Cumbria
2. Strategic employment site at Lillyhall
3. Port of Workington
4. High quality parks and access to green and blue spaces.

In relation to the following issues in the Workington locality, the Council will:

Housing

- Identify land for new housing reflecting its position within the settlement hierarchy, recognising the importance of Workington to future residential development in Allerdale;
- Seek to encourage new housing across the area to provide a mix of tenures and types, including affordable to meet current and future need, aspirations and regeneration objectives;
- Target areas of poor quality housing and prioritise for housing renewal and improvement.

Economy

- Seek to maximise the strategic role of Lillyhall in the future growth of the Allerdale economy by promoting the growth of the energy sector, research and development clusters, education and skills and the development of high quality, large format industrial and commercial use;
- Work closely with partners to enable development of land around the Port of Workington to capitalise on and compliment the Port's role in the movement of freight and the potential role in servicing the energy sector and Nuclear New Build;
- Encourage the growth and enhancement of employment opportunities on existing employment sites such as Derwent Howe in order to realise the potential;
- Seek to maximise the opportunity to redevelop brownfield land to create new mixed and employment opportunities such as the re-development of the former Corus site;
- Support proposals for the redevelopment of the Derwent Forest site for appropriate uses such as large-scale leisure developments and tourism activities of a predominately "open" nature, renewable energy schemes or educational facilities;
- Support the role of Energus and Lakes College (West Cumbria), as part of the Energy Coast Campus;
- Actively seek to improve the vitality and viability of Workington town centre by directing retail and leisure developments to town centre and edge of centre sites; by supporting a wide and diverse range of shops and leisure uses within the centre and by encouraging a thriving evening economy;
- Support redevelopment of the Derwent Valley area for a mix of uses that may include leisure, retail and employment. Particular encouragement will be given for proposals that seek to improve and enhance the town's sports and leisure facilities in this edge-of-centre location.

Built Environment

- Seek the continued protection of the attractive historic buildings within the conservation areas of Portland Square, Brow Top and St Michaels.

Natural Environment

- Protect and enhance the exceptional natural beauty of Curwen Park and recognise the importance of this area for recreational uses, as a habitat for protected wildlife species, and a significant Green Infrastructure asset;
- Recognise and protect the special character of the River Derwent and River Derwent Corridor (SAC);
- Support proposals which minimise the risk of flooding and effectively contribute to defence management.
-

Transport/infrastructure

- Support proposals in Workington to create a multi modal transport interchange with potential for mixed use development and additional car parking;
- Facilitating the expansion of the Port of Workington by enhancing the infrastructure such as road and rail access;
- Encourage proposals that will actively support the further development of the nuclear industry in the area such as rail and highway improvements;
- Work with partners to support any future proposals for the strategic infrastructure projects, such as the Workington Southern Link Road, and seek to protect proposed routes through planning policy;
- Work with partners to maximise the roll out of superfast and next generation broadband across the locality to both residential and business users.

S11 - Cockermouth



KEY:

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Key Service Centre |  Village |
|  Major Road Link |  Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) |
|  Secondary Road Link | |

Key Issues

1. Lack of affordable housing
2. Limited infrastructure capacity
3. Lack of employment land and employment opportunities
4. Flood risk
5. Poor public transport connections

Key Strengths

1. Rich historic character
2. Thriving town centre and vibrant evening economy
3. Major tourism potential associate close proximity to Lake District
4. High performing schools

In relation to the following issues in the Cockermouth locality, the Council will:

Housing

- Identify land for new housing provision, with a high priority given to meeting local affordable needs;
- Expect new residential development to make a positive contribution to the overall mix of housing in the locality in which it is to be located;
- Encourage the provision of housing to meet the needs of elderly and for people with special needs.

Economy

- Address lack of available employment sites and increase the range of offer to meet both local needs and those of the nuclear supply sectors;
- Support proposals which build upon the existing vitality and viability of Cockermouth town centre including, improve the retail provision (particularly convenience), develop the evening economy, supports the representation of independent local retailers and revitalises the Market Place;
- Support the provision, improvement and protection of small scale retail, leisure and community services in rural settlements;
- Encourage tourism proposals which capitalise on the high visitor numbers to the Cockermouth area, particularly, sustainable forms of tourism and leisure attractions, such as Roman Papcastle, and high quality accommodation.

Built Environment

- Safeguard and enhance buildings sites and areas of heritage and cultural importance.

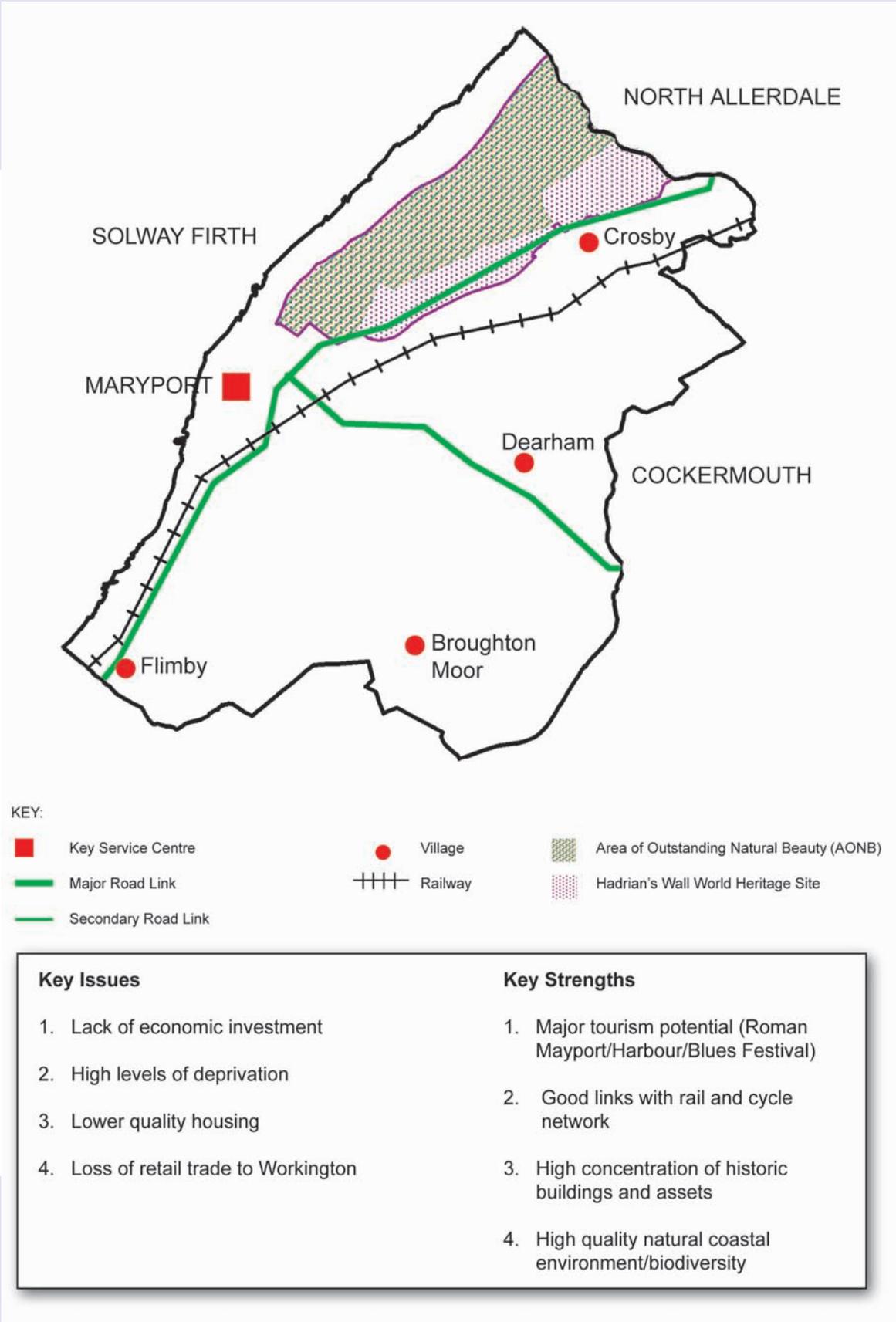
Natural Environment

- Recognise and protect the special character of River Derwent corridor and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC);
- Support proposals which minimise the risk of flooding and effectively contribute to defence management.

Transport/Infrastructure

- Support proposals which improve utility provision;
- Encourage improvements to the accessibility of the town centre through improvements to the town car parks, with linked improvement to local public transport provision;
- Support improvements in traffic management measures;
- Work with partners to maximise the roll out of superfast and next generation broadband across the locality to both residential and business users.

S12 - Maryport



Housing

- Identify land for new housing reflecting the settlement hierarchy, recognising the importance of the locality to future residential development in Allerdale;
- Seek to encourage new housing across the area to provide a mix of tenures and types, including affordable to meet current and future need, aspirations and regeneration objectives.

Employment

- Provide a mix of employment land opportunities across the locality and support high quality development and refurbishment of existing employment sites such as the Glasson, Solway and Risehow industrial estates;
- Supporting existing and new businesses by promoting proposals for flexible business start-up and 'move on' space;
- Actively seek to improve the vitality and viability of Maryport town centre by directing retail and leisure developments to town centre and edge of centre sites; by supporting a wide and diverse range of shops and leisure uses within the centre and by encouraging a thriving evening economy;
- Promote Maryport as a key tourism destination and encourage the development of strategic visitor attractions such as Roman Maryport and the Harbour / Marina;
- Support proposals for the redevelopment of the Harbour and Marina for a mix of uses, which may include leisure, retail, employment, and residential uses. Particular encouragement will be given for proposals that seek to improve the area's tourism offer with high quality hotel and leisure facilities.

Built Environment

- Seek the continued protection of the attractive historic buildings within the conservation areas of Fleming Square;
- Continue to recognise the national archaeological importance of the Roman fort at Camp Farm. Efforts to increase archaeological investigation in the area shall be supported and protection of the archaeological and historical integrity of Roman Maryport will given.

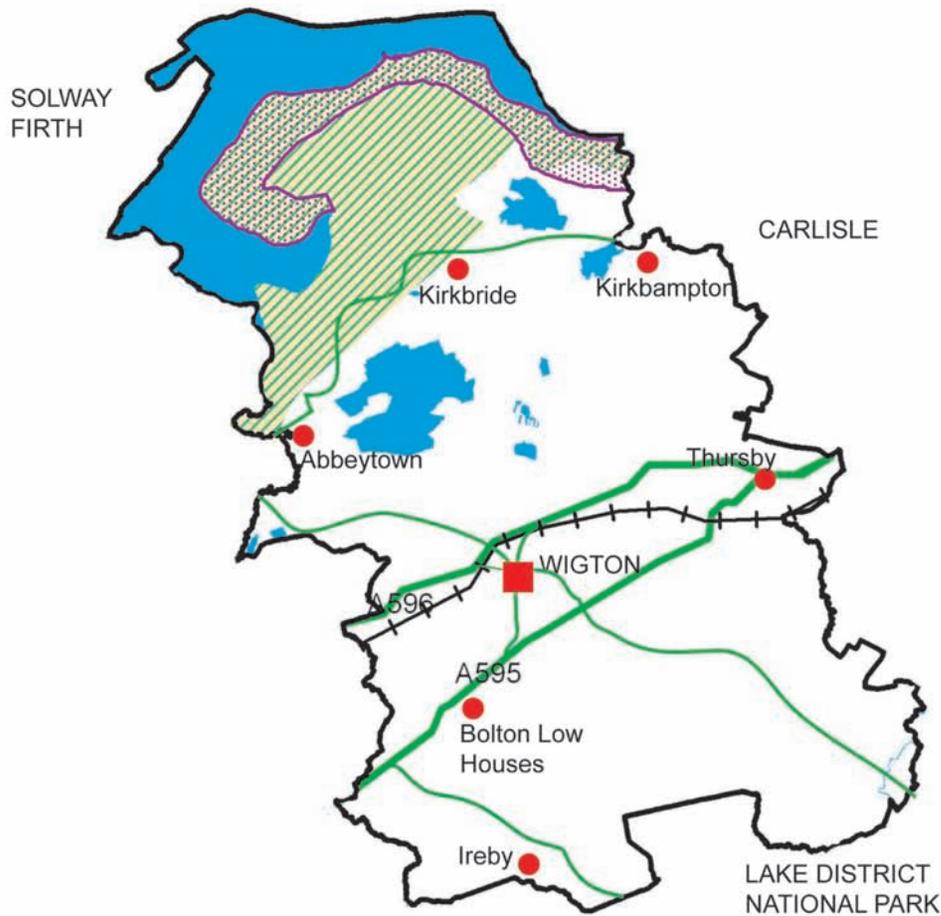
Natural Environment

- Support the development of the Cumbrian Coastal Access project, which seeks to establish an unbroken public right of way across the coast of Britain. As one of the first areas being considered by Natural England for the project, Maryport will have established new rights of way and enhanced routes along the coast of the locality;
- Continue to protect the nationally designated Historical Park of Netherhall which is a locally important area of green space within the town;
- Continue to safeguard the internationally protected areas of the Solway Coast AONB by ensuring that all development is consistent with the objectives within the AONB Management Plan.

Transport/Infrastructure

- Work with partners to support the improvement and integration of bus and rail services through the development of a Maryport Transport Interchange;
- Seek improvements to the West Cumbrian Coastal Railway service;
- Work with partners to maximise the roll out of superfast and next generation broadband across the locality to both residential and business users.

S13 - Wigton



KEY:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
|  Key Service Centre |  Village |  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) |
|  Major Road Link |  Railway |  Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site |
|  Secondary Road Link | |  Site of Special Scientific Interest |

Key Issues

1. Housing affordability in rural areas
2. Lack of employment land
3. Poor access to rural services leading to high reliance on car use
4. Town centre traffic and poor pedestrian environment

Key Strengths

1. Good accessibility to Wigton town via road and rail
2. Potential for substantial economic growth
3. Strong agricultural sector
4. Good range of services

Housing

- Promote the appropriate level of housing through the spatial strategy, with a high priority given to meeting local affordable needs;
- Support efforts to make use of long term empty housing, especially within town centres.

Economy

- Encourage appropriate levels of employment growth following the spatial strategy through the identification of additional employment land;
- Supporting existing and new businesses by promoting proposals for small flexible business start-up and 'move on' space as well as alternative methods of provision, such as the role of work hubs in providing facilities as a focal point for rural businesses.
- Promote the sustainability of Wigton town centre by;
- Directing retail, leisure and cultural proposals within the town centre wherever possible;
- encouraging vibrant and diverse evening and leisure uses to serve local communities and attract visitors;
- Actively encouraging improvements to the built environment, public realm and architectural heritage of the market town;
- Working with partners to support traffic management and infrastructure projects in order to tackle congestion, ease heavy traffic movement and improve the public realm within Wigton town centre;
- Encourage appropriate levels of employment growth following the spatial strategy and promote alternative methods of provision, such as the opportunity for 'livework' units;
- Protect and maximise appropriate use of local employment sites;
- Support appropriate rural and farm diversification schemes, recognising the important role these have for the wider Allerdale economy;
- Protecting the character and sustainability of rural settlements by setting policies that vigorously protect village and community services such as shops and pubs.

Built Environment

- Safeguard the attractive and distinctive Georgian architectural heritage within the Wigton town centre and the wider rural villages, promoting improvements and enhancements to maximise the character of the buildings and public realm within these conservation areas;
- Protect the distinctive character of villages and settlements by ensuring that all new development respects and enhances existing traditional designs and features.

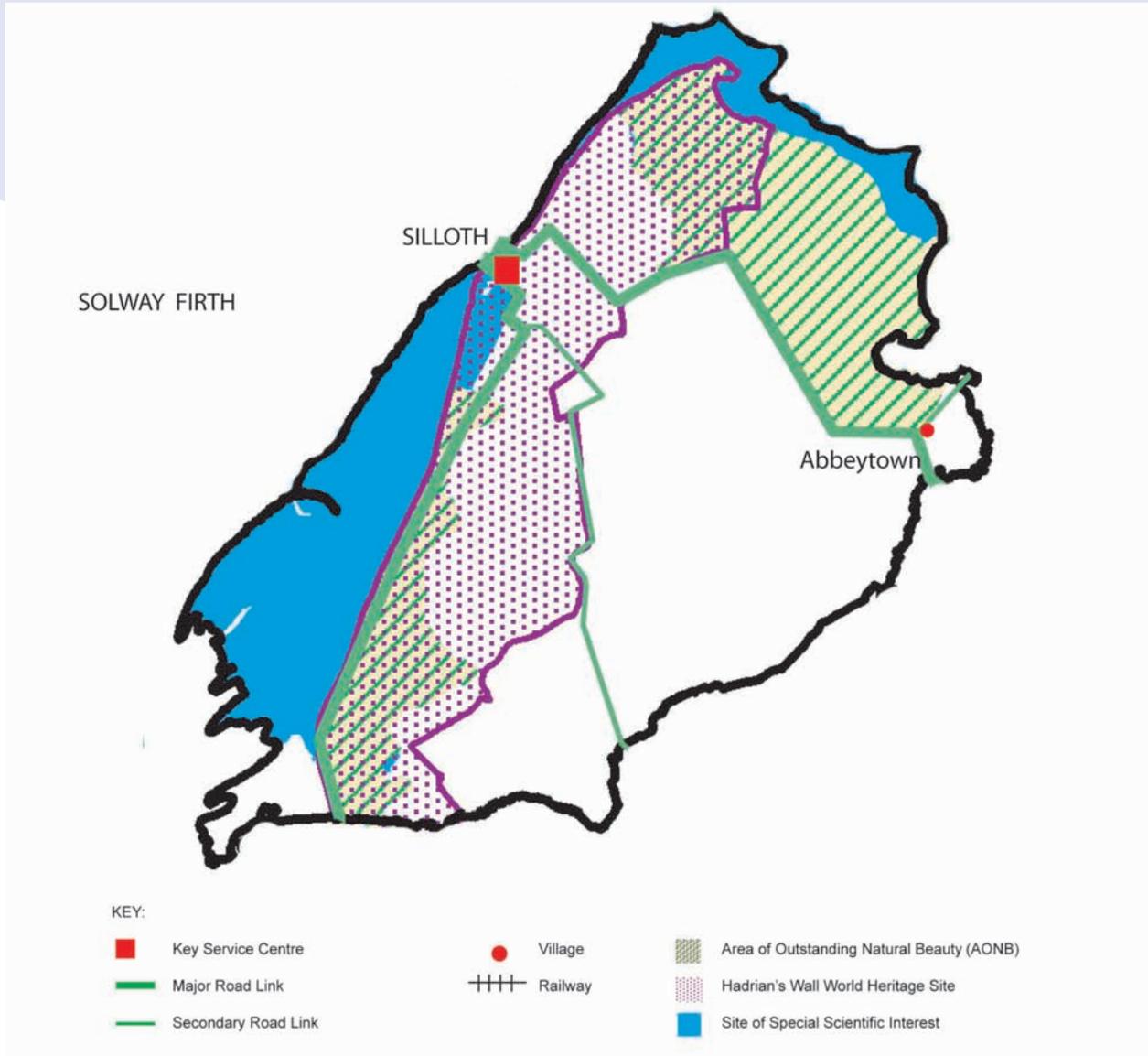
Natural Environment

- Continue to safeguard the internationally protected areas of the Solway Coast AONB by ensuring that all development is consistent with the objectives within the AONB Management Plan.

Transport / Infrastructure

- Work with partners to support appropriate, proposed and aspirational future strategic infrastructure projects, such as the Wigton Eastern Bypass, and seek to protect proposed routes through planning policy;
- Support proposals to improve facilities at Wigton rail station such as the creation of additional car parking;
- Work with partners to maximise the roll out of superfast and next generation broadband across the locality to both residential and business users;
- Support proposals which improve utility provision;
- Support improvements to open space provision.

S14 - Silloth



Key Issues	Key Strengths
1. Poor accessibility	1. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
2. Limited town centre retail offer	2. High tourism potential related to AONB and Hadrian's Wall
3. Poor access to services in rural areas	3. Rich historic character
4. Lack of economic investment	4. Good range of services

Housing

- Promote the appropriate level of housing through the spatial strategy, with a high priority given to meeting local needs;
- Provide a supportive policy framework for the development of housing to support local affordable needs through rural exception sites and community right to build;
- Support efforts to make use of long term empty housing, especially within town centres.

Economy

- Encourage appropriate levels of employment growth following the spatial strategy and promote alternative methods of provision, such as the opportunity for 'livework' units;
- Protect and maximise appropriate use of local employment sites;
- Promote the sustainability of the Silloth locality by supporting the vitality and viability of Silloth town centre, to be achieved by directing retail, leisure and cultural proposals of appropriate scale and nature within Silloth town centre wherever possible;
- Recognise and promote the importance of Silloth as a visitor destination, particularly as the main service centre to visitors to the Solway Coast AONB. Supporting improvements to the leisure services industries within the town;
- Support appropriate rural and farm diversification schemes, recognising the important role these have for the wider Allerdale economy;
- Protect the character and sustainability of rural settlements by setting policies that vigorously protect village and community services such as shops and pubs.

Built Environment

- Safeguard the attractive and distinctive Victorian architectural heritage within Silloth town centre, promoting improvements and enhancements to maximise the character of the buildings and public realm within these conservation areas;
- Protect the distinctive character of villages and settlements by ensuring that all new development respects and enhances existing traditional designs and features.

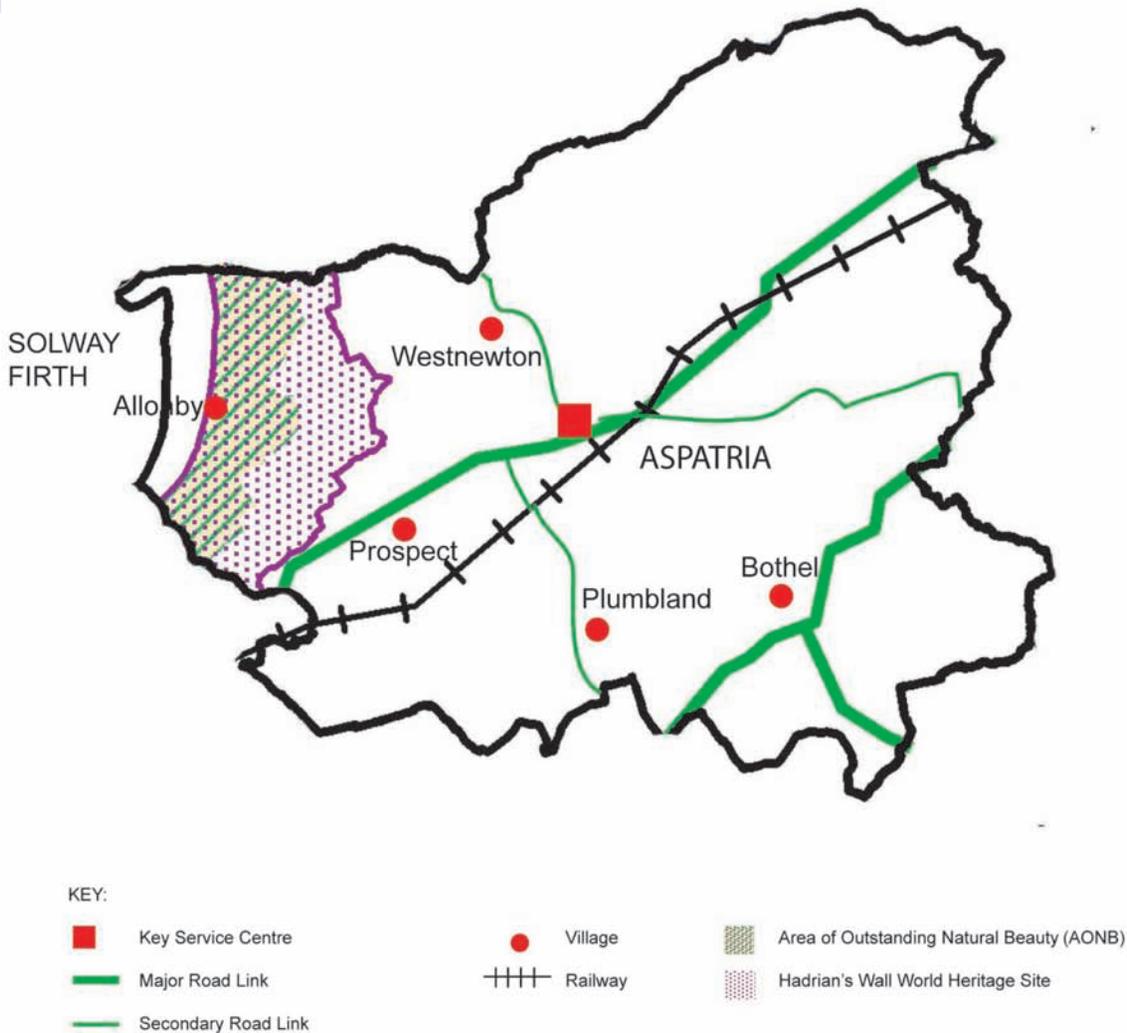
Natural Environment

- Continue to safeguard the internationally protected areas of the Solway Coast AONB by ensuring that all development is consistent with the objectives within the AONB Management Plan;
- Protect and enhance the Silloth Green open space and recognise the importance of this area for recreational uses, attracting visitors to the town and as a significant Green Infrastructure asset.

Transport / infrastructure

- Encourage the enhancement of rural transport links in order to provide access to local facilities to address the issue of rural isolation;
- Work with partners to maximise the roll out of superfast and next generation broadband across the locality to both residential and business users.

S15 - Aspatria



Key Issues

1. Lack of economic investment
2. Poor rural accessibility to services
3. Poor town centre retail and leisure offer
4. High level of out commuters

Key Strengths

1. Good links to road and rail network
2. Attractive location and villages
3. Low crime rate
4. Potential for tourism investment at Allonby and access to AONB

Housing

- Promote the appropriate level of housing through the spatial strategy, with a high priority given to meeting local affordable needs;
- Provide a supportive policy framework for the development of housing to support local affordable needs through rural exception sites and community right to build;
- Support efforts to make use of long term empty housing, especially within town centres.

Economy

- Encourage appropriate levels of employment growth following the spatial strategy and promote alternative methods of provision, such as the opportunity for 'live/work' units;
- Protect and maximise appropriate use of local employment sites;
- Promote the sustainability of the Aspatria locality by supporting the vitality and viability of Aspatria town centre by directing retail, leisure and cultural proposals of appropriate scale and nature within the town centre wherever possible;
- Set policies which create and protect a town centre boundary within Aspatria in order to improve the retail and leisure services on offer to both local residents and visitors.
- Support appropriate rural and farm diversification schemes, recognising the important role these have for the wider Allerdale economy;
- Protecting the character and sustainability of rural settlements by setting policies that vigorously protect village and community services such as shops and pubs.

Built Environment

- Protect the distinctive character of villages and settlements by ensuring that all new development respects and enhances existing traditional designs and features.

Natural Environment

- Continue to safeguard the internationally protected areas of the Solway Coast AONB by ensuring that all development is consistent with the objectives within the AONB Management Plan.

Transport / infrastructure

- Encourage the enhancement of rural transport links in order to provide access to local facilities to address the issue of rural isolation;
- Support proposals to improve facilities at Aspatria rail station such as the creation of additional car parking;

- Work with partners to maximise the roll out of superfast and next generation broadband across the locality to both residential and business users;
- Support proposals which improve utility provision.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach to the area based policies performed strongly against a broad number of the objectives; however, the SA identified a number of uncertainties and potentially adverse effects. The effects will depend on the implementation of policy, location of development, as well as the context of the wider plan policies. As such any policies and SA results will need to be taken in conjunction with the findings of the HRA, and will often require a site-by-site approach.

Justification for Preferred Option S10 -15

This option offers six locally distinctive area based policies, highlighting and addressing issues that affect each locality accordingly. Allerdale is a Borough of varied and contrasting characteristics, with each locality having its own strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. It is considered appropriate that policies should aim to address these issues according to the priorities of each locality and not simply by generic themes.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	These policies deliver all of the strategic objectives
National Planning Policy Framework	National policy principles are reflected within all of these policies.
Sustainable Community Strategy	4, 5, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	This relates to all the Allerdale Council Plan priorities
Evidence Base	Relates to all of Allerdale's evidence base documents

Alternative policy option

S10-15a Do not provide area based polices, instead addressing policies through the strategic objective themes of Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Housing, Economy, Transport, Natural & Built Environment.

This option offers a more straightforward approach to the Core Strategy and avoids the potential for duplication of policy. However, it is considered that this approach would not reflect the diverse needs of each locality and removes the opportunity of addressing these needs.

Q7) Do you think that the areas based policies successfully address the issues, challenges and opportunities within each of the localities (S10-15)?





HOUSING



Housing

Community Views

- The location of new housing should help sustain rural villages and services;
- In some parts of the Borough the quality of housing and mix is a major issue;
- Access to affordable housing is a key issue across Allerdale;
- Affordable housing should be located throughout the Borough, where there is an identified need, and not restricted to the towns and larger villages;
- Affordable housing should ideally be sought on developments of 10 units or less but that there need to have an element of flexibility;
- If need for a Gypsy and Traveller site is identified in the Borough, it should be provided where there is greatest need;
- Refurbishing existing housing stock could be a more sustainable way of meeting housing need within the Borough;
- New housing development should integrate into its surroundings.

Key issues

- A balanced housing market is key to meeting the aims and objectives of the Council and is essential to support economic growth
- A key aim of national policy is to create sustainable mixed communities for current and future residents
- Affordability is a severe issue across the Borough
- Allerdale needs more homes in order to meet the needs of current and future residents

Introduction

The Local Plan must deliver the Government's key housing goal that aims to ensure "everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home they can afford in a community where they want to live." The creation of a healthy and balanced housing market is also a key objective of Allerdale Borough Council, and together with other strategies and programmes being undertaken by the Council and other organisations, the Local Plan should ensure the use of land supports the delivery of sustainable communities.

Allerdale faces a number of significant housing challenges that need to be overcome to achieve a more balanced housing market. The Policies in the following section aim to address housing issues around affordable housing, type, mix of new homes and as well as ensuring that the needs and requirements of specific groups such as Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, rural workers and the elderly are met.

HO1 Preferred Option – A Balanced Housing Market

In order to achieve a more balanced housing market Allerdale Borough Council will work with partners to promote sustainable mixed communities through ensuring that all new residential development contributes to improving the balance of housing and meets the identified needs of the whole community. The Core Strategy will ensure the development of sustainable mixed communities by;

- Maximising the delivery of affordable housing across the Allerdale;
- Ensuring the sustainable use of housing land;
- Ensuring the correct mix of housing and tenures;
- Making provision for the identified needs of an aging population and ensuring that the specific requirements of different groups are met;
- Improving the quality and suitability of the existing housing stock.
- Encouraging high standards of design that create sustainable and inclusive communities

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred option performed strongly against the alternative in terms of sustainability with potentially beneficial effects identified against almost all of the objectives.

Justification for preferred option HO1

The preferred option sets the context for all housing policies and provides a focus on the specific issues within each of the housing market areas, emphasising the importance of this issue and reflecting community and stakeholder views. The policy clearly sets out the Council's position and the key issues that housing policy will seek to address, and in so doing supports the strategic aims and objectives of the Core Strategy in delivering and addressing housing needs. While the policy has the potential to duplicate other plan policies the strategic nature of the approach means that this is kept to a minimum.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1b, SO2a, SO2b, SO2d, SO2e, SO5a, SO1e
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy, 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 8 – Promoting healthy Communities; Planning Making
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.3, 6.5, 6.7
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2, 3
Evidence Base	Allerdale's Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011, Cumbria Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2008
Links to Core Strategy Policies	This policy relates to all the policies within the Housing chapter.
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

HO1(a): Do not include a strategic housing policy

The alternative approach considered would be to have no introductory policy and rely on the specific policies to deliver housing aims and objectives. This was rejected as it was felt that this would fail to provide a clear focus, and would be a lost opportunity to set out priorities.

Q8) Do you agree with the key aim to create a balanced housing market, are there any additional issues that you think should be addressed?

Key issues

- Improving affordability is a key objective of national policy
- National policy requires a policy that sets an informed target for affordable housing and a likely development threshold size
- A key aim of national policy is to create sustainable mixed communities for current and future residents
- Affordability is a severe issue across the Borough
- Evidence suggests that affordable need is greater in Cockermouth and many of the rural areas of Allerdale

Introduction

The provision of affordable homes is a key objective of the Core Strategy. Providing affordable homes is also a key priority of the Sustainable Community Strategy and is one of the Council's key priorities. The majority of affordable housing that is built in the Borough is delivered as part of new development. Therefore, planning policies have a central role in helping to deliver low cost homes through quotas of affordable dwellings being negotiated and delivered on open market housing sites. The Core Strategy sets out the circumstances for securing affordable housing, which will in time be supported by an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

Affordable Housing is defined in national policy as “social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.” Social and affordable rented housing is normally rented from a Housing Association. Intermediate Housing refers to housing which is available to buy or to part buy/part rent at below the market price.

In 2011 average house price in Allerdale stood at approximately £156,000, and while this is not considered high by national standard, when compared to average household income they are considered unaffordable, with a ratio of 5:1. At entry level the problem is more pronounced and many local people, especially younger people, often find themselves priced out of the market. Furthermore, despite the current economic downturn the issue of housing affordability remains a key concern across Allerdale. Additionally over the last few decades ‘Right to Buy’ sales have significantly reduced the supply of social sector properties available to meet housing needs.

A key theme of national policy is that local planning authorities can seek the provision of affordable housing through the planning system where there is strong evidence on need. In order to demonstrate the need for affordable housing within Allerdale, the authority carried out three Strategic Housing Market Assessments, and a Housing Viability Assessment.

The SHMA identifies a need for affordable housing in the Borough of approximately 173 dwellings per annum to meet backlog and emerging needs. This must be placed in the context of the preferred growth level identified in the strategic policies of 304 new dwellings (both market and affordable) each year over the plan period. This equates to nearly 60% of the annual housing numbers. The assessments also indicated that across the Borough most of the need was for social rented units rather than shared ownership dwellings.

2011	Maryport and Workington HMA ¹	Wigton HMA	Cockermouth HMA
NET ANNUAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED	106	29	38
Total Need over 5 years	529	145	190
Tenure Split			
Social Rent	81%	60%	70%
Intermediate	19%	40%	30%
¹ Figure excludes surplus of 2 bed flats			

As the private sector is by far the largest house builder it is recognised that the provision of affordable housing can affect the profitability and the viability of housing development. The Housing Viability Assessment has been produced to demonstrate the levels at which housing development is capable of being delivered profitably while at the same time providing an appropriate level of affordable housing and tenure mix. The viability of the provision of affordable housing has been considered in addition to the overall level of need when providing the indicative housing requirements in our preferred option.

The results of the Housing Viability Assessment indicate that in lower market areas the land values and house prices make the delivery of affordable housing challenging. While, elsewhere in medium and high market areas land values and house prices suggest that development is capable of delivering higher levels of affordable housing without adversely affecting the profitability of sites. Furthermore, as market conditions improve, sites across the Borough should be able to accommodate increased levels of affordable housing without impacting on profitability.

HO2 Preferred Option – Affordable Housing

Allerdale Borough Council will seek to maximise the delivery of affordable housing across the plan area by working in partnership with the Homes and Community Agency, Registered Providers, developers and local communities.

In order to address the need for affordable housing the Council will seek a proportion of affordable homes from residential development in perpetuity. Affordable housing will be provided on-site, apart from in exceptional circumstances.

Within Key Service Centres (KSC) housing development of 10 dwellings or more will be required to make provision for a proportion of affordable housing specific to each HMA. The proportion will be expected to be at least:

Workington and Maryport	20%
Cockermouth	40%
Wigton	20%

Outside of KSC housing development of 5 dwellings or more will be required to make provision for a proportion of affordable housing specific to each HMA. The proportion will be expected to be at least:

Workington and Maryport	20%
Cockermouth	40%
Wigton	30%

In determining residential applications the Council will assess the site size, suitability and type of units to be delivered reflecting policy HO3. The Council will regularly monitor and review the needs for, and delivery of, affordable housing.

The Council will require the provision of affordable housing to be dispersed throughout the development and reflect the tenure identified within the strategic housing market assessments. Unless local evidence suggests otherwise the tenure mix expected for each HMA will be as follows;

Workington and Maryport	80% Socially Rented 20% Intermediate
Cockermouth	70% Socially Rented 30% Intermediate
Wigton	60% Socially Rented 40% Intermediate

The Council recognise that in some areas viability of housing sites is marginal under current conditions and the targets outlined above are in some cases ambitious. Where the viability of schemes fall short of the policy requirements specified, the onus will be on the developer/ landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution or tenure mix.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy option performed most strongly in sustainability terms of all the options considered for this objective. Particular strengths were assessed in the social and economic objectives due to the beneficial effects of considering the different areas and needs across the Borough in terms of targets and thresholds for affordable housing rather than taking the approach of a single target or threshold to be applied across the whole area.



Justification for preferred option HO2

The preferred policy responds to housing need at housing market area level reflecting local circumstance, and allowing a focused policy response which tackles the key issues and drivers within a specific housing market. Furthermore, the policy promotes the delivery of sustainable mixed communities, and ensures the need is met where, or close to where it arises. The policy seeks to address the housing needs of key service centres while recognising the different level of need lower in the settlement hierarchy. Although the approach may be more complex than a single target it reflects community and stakeholder views as well as national planning and housing guidance.

This further element of the preferred option reflects the local scale of developments in Allerdale and strikes a balance between delivery and viability of affordable housing. The former national threshold for securing provision appears unlikely to meet the continuing need for affordable housing in the future. It is therefore proposed that the size of sites from which affordable housing is secured is reduced. The lower threshold will ensure that rural areas where small scale developments are more prevalent receive a share of affordable housing. In striking a balance the preferred option has been set at 10 across KSC and 5 in rural areas reflecting local evidence of housing need and past delivery.

The preferred policy provides a clear approach following national guidance and ensures that the strategic objectives and aims to create sustainable mixed communities are achieved. Policy wording ensures that off-site provision and commuted sums will be acceptable in exceptional circumstances where viability is an issue.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO2a, SO2d, SO1b
National Planning Policy Framework	6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 8 – Promoting healthy Communities; Planning Making
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.3, 6.5, 6.7, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1
Evidence Base	Allerdale's Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011, Projections Paper – Projecting Employment and Housing Change (2011), Viability Assessment Update (2011), Allerdale Housing Viability Study (2011).
Links to Core Strategy Policies	HO3
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

HO2a No affordable housing target, proposal assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The option would not provide a target for affordable housing in the core strategy. Instead provision of affordable dwellings would be tackled on a case-by-case basis resulting in a more flexible and localised approach. This policy approach is not preferred as it does not fully conform with national policy, and lacks a strategic approach to providing affordable housing in the Borough. Furthermore, the policy would fail to give certainty to developers and Registered Providers, while placing severe resource implications on the planning authority.

HO2b Single affordable housing target for the whole of Allerdale.

A simple affordable housing target would be established for the whole of Allerdale, providing certainty of requirement for all developments and resulting in a simple policy approach. This approach was rejected as the preferred option as it lacks flexibility and does not reflect local circumstance or community and stakeholder views. Areas of low affordable need would require the same level of provision as those where affordability is a key issue, raising the possibility of creating surplus in some areas and increasing the deficit of affordable housing in others. Additionally this approach does not address viability in any way.

HO2c Policy applies to all development no matter the size.

This approach would result in a clear policy requiring all residential developments to make provision for affordable housing and therefore, in theory maximise the potential for delivery. This was not selected as the preferred option as the viability of providing affordable housing on all

sites would be a key problem, leading to a policy that could possibly slow delivery of housing especially in areas of low viability, or have severe resource implications for the planning authority and developers in negotiating over viability issues.

HO2d Policy applies to over 15 dwellings.

This approach follows the threshold set out in the former national policy and provides a clear threshold to implement. This was rejected as the preferred option as it does not reflect the local scale of developments within Allerdale, and therefore would not maximise the potential provision of affordable housing. Additionally the high threshold could be especially detrimental to delivery of affordable housing in rural areas where developments tend to be smaller, and does not reflect community and stakeholder views collected in previous consultation.

HO2e Flexibility approach to on-site affordable provision

This approach would give the ultimate flexibility to negotiate on or off site provision of affordable housing, which would potentially help to assist delivery. This was rejected as the preferred option as it is contrary to national guidance and the strategic objectives of the plan to deliver sustainable and mixed communities by failing to ensure that affordable housing is delivered as part of the overall housing mix. Furthermore, the approach would place greater resource implications on the local authority in both negotiation and collection of contributions.



Q9) Do you agree with the framework set out to address affordable housing issues across the Borough (HO2)? Do you have any other comments?

Key issues

- A key aim of national policy is to create a ‘balanced’ stock of housing that reflects demand in order to support economic growth and mitigate localised problems such as affordability;
- National policy encourages sustainable and cohesive communities by delivering a mix of housing that enables changing needs through lifecycle stages to be met within the locality;
- Population forecasts suggest there will be a rise in the number and proportion of single person, and elderly households;
- The overall size of households is expected to decline over the plan period.

Introduction

It is important for the development plan to provide homes to meet the aspirations of local people and to attract new people to live in the Borough to support our economic objectives. Creating sustainable and balanced communities is also one of the government’s key aims of



the planning system. As well as ensuring that sufficient market and affordable housing is delivered the development plan must ensure that the housing needs of different types of households is fulfilled by providing the right types and mix of housing within the plan area. There is a danger that if left unchecked, the housing market, is likely to reflect the most profitable forms of development, leaving the supply of housing unbalanced and compounding affordability issues in the long term. Therefore national planning policy suggests that developers should be encouraged to bring forward proposals which reflect demand and the profile of households requiring market housing.

Household projections for Allerdale suggest that the population and the number of households is expected to grow steadily over the next 20 years. Over this period the average size of households is expected to decrease, driven in part by increasing number of single person households, as well as an increase in the elderly population. These trends have key implications for future housing delivery and the types of dwellings that will be required. The Strategic Housing Market Assessments prepared by the local authorities should be used to inform the types of housing that are required.

HO3 Preferred Option – Housing Mix

New residential development will be expected to make a positive contribution to the overall mix of housing in the HMAs in which it is to be located.

Housing required to address local need will be delivered through the affordable housing policy HO2.

Residential development on allocated sites will be required to provide an appropriate mix of housing. The final mix will be negotiated with the developer based on the housing needs and aspirations identified in the latest housing market assessments.

The Council will encourage the incorporation of adaptable housing designs within new residential development to enable the units to be capable of meeting differing household needs over time in line with the Lifetime Homes Standard.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy options performed well in sustainability terms and against the alternative option proposed. Particular strengths were assessed in the social objectives, while many of the other objectives were assessed to have no significant impacts. Particular strengths were the beneficial effects of using an evidence base to consider the different areas and needs across the Borough, rather than taking the approach of using a threshold to trigger those developments that would require a balanced mix. This ensures that the very specific and differing needs of the different areas within Allerdale are fully taken into account in decision making and that smaller communities who are only likely to receive development that falls under a threshold are still able to benefit from development in their locality.

Justification for preferred option HO3

The preferred policy option would encourage developers to contribute positively to the housing mix in the HMAs based on local evidence. By seeking to encourage developers to provide a mix of housing on sites it is considered to be more enabling in nature, and more likely to deliver and achieve a 'balanced' community. Additionally the policy gives encouragement for the provision of lifetime homes within new residential development proposals, although developers would not be obliged to do so, nor would any quotas or thresholds be identified. This less prescriptive nature fits with the enabling approach outlined in the key focus of this policy therefore was selected as the preferred option.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO2a, SO2d, SO1b, SO1e, SO2e, SO5a
National Planning Policy Framework	6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 8 – Promoting healthy Communities; Planning Making
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.3, 6.7, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan	1, 2
Evidence Base	Allerdale's Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011, Cumbria Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2008, Projections Paper - Projecting Employment and Housing Change (2011)
Links to Core Strategy Policies	HO2, HO7
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

HO3a Include a policy that requires developments of a certain threshold to provide an appropriate mix of housing

This policy option would be prescriptive in nature, requiring developers of sites over a certain size/number of units to deliver a mix of housing that would contribute to the need identified in the local housing market assessment, therefore to the objective of creating balanced communities. While this would ensure that all new residential development makes positive contribution to housing mix within the area, it was considered such an approach could be over-onerous.

HO4 - Housing Renewal

Key issues

- Allerdale has pockets of low demand housing and empty homes;
- Sustainable development is a key aim of the plan;
- Development of a mixed and balanced community is central to the economic growth and people's well being;
- Anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime is a key issue in some areas.

Introduction

Many industrial towns and cities suffer from problems of difficult to let or sell properties. The causes of low demand are complex and often interlinked, but can be attributed to broad factors such as: economic restructuring; changes in housing preferences and behaviour patterns resulting in a surplus of older terraced properties; past provision of a poor housing mix, and area 'stigmatisation'. In neighbourhoods where the concentrations of low demand



properties is high, the loss of population and the inability to attract new households had created neighbourhood decline and deprivation.

National planning policy encourages Local Planning Authorities to use their development plans, to facilitate appropriate renewal in areas of low demand and vacant housing. Housing renewal policies are a mechanism for tackling the problems of neighbourhoods with acute low housing demand. These policies can channel investment to facilitate selective demolition and refurbishment of existing housing stock and infrastructure and environmental improvements.

Evidence of problems associated with low demand and declining environmental quality can be found in the towns and former mining villages along the West Coast. Few of the towns have experienced significant outward migration, instead the problems related to better housing 'offer' elsewhere in the locality and movement of affluent people. Housing renewal projects are a means of reversing the trend of decline, increasing the desirability of the affected area as a residential location, creating successful places and communities, and re-engaging the area with the mainstream housing market.

HO4 Preferred Option – Housing Renewal

In areas of housing market failure the Council will work closely with partners, including the local community, to identify ways in which the neighbourhoods can be strengthened and returned to prosperity.

In areas of unpopular or unsustainable housing, the Council will encourage proposals that involve:

- Improvement and refurbishment of existing housing stock
- The delivery of new housing that would improve the social mix of the area (contributing to the objectives of Policy HO3)
- Environmental improvements and the provision of recreational green open space (contributing to the objectives of Policies NE1 and EN5)

In some cases selective clearance may be the most viable solution and therefore, the Council will support such proposals subject to DM HO1.

In those settlements containing areas suffering from housing market failure, and where the Housing Market Assessments indicate that need for the provision of affordable units is marginal, the Council may, alternatively, seek developer contributions to facilitate the delivery of housing market renewal schemes (see Policy S4 – Developer Contributions)

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach to housing renewal performed strongly in sustainability across all the objectives, with major beneficial direct and indirect impacts. The approach promotes the reuse of existing housing areas and land, which is generally well located within settlements which often have existing services and facilities that the new population can benefit from. Supporting housing renewal across the whole Borough, rather than just in priority areas, will ensure that even the smaller settlements that currently have issues relating to empty / less desirable areas of housing will benefit from the policy. Furthermore, the alternative assessed has negative impacts across all objectives.

Justification for preferred option HO4

The preferred approach is to include a policy in the core strategy to encourage and facilitate housing renewal in areas of low demand housing and environmental deterioration. In doing so the Council is recognising that for some areas of the Borough housing renewal is an issue that needs to be tackled in order to ensure our communities have access to good quality housing stock. The approach outlines the use of developer contributions to enable/facilitate housing renewal initiatives where there is no or little demand for affordable housing. This will ensure

that where contributions are sought they go towards tackling the key housing issues within the area, provided much needed funds for housing renewal. The policy applies to all the Borough ensuring equitable distribution of resources based on where the need has been identified rather than solely focusing on the traditional regeneration areas.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO2b, SO1b, SO1e, SO2a, SO5c
National Planning Policy Framework	6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 8 – Promoting healthy Communities; Planning Making
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.3, 6.5, 6.7, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1
Evidence Base	Allerdale’s Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011, Projections Paper – Projecting Employment and Housing Change (2011)
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S4, HO3, NE1, EN5
Key Development Management Policies	DM HO1

Alternative policy options

HO4a Include a policy that supports and facilitates housing renewal initiatives in existing priority areas

This option would support renewal initiatives in existing priority areas, ensuring that resources are directed to areas in most need. This was not preferred as it was considered that the targeted approach could be viewed as inequitable distribution of resources as there are also areas outside of those traditionally seen as priority areas that are identified as requiring intervention.

Key issues

- The plan needs to deliver housing in smaller rural settlements and address problem rural affordability;
- National and local policy aim to create sustainable rural communities with appropriate mix of housing;
- Many rural areas are experiencing a displacement of young people and low-income families due to affordability and lack of supply;
- The development plan needs to support rural services;

Introduction

The affordability of rural housing is a major problem in some areas of the Borough. In many rural areas property prices in rural villages have increased to a level where people within the community, particularly young people and young families, can no longer afford them. There are a number of reasons for this, which are related to both supply and demand issues. The supply of housing in small rural settlements has been limited as the primary focus for new housing is within towns and larger villages. The lack of supply has been compounded by an increase in the demand for rural housing, for both residential and commercial purposes.

National planning policy highlights the importance of providing affordable housing in rural areas, where opportunities for delivery tend to be more limited, in order to assist in creating and maintaining sustainable rural communities. It also advises that land can be released as rural exception sites where land would not normally be released for housing. Affordable housing on these rural exception sites should seek to address the needs of the local community and should be retained as part of the affordable housing stock in perpetuity.



HO5 Preferred Option – Rural Exceptions Sites

The Council recognise that the lack of affordable rural housing is a major issue within some areas of Allerdale. The problem is compounded by the fact that opportunities for delivering affordable rural housing tend to be more limited, given that smaller rural settlements are the subject to policies of development restraint.

Rural exceptions sites offer a means by which housing can be provided for local people in circumstances where normal open market housing would not normally be allowed. Therefore, the Council will support rural affordable housing schemes outside defined development limits, provided that:

- The development will meet or assist in meeting a proven and specific need for affordable housing in the locality, which could not otherwise be met
- The sites is well-related and sympathetic to the form and character of the settlement demonstrates good design and allows accessibility to community services and facilities within it
- The scale is in keeping with the settlement setting and its role in the hierarchy
- The site is considered to be the most suitable to meet the identified need
- The applicant enters into a legal agreement that ensures the accommodation will be managed so as to meet the need for affordable housing in perpetuity and reserves and controls occupancy for people in housing need who have a specified local connection

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach performed well against social and economic sustainability objectives, and had no identified effect in other areas. These areas of strong performance were particularly linked to the provision of decent and affordable homes and the supporting of the vibrancy of communities. Affordability is a key issue across the Borough including in the rural areas, and this policy permits affordable housing in those areas outside of the more formal core strategy policies. The alternative option was considered less sustainable as this would not necessarily provide the much needed affordable housing in the area.

Justification for preferred option HO5

This option would allow the Council to consider sites for affordable housing that lie outside the designated boundary of the village where the land can be obtained at a cheaper cost. This policy approach would facilitate the delivery of affordable housing in smaller rural settlements where few sites are allocated, and would help the creation of sustainable rural communities.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1b, SO2a, SO5a
National Planning Policy Framework	6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 8 – Promoting healthy Communities; Planning Making
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.3, 6.5, 6.7, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1
Evidence Base	Allerdale’s Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

HO5a A small element of open market housing may be permissible where it would enable the delivery of an exception site.

This approach would offer a greater potential to facilitate the delivery of sustainable mixed communities and affordable housing in rural areas. Furthermore, it addresses past delivery failure of exception site and reflects the new national planning policy. Evidence suggests that the deliverability of exceptions sites with 100% affordable units is affected by issues relating to economic viability and lack of profit. In circumstances where it could be demonstrated that lack of economic viability/profit was preventing a site from being developed that would have significant wider local benefit, this option would allow the quota to be reduced. Despite the benefits outlined this was not selected as the preferred option as although it is an approach that is now advocated within national policy it could result in the creation of open market housing units in the open countryside – where national policy also advises strict controls.

Q10) Do think the Plan should allow a small portion of market housing to subsidise the delivery of rural exception sites, as outlined in the alternative approach (HO5)?

HO6 - Dwellings in the open countryside

Key issues

- Policy needs to support the rural and agricultural economy;
- Many rural areas are experiencing high house prices and low affordability;
- Agricultural workers often need to live close to their agricultural or rural business;
- Policy should protect the countryside from non-essential development.

Introduction

National planning policy protects the open countryside from new residential development, while rural policy emphasises the important role of the agricultural, forestry and horticultural sectors in sustaining rural communities and rural economies and also maintaining the character and appearance of the countryside. In many instances it will be possible for workers in agricultural and land-based occupations to live in a town or village near to their business location. However, occasionally the nature of agricultural and other rural businesses make it essential for someone to live on, or in close proximity to the business. Therefore, an exception to this rule is the provision of rural workers' dwellings.

Despite national trends of declining rates of employment in the traditional rural enterprises, these industries are still an important part of the Allerdale economy and the need for rural workers' dwellings still arises as a result of new enterprise or the expansion of an existing business. The criteria to assess whether the need for the provision of a new rural workers' dwelling is highlighted in national planning policy and the preferred approach aims to make rural workers' policies locally distinctive by providing additional policy criteria over the national framework.

Demand for rural workers dwelling has accelerated in recent years, due in part to the trend of the separate disposal of farmhouses and associated land. The residual agricultural land and buildings are typically purchased and incorporated into neighbouring holdings but are often too remote from the existing farmhouse to be managed effectively. This has given rise to a need for new dwellings to replace those lost as a result of separate disposal. The demand, particularly for new rural workers dwellings on holdings in the vicinity of settlements, is also underpinned by a shortage of housing that is affordable to those employed in agriculture and is reflective of the wider housing problem in rural areas.

HO6 Preferred Option – Dwellings in the open countryside

Proposals for the construction of rural worker's dwellings outside defined settlement limits will be supported provided that the Council is satisfied that there is an essential need for the dwelling to enable a person employed in agriculture, forestry, horticulture or commercial equine enterprise on a full-time basis to live at, or very close to their place of work.

New permanent dwellings in the countryside for agriculture, forestry or other occupational requirements will only be permitted where the business unit is established and has been profitable and economically viable for at least three years and;

- There is a clear functional requirement for a person to be resident on site;
- The need is full-time and relates to activities that necessitate the need for essential care at short notice;
- There are no other dwellings on the holding or locally which would fulfil the need;
- Where a need has been identified, a rural workers' dwelling, should be of a size and cost commensurate with the established functional requirement.

For newly-established agriculture, forestry, horticulture or commercial equine enterprises the Council, may consider the stationing of a caravan or other form of temporary accommodation on the site for a limited period of time to allow the viability of the holding or enterprise to be proven over a three year period. In such cases a robust business plan will be required in addition to fulfilling the criteria set out above.

Dwellings permitted under this policy will be subject to an occupancy condition limiting occupancy to a person solely, mainly or last working in the defined business, a surviving spouse or partner of such a person, or any resident dependants. Applications to remove such conditions will only be considered as a last resort subject the DM HO2.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred options were considered to all be strongly sustainable, they support the provision of decent and affordable housing in rural areas, reducing the need to travel for those rural workers and potentially support rural business and farm diversification schemes etc, strengthening and diversifying the economy of the Borough. As a result the preferred policy performed strongly against economic and social objectives, with no significant impacts in the other areas. The alternative approach was considered less sustainable in terms of the lack of affordability of housing, the increased need to travel, the economic restrictions that this may place on the rural business sector and also in recognition of the importance that agriculture and rural business has in the Allerdale economy.

Justification for Preferred Option HO6

The preferred approach would be to include a rural workers' dwellings policy in the core strategy that would build on national planning guidance and also allow the introduction of supplementary criteria to reflect local circumstances covering established and new businesses. The driver behind this policy is to provide a response to the shortage of affordable housing in rural areas, while also supporting the ongoing viability and vitality of the agricultural sector and contributing to wider rural enterprise objectives.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1b, SO2a
National Planning Policy Framework	6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 8 – Promoting healthy Communities; Planning Making
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.2, 6.5
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	-
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	DM HO2, DM HO3, DM HO4

Alternative policy options

HO6a No rural workers' dwellings policy in the core strategy

The alternative approach is to have no rural workers dwellings policy in the core strategy, with the Councils policy approach being based primarily on national planning guidance. This was not selected as the preferred option as reliance on the limited national policy would not result in appropriate response for the Council and does not recognise the specific needs of the agricultural sector that make a up a significant proportion of the rural economy and community.

Key issues

- Evidence suggests an increasing number and proportion of elderly population within the Borough;
- There is growing shortage of suitable housing for the elderly;
- Evidence projects future demand for accommodation suitable for the elderly;
- There is declining number of residential care and nursing homes.

Introduction

Evidence suggests that the absolute number and proportion of older people will increase considerably over the next 20 years. This is due to longer life expectancy together with lower birth rates and out migration of younger age groups. The implications of an increase in the elderly population are made more acute when assessed in the context of a predicted decline in the provision of traditional forms of elderly accommodation, such as residential homes/care homes. In response to these trends, recent government policy has focused around giving all adults with care needs more choice and control in where and how they live and how they wish to receive care.

Other forms of provision are emerging which can meet the needs of elderly people, such as providing in built flexibility in new homes to adapt as peoples' lives change through Lifetime Homes Standards. Furthermore, extra care housing provides another form of housing that helps older people to live as independently as possible, offering self-contained accommodation in a choice of tenures with access to 24-hour care on site. Continuing care retirement communities, which are much larger in scale, also offer housing with independence, a range of facilities and activities that are not care related, opportunities for informal and formal social activity and engagement, alongside a range of care and support services.



HO7 Preferred Option – Elderly Needs Housing

The Council will encourage the provision of housing for the elderly and for people with specific needs.

The Council will, through the identification of sites and/or granting of planning consents in sustainable locations, provide for the development of residential care homes, extra care housing and Continuing Care Retirement Communities. When assessing the suitability of sites and/or proposals, the Council will have regard to the following:

- The local need for the accommodation proposed
- The ability of future residents to access essential services, including public transport and shops
- Whether the proposal would result in an undue concentration of provision in the area
- Impact upon the local environment and the character of the area

In addition to the provision of specialist accommodation, the Council aims to ensure that older people are able to secure and sustain on-going independence either in their own homes or with the support of family members. To enable this, the Council will:

- Actively encourage developers to adopt 'Lifetime Homes' standards so that new housing can be readily adapted to meet the needs of the elderly
- Support proposals for residential annexes subject to DM HO5 and detailed design considerations as set out in Policy BE1 (Design).

Sustainability Appraisal

All the policy options assessed identified potentially beneficial impacts against the sustainability objectives. Although the alternative provides more flexibility in many areas, the preferred option has significant benefits in the social objectives. Additionally the alternative would enable development outside of the key service centres, there was the concern that this could reduce access to key services and facilities and increase the need to travel, therefore increasing transport related emissions.

Justification for preferred option HO7

The preferred approach adopts a proactive stance, with a policy that seeks to promote and encourage the delivery of elderly needs housing throughout the Borough. This policy is a direct response to the issue of a rapidly ageing population within the Borough identified by the core strategy evidence base. The policy aims to encompass a range of accommodation solutions from purpose built facilities through extensions to existing homes. This provides a flexible approach to cater for a range of needs.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO2a, SO2e, SO1b, SO5a
National Planning Policy Framework	6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 8 – Promoting healthy Communities; Planning Making
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.2, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan	1
Evidence Base	Allerdale's Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011, Projections Paper – Projecting Employment and Housing Change (2011)
Links to Core Strategy Policies	HO3, BE1
Key Development Management Policies	DM HO5

Alternative policy options

HO7a Allow an element of flexibility that allows sites or proposals in local centres to be considered if sites within key service centres cannot be identified.

This option would enable elderly needs housing to be delivered outside of the key service centres if no suitable sites can be identified. Additionally, a benefit of this approach would be to improve the sustainability of lower tier settlements, while potentially providing shops/services that could be available to the wider community. This option was not preferred as it risks encouraging the provision of elderly needs housing in more rural areas which does not accord with the wider sustainability objectives of the Core Strategy.

HO8 - Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites

Key issues

- Policy needs to create and support sustainable, respectful and inclusive communities, where there is fair access to suitable accommodation, services and facilities;
- There are a number of unauthorised encampments and developments;
- Evidence suggests that there is a need for Gypsy and Traveller sites in appropriate locations;
- There are significant numbers Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Show People communities in Allerdale.

Introduction

The accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show People should be considered along with the housing needs of the whole community. National policy places a responsibility for local authorities to set out the strategy and the criteria to be used to guide the development of Gypsy and Traveller sites in the plan area.

Following the removal of the duty of local Councils to provide Gypsy and Traveller sites in 1994 there has been a decline in the number of available authorised pitches. The community have also experienced difficulties in gaining planning permission for privately-owned sites. In 2006 the new policy framework was introduced to significantly reduce the current levels of unauthorised camping

The Cumbria Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (2008) was undertaken for the six Cumbrian District Councils and the National Park Authority in 2008. The study determined that in 2007 there were 112 existing private pitches and 19 unauthorised pitches within the county. It highlighted that between 1994-2006, two local authority owned sites had been closed, which was linked to a rise in instances of unauthorised encampment. Between 2008-2016 the study identified a requirement of 89 additional pitches within Cumbria. The Allerdale need, up to 2016 was identified as 23 permanent pitches, 5 transit for Gypsies and Travellers and 11 pitches for Travelling Showpeople.

In general, Travelling Showpeople do not share the same cultural traditions as Gypsies and Travellers and their sites are normally mixed use, both business and residential use in order to accommodate the need to store and repair their vehicles. Because of this their sites may have more of an impact on the surrounding area both visually and acoustically which needs to be taken into account within policy.

HO8 Preferred Option – Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites

The Council recognise that everyone should have the opportunity of living in a decent home. This includes meeting the needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities within Allerdale.

Where a need has been identified, the Council will work with partners to address the current and future requirements of Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and will assess proposals and/or future land allocations to ensure any development:

- is well related to a major centre, town, key or local service centre and is located within a reasonable distance of facilities including education and health provision;
- can be accessed by a range of transport modes, has safe and convenient access onto the road network and adequate parking;
- would offer a suitable level of residential amenity to any proposed occupiers and have no adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents;
- does not result in unacceptable impacts on the physical and visual character and quality of the area;
- avoids the loss of important trees or biodiversity;
- includes adequate landscaping, including screening to minimise the potential impact on the surrounding area;
- can be served by the necessary utilities infrastructure;
- includes a plan for the long term management of the site; and
- does not result in industrial, retail, commercial, or commercial storage activities apart from the proven need for storage required in relation to a travelling circus or show.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred option performed strongly in sustainability terms especially with regard to environmental and social objectives. The policy was strong in terms of provision of a decent home and ensuring good access to services and facilities. Furthermore, it was concluded to be more sustainable than the alternative approach to rely on national policy and generic local policies.

Justification for preferred option HO8

The preferred option is to include a separate policy within the core strategy that would provide a set of criteria specific to the requirements for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites that would enable the Council to assess applications and identify suitable

sites. This approach would contribute towards the Council's key aims to create sustainable mixed communities and ensure that the housing needs of all groups are met. The policy would facilitate the provision of additional authorised sites in order to reduce unauthorised encampments in unsuitable locations, therefore reducing the potential for tension with existing communities and uses. Furthermore, this approach ensures the Council are compliant with the 1976 Race Relations Act and the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2012).

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Alternative policy options

Strategic Objectives	SO2a, SO2c, SO6a, SO6b, SO5a, SO6d, SO1b
National Planning Policy Framework	6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 8 – Promoting healthy Communities; Planning Making. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites.
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.2, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1
Evidence Base	Allerdale's Strategic Housing Market Assessments 2011, Cumbria Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2008
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	-

HO8a No Gypsy and Traveller sites policy in the core strategy

The alternative would be to have no gypsy and traveller site policy in the core strategy, with the Council using a combination of national policy and generic design/locational/environmental policies to assess applications and identify suitable sites. This option was not considered desirable as it would not ensure that the specific housing needs of these communities were met. Additionally, the absence of such a policy would not result in a local plan compliant with national planning policy that requires local authorities to set out appropriate criteria for determining applications for Gypsy sites and to guide the allocation of sites.

Q11) Do you think the policies outlined deliver a balanced housing market (HO2- 8)?



ECONOMY



Community Views

Employment

1. Respondents felt that Allerdale should continue to allocate a generous level of employment land reflecting the spatial strategy, while ensuring a distribution throughout the Borough;
2. The majority of respondents suggested new development should only be allowed in local service centres; however the conversion of existing appropriate buildings for commercial uses should not be resisted;
3. A key theme was that the allocations must maintain land for a diverse set of sectors and uses, an additional thought was that land should be allocated with a degree of flexibility to enable economic development and not constrain choice;
4. Consultation revealed a general level of support for providing employment land of various levels of quality to meet the needs throughout the Borough;
5. Consultation highlighted the lack of a skill base as a key issue for many employers in Allerdale. Many people linked the skill gaps to poor economic performance and lack of growth opportunities.

Town Centres & Retail

1. Respondents suggested that Workington should be promoted as the principal shopping destination, the other towns given specific and complementary roles, taking into account the size and place in the shopping hierarchy, in addition to other issues, such as retail 'leakage' to other towns;
2. Most respondents would prefer that Primary shopping streets and boundaries be identified within town centres to protect retail frontages and prevent development which may adversely affect the character of the town centre;
3. It was agreed that residential developments should be encouraged within town centres;
4. Improvement of town centre parking provision was considered a matter of priority, particularly in Maryport, where it was felt that provision should be increased.

Tourism & Leisure

1. The Council should allow new tourism proposals, and extensions to existing facilities within the open countryside, whilst continuing the protection of the AONB;
2. The majority of future development should be directed towards locations where the most sustainable patterns of transport can be achieved and where a greater choice of transport is available, eg - public transport, cycleways and footpaths;
3. New build holiday lets should be treated principally as new housing, subject to the same sustainability requirements as housing proposals;

4. There is a shortage of sports and recreation facilities in several areas of the Borough;
5. Small scale tourist developments should be encouraged along with the need to extend the main summer season in order to bring in an income over a longer period;
6. The lack of hotels around the Borough was highlighted as a problem – as well as lack of demand caused by poor infrastructure which has a limiting effect on the types of tourism businesses and visitors attracted to the towns and villages;
7. It was felt that a key tourism project or initiative such as Derwent Forest and Roman Maryport etc, could be catalysts for further tourism investment and development in the area.

Derwent Forest

1. There is a need to upgrade existing road and transport infrastructure to accommodate any proposed development;
2. Job creation and training should be an important outcome from any proposed development;
3. There should be access to the site for the community with emphasis on providing cycle tracks, a possible education centre and preserving and enhancing the wildlife.

Renewables

1. The majority of people were in favour of the generation of energy from renewable sources using the full range of technologies;
2. Many communities experience with wind developments to date had not always been positive, with many concerned about the potentially harmful impacts on; tourism, landscape and historic environment, as well as a perception of poor performance of the technology, and the lack of local benefit generated from the developments;
3. Many respondents suggested that a clear understanding of the potential problems is required to ensure that national and locally important sites are not damaged.

EC1 - Location of Employment Land

Key issues

- National policy requires an approach that facilitates and promotes development of employment land by making suitable quantity and quality available;
- A good supply of high quality premises is required in order for Allerdale to meet economic aspirations;
- The plan should ensure it allows a degree of choice to help business start up, while giving the flexibility to grow and move on;
- Consultation revealed a general level of support for providing employment land of various levels of quality to meet the needs throughout the Borough.

Introduction

West Cumbria's main employment areas are found in and around the main towns of Allerdale, with other notable local sites located throughout the area including in smaller settlements and rural locations. A clear hierarchy of premises is on offer across Allerdale. Mixed quality industrial/commercial premises can be found at Lillyhall which is a major industrial location in West Cumbria. Additionally, higher quality office locations are located at Dovenby Hall Estates, and small scale offices and mixed quality industrial and commercial premises are available at Lillyhall.

Local industrial units are also available at Glasson in Maryport however the quality in these locations is often poor. Modern units of reasonable quality can be found in Wigton, with further units available in other rural areas, often subject to poor infrastructure and other constraints.



There are a number of education establishments in Allerdale, including the Energus campus and Lakes College (West Cumbria) at Lillyhall, and a number of other colleges across the Borough. These establishments contribute to the local and regional economy and prosperity, and so it is important that these establishments continue to be viable and play a central role in providing vital skills and training for continued economic development, especially for the nuclear, and renewable sectors as well as enhancing the education and training of the population of Allerdale and West Cumbria.

A great bulk of the Allerdale area is rural in character. In the northern and eastern part of Allerdale the economic structure is typical of most rural areas with a significant reliance on agricultural activity and its allied trades. Pockets of “best and most versatile agricultural land” (grades 1 and 2) can be found near and around the town of Wigton.

A key message from the employment evidence suggests there is scope for considering the most appropriate use for employment land and possible de-allocation of land. Furthermore, the study concluded that there is a lack of quality premises across all uses in West Cumbria. The provision of better quality employment land will be a key factor in supporting economic restructuring of the area, especially if higher value occupiers are to be attracted. The employment land study suggests prioritising environmental enhancement and investment on key sites such as; Lillyhall, Derwent Howe and the Port of Workington.



A key role of the development plan is to allocate enough land of sufficient quality in order to meet the needs of different types of businesses throughout the Borough. Policies S5 to S9 set out the level of growth and spatial strategy that has been developed in order to meet the current and future needs of businesses. However, different types of employment also have different requirements in terms of their location, their impact and the needs of businesses. Therefore, the Council needs to provide a basket of sites to meet a diverse need, to cater for both different types of industries, company size, as well as for new and existing businesses.

EC1 Preferred Option - Location of Employment Land

To encourage sustainable economic growth of Allerdale, the Council will allocate sufficient employment land to accommodate current and future needs from new and existing businesses according to the central strategy set out in S5 - S9. The Council will provide a diversity of sites to meet different business needs such as Strategic, Business Park and local needs set out in the site allocations DPD.

In addition to the strategy for growth outlined in the strategic policies the core strategy will, where appropriate, direct new B1 office development to town centres, with a focus on the main centres of Workington and Maryport, with more limited office development expected in the local centres across Allerdale, in accordance with Policy EC5 on Town Centres.

In recognition of the importance of strategic sites to the long term economic success of Allerdale the Core Strategy will support and encourage the appropriate development of the employment sites of Lillyhall Industrial Estate, Port of Workington and Derwent Howe.

Lillyhall Estate

Lillyhall will make a strategic contribution to employment in West Cumbria with an emphasis on integration of industry, commerce, education and training. Lillyhall will continue to be the focus for the application of knowledge and skills in responding to the challenges of sustainable energy production and low carbon solutions.

Allerdale Borough Council will promote and encourage the continued development of Lillyhall as a strategic employment site with a focus on;

- a broad mix of large scale occupiers;
- provision of land for larger format uses;
- existing education and skills development sites located in Lillyhall
- promoting the refurbishment and redevelopment of existing uses
- improving the public realm and green infrastructure

Development according with the Lillyhall Master plan and future investment in high quality design and public realm is supported. In order to maintain the strategic importance and draw of Lillyhall, incremental small scale development will be discouraged and the release of employment land for non employment uses will be strongly resisted.

... continues

Development of Port of Workington

The Port of Workington is allocated as a strategic site for employment recognising its role in the development of West Cumbria, with a particular focus on the nuclear and distribution sectors. Allerdale Borough Council will work closely with the Port Authority, the nuclear industry and partners to deliver the appropriate infrastructure and conditions to support future uses. The Council will ensure that any development within and around the site concurs with the strategic objectives and that potential uses are not detrimental to the Port's continued development.

Derwent Howe

Allerdale Borough Council will support the retention, expansion and consolidation of employment sites in Derwent Howe subject to the other Core Strategy policies. Employment uses on this site are expected to be distinct from developments in other strategic sites, with an emphasis on small to medium units, and uses that integrate with the adjoining residential and retail uses. The continued investment in refurbishment and renewal of existing sites, together with high quality design is required to enable Derwent Howe to fulfil its strategic role.

Other sites

Elsewhere across Allerdale there are a number of employment sites that are significant at a more local level. These will be identified as local needs and business park allocations in the site specific Local Development Document.

Furthermore, the Core Strategy will support the establishment and growth of small and medium sized businesses through the site allocations document. Where appropriate sites allocated for employment development should make provision for small flexible space to provide scope for business 'start up' and 'incubator' units, as well as 'work hubs' in the lower tier of the settlement hierarchy in order to facilitate the continued growth and retention of businesses.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy approach performed strongly in terms of the sustainability, especially in terms of social, natural and economic objectives. Particular strengths related to the focus of new economic development to be within the existing urban centres, where the improved infrastructure exists and where the majority of the population reside therefore increasing access to services and facilities and reducing the need to travel. The preferred approach also performs strongly in terms of strengthening and diversifying the Allerdale economy rather than leaving economic development to be driven by market forces.

Justification for Preferred Option EC1

The preferred approach follows national guidance and ensures that enough land of sufficient quality is available to meet the future employment requirements. It ensures that consideration is given to provision of all the Borough's employment needs. Producing a hierarchy of available sites helps raise the quality of employment land on offer by enabling the prioritisation of investment and enables provision of public support for the appropriate sites.

This policy approach underpins many of the strategic objectives of the plan in providing support and enhancement for town centres and in directing development of offices to the most sustainable locations. Furthermore, this option would, in the first instance, direct office development to town centres such as Workington and Maryport as a key and most sustainable location for quality office development as suggested by the Employment Land Study. This policy approach is consistent with the Town Centre policy which allows a flexible approach when no suitable sites are available in town centres.

The policy emphasises the key role of strategic sites in Allerdale's economic future. It allows Allerdale Borough Council to support and create specific commercial clusters providing certainty and the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the development of certain industries such as nuclear and related supply chain industries. The policy would build on the West Cumbria Employment Land Study recommendations to emphasise the role of strategic sites such as Lillyhall, Port of Workington and Derwent Howe in delivering the important employment opportunities into the future. It also promotes the role of other locally important sites in delivering the spatial strategy and meeting the needs of the whole of Allerdale.



Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Strategic Objectives	SO1a, SO3b, SO3c, SO3d, SO3e, SO3g, SO3j, SO4a, SO4g, SO5c, SO1b, SO1d, SO1e, SO3a
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 2 - Ensuring the vitality and viability of town centres; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 5 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure; Plan Making.
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012), Britain's Energy Coast – Investment Strategy: Nuclear Topic Paper 2011
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S5-9, EC3, EC4, EC5
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

EC1a Maintain the level of employment land required, but do not specify the type of use in order to maximise the flexibility.

An alternative option would be to maintain the level of employment land required by S5, but maximise flexibility and let the market decide the level and role of employment land. This was not preferred as it could result in piecemeal and unplanned development and an unsustainable pattern of growth. Furthermore, it would not allow the targeted investment and prioritisation required to raise the quality of employment offer, and would not represent a planned and efficient approach to the provision of employment land over the plan period.

EC1b Allocate main employment sites in strategic allocations

An alternative option would be to allocate the major employment sites as strategic allocations within the core strategy. Sites should only be considered if they are central to the achievement of the strategy, and although these major sites have the potential to play a significant role in the future economic growth in Allerdale it is considered that they form part of a wider economic strategy and therefore should be evaluated and reviewed together with other employment

areas. Additionally, given the current level of employment land provision early allocation would possibly constrain the choice of land the Council is able to allocate in further development plan documents.

EC1c Unrestricted approach to employment land

This general option to the provision of types of employment land would seek to provide an unrestricted approach to employment land, allowing maximum flexibility, with the market given full control. This was rejected as it would result in development contrary to the spatial strategy and not result in the most sustainable pattern of growth. Furthermore, the approach would result in haphazard development without the necessary infrastructure to support it, and could result in the loss and dilution of important and strategic sites which would cause further difficulties to achieving the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy.

EC1d Unrestricted approach to office development

This option considered an unrestricted approach to office development, again leaving the market with the full flexibility to decide and control growth. This was not preferred as it would be against national policy and could be detrimental to town centre vitality and viability.

Q12) Do you agree with the focus of the strategic sites (EC1)? Any other comments?

Key issues

- National policy requires an approach that facilitates and promotes development of employment land by making suitable quantity and quality of land available;
- Allerdale has an excess of poor quality employment land, much of which does not meet the requirements of modern business;
- A good supply of high quality premises is required in order for Allerdale to meet economic aspirations;
- The plan should ensure it allows a degree of choice to help business start up, while giving the flexibility to grow and move on;
- Local planning authorities should strictly control development in rural areas or outside areas allocated for development;
- Consultation revealed support for existing business expansion and maintaining flexibility and choice for local companies.

Introduction

The Employment Land Update (2012) concludes that Allerdale has an excess of employment land with approximately 100 hectares



allocated compared to a requirement for at least 60 hectares to 2030. However, it is important to retain employment sites that currently make a contribution to local employment, as well as retaining important or valuable sites for future employment uses. This policy seeks to ensure that there is a considered review of our employment sites in the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD and only sites that no longer meet the needs of modern business, or are poor and have little prospect of being developed are removed.

Appropriate planning policies are also needed to ensure that business will want to locate in the area. Existing and new

small and medium sized enterprises should be supported to grow and prosper. Ensuring that adequate land and buildings are available as well as identifying new areas for employment uses is an important element of the Local Plan and will be identified in the Site Specific Allocations Local Development Document. It is also important that current employment sites which may be under pressure for redevelopment for other uses, should be protected wherever a need can be demonstrated.

EC2 Preferred Option - Employment Allocations

The Core Strategy will retain and safeguard existing employment sites and allocations within the Allerdale Local plan until these are reviewed through the Site Allocations and Delivery DPD. Proposals for change of use of sites will be considered following DM EC2.

During the review Allerdale Borough Council will consider whether the site can meet the needs of modern business and consider opportunities to de-allocate sites of poor quality where they are better suited to alternative uses. The Council will formulate robust criteria in order to review sites suitability and where de-allocation is suggested priority will be given to alternative uses in sequence.

The Core strategy will support the upgrade, extension or intensification of existing business where the scale and use are appropriate for the locality and the proposal accords with DM EC1 and with the other policies within the Core Strategy.

Proposals outside allocated employment land or that currently used for employment uses will be discouraged and developments directed in sequence to existing allocations and then previously developed land following DM EC3. Where proposals are able to demonstrate why they can not be appropriately located, they will be considered on their merit taking into account local impacts and other Core Strategy policies.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred options in combination were considered to be the most sustainable for this policy area and would provide the best solution in terms of employment allocations. The approach performed very well across the objectives.

Justification for preferred option EC2

The preferred option would provide short-term approach and maintain the sites until they can be considered as part of the Employment Land Allocations. Furthermore, the option allows for long-term improvement in the employment offer in Allerdale through detailed review and allocation. This approach accords with the employment land study which highlights potential for de-allocating some under performing sites, also emphasising the importance of safeguarding the employment land both in current use and for future supply to ensure that Allerdale maintains a supply of good quality land. A criteria based approach would be required to review the existing employment land stock within an employment site allocations DPD, priority could be given to alternative uses in sequence.

The preferred approach also supports landless growth by the extension and intensification of existing employment sites. The policy approach would support local and existing businesses in developing and expanding, subject to the development being in keeping and in scale with the surrounding uses and not causing unacceptable levels of harm.

This option is designed to ensure efficient and sustainable use of land by restricting employment related developments out with existing sites and allocations. This approach builds on other policies within the Core Strategy and directs employment to the most sustainable locations according to the Spatial Strategy. In order to ensure businesses are not unnecessarily constrained there is flexibility in the policy to consider proposals outside allocated sites where it can be robustly demonstrated that the existing sites do not fit the need of a particular business.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Strategic Objectives	SO1e, SO3c, SO3d, SO1b, SO3j, SO3b
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3
Allerdale Council Plan	1, 2
Evidence Base	Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012)
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	DM EC1, DM EC2, DM EC3

Alternative Policy Options

EC2a Allow for the release of existing employment sites for other uses

An alternative option would be to allow the immediate release of existing employment sites for other uses, and seek to reduce the level of employment land, therefore addressing the specific conclusions within the employment land study. This option was rejected as the preferred option as it would not result in a considered release of land and could result in the loss of important sites which could damage employment land offer and the objectives of the Core Strategy.

EC2b Roll forward all existing employment into new allocations

This alternative option would automatically carry forward all employment land and allocate it

for the next plan period, with a key aim to protect important and strategic employment land to other uses. This was not preferred as it would not allow the considered review and justification of employment land allocations outlined in national policy.

EC2c Restrict the extension of existing employment sites and direct the development to allocations.

This option would restrict the extension of existing employment sites and direct developments to allocated sites thus ensuring an efficient use of land. This was rejected as it is contrary to national policy, could constrain growth and viability of existing business. Also it is against Council priority to support and promote growth and intensification of existing businesses.

EC2d Restrict employment related development outside employment allocations.

This option is designed to ensure efficient and sustainable use of land by restricting employment related developments out with existing sites and allocations. This approach builds on other policies within the Core Strategy and directs employment to the most sustainable locations according to the Spatial Strategy. This option would result in the most sustainable pattern of growth and help protect open countryside and green field sites. However, the policy lacks flexibility, and constrains development therefore it was rejected in favour of a more flexible approach.



Key issues

- Much of Allerdale is rural in character and the rural economy is a key sector.
- National policy emphasises the need to locate economic development in or next to local centres;
- National policy states that priority should be given to economic activities that have strong countryside links and farm diversification should be encouraged provided projects are consistent in their scale with their rural location;
- National policy also supports sustainable economic growth, the re-use and conversion of existing buildings in rural areas is encouraged. It also encourages the use of new and innovative modes of working such as Live/work units and work hubs;
- Consultation suggested that new development should only be allowed in local service centres; however the conversion of appropriate existing commercial buildings for employment uses should also be encouraged.

Introduction

The importance of meeting the social and economic needs of rural communities and supporting the rural economy are key considerations of the Local Plan. A careful balance needs to be achieved in supporting and promoting proposals that assist the economic sustainability of communities, whilst protection and enhancing the environment. Enabling appropriately scaled growth of new rural enterprise, and expansion of existing business is key to growing the rural economy. Furthermore, the policy approach reflects changes in working practices and new method of working while also supporting traditional land based industry through farm diversification.

National planning policy indicates that local planning authorities should carefully consider development in rural areas or outside areas allocated for development, and emphasises the need to locate economic development in or next to local service centres. However, it is also important to allow scope to consider development to meet local business needs in other locations. Following the central theme of sustainability national policy it is clear that the re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic development purposes will usually be preferable to new build and should be encouraged where appropriate.

Flexibility to accommodate new or emerging sectors not anticipated should also be considered as well as facilitating new work practices such as live/work. To support sustainable economic growth, the re-use and conversion of existing buildings in rural areas is encouraged, as is farm diversification. In developing policies, local planning authorities should also support activities, which contribute to the rural economy, and give priority to economic activities that have strong links with the local area. Throughout national policy, farm diversification is encouraged provided projects are consistent in their scale with their rural location.

Policy EC3 Preferred Option - Rural Economy & Enterprise

The Council will support the economic prosperity and sustainability of rural communities by enabling appropriately scaled growth of rural enterprise, extension of existing businesses and diversification in appropriate locations while ensuring that the countryside is protected from harmful development.

New Small Scale Business Uses in Rural Areas

Support will be given to new small scale business uses of appropriate size and nature within the settlement hierarchy where proposals accord with DM EC3. Particular encouragement will be given to the provision of small employment units that serve local and community needs, and to development of multi user 'workhubs' within local service centres and rural villages.

New and innovative methods of working such as 'live work' will also be supported within lower tier rural villages providing small flexible business space according to DMEC4.

In all cases exception is given to the re-use of rural buildings in the open countryside in compliance with Policy BE3, where the retention and reuse of vacant or derelict rural buildings is seen as favourable. Additionally, exception is given to equestrian activities given the requirement for a rural location following DM EC7.

Expansion of Existing Rural Businesses

Proposals for the expansion of existing businesses will be supported according to DM EC1. In addition, proposals for the extension of rural businesses -

- must re-use existing buildings wherever possible;
- which seek to expand the business outside of the existing curtilage must demonstrate that that it is essential to the needs of the business;
- that involve any new buildings or extensions must be of appropriate scale and nature to their location.

Proposals for the expansion of existing businesses will be supported outside of the settlement hierarchy where it can be demonstrated that:

- The business has been operating for a minimum of 18 months;
- It is not viable for the business to relocate within the settlement hierarchy.

Farm Diversification

In order to support the continued economic viability of farming enterprises, the local plan will support proposals for the diversification of farming activities that are of a scale and nature appropriate to the location according to DM EC5.

Sustainability Appraisal

The provision of a policy approach that supports the economic prosperity and sustainability of rural communities through enabling appropriate growth and diversification, whilst protecting the countryside, performs strongly against the sustainability objectives considered. The preferred approach performed well across the objectives and specifically those related to social and economic objectives. The alternative approaches did identify beneficial effects in some areas but also identified a number of potentially adverse effects. These effects were in terms of the limiting of rural developments to only those settlements within the settlement hierarchy, and the lack of focus on the identified needs of the rural communities and the important role that they play within the wider Allerdale economy.

Justification for preferred option EC3

The preferred option clearly sets out Council's desire to enable and encourage sustainable rural enterprise and diversification through the support of the rural economy. It serves to reiterate the Council's intention to protect the countryside and landscapes from harmful developments, while also providing a local distinctive policy approach on the rural economy to supplement the limited national policy provision.

The approach supports proposals for small scale business uses of appropriate size and nature within the settlement hierarchy. There is particular encouragement given to the provision of businesses which serve local and community needs and to 'work hubs', improving the sustainability of rural settlements in the lower tiers whilst protecting the open countryside from unfettered development. Exception is given to the re-use of rural buildings in compliance with Policy BE4, where the retention and reuse of vacant or derelict rural buildings is seen as favourable. The approach offers support to the rural economy, and allows the growth and expansion of established rural enterprises whilst protecting the countryside from unfettered developments. Proposals for small scale extensions and business expansion will be supported where appropriate, subject to environmental impact.

This option provides clear support to rural enterprise by allowing a level of growth and expansion for businesses which are operated from existing homes outside of the settlement hierarchy. Extensions and units of appropriate size and nature will be supported within the curtilage of existing dwellings in order to allow home-run rural businesses to expand where relocation is not a desirable option. This preferred option allows for growth of smaller businesses whilst supporting the spatial strategy and preventing unfettered development in the countryside.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Strategic Objectives	SO3a, SO3d, SO3e, SO1b, SO1e
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012)
Links to Core Strategy Policies	BE3
Key Development Management Policies	DM EC4, DM EC5, DM EC6, DM EC7

Alternative Policy Option

EC3a No Overarching policy to support rural economy - relying on national policy.

An alternative option would be to have no overarching policy in support of the rural economy. This approach would simplify the Core Strategy, however it does not reflect the importance of the rural economy across Allerdale and would fail to reflect the plan's overall strategy and objectives. Additionally, this lack of policy would not accord with national policy therefore it is rejected.

EC3b Support proposals for small scale business uses within settlement hierarchy only.

This policy would support proposals for small scale business uses within settlement hierarchy only. It sets a strict approach to protecting the countryside from harmful development and provides support to the settlements hierarchy and the spatial strategy. This option was not selected as the preferred option as it was considered to be overly restrictive and therefore unsupportive of rural enterprise.

EC3c Allow small scale business uses in open countryside subject to environmental impact and sustainability

This alternative option offers a flexible and open approach to encouraging and enabling rural enterprise and diversification by allowing development in the open countryside. This was rejected as it was considered to be too open to development and could lead to sporadic development patterns within the open countryside.

Key issues

- There are a number of education establishments in Allerdale, including the Energus campus and Lakes College (West Cumbria) at Lillyhall, that contribute to the local and regional economy and prosperity;
- Continued development of the Boroughs skills and training is vital for the continued economic development of Allerdale, especially for the energy sector and knowledge economy;
- Enhancing the general education and training of the population is a key issue in tackling poverty and well being;
- Consultation highlighted skills gaps, with a clear link to poor economic performance and lack of growth opportunities.

Introduction

Raising the levels of attainment and skills and increasing access to learning and training is vital to both raising the economic success and the quality of life within Allerdale. Localised and often high levels of worklessness are focussed around the urban core settlements of Workington and Maryport, and can also be found in more dispersed pockets in rural areas. These areas are often characterised by poor health levels, low educational attainment and skills levels and therefore high levels of worklessness. This is contrasted by a reliance on skilled and well-paid jobs focused on the nuclear and energy related industries, and those businesses that support them. Future potential growth and diversification of these sectors is a key economic aim of West Cumbria, however, there needs to be a workforce equipped with the right skills to meet these opportunities in order to capitalise.



The Local Plan and economic strategy of the Borough seeks to build on and diversify the economic base, increasing the number of new business start-ups and enterprise while ensuring that we have the correct range of skills and workers to attract investment. The Energus Campus at Lillyhall, Lakes College (West Cumbria), and the University of Cumbria, provide valuable training and education resources that need to be encouraged and supported

in order to capitalise on these assets and provide the skilled workforce to meet economic and social goals across Allerdale.

EC4 Preferred Option - Education and Skills

The Core Strategy has an important role in raising the quality of life of the current and future population within Allerdale. Raising educational attainment together with diversifying and increasing the skill base will help the area become a more attractive area to invest and locate new business.

Allerdale Borough Council will support and encourage development that contributes towards raising the level of skills and opportunities, subject to the other relevant Core Strategy policies. Development of education and skills will be promoted through:

- Supporting the development of higher and further educational facilities; such as the continued expansion of Energus and the University of Cumbria;
- Promotion of skills development and commercial opportunities with further education partners in support of economic objective while capitalising on current resources;
- Proactive planning policies to promote Lillyhall as a location for the integration of industry together with education and training;
- Enhancing enterprise and training and skills for the local workforce by working in partnership with Allerdale's education facilities;
- Proactively planning for the provision of schools in the right location and of sufficient size for future population requirements.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy option identified a range of strong beneficial effects related to improvement of education and skills in the Borough, and the related benefits of increased access to educational facilities and beneficial elements related to the economy. Without a policy approach, decision making in the Core Strategy will fail to consider education and skills fully and fail to address the current skills and education gaps in the Borough that currently restrict the potential for future economic growth and development across the area.

Justification for Preferred Option EC4

The preferred policy provides support and encouragement to the development of educational facilities and skills developments, recognising the need to improve Allerdale's skill base to develop and diversify the Borough's economy. A key element of this is the provision and enhancement of sustainable educational facilities (both schools and further education facilities). Working with existing education providers the policy would seek to build on the concept of an energy campus, economic blueprint and the Lillyhall Masterplan and encourage integration and investment between industry, commerce, education and training, helping to make the

area an attractive location for future employers to locate operations. Working to raise the level of educational achievement and skills across Allerdale will help ensure that businesses from nuclear, energy and environmental sectors; as well as engineering, product and process manufacturing have the skills to develop and grow over the plan period.

The continued development of specific educational providers such as the University of Cumbria and Lakes College (West Cumbria) would be supported. This approach was preferred as it recognises the important contribution of the education and skills sectors to the long-term economic success of Allerdale, and supports the achievement of the strategic objectives.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Strategic Objectives	SO3c, SO3g, SO4d, SO1b
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 8 – Promoting healthy communities.
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.6
Allerdale Council Plan	1, 2
Evidence Base	Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain’s Energy Coast (2012).
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S3, EC1
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative Policy Options

EC4a Do not include a policy on education and skills within the Core Strategy

An alternative approach would be to not include a policy on education and skills within the core strategy. This would leave the delivery of improvements in skill and education to other Council and national strategies. The evidence suggests that lack of suitable skills and gaps in the skill base across the Borough are a major inhibitor on economic growth, business start up and relocation. It was considered that the absence of a policy would be detrimental to the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy and future economic development. Therefore it was rejected.

Key Issues

- Significant shortage of convenience goods provision in Workington, Cockermouth & Maryport;
- High level of retail sales leakage to Carlisle from northern Allerdale;
- Lack of an evening economy in the majority of towns, with exception of Cockermouth;
- Relatively high level of out of town leisure service provision has reduced the level of activity within Allerdale town centres;
- Significant shortage of leisure and cultural activities.

Introduction

Town centres are important places for communities as they provide a focal point for business activity, social interaction and diversity. A vibrant and active centre which offers quality retail, leisure, business and cultural facilities is proven to significantly enhance the quality of life of residents and the attractiveness of the area to visitors and investors.

Whilst planning policy relating to town centres has traditionally been based upon the shopping function of the centre, it is important to understand that the notion of vitality and viability relates to a much broader range of issues than just retail performance. Therefore, policies need to promote and support a broad mix of uses, both spatially and temporally in order to achieve a vibrant, diverse and thriving centre.



Village shops and community services are equally important in providing a centre for business and social interaction. Local shops and services which provide for people's day to day needs fulfil a crucial role in community life, particularly for those who are isolated either by their location or circumstance. Therefore policies will aim to promote and enhance the provision of such services, encourage proposals for multi-purpose community facilities and safeguard against their unnecessary loss.

EC5 Preferred Option - Town Centres & Retail

Policies in the Core Strategy will promote vitality and viability of centres within Allerdale by encouraging a diverse mix of uses in high quality environments which attract a wide range of people at different times of the day, and which are safe and accessible to all.

Policies in the Core Strategy will establish the following retail hierarchy of centres:

Principal Centre:	Workington
Key Service Centre:	Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton
Local Service Centre:	Aspatria, Silloth
Rural Villages:	As defined within Settlement Hierarchy (Policy S6)

Policies will direct proposals for new retail, leisure, cultural and office floorspace towards the existing centres above and will strongly discourage proposals of this type of development outside of these. Proposals which do not accord with these policies will be subject to a sequential and impact test as described in national policy. Thresholds to which impact assessments apply will be set out in Policy DM EC10.

Policies will require developers of tourism and leisure attractions and accommodation to seek locations within existing centres before considering locations elsewhere, in accordance with Policy EC6.

Policies will support the preservation of town centre boundaries and frontages which will be set in DM policies DM EC12 - 14.

Policies will encourage developments which promote an evening economy within the hierarchy which encourage people to inhabit the centres at different times of the day and night.

Policies will seek to preserve and enhance the character of each town centre by ensuring new development is of a high quality in terms of design and materials and that the architectural and historical assets of the centre are protected.

Policies will seek to preserve and enhance the distinctive character of rural villages and the sustainability of small communities by supporting the creation, improvement and protection of facilities which promote social and cultural interaction and provide for people's day to day needs. Support will be given to the improvement of existing, and the creation of new facilities which are of appropriate character and scale and where the proposal is justified and is compatible with its location.

Policies will support the operation of markets of appropriate scale and character within the hierarchy.

... continues

Policies will encourage developments and initiatives which increase the attractiveness of the built and natural environment through improvements to the public realm and Green Infrastructure network.

Policies will promote the accessibility of towns and service centres support the improvement of public transport links and the cycle and footpath network.

Policies will support the development of town centre action plans and teams to form locally distinctive strategies for each centre. Action plans will provide a supportive framework, promote public / private sector partnerships and set out proactive measures to secure appropriate developer interest and investment.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred options in combination present the most sustainable approach to implementing this policy in the Core Strategy, as they performed the most strongly in terms of the sustainability objectives. The policy option's strengths in particular the encouragement that they provide towards town centre viability and the support that they provide to the local economy in terms of encouraging investment and diversification, protection and growth of employment opportunities and improving access to employment opportunities.

Justification for Preferred Option EC5

The main emphasis of government policy with regards to town centres is to secure their vitality and viability through the promotion of retail, leisure and cultural developments within existing centres. The preferred option complies with national guidance, whilst also supporting the Council's own locally distinctive strategic objectives, providing clear direction for the future development of town centres. The policy reflects national guidance and clearly establishes a hierarchy of centres within a network that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes and which meets the needs of their catchments areas. This option defines a logical hierarchy of centres within the Borough based upon evidence in the West Cumbria Retail Study. This option supports an approach where the larger towns will perform complimentary roles and not competing ones.

Further policy material ensures development is of appropriate scale and type for its role within the hierarchy by linking to the evidence base, development management policies and site allocation. This approach allows the Council to adopt a positive and flexible approach to retail and leisure development, allowing for changes in the economic climate and local circumstance over the plan period, whilst ensuring development is appropriate to the hierarchy. This option sets an appropriate level of detail within the Core Strategy without being too prescriptive, however it will be heavily reliant upon an up to date evidence base.

As directed by national policy commitment and support is provided within the approach to the principal of applying the sequential and impact assessments. Guidance is contained within the NPPF and also remains available in the guidance document - 'Planning for Town Centres: Practice Guidance on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach'. Whilst it is considered preferable to not discuss the specific details within this option, care must be taken not to under estimate the importance of the tests and the role they will have on the determination of planning applications.

The preferred option also sets out the Council's support for the development of action plans which would support and promote the vitality and viability of individual town centres within the Borough and address key issues highlighted in the evidence base. Action plans may provide a supportive framework, promote public / private sector partnership and set out proactive measures to secure appropriate developer interest and investment.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Strategic Objectives	SO1a, SO3h, SO3i, SO4a, SO4c, SO4d, SO5c, SO6e, SO5a, SO1b, SO1e, SO4e, SO5d
National Planning Policy Framework	2 - Ensuring the vitality and viability of town centres; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 7 - Requiring good design; 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 3, 4
Evidence Base	Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012).
Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012)	
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S6, BE6
Key Development Management Policies	DM EC10, DM EC12, DM EC13, DM EC14

Alternative Policy Options

EC5a No policy relating to issues covered by national policy

This option would prevent a repetition of national guidance where it gives support to an issue, for example - town centre uses, evening economies, boundaries, frontages, markets, accessibility etc. However, it is considered that, whilst proposals may be assessed against national policy, this option offers no local distinction and would not represent a meaningful

response to the findings of the evidence base. Furthermore, this option does not allow for flexibility and potential changes to the national context.

EC5b Policy identifying retail hierarchy in line with current Joint Structure Plan (Policy ST5)

This option would see Workington and Maryport as having the same (competing) roles within the town centre hierarchy. This approach is not supported by the evidence base which sees complementary roles for these towns with Workington as the principal retail centre and with Maryport offering a larger tourism and leisure product.

EC5c Policy to set detailed requirements for floorspace and capacity (scale and type) for each centre.

This option would see the Council setting detailed floorspace capacities for the amount of retail and leisure development to be directed to each centre within the hierarchy. Whilst being a standard approach to retail policy making, it is considered that this option would not allow flexibility with regards to balancing the quantitative and qualitative requirements of each centre. Furthermore, due to the dynamic nature of the retail sector and the sector's tendency to fluctuate with national economic changes, it is not considered reasonable to tightly restrict the ability of each centre to grow and adapt.

EC5d Policy which addresses key implications and sets out the thresholds and requirements for impact and sequential tests.

This policy approach is not considered reasonable it would simply repeat national policy guidance without offering local distinction.

EC5e No policy to develop town centre action plans

The development of town centre action plans and strategies are not a mandatory function and therefore this is a reasonable action, particularly given the level of resources required to produce the action plans for each centre. However, it is considered that as the evidence base has highlighted a number of issues with the Borough's centres, such as lack of evening economy and poor public realm, that it would be appropriate to offer support to such action plans within the core strategy. This option would also align with the Council Plan priority for town centres.

Q13) Do you agree with the preferred retail hierarchy (EC5)? Do you have any other comments?

Key Issues within Allerdale

- Shortage of hotels and holiday accommodation across a wide range of prices;
- Accessibility problems directly related to poor public transport provision;
- Poor town centre evening economy and visitor infrastructure;
- Shortage of quality attractions to invite visitors beyond the Lake District.

Introduction

It is important to note that for the purposes of this document the categories of tourism and leisure have been divided into separate sections as below.

Town Centre Tourism, Culture & Leisure Uses	Rural Tourism, Culture & Community Leisure Uses - (Non town centre)	Outdoor Tourism, Culture & Community Leisure Uses
Policies - EC5	Policies - EC6	Policies - NE6
Retail, leisure, culture, entertainment and the more intensive sport and recreation uses including - cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, bingo halls, theatres, museums, galleries, concert halls, hotels and conference facilities.	All other tourism, culture and indoor community leisure developments which cannot be located within an existing centre due to the nature of the attraction (being directly related to a rural community / venture or natural asset).	Outdoor tourism and community leisure facilities, i.e - parks, woodlands etc.

Tourism provides an important source of income to the towns and rural communities of Allerdale in the form of visitor spending on accommodation, food, drink, leisure activities and shopping, and also to local business supply chains and wholesalers. Tourism brings over £200 million into the Allerdale local economy each year (including LDNP) and provides up to 4000 local jobs. Allerdale’s greatest tourism assets lies within its natural environment, with the majority of visitors to the area considering the scenery and landscape to be the most important factor in the enjoyment of their trip (Cumbria Visitor Survey 2009).

However, as well as being the area’s most valuable tourism asset, the unspoilt countryside and coastlines are also the area’s most sensitive resource. Much of the plan area is protected by international, national and regional designations and whilst the desire to develop the tourism industry is high, the priority must always be to preserve the natural environment from detrimental development. This presents an even bigger challenge when considering that some of the area’s key tourism destinations are difficult to access via public transport, placing a high dependency upon private car use. It is clear therefore policies must strike a balance between the aspirations for economic prosperity with the need to protect the natural environment and landscape.

Policy EC6 Preferred Option - Tourism & Leisure

Policies in the Core Strategy will promote the creation, enhancement and expansion of tourism, cultural and leisure attractions (and associated infrastructure) in order to support local economic prosperity and rural diversification.

Policies will support new tourism and leisure attractions in locations that can accommodate the additional visitor numbers without detriment to the environment, in accordance with Policies S6 & BE1 and where possible within existing or replacement buildings.

Policies will support key tourism projects which have the transformational potential to significantly improve the social and economic prosperity of the area, such as:

- Roman Maryport;
- Derwent Forest;
- Derwent Valley;
- Hadrian's Wall;
- Silloth Green; &
- Solway Coast AONB

Policies will support new tourism and leisure attractions sequentially as follows:

- in Principal, Key, Local Centres or Rural Villages;
- in other locations subject to environmental impact and sustainability.

Policies will support new or improved tourist accommodation and infrastructure in existing Principal, Key, Local Centres and Rural Villages. Development will also be allowed in the following locations subject to appropriate scale and design (Policy BE1), environmental impact and sustainability:

- 1 in the open countryside, only through reuse of redundant rural buildings (in accordance with Policy BE3) or as an extension to an existing tourism business; or
- 2 as new build in other locations only where existing buildings cannot be re-used, the accommodation is directly associated with a strategic tourist attraction (listed above) and a deficiency in accommodation has been identified in this location.

Policies will urge the resistance of proposals which fall outside of the above criteria.

Policies will support the provision of tourism accommodation in the form of camping, caravan or chalet parks where the location can support additional visitor numbers without detriment to the environment or local amenity.

Policies will set out the Council's approach to applying, altering and removing occupancy conditions relating to all new holiday accommodation.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy approach is the most sustainable across all objectives, with major benefits assessed in most areas. The preferred options performed strongly in most areas of the sustainability objectives as they reflect the importance of the Borough as a tourism destination, particularly in terms of the economy, but also reflect the importance of the Borough's environmental assets in supporting this level of tourism interest. Without the preferred policy approaches in the Core Strategy, the assessment identified that there is a potential risk of inappropriate development in the wrong locations.

Justification for Preferred Option EC6

The preferred option sets out the Council's commitment to support tourism and community leisure development in appropriate locations. This option supports existing Key and Local Service Centres but would also help support tourism and diversification in the rural economy by allowing appropriate development elsewhere subject to stringent environmental, sustainability and economic impact assessments. Whilst this option offers many desirable outcomes, the policy will require careful implementation with assessments made against an up to date evidence base in order to avoid inappropriate development in the countryside.

Despite the inevitable uncertainty regarding the deliverability of some major projects, it is believed that there is merit in identifying projects given the scale, nature and subsequent delivery period of some of the proposals. This option offers clarity in the Council's support for large/transformational projects but does not guarantee delivery of the projects.

This policy would direct new tourism accommodation to Principal, Key and Local Service Centres but would offer flexibility for extensions to existing businesses already located in the countryside. Furthermore, this option offers the opportunity for new build tourism accommodation only where it can be demonstrated that it is required to support a key strategic



tourism attraction (listed above) and a deficiency in accommodation in this location has been identified in the evidence base. Whilst this option sets a clear policy approach to support the local economy through the improvement of the tourist accommodation stock, it is important that robust Development Management policies are developed to ensure conversions and extensions are appropriate to the location and that new build accommodation is strictly in accordance with sequential criteria and countryside protection policies.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Strategic Objectives	SO1a, SO3a, SO3h, SO4a, SO5b, SO5c, SO1b, SO1e, SO3i, SO4g
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 2 - Ensuring the vitality and viability of town centres; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 7 - Requiring good design; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.5,
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 3, 4
Evidence Base	Allerdale Tourism Strategy 2005 – 2015, Allerdale Cultural Study 2007, Cumbria Destination Management Plan 2010 – 2011; Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012)
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S6, BE1, BE3,
Key Development Management Policies	DM EC19, DM EC20, DM EC21

Alternative Policy Option

EC6a No overarching policy to support sustainable tourism and leisure development

This option would mean a reliance on national policy and the spatial strategy to direct tourism policy, a benefit of which would be to simplify the Core Strategy. However, due to the importance of tourism in the Borough, along with the collective desire to see the tourism offer improved and increased (as demonstrated by the evidence base) and the environmentally sensitive nature of many of the areas key tourism assets, it is felt that a policy relating to tourism is fully appropriate, therefore this option is not considered reasonable.

EC6b Policy to direct development for tourism and leisure development to existing centres only - in order protect town centre vitality and viability and prevent inappropriate development within the countryside.

This option sets a clear approach to directing new tourism and leisure developments to Principal, Key and Local Service Centres only. This option complies with national policy in that it seeks to protect the vitality and viability of town centres, as well as avoiding sporadic

development within the open countryside, however, this is not considered a reasonable approach in the context of Allerdale. This option fails to recognise and take advantage of opportunities for the enhancement of rural economies through tourism activities. It also fails to recognise evidence which shows that it is the natural environment itself, which is our most valuable tourism assets and the reason most people visit our area.

EC6c No policy to support specific key tourism and leisure projects.

This policy would not specifically refer to key projects identified in the Spatial Strategy which would simplify the Core Strategy and could be considered more flexible, but would fail to recognise or support large scale transformational projects which would be of wider benefit to the community.

EC6d Policy to provide support for improved tourist accommodation in Principal, Key and Local Service Centres only.

This policy would conform with national policy and the “town centres first approach, but would not reflect the wider aspirations for tourism development throughout the Borough which included the improvement of the holiday accommodation stock.



EC7 - Derwent Forest

Key issues

- Identified in British Energy Coast Masterplan and emerging economic strategy as strategically important site for tourism;
- Largest derelict site in the North West;
- Consultation suggested that any development should have economic, social and environmental uses;
- The Site has areas that are important habitats for many species and biodiversity.

Introduction

The Derwent Forest site, at Broughton Moor, is a former Royal Navy Armaments Depot, which at 425 hectares is one of the largest derelict sites in the North West of England. Its use as an armaments depot ceased in 1992, since which time the site has lain redundant.

The site is strategically placed between the Lake District and the West Cumbria coast and provides an unique opportunity to establish West Cumbria as a visitor destination in its own right as well as drawing visitors from the National Park. The role of Derwent Forest in the regeneration of West Cumbria is recognised in a number of key strategies including the Energy Coast Masterplan, sub regional spatial strategy, Cumbria tourism destination plan and Cumbria economic plan.

Given the scale of the site and its strategic potential the Derwent Forest site has been subject to a stand alone policy both in the Allerdale Local Plan (1999) and the first alteration to the Allerdale Local Plan (2006). Current policy identifies a range of uses that may be suitable for the site; these include leisure uses that are predominately open in nature, hotel, tourist development, again open in nature, such as golf courses, or cycle tracks. Renewable energy schemes, of an appropriate scale, are also seen as a suitable use.



As in the past any future policy has to strike a balance between maximising the opportunities that this site provides while respecting the landscape setting, the quality of the biodiversity and habitat on the site, as well as the infrastructure required to support development. It also should be acknowledged that the site lies outside any defined settlement and as such would be treated as an exception to normal planning policy.

Policy EC7 Preferred Option - Derwent Forest

In assessing any proposals for the use and/or redevelopment of the former Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Broughton Moor, the Council will support the following uses either individually or in combination subject to the criteria below:

- Institution(s) standing in their own grounds, to include education but to exclude prison uses;
- Large scale leisure development of a predominately “open” nature;
- Hotel/restaurant and conference centre;
- Tourist related development of a predominately “open” nature such as golf course, cycle tracks;
- Renewable energy schemes of an appropriate scale and character.

Other proposals considered as ancillary to the main uses, listed above, will be considered if they make a positive contribution to the viability of the overall scheme, provided such uses are supported by appropriate evidence.

A comprehensive masterplan for the site, including phasing, will be required to be submitted as part of any planning application to ensure delivery of a coherent solution for the site and avoid a piecemeal approach.

Any proposal will be required to demonstrate the socio, economic and environmental benefits it will bring to the local economy and community.

Any proposal for the whole site should include elements of public access, and the continuation of the C2C cycle route through the site.

A transport assessment/travel plan will be required to support any proposal; consideration of sustainable modes of transport will be an important part of any assessment.

The siting, design and scale of all elements of the proposed scheme shall seek to minimise the impact on the landscape and retain and enhance important landscape features as well as incorporate measures to enhance and safeguard existing wildlife species and habitats.

Ensure that off-site infrastructure is adequate to accommodate any proposals.

Ensure the site is remediated to an acceptable level for the proposed end use.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy approach and alternative option EC7b both identified potentially beneficial effects against the sustainability objectives and in comparison to the other alternative option EC7a. However, the preferred option ensures the most beneficial effects ensuring the social, economic and environmental issues related to the development of Derwent Forest are fully considered and maximised. The support identified through policy option EC7b was not considered to be as explicit as the preferred option.

Justification for Preferred Option EC7

The preferred approach is to provide policy material in support of the development of Derwent Forest. The preferred option ensures that any potential development, while maximising economic and social benefits, takes account of its sensitive setting in open countryside and the wealth of biodiversity which exists on the site. The development provides a unique opportunity to diversify the local economy, particularly the visitor and leisure sector, provide local jobs and bring back into use one of the largest previously developed sites in the region. Given the importance of the Derwent Forest site it is considered that without a dedicated policy, to guide development and address specific site related issues, this would result in uncertainty for potential investors and for the community. A potential negative aspect to this option is that it has the potential to reduce flexibility in the scope of the end use for the site.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Strategic Objectives	SO3h, SO1d, SO6b
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3,
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 4
Evidence Base	British Energy Coast Masterplan, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012)
Links to Core Strategy Policies	EC6, EC8, NE1, NE3.
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative Policy Option

EC7a No policy

With this approach any proposal for the Derwent Forest site would have to be assessed against national planning guidance and other Core Strategy policies depending on the nature of the proposal. Whilst it is considered that this would allow greater flexibility for the potential end use; this option would not provide certainty or a framework to ensure a comprehensive solution. Furthermore, reliance on general Core Strategy policies would not be sufficiently focussed to provide policy guidance and direction for this exception site.

EC7b Allocate Derwent Forest as a strategic site

Strategic sites should only be considered if they are central to the achievement of the strategy. Derwent Forest, although an important project, is not considered to be so pivotal to the Core Strategy that failure to deliver the project would fundamentally undermine it.

Key issues

- The UK Renewable Energy Strategy seeks around 35% of electricity and heat to come from renewable sources by 2020;
- National policy states that plans should promote and encourage, rather than restrict the development of renewable energy;
- Evidence suggests that despite considerable current deployment Allerdale has a significant capacity for renewable energy;
- Consultation revealed a level of community support of renewable energy generally, however there was a level of opposition to commercial wind development.
- Given the level of current deployment cumulative impacts are a key concern;
- Many respondents were concerned about the negative impacts of wind development as well as the lack of local benefit generated from the developments.

Introduction

The UK Renewable Energy Strategy seeks around 35% of electricity and heat to come from renewable and low carbon (non nuclear) sources by 2020. Renewable energy is clearly an important issue nationally as well as locally across the communities of Allerdale. National policy is central to the development of the local policy and includes a strong message that we should promote and encourage, rather than restrict, the development of renewable energy sources. Furthermore, development plan policies should not place constraint on the development of renewable energy or specific technologies.

The prescriptive nature of national policy continues stating that planning authorities should recognise the full range of renewable energy sources, their differing characteristics, locational requirements and potential for exploiting them subject to appropriate environmental, landscape and amenity safeguards.

The Cumbria Renewable Energy Capacity and Deployment Study was completed in August 2011 and considers the renewable energy potential across Cumbria to provide the evidence to support Renewable Energy Policies within the Local Planning Authorities Local Plan. It considers an extensive range of renewable energy sources, translating potential into a realistic deployable capacity up to 2030 in order for Cumbria to meet Government energy targets.

The overall level of renewable energy currently deployed across Cumbria is 295MW of which 70% is located within Allerdale. The Study found that Cumbria has a high natural resource for renewable energy (4,542MW), however, as it also has a large number of high quality landscapes and designations the level of resource that is realistically achievable is significantly reduce. The study suggests that once the constraints (environmental, transmission, supply chain, economic viability, and planning and regulatory constraints) are taken into account Cumbria's renewable energy deployment is likely to be 606MW in 2030.

The study indicates that within Allerdale there is a large resource of renewable developments, and suggests that there is a realistic potential for an extra 80MW by 2030. This additional supply is likely to come from a mix of technologies, with the onus on micro renewable technologies and commercial wind developments. Given the level of current development and the future deployment both cumulative impact and public opinion will be key considerations. The future development of our renewable resource, especially micro generation presents an exciting economic opportunity in terms of job creation, investment and economic diversification and accords well with the aspirations of the Economic Strategy for West Cumbria.

EC8 Preferred Option - Stand Alone Renewable or Low Carbon Technologies

Allerdale Borough Council will seek to promote and encourage the development of stand alone renewable or low carbon energy resources given the significant wider environmental, community and economic benefits. Proposals that have an unacceptable impact, either in isolation or cumulatively will be strongly resisted. In considering proposals the planning authority will take in to account the following criteria:

- Local amenity (air quality/emissions, noise, odour, water pollution) (EN4);
- Location, scale and its visual impact in relation to the character and sensitivity of the surrounding landscape. (NE2);
- Effects on nature conservation features, biodiversity and geodiversity, including sites, habitats and species, avoiding significant adverse effects on sites of international nature conservation (NE3);
- Potential benefits to the local economy and the local community, including any effects on agriculture and other land based industries;
- Appropriate operational requirements (including accessibility and suitability of road network, ability to connect to the grid, proximity of any feedstock where relevant);
- Appropriate measures are included for the removal of structures and the restoration of sites, should sites become non-operational.

Within the sensitive landscapes of the Hadrians Wall World Heritage Site and the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty only small scale, stand alone renewable energy schemes, which preserve the special qualities of these designations and accord with Core Strategy Policy NE2, will be supported.

Renewable energy proposals are expected to provide supporting evidence including Landscape, Visual and Environmental Assessments and to demonstrate that any negative impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated. Proposals will be expected to outline and deliver significant benefits to the local community and where necessary this will be secured through Planning Obligations (Policy S4).

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy approach presents the most sustainable approach to consideration of renewable and low carbon generation in the Core Strategy. It scored well across the objectives, but especially in relation to economy, social and some environmental objectives. The alternative policy options performed less well by virtue of them not necessarily supporting renewable energy development in the Borough and therefore not addressing issues related to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, or relate to the setting of restrictive thresholds and distances that would result in limiting the amount of energy related development coming forward.

Justification for Preferred Option EC8

The preferred option follows government priorities for development of our renewal resources and closely follows national planning policy in supporting and promoting renewable energy generation. Accordingly, the policy adopts a criteria based approach to encourage proposals to come forward to help meet renewable energy targets within Allerdale where they are acceptable. This approach works in conjunction with other Core Strategy policies to ensure the maximum level of resource is harnessed while minimising impact and where required provides mitigation. This approach supports the strategic objectives, Government priorities and Energy Coast ambitions. Also the approach of promoting renewable technologies in suitable locations was broadly supported by stakeholder and community views in earlier consultation. One drawback of the approach could be a perceived lack of protection offered by an encouraging and promotional policy approach, however, the protection and control of developments is included within the policy criteria and other Core Strategy policies.

An additional section of the policy is provided to ensure that within the AONB and heritage setting renewable schemes are in keeping, and of scale to provide minimal impact. This was the preferred option, as although it has the potential to reduce renewable capacity of Allerdale it reflects the importance of the landscape of the AONB and heritage settings and the feelings of many communities with Allerdale. Additionally, this approach conforms with national policy and supports strategic objectives to both generate renewable energy and protect the natural environment.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Strategic Objectives	SO3a, SO3b, SO6b, SO6d, SO1c, SO1d, SO3c
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Communities Strategy	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.8
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2
Evidence Base	Cumbria Renewable Energy Capacity and Deployment Study 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint:
Realising the Potential of Britain’s Energy Coast (2012), Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment, Solway Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009 – 2014	
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S4, EN2, EN3, EN4
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative Policy Options

EC8a No renewable policy.

An alternative approach would be to have no renewable policy in the Core Strategy, relying on national policy and other Core Strategy policies to guide development. This was rejected as it does not reflect the importance of renewable energy to communities and businesses in Allerdale and would not promote national priorities or strategic objectives.

EC8b Adopt a negative policy towards large scale wind

This alternative approach was considered to address the widespread community concerns regarding wind development by providing a clear message in policy. It was rejected as the preferred option as it would be against national policy and likely to fail the Government’s ‘test of soundness’ as the approach is not informed by evidence and therefore would be very unlikely to be implemented. Additionally, the policy would not help promote national priorities or strategic objectives, as it would rely on other technologies to help meet national renewable targets, which is again contrary to the findings of the evidence base.

EC8c Establish ‘areas of search’ for wind development

This alternative option was also considered. It would provide additional policy material on wind development by establishing areas of search for wind development. Adopting such a policy would effectively assess the Borough and identify those areas that would be appropriate for wind development and establish the potential carrying capacity. This would reflect some local concerns about inappropriate developments in some areas, and provide certainty for developers while reducing their costs and time. This was not considered to be the preferred option as it would require extensive upfront resource implications to provide the evidence to base policy on. The establishment of areas of search would reduce the influence the Council and communities has over individual proposals in designated areas of search for wind. Also it was considered that the approach may not generate community support once areas have been identified and therefore would be difficult to implement.

EC8d Set a renewable energy threshold

This alternative approach would set a threshold for the total allowable renewable energy deployment in Allerdale and therefore protect the Borough from excessive development. In order to set a threshold evidence would be required to justify the figure selected. Calculating our 'fair share' would be complex, and difficult to justify. This approach was rejected because renewable targets set by the Government are not a maximum ceiling for development; they are to provide an aim for policy and a target to be able to monitor progress. Therefore an upper limit for development is unlikely to pass as a 'sound' policy.

EC8e Include specific criteria indicating 'setback' distances from residential developments

Criteria could be developed to protect residential dwellings from commercial wind development close by. This approach was rejected because it would have to be evidence based, and as each potential site varies setting one threshold for the whole of Allerdale would be complex, difficult to justify and open to challenge. In other countries, most notably Scotland include guidance suggesting a greater separation distance from settlements in practice the scale and nature of landscape and developments are different and the setback of 2km is a guide with proposals with the 2km being considered on their own merits. Furthermore, the policy approach preferred has criteria to protect amenity and health on a case-by-case basis and this is considered to be the best method to protect dwellings from potential harm.

EC8f Apply policy uniformly across all Allerdale

This approach adopts a uniform policy for renewables across all of Allerdale and does not differentiate between different degrees of landscape sensitivity. This would provide a simple approach that would rely on other core strategy policies to protect landscape and heritage. This was rejected as the preferred option as it was against community and stakeholder views, and may lead to degradation of important landscapes that have national, European and world protection.

Q14) Are there any other approaches that we should consider (EC8)? Do you have any other comments?

Key issues

- The UK has a legally binding target to cut emissions by 80% by 2050;
- A key aim of national policy is to improve the nations energy security;
- A site adjacent to Sellafield has been 'accepted' for construction of a new nuclear reactor;
- Any nationally significant development would have major infrastructure implications for Allerdale.

Introduction

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects are determined by the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit reporting to the Secretary of State. While EC10 provides policy on projects that are at a relatively advanced planning stage this policy sets out the Councils approach to subsequent developments that emerge over the plan period. As with those developments related to nuclear, Allerdale is not the consenting authority for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, however, the Council will seek, in negotiation with partners and developers where appropriate, to engage with the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit, to ensure that the development has regard to the principles of the development plan and the following policy.

EC9 Preferred Option - Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

The Council will actively engage at the pre-application stage with the developer of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project to ensure:

- A robust programme of community consultation with the local community and stakeholders is achieved
- That appropriate mitigation measures are considered to reduce the potential impact on the day to day activities of the local community and businesses as a result of the proposed development. This would include the impact on local infrastructure and services.
- That, where appropriate, the developer is to locate temporary workers in the Principal or Key Service Centres close to services and public transport routes
- Sustainable forms of transport will be encouraged to move construction materials and workers
- Seek to maximise the local socio-economic opportunities for the West Cumbrian economy in terms of increased training and employment opportunities, improvements to local infrastructure and the development of local business opportunities.

The Council will, where appropriate, prepare and submit a Local Impact Report to the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit as part of the Development Consent Order process. It will seek to assess both positive and negative local impact on local communities, jobs and businesses, infrastructure and the environment.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach was assessed as the most beneficial across many of the objectives, however, it should be noted that the policy options do not relate to the actual location, form or actual development of NSIPs. The preferred approach adopts a proactive and transparent process towards applications for NSIPs performed most sustainably as this ensured the involvement of the local community and enables local stakeholders to work towards ensuring that new NSIPs within the Borough reflect the needs and desires of the community.

Justification for Preferred Option EC9

Although it is acknowledged the National Policy Statements establish the need for a particular Nationally Significant Infrastructure project Allerdale has an important role in engaging in the development consent process through the drafting of a Local Impact Report and commenting on the effectiveness of the consultation carried out by the applicant. In addition the Council

also has the opportunity to submit its own view on the proposed infrastructure. The preferred policy aims to set out the key areas which will guide the Council's involvement with the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit and the developer.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Objectives	SO3a, SO3b, SO4b, SO1d, SO3c, SO4a,
SO5a	
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1,6.2,
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2, 3
Evidence Base	National Planning Policy Statements, Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012), Britain's Energy Coast – Investment Strategy: Nuclear Topic Paper 2011
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S3, S5-9,
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative Policy Options

EC9a Do not include a policy on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects within the Core Strategy

An alternative approach would be to not include a policy on Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects within the core strategy. This approach would not support a proactive and transparent process for future projects, and may result in a poor policy background. It was considered that the absence of a policy would be detrimental to the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy and future economic development.

EC10 - New Nuclear Power Station at Sellafield

Key issues

- The UK has a legally binding target to cut emissions by 80% by 2050;
- A key aim of national policy is to improve the nations energy security;
- A site adjacent to Sellafield has been 'accepted' for construction of a new nuclear reactor;
- Any nationally significant development would have major infrastructure implications for Allerdale.

Introduction

When the Government passed the Climate Change Act 2008 it set a legally binding target of at least an 80% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with an interim target of at least 34% by 2020. Nuclear power is likely to play a significant role in meeting the UK's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, and a site adjacent to Sellafield (in the Adjoining local Authority of Copeland) has been 'accepted' for construction of a new nuclear reactor. As the development and those associated with nuclear new build is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, it will be determined by the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit reporting to the Secretary of State. Although Allerdale is not the consenting authority, the Council will seek, in negotiation with partners and developers where appropriate to engage with the Major Infrastructure Planning Unit, to ensure that the development has regard to the principles of the development plan and the following policy.

EC10 Preferred Option - New Nuclear Power Station at Sellafield

In relation to specific Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects the Council would seek to enter discussions with the developer with respect to the following;

New Nuclear Power Station at Sellafield

In relation to worker accommodation consideration should be given to the use of brownfield sites in the Principal and Key Service Centres with the potential to leave serviced, usable sites, once the accommodation is no longer required.

Provision should be considered, where necessary, for additional health, retail and recreation facilities in association with any proposed accommodation to ensure local infrastructure is not compromised by the additional demand.

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Wherever reasonable and practicable promote the use of the Port of Workington to ship in construction material and other bulk components along with the use of the existing railway infrastructure to transport both materials and workers.

Ensure adequate land and premises are available to meet the requirements for storage, assembly and manufacture of off site components.

Electricity Transmission

Seek to ensure that any new electricity transmission infrastructure minimises potential impacts on the Allerdale's landscape and biodiversity quality and the health and amenity of the local community.

Ensure that all potential route options have been considered including undergrounding and off-shore solutions

Geological Disposal Facility

Ensure there is a proven and robust safety case for the preferred site.

That the preferred site has the support of the host community

Secure an acceptable community benefits package to mitigate against any adverse impacts on the local community and business.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach was assessed as the most beneficial across many of the objectives, however, it should be noted that the policy options do not relate to the actual location, form or actual development of a new Nuclear Power Station. The preferred approach adopts a proactive and transparent process towards applications and therefore performed most sustainably as this ensured the involvement of the local community and enables local stakeholders to work towards ensuring that NNB at Sellafield reflects the needs and desires of the community.

Justification for Preferred Option EC10

This policy seeks to apply the general principles set out in the preceding policy and applies them to three potential projects which could come forward during the plan period. The issues outlined in the preferred option provide a framework for discussion with the developer, particularly at the pre-application stage.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Relevant Objectives	SO1d, SO3a, SO3b, SO3c, SO4a, SO4b, SO5a
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.1,6.2,
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	National Policy Statements, Employment Land and Premises Review 2009, Employment Land Review Update 2011, Draft West Cumbria Economic Blueprint: Realising the Potential of Britain's Energy Coast (2012), Britain's Energy Coast – Investment Strategy: Nuclear Topic Paper 2011
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S3, S5-9, EC1
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative Policy Options

EC10a Do not include a policy on New Nuclear Power Station at Sellafield within the Core Strategy

An alternative approach would be to not include a policy on New Nuclear Power Station at Sellafield within the core strategy. This approach would not support a proactive and transparent process for future projects, and would result in a failure to fully engage in the proposals. It was considered that the absence of a policy would be severely detrimental to the aims and objectives of the Core Strategy and future economic development.

Q15) Do you have any comments on the economic policies?



TRANSPORT



Transport

Community Views:

1. Development should be focussed in settlements with greater service provision, such as frequent bus routes and a choice of sustainable transport methods;
2. Provision should, where possible, be made in new developments for cyclists and other sustainable methods of transport;
3. Consultation suggested that parking provision within Allerdale's town centres is generally poor, with Workington, Maryport and Cockermouth particularly poorly serviced;
4. Lack of parking at and around train stations is an increasing issue.

Key Issues

- Policy needs to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking
- Policy needs to conform with and work towards implementing the Cumbria Local Transport Plan
- The Borough has large rural areas that are often isolated from public transport and services;
- A key aim of the development plan is to protect and enhance green infrastructure assets
- Community consultation suggests there is a perceived lack of parking within Workington, Maryport and Cockermouth and around some of the Borough's railway stations.

Introduction

Providing a sustainable transport network to serve the communities of Allerdale is essential for improving accessibility, enhancing economic vitality, protecting the environment and promoting quality of life. A key objective of spatial planning is to ensure that jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. It is therefore important that we actively manage the pattern of development and the location of major development to make best use of public transport. This will help to support healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities as well as reducing the impacts of travel. The approach seeks to encourage sustainable travel in order to achieve these goals and to minimise the impact on the strategic and local road network.

The rural nature of the plan area means that accessibility and access to services is a key issue. This is particularly for people who do not have access to a car, for a dispersed rural population and for a district with an ageing population. It is also important in order to support attempts to encourage people who do have access to a car to use it less or stop using it. Opportunities for sustainable transport choices are more limited in rural areas and considerable investment will be needed to improve public transport services in order to facilitate a modal shift, moving people and journeys from private cars onto public transport. The priority for improving bus services and passenger facilities will be those serving the Principal and Key Service Centres as they are the main centres for jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services.



TR1 Preferred Option - Transport Principles

Priority will be given to new development that is located in areas which help to reduce journey times and have safe and convenient access to public transport, open space, key and local service centres and utilities and should, where possible, actively seek to improve travel choice and reduce the need to travel using private motor vehicles.

Exceptions to this policy may be allowed for suitable development in rural areas which meets the requirements of other local plan policies though such development shall still be required to demonstrate that provisions for sustainable access have been incorporated into the development. The Council will continue to support rural transport schemes and shall work with partners to enhance services whenever possible.

All new development within Allerdale shall have to have regard to the following accessibility principles:

- Provision for pedestrians and cyclists will be given the highest priority within town centres and new developments. Dedicated pedestrian and cycle routes will be provided in a manner that is convenient, safe and well integrated with other transport links and developments where appropriate. New development shall also provide secure cycle parking facilities where appropriate;
- All designated public rights of way will be protected and where appropriate enhanced;
- Major new development applications will be required to be accompanied by Transport Assessments/Travel Plans that conform with Cumbria County Council guidance. Details of the triggers for plans are outlined in DM TR1;
- All new development shall be required to ensure the accessibility requirements of vulnerable people are taken into account;
- New development will be required to protect, enhance and capitalise upon sustainable transport links offered by Green Infrastructure corridors wherever possible;
- New development will be required to provide adequate levels of car parking as outlined in policy DM TR3.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach to transport principles in the Core Strategy perform the most strongly in terms of sustainability, although there was potentially adverse effects identified relating to rural exceptions and the potential impacts that these might have on use of green field land, as well as rural isolation, and landscape character and quality. It was considered that when other policies were assessed alongside TR1 these issues are reduced, therefore on balance this performs strongly in other areas and is appropriately retained as the preferred policy option.

Justification for the Preferred Option TR1

The preferred approach has a key role in both delivering the local plans' central vision and objectives and in implementing the objectives and policies contained within the Cumbria Local Transport Plan. Together with other policies it sets out Allerdale's strategy to enable reduced emissions from vehicles and will help to ensure sustainability within new developments in terms of location and access. Additionally, the preferred option seeks to encourage greater levels of healthy transports modes to be included within new development, while also encouraging integration between development, the public transport network, access for all and appropriate levels of car parking.

The policy also includes material to support rural exceptions, so that it does not inappropriately constrain suitable or essential development in rural areas.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1b, SO2e, SO3j, SO4a, SO4b, SO4c, SO4d, SO4e, SO5a, SO6c, SO6e, SO1e, SO3b
National Planning Policy Framework	4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 8 - Promoting healthy communities; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11-Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2; 6.3; 6.4, 6.5
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2, 3
Evidence Base	Green Infrastructure Plan, Cumbria Local Transport Plan 2006-11
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	DM TR1, DM TR2, DM TR3

Alternative Policy Options

Option TR1a: No requirement for development to be sustainably located

This option is not considered reasonable as it would mean that any application for development that could have implications in terms of accessibility would have to defer to national policy, meaning that any locally specific issues or requirements would not be addressed via the planning process. It would also result in policy contrary to the overall strategy of the plan and therefore, it is not considered to be a viable option.

TR1b No transport rural exception

The policy option would produce a single, simplified policy covering all of Allerdale equally. This was not selected as the preferred option as it would fail to recognise the particular accessibility issues faced by rural areas that cover a large portion of the Borough. Failure to take this into account could increase rural isolation and would not allow rural communities to remain sustainable and would be against national policy.

TR1c Do not ask for travel plans or Transport Assessments

This option would result in a simplified approach, leaving transport arrangements related to development to the market, and national policy. This was not selected as a preferred option as it would be detrimental to the central aims of the plan and could result in poor integration of new development into the existing transport infrastructure, while failing to capitalise and ensure that provision for cyclists and pedestrians has been taken into account.



TR2 - Supporting and Safeguarding Strategic Infrastructure

Key Issues

- Policy needs to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport;
- Policy needs to conform with and work towards implementing the Cumbria Local Transport Plan;
- The coverage of public transport is uneven across the Borough, and can be poorly integrated;
- Transport infrastructure is key issue in the economic strategy, and improvement is required in order to capitalise on the potential nuclear new build in West Cumbria;
- Much of Allerdale is isolated from national transport links;
- Improvement to the access and role of the Port of Workington is required to meet the potential.

Introduction

The whole of Allerdale, but especially the key centres requires good accessibility for goods and services to promote investment in the local economy and address issues affecting its future growth and prosperity. This will require further improvements to the strategic and local highway network to manage transport demands and to support sustainable economic growth. There are some key transport infrastructure projects that are set out within the Local Transport Plan that are identified as key to delivery of Allerdale's aims and objectives. The planning system needs to be able to ensure that development proposals do not constrain the provision of new transport projects, and enable the implementation of the Transport Plan in order to support the level of growth identified within this plan.

As the transport strategy is progressed and projects reach the design stage, there will be a need to safeguard land required for the implementation of projects. Where projects are advanced to a certain level, safeguarded land or safeguarded lines can be identified on proposals maps accompanying the development plan.

TR2 Preferred Option - Supporting and Safeguarding Strategic Infrastructure

The Council, will work with partners to implement the Cumbria Local Transport Plan, and will support and lobby for improvements to strategic transport infrastructure within Allerdale as presented within the Local Transport Plan and other relevant strategic documents and masterplans.

This includes:

- Supporting the establishment of viable transport interchanges in Workington and Maryport;
- Protect the approved route of the Workington Southern Link Road from Moss Bay Road to the A596 as detailed in the Local Transport Plan as part of the Strategic Links to Workington Development Areas proposals; ... continues



- Protecting the routes of strategic transport links from potentially compromising development as and when route plans become available;
- Seeking improvements to the West Cumbrian Coastal Railway service;
- Protecting and enhancing access to the Ports of Workington and Silloth and encouraging greater movement of freight via railway;
- Supporting efforts to improve the flood resilience of Allerdale's infrastructure;
- Supporting and lobbying for infrastructure improvements associated with Nuclear New Build.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy approach is the most sustainable as the policy options generally all potentially give rise to beneficial effects, however, the assessment suggested potentially adverse effects may occur relating to the provision of new infrastructure in Maryport and Workington and the potential impact that this may have on biodiversity interests in the area. On balance, and when considered in the context of other policies the preferred option still present the most sustainable approach to decision making in the Core Strategy and are preferable to the alternative option.

Justification for the Preferred Option TR2

The preferred approach provides key support for strategic transport developments and aims to ensure the future facilitation of schemes outlined. The policy builds on transport projects outlined in the Cumbria Local Transport Plan and other known schemes that have a degree of certainty, providing support for other partners such as Cumbria County Council and The Highways Agency.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO3b, SO3j, SO4b, SO4c, SO4e, SO4f, SO4g, SO1b, SO1e, SO5e, SO4d
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 8 - Promoting healthy communities; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11-Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2; 6.4; 6.7
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2, 3
Evidence Base	West Cumbria Rail Capacity Study, Green Infrastructure Plan, Cumbria Local Transport Plan 2006-11
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative Policy Options

TR2a Do not support the protection and enhancement of strategic transport infrastructure

This approach would leave the promotion and enhancement of the Boroughs transport infrastructure to national policy and other strategies such as the Cumbria Local Transport Plan. It is considered that this option would greatly undermine the aim and objective of the local plan and would not tackle one of the fundamental issues of accessibility therefore this was rejected as the preferred option.

Q16) Are there any key principles or transport projects missing (TR1 and TR2)? Do you have any other comments?





BUILT ENVIRONMENT



BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Community Views

- There should be a presumption against development in areas of high flood risk – however a case-by-case basis should be adopted, taking account of probability/risk;
- The sequential approach - that requires the development of available brownfield sites before available greenfield sites – should be restricted to the settlement in question;
- When looking for land for new developments the Council should take into account the economic viability of sites and whether they will be profitable and/or developable;
- The Council should seek the repair and enhancement of listed buildings within the Borough deemed to be 'at risk';
- A local listing register should be compiled to protect locally important buildings that are not already listed;
- Important that the scale of development is in proportion to the settlement in which it is to be located;
- The conversion of existing redundant buildings, particularly those in rural areas, should be supported;
- The Council should insist on sustainable design principles within new developments (i.e. energy efficiency, the use of local materials);
- New development on brownfield in-fill sites within urban areas should be protected from noise and other forms of environmental pollution;
- All new developments should include SUDS systems for surface water drainage unless ground conditions dictate otherwise;
- The Council should seek a high standard of design in all new development to improve the image of the Borough.

Key Issues

- 'Generic' design of new residential development by volume builders;
- Lack of integration between new and existing development;
- Need to consider accessibility and adaptability as part of design considerations taking into account the ageing population of the Borough;
- Ensure that design of new development does not encourage crime or anti-social behaviour.

Introduction

Perhaps one of the most significant design issues that affect Allerdale is the gradual erosion of local character by the 'generic' design of new development. In areas outside of defined conservation areas or landscapes such as the Solway Coast AONB, where strict design criteria are difficult to enforce, new development often fails to make a positive contribution to the character of the local area. In certain areas, such as those of the suburban fringe, it is recognised that there may be no definable vernacular style. However this should not be seen as justification for unimaginative design but instead potential opportunity to deliver creatively designed development that adds to the sense of place. Therefore an objective of the core strategy is to ensure the all new development is of a high design standard throughout the Borough that makes a positive contribution to, and achieves a good relationship with, the locality within which it is set.

The notion of accessible design has expanded beyond the narrow definition of simply providing wheelchair access to a broader concept that includes groups considered to have restricted or limited mobility. Disabled access remains a key consideration, but the needs of people who may have mobility limitations such as the elderly, parents with young children and children themselves also need to be considered. Policies will guide developers to consider the internal and external layouts of buildings in relation to these issues – particularly the Lifetime Homes concept, which promotes developments fit for future adaptation, so residents can alter their homes to accommodate lifecycle changes.

Good design and its ability to influence the levels of crime or anti-social behaviour within an area are well documented. Problems can occur in developments where there has been little regard for the design, function and separation of public and private spaces, leading to a problem – or perceived problem, with crime and anti-social behaviour. This is often a key issue related to low demand or difficult-to-let housing – with viable housing units standing empty. Therefore policies will promote design that maximises safety and the perception of safety, which in turn minimises the risk of attracting crime or anti-social behaviour.

BE1 Preferred Option - Design

The maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the built environment is a key priority for the Council. Therefore, proposals for all new development will be expected to demonstrate high standards of design. Proposals that comprise poor visual design and layout, or otherwise seriously detract from the character of their surroundings will be strongly resisted.

All development, including conversions, extensions and alterations of existing buildings will be required to:

- Demonstrate a satisfactory level of integration with existing development in the locality in terms of scale, appearance and layout (see policy DM BE13);
- Incorporate sustainable construction methods that reduce energy consumption and allow for future adaptation in response to changing life needs (see policy DM BE10);
- Incorporate hard and soft landscaping, where appropriate, in order to mitigate visual impact (see policy DM BE15);
- Safeguard environmental quality and the amenities of occupiers of both proposed and existing property and uses (see policy DM BE7);
- In the case of mixed use development, include suitable and compatible mix of uses that take into account the identified needs of the area (see policy DM BE14);
- Provide sufficient public and private open space for residents and users (see policy DM BE17);
- Make appropriate provision for access for those with reduced mobility and/or disabilities;
- Ensure the design provides a safe environment which maximises personal safety and minimises opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour (see policy DM BE16).

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy option performs very strongly across almost all of the sustainability objectives, addressing key objectives of high quality design, layout, environment, access, safety and sustainability. The assessment identified few beneficial effects generated by the alternatives, with a number of potentially adverse effects related to failure to address issues such as design in new development, or focuses on traditional design which fails to address the whole range of sustainability measures.

Justification for Preferred Option BE1

This policy would provide traditional criteria to encourage high standards of design. It would ensure that sustainable development principles will be a consideration in the development and appraisal of development proposals, and it would contribute to the Council's objectives

of creating high quality local environments and combating the impacts of climate change. The policy also ensures that the visual amenity of local areas will not be eroded by the cumulative impact of poorly designed extensions/alterations to existing properties.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1c, SO1e, SO2e, SO5a, SO5f, SO5b, SO5e, SO1b, SO3d, SO6d
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 2 - Ensuring the vitality & viability of town centres; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 5 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure; 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 7 - Requiring good design; 8 - Promoting healthy communities; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2; 6.3; 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 3
Evidence Base	-
Links to Core Strategy Policies	This links to all other policies within the Core Strategy
Key Development Management Policies	DM BE1 to DM BE21

Alternative policy options

BE1a No design policy in the core strategy

National planning guidance requires that local planning authorities include policies in relation to design in their core strategies. This is not considered to be a viable option.

BE1b Include a design policy that addresses the traditional issues of design

This option would provide traditional criteria to encourage high standards of design, it would however fail to recognise that the definition of good design now transcends traditional measures and fail to contribute to the sustainable objectives set out in the Council plan.

Q17) Are there any other aspects of design that you think should be addressed by this policy or other approaches that we should consider (BE1)? Do you have any other comments?

BE2 - Previously Developed and Contaminated land

Key Issues

- Significant amount of previously developed land within the Borough;
- Issues of contamination on many previously developed sites formerly occupied by traditional industries;
- Need to redevelop previously developed sites within western areas of the Borough to facilitate regeneration;
- Current economic viability of previously developed sites is low, particularly those with contamination issues.

Introduction

There is significant amount of vacant previously developed land distributed throughout the Borough although the bulk of it is located in the south western part and in particular, Workington. A number of these sites are considered to be strategic and form part of the wider regeneration strategy for these towns. Therefore policies will strongly encourage redevelopment of previously developed land and facilitate schemes that involve the restoration and regeneration of these sites.

Given their former uses – industrial, storage - many brownfield sites are contaminated with chemicals, oils and other pollutants that can pose a risk to human health. Consequently, proposals involving the reuse of contaminated sites must be rigorously assessed to ensure that the extent and nature of the contamination is identified and also that a suitable scheme for the remediation of the site can be achieved.

BE2 Preferred Option - Previously developed and contaminated land

In line with local regeneration and sustainability objectives, the Council will seek to secure the effective reuse of previously developed and vacant sites within Allerdale. There will be a presumption in favour of proposals for the use of previously developed sites in the key and local service centres, particularly where schemes would:

- Facilitate regeneration and/or
- Provide affordable housing,

Proposals for development on greenfield sites will only be supported in circumstances where the developer has undertaken a sequential test, which demonstrates that there are no available previously developed sites within the settlement that could suitably accommodate the scheme (see policy DM BE22).

Proposals for the development of land where there is risk of potential onsite contamination, an investigation into the quality of the land will be required. In circumstances where the proposal involves a site that is known to be contaminated, the Council will require an assessment or remediation strategy to be submitted with the application in order for it to be determined (see policy DM BE23).

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred option presents the most sustainable approach to decision making as it ensures that previously developed land is prioritised in new development, both, reducing loss of greenfield land and maximising the potential benefits related to protecting biodiversity and landscape assets and reducing the potential for soil sealing. Without this policy approach, the assessment suggests that there may be major adverse impacts across all objectives.

Justification for preferred option BE2

The preferred option is to where possible seek to reuse previously developed land in the Borough. This policy would send a clear message that the redevelopment of previously developed land is a priority for the Council while also setting out the requirement for a sequential test for the development of greenfield land.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1e, SO2b, SO5f, SO2d, SO6d
National Planning Policy Framework	11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	SHLAA; Employment Land & Premises Study; NLUD
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	DM BE22, DM BE23

Alternative policy options

BE2a No policy in relation to previously developed land in the core strategy

An alternative approach would be to not included a policy related to the re-use of previously developed land. This was rejected as the preferred approach as this would be detrimental to the central aims and objectives of the plan and would miss the opportunity to facilitate Council priorities. Furthermore, it would fail to reflect national policy on using previously developed and contaminated land.

Q18) Do you think the preferred approach is sufficient to achieve the national objectives, would previously developed land targets be useful? Do you have any other comments?

BE3 - Reuse of Rural Buildings

Key Issues

- Significant number of traditional rural building which are no longer required.
- High demand for residential conversions in rural areas.
- Debate whether reuse of rural buildings in rural areas constitutes sustainable or unsustainable development.
- Impact of deteriorating rural buildings on wider landscape.
- Shortage of housing and affordability problems in rural areas.
- Implications for spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy.

Introduction

Changes in agricultural practices – larger vehicles, larger buildings - have meant that traditional rural barns are sometimes no longer fit-for-purpose and stand empty. When assessed in isolation, the deterioration and/or loss of such buildings does not appear to be significant, however when assessed in a cumulative context, the impact on the landscape can be considerable. Therefore planning policies must address this issue and determine whether the principle of the protection of traditional rural buildings should be supported and if so, what uses should be allowed.

National planning policy states that the re-use of buildings in the countryside for economic development purposes should be considered, with particularly importance given to supporting the diversification and sustainability of rural communities. However, the most popular form of reuse is, by far for, residential conversions.

BE3 Preferred Option - Reuse of rural buildings

The Council will encourage proposals that involve the conversion and reuse of redundant rural buildings in the open countryside in circumstances where it can be demonstrated the scheme will contribute to the ongoing sustainability and vitality of the local economy and community.

Proposals for the reuse of rural buildings that are located outside of the settlements identified in the settlement hierarchy may be acceptable when:

- The building does not stand in isolation and forms part of a definable cluster of buildings within the immediate locality.
- The scale of development proposed is proportionate, taking into account the open countryside location
- Policies in relation to access, parking and amenity can be satisfied without detriment to the building or its rural setting
- The proposal would not generate any significant increase of traffic on minor and/or unsuitable roads that would be prejudicial to highway safety

Only buildings that are demonstrated to be structurally sound and those of traditional appearance, construction and materials will be considered to be suitable candidates for conversion under the provisions of this policy. Proposals for the conversion of buildings constructed of modern materials or with little or no historic merit will not be supported.

The Council will give preference to proposals involving the reuse of buildings for business or community uses that will lead to the provision of new business premises or services for local communities. Proposals for the conversion of rural buildings to residential use will be expected to demonstrate that the reuse of the building for commercial or community purposes has been fully explored (see policy DM BE24)

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy options performed well against the sustainability objectives, with a high number of potentially beneficial effects identified focused on social, natural and economic categories. The assessment identified potential uncertainty related to the overall contribution of the approach in maximising the provision of affordable and market housing, however, this relates more to policy implementation rather than the approach itself.

Justification for preferred option BE3

This policy incorporates an element of flexibility to allow small-scale development outside defined settlements. This will support the sustainability of rural communities and economies,

as well as the retention of traditional rural buildings that contribute to landscape character. The policy seeks to secure the re-use of rural buildings primarily for economic or community purposes before considering residential conversions, reflecting both the spatial strategy and the Council's strategy to support rural economic growth. The policy also allows for the preservation of isolated listed buildings at risk.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO5a, SO5b, SO6a, SO1e, SO2d, SO3e
National Planning Policy Framework	6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2; 6.3; 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 2
Evidence Base	-
Links to Core Strategy Policies	S1, EC3,
Key Development Management Policies	DM BE24

Alternative policy options

BE3a Do not include a policy in the core strategy relating to the conversions of rural buildings outside of settlements included in the settlement hierarchy

Re-use of rural buildings is a big issue in the Borough that warrants inclusion at core strategy level.

BE3b Include a policy in the core strategy where the conversions of rural buildings are not permitted under any circumstance

This would be contrary to national guidance and would result in the deterioration and potential loss of many locally important rural buildings.

BE3c Allow conversions without demonstrating requirement for commercial or community use

It is considered that this option would undermine the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy and promote residential development considered to be unsustainable. Furthermore, this approach would fail to deliver support for sustainable economic growth in rural areas.

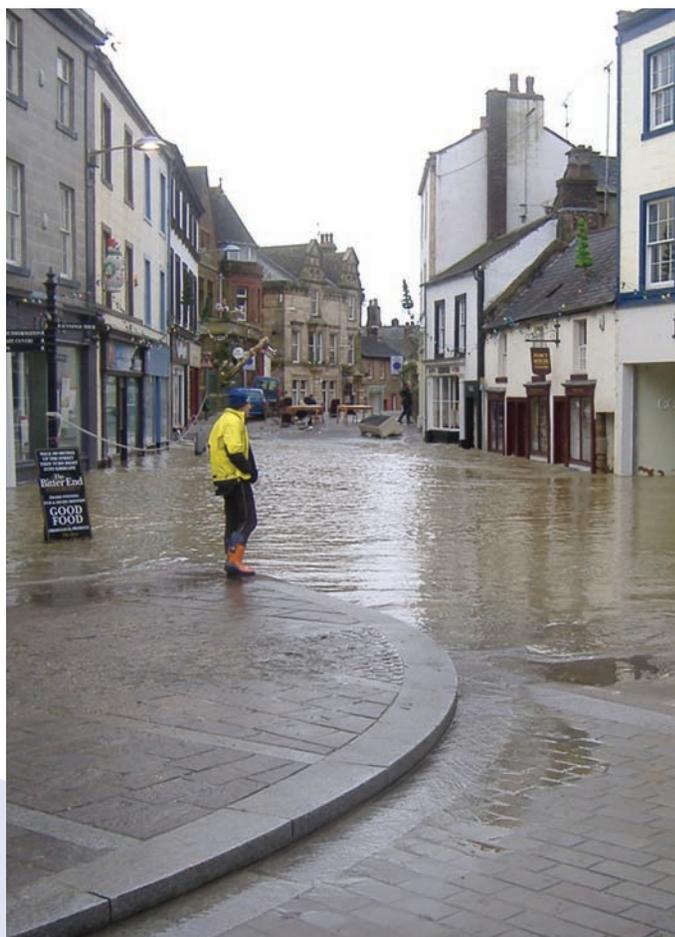
Q19) Do you agree with the strategy of prioritising the reuse of rural buildings for economic use (BE3)? Any other comments?

Key issues

- Many areas of the Borough are prone to flooding;
- Risk of flooding likely to increase due to climate change;
- Need to ensure new development is located in low-risk flood areas;
- Localised overloading of surface water drains and sewer systems;
- In circumstances where new development is allowed in areas prone to flooding, there is a need to ensure that new development is flood resilient and safe.

Introduction

Allerdale's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) highlights a number of areas within the Borough at risk from either tidal or fluvial flooding and recent major events in Workington and Cockermouth have highlighted the susceptibility of the area to flooding. Policies will therefore be required to control development in flood risk areas and ensure that developers are encouraged to include measures to improve flood resilience



There are a number of options for managing development in flood risk areas, however guidance set out in national policy is to adopt a sequential approach that directs development to suitable sites within areas of lower flood risk before those in medium to high risk areas are considered. The terms of the flood risk sequential test must reflect the framework set out in the spatial options and settlement hierarchy.

In addition to tidal and fluvial flooding, the Cumbria Surface Water Management Plan has identified that surface water flooding also affects many of the settlements in Allerdale. The main problems are related to higher intensity storms that involve large volumes of rainfall over a short period that overwhelm local sewers. A key objective of the Local Plan is to encourage the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) within new development as they slow down the volume and rate of run off following heavy rainfall, therefore reducing the risk of surface water flooding.

BE4 Preferred Option - Flood risk & surface water drainage

The Council will act to prevent development in locations that would be at risk of flooding or where it would increase the level of flooding elsewhere by reducing the storage capacity of floodplains, would impede the flow of flood water or increase surface water run-off unacceptably. Development within areas at the greatest risk of flooding shall be strongly resisted.

In order to minimise the risk to people, property and places from flooding, the Council will:

- Apply the sequential test approach to both the site allocations process and the assessment of development proposals to ensure that new development is steered, as far as possible, from areas at risk from flooding (DM BE25)
- Expect all development proposals in areas at risk of flooding to provide a Flood Risk Assessment that is commensurate, in terms of scope and detail, with the scale of the flood risk and identifies all likely sources of flooding (DM BE27).

The Council will expect all new developments to defer to the drainage hierarchy and seek to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in preference to discharge to local watercourses or the main sewer. Proposals seeking to discharge surface water to local watercourses or the main sewer will normally be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that:

- Local ground conditions render a SuDS system impractical or
- The cost of installation would render the scheme economically unviable

In circumstances where a SuDS system is deemed practical and viable, developers will be expected to submit a management plan outlining how the system will be maintained and managed in the long term. Developers will be required to enter into a section 106 agreement in order to secure the long term management responsibilities of the SuDS in perpetuity.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach performs strongly across many objectives and by far offers a more sustainable option compared to the alternatives. The approach is not related to all the objectives, however, where relevant there are particularly beneficial effects in the social, natural and economic categories.

Justification for Preferred Option BE4

This policy will establish a presumption against development in high flood risk areas, steering development to lower flood risk areas. It will allow for a flexible approach to ensure that housing delivery and the spatial strategy are not compromised. It also highlights issues relating to surface water flooding that need to be considered, ensuring that surface water run off will not be increased as a result of new development as far as is practically possible. The policy also requires the use of sustainable drainage systems, in accordance with building regulations requirements.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1e, SO5e, SO1b, SO6d
National Planning Policy Framework	10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2; 6.3
Allerdale Council Plan	-
Evidence Base	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2011
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	DM BE25, DM BE26, DM BE27

Alternative policy options

BE4a No policy in relation to flooding/flood risk

Relying on national guidance would not be locally distinctive, and Allerdale specific issues would not be considered.

BE4b Encourage the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems, where possible

This would lead to a policy which would not require developers to incorporate SUDs. As such, it does not comply with building regulations.

BE5 - Pollution Management

Key Issues

- Need to minimise the amount of environmental pollution generally
- Need to ensure that pollution sensitive development is located away, and protected, from pollution generating development
- Locate potentially polluting development in suitable locations that do not affect amenity and will not constrain further development

Introduction

Environmental pollution can pose a threat to wellbeing of local communities if not properly managed. A key role of the Local Plan will be to ensure that pollution sensitive development is located away, and protected, from pollution generating development. The health and safety of local communities is paramount and there is a responsibility to prevent development occurring adjacent to residential areas that may be harmful or would significantly erode residential amenity. Conversely it is important that economic and industrial growth and expansion is not constrained by allowing residential development to permeate into areas traditionally used for employment purposes. Given the drive to reuse previously developed land, which often has a former industrial use, residential development is being brought into greater proximity with potentially polluting development. Therefore policies will ensure that, whilst supporting the ambitions for the reuse of previously developed land, an appropriate separation of pollution sensitive and pollution generating developments is maintained.

BE5 Preferred Option - Pollution Management

All development proposals should seek to minimise, and where possible reduce, emissions and other forms of pollution, including light and noise pollution and odour

The development of new housing or other environmentally sensitive development will normally be resisted in locations where there is potential to incur statutory nuisance or a poor standard of residential amenity by virtue of air pollution, noise, smell, dust, vibration, light or other pollution.

Proposals for potentially polluting development will be assessed against criteria designed to minimise any adverse affects, and will be in accordance with statutory environmental regulations set out by the DEFRA, the Environment Agency and the Health & Safety Executive.

Considerations will include:

- Direct and indirect impacts on the natural environment and general amenity;
 - Unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the public;
 - Environmental benefits of the development, such as improvements to infrastructure, restoration or enhancement of habitats and the remediation of past contamination;
- ... continues

- the wider economic and social need for the development;
- existing, and likely future, air quality in an area, including consideration of cumulative impacts;
- the need for compliance with statutory environmental quality standards;
- possible adverse impacts on surface and underground water quality.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach was considered to be the most sustainable option assessed as it identified the strongest beneficial effects across social, environmental, and natural categories and specifically in terms of the protection of assets such as water quality, land and soil.

Justification for Preferred Option BE5

This policy introduces a presumption against pollution sensitive development near pollution generating development (and vice-versa). It allows an element of flexibility to deal with proposals on their own merits and provides guidance and certainty to industrial developers and businesses. It also safeguards interests of important infrastructure, such as the ports for future expansion.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO5f, SO6b, SO6d, SO1b
National Planning Policy Framework	11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2; 6.3; 6.5
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	-
Evidence Base	-
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

BE5a No pollution management policy in the core strategy

A lack of local guidance could result in the submission of unacceptable proposals. This option would not support the Council’s objective of creating high quality environments.

BE5b Include a pollution management policy in the core strategy that prohibits the siting of pollution sensitive development in locations where pollution generating development is present

This option could prevent the development of sites considered to be ‘marginal’. It does not allow the potential for mitigation measures.

BE6 - Historic Environment

Key issues

- Need to protect and enhance Borough's heritage and historical assets
- The Plan should prevent unsympathetic alterations/extensions to listed buildings
- We need to prevent unsympathetic development in conservation areas
- Safeguard the integrity of archaeological sites and scheduled ancient monuments
- Need to build on role of heritage in terms of social and economic regeneration

Introduction

The Council has a duty to conserve and enhance the significance, character and appearance of the Borough's historic environment. It is recognised that the historic environment contributes to the enjoyment of life in the Borough and provides a unique sense of identity. The term 'historic environment' includes not only archaeological sites, historic buildings, settlements and landscapes with statutory designation, but also the wider historic landscape and townscape together with locally distinctive, valued and important buildings, areas and features.



BE6 Preferred Option - Historic Environment

Recognising the quality of the historic environment within Allerdale and also the role that cultural heritage has in helping to secure social and economic regeneration, the Council will seek to sustain and enhance those buildings and areas which make an important contribution to historic, archaeological and cultural heritage and provide an attractive environment for residents and visitors alike.

The Council will:

- Safeguard listed buildings and their settings, while encouraging development which preserves and enhances character; (see policy DM BE28);
- Safeguard the distinctive character and appearance of Allerdale's conservation areas, while allowing innovative designs which are both sympathetic and complementary to historic fabric and features (see DM BE28);
- Resist proposals which harm or detract from the character or appearance of listed buildings and those within conservation areas. Demolition of listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas will only be considered in exceptional circumstances (see policy DM BE30);
- Resist development that would adversely affect important archaeological sites or monuments (DM BE31);
- Require the recording of historic assets that are either lost or altered as a result of approved schemes (see policy DM BE32).

The Council will adopt a firm stance against the deterioration of assets of historic significance as a result of poor maintenance. In the event that that a listed building is not being properly preserved resulting in its deterioration, the Council will consider the use of repairs notices requiring repair works to be carried out to prevent further decay.

Proposals which involve demolition or deterioration of listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas, on the grounds of being beyond reasonable economic repair, will not be supported should there be evidence that the building has been the subject of neglect or damage.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach was considered the most sustainable and in particular strengths were noted in terms of the wider benefits in relevant objectives relating to social, environment and economic categories. Specifically, key drivers of the benefits are related to improvements to the built and local environment, quality of life and local economy through tourism related to the Borough's historic assets.

Justification for preferred option BE6

This option provides policy context that is locally distinctive. It ensures that key heritage assets will be safeguarded and allows an element of flexibility to allow historic environment to evolve.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO5a, SO5b, SO5c, SO6a, SO1b, SO1e
National Planning Policy Framework	11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
Sustainable Community Strategy	6.3; 6.5
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 3
Evidence Base	-
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	DM BE28, DM BE29, DM BE30, DM BE31, DM BE32, DM BE33

Alternative policy options

BE6a No historic environment policy in the core strategy

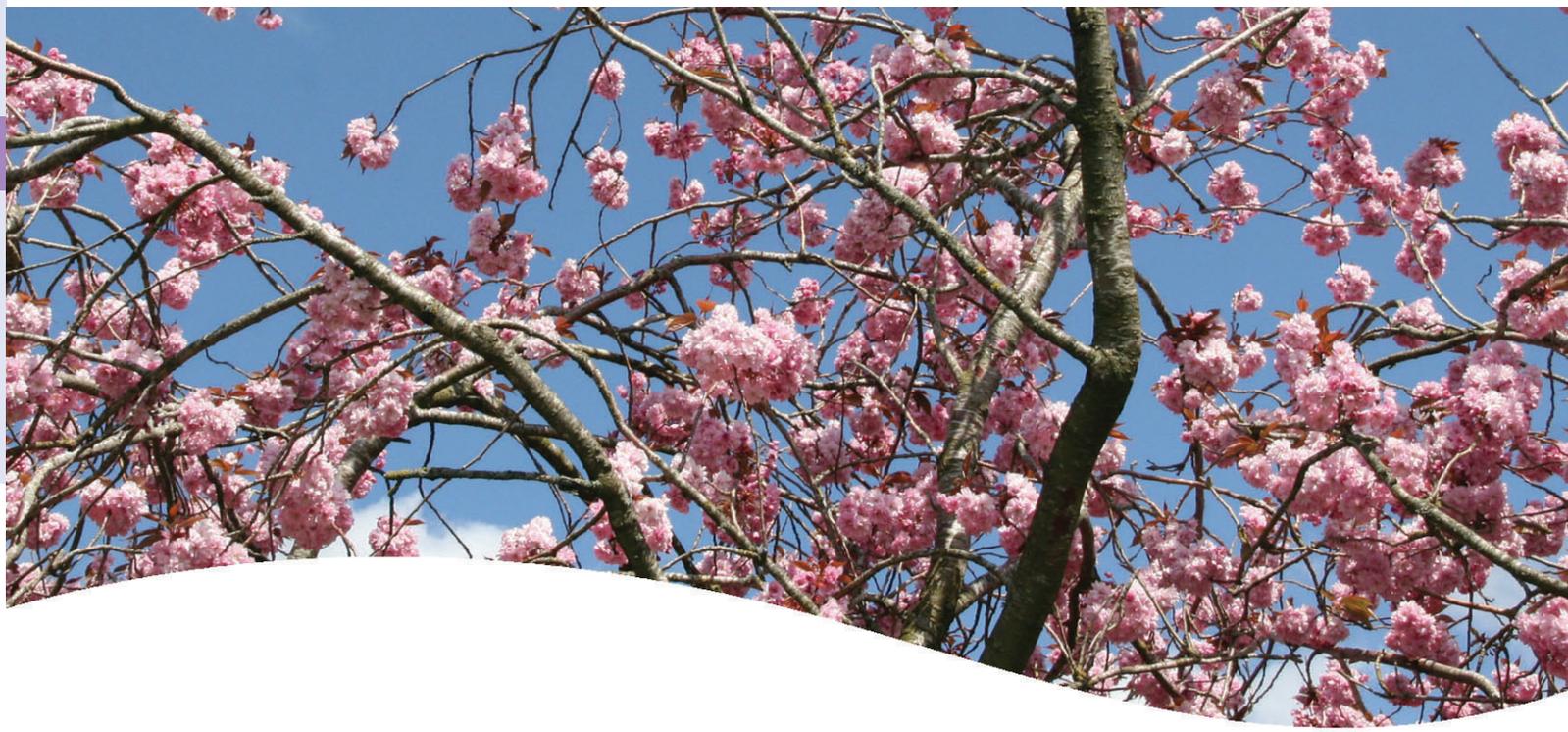
This option would not lead to the creation of locally distinctive policy.

BE6b Include a policy adopting a strict approach to protection and enhancement of the historic built environment

This option could be too restrictive and result in a confrontational relationship with property owners. It may result in properties deteriorating due to onerous repair costs.

Q20) Do you think the plan provides enough flexibility without compromising the protection of the historic environment (BE6)?

Q21) Do you have any other comments on the built environment section (BE1 - 6)?



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Community Views

- The core strategy should include policies to protect landscape character - the strongest support is for the continuation of local landscape designations within the plan area.
- The impact of renewable energy developments (wind farms) on the landscape was a major concern and that a balance must be found between demand for renewable energy and the need to protect the landscape.
- The core strategy should promote a more pro-active approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and habitats, particularly when considering proposals for new development.
- The Council should be more active in designating (and managing) more Local Nature Reserves – a number of locations across the Borough were identified as potential candidates.

Key Issues

- Need to identify and utilise 'network' of multifunctional green and blue spaces and links within the Borough;
- Preservation and enhancement of existing assets to improve provision;
- Ensuring Green Infrastructure is weaved into all new developments.

Introduction

Green Infrastructure is the network of multi-functional green and blue spaces found within and between the settlements of the Borough. A Green Infrastructure asset can be counted as anything which makes a contribution to a network of outdoor natural or man made open spaces, habitats or linkages between them. These can include, but are not limited to, woodlands, parks, rivers, private gardens, trees, ponds, cycle paths, coastal areas, footpaths, sports pitches or farmland.

The main purpose of promoting Green Infrastructure is to maximise the multi-functional nature of assets. For example, housing schemes which are proposed near to a stream or beck, should ensure that the development is integrated with and promotes this asset, for example by:

- investigating use of the asset in association with sustainable drainages schemes;
- promoting the asset for its recreational and aesthetic value;
- enhancing the area for biodiversity and wildlife habitats;
- linking the area with the footpath or cycle path network.

All of these efforts will improve sustainability and attractiveness of the scheme, to the social, environmental and economic benefit of all.

Policies will ensure the protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure, as well as promoting the integration of existing assets into all new developments.



NE1 Preferred Option – Green Infrastructure

Policies in the Core Strategy will seek to ensure that Green Infrastructure assets within Allerdale will form an attractive, distinctive, accessible and multi-functional network of natural and man-made green and blue spaces, links, habitats and landscapes which will enhance the character and sense of place and improve the quality of life for residents, workers and visitors to the area.

As part of the above, policies will:

- Promote high quality, attractive places which allow everyone to enjoy direct and regular contact with the natural environment;
- Support the production of a Green Infrastructure Plan which will identify key assets within Allerdale, highlight identified deficiencies and form the basis for future strategies to improve and enhance provision;
- Seek creation of new green infrastructure assets to improve provision and quality of life which complement and enhance the function of existing green infrastructure assets;
- Seek to ensure Green Infrastructure is weaved into all new development;
- Protect, enhance and create key ecological habitats and wildlife corridors, including watercourses, wetlands, woodlands and parklands;
- Seek to alleviate open space deficiencies in existing communities whilst ensuring all new open space provision is high quality, attractive and safe. Promote design and management of parks and natural green spaces to increase biodiversity and maximise their function as nature reserves;
- Encourage use of street trees to define streets, improve the urban environment and provide linkages in habitat networks;
- Promote creation of multi functional habitat networks, such as communal / private courtyards, pocket green spaces and green buildings, which are responsive to a range of microclimate conditions and provide an experience of nature on people's doorstep;
- Promote health and fitness through provision of open space and opportunities for community involvement in outdoor exercise, sport and active recreations;
- Seek creation of new and enhanced links and corridors between towns and settlements such as cycle ways and footpaths;
- Promote improvements in air, water and soil quality and more sustainable drainage and flood mitigation solutions;
- Seek the protection and rehabilitation of landscapes and habitats damaged or lost by development or land management practices;
- Maximise the potential of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage features to contribute to local identity and sense of place;

... continues

- Maximise opportunities to enhance and create assets which have the potential to attract visitors, create employment and attract investment to the area;
- Exploring the potential of existing and new green infrastructure assets to provide opportunities for renewal energy schemes;
- Promote opportunities for farmers, foresters and other land managers to diversify and the promotion of woodland management, including opportunities for new planting schemes;
- Support key specific projects which would contribute significantly to the Green Infrastructure network.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach to green infrastructure gives rise to potentially beneficial effects across many of the sustainability objectives, and is therefore considered a sustainable approach to take. Alternative option NE1b did perform more strongly in certain areas of the assessment than the preferred option, however, these potential effects rely on the adoption and ongoing management of the Green Infrastructure Plan. At this stage it is the adoption and management of this plan is uncertain and therefore the preferred approach is the most sustainable at this time.

Justification for Preferred Option NE1

This policy complies with national policy which supports and encourages the provision of Green Infrastructure. It sets out clearly the Council's support for provision, protection and enhancement of Green Infrastructure. It adopts a proactive approach to Green Infrastructure and by setting out the Council's commitment for provision, protection and enhancement within a flexible, updatable document in the evidence base. The policy is flexible in that it allows for change in the identification of Green Infrastructure assets and is updatable over the plan period. It sets out clearly that Council will seek to redress deficiencies in Green Infrastructure provision, preventing repetition of target provisions within Core Strategy and allowing for flexibility in targets which may change across the time period of the plan. It also links policy to evidence base, meaning that the Core Strategy can continue to reflect important projects as they are identified and updated in the Green Infrastructure plan.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO5b, SO5c, SO5d, SO5e, SO6a, SO6b, SO6d, SO6e, SO1b, SO1d, SO1e, SO5a, SO5f, SO6c
National Planning Policy Framework	1 - Building a strong, competitive economy; 2 - Ensuring the vitality & viability of town centres; 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 4 - Promoting sustainable transport; 5 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure; 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes; 7 - Requiring good design; 8 - Promoting healthy communities; 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	This relates to all the Allerdale Council Plan priorities
Evidence Base	Green Infrastructure Study, Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study, Cumbria Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Cumbria Strategic Cycle Network Map, Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment, The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan, Solway Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009 – 2014, Allerdale Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, River Derwent Catchment Flood Management Plan, Shoreline Management Plan 2
Links to Core Strategy Policies	This relates to the majority of policies within the Core Strategy
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy option

NE1a No overarching Green Infrastructure policy

This option fails to recognise importance of Green Infrastructure and benefits. It does not follow national guidance.

NE1b Policy to set targets for Green Infrastructure provision (parks, amenity space, tree planting, cycle paths etc) in line with the deficiencies identified in the Green Infrastructure plan (if adopted);

This option would mean that protection of green infrastructure would rely upon Green Infrastructure Plan being adopted and regularly updated, which is not guaranteed. Repetition of targets within the Core Strategy and Green Infrastructure plan may also be confusing.

Key Issues

- Protection of valued landscapes;
- Protect special character of Solway Coast AONB and Hadrian's Wall WHS;
- Scenery and landscape are important factors for tourism visits;
- Ensuring the impact of sustainable development on landscape is minimised.

Introduction

Covering an area that incorporates the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the west, to the Lake District Fells in the east, Allerdale has a distinctive and diverse landscape. As well as the nationally protected AONB, the wider Borough has large tracts of unspoilt countryside that are highly scenic and require protection from development pressures. These include the coastal plain areas outside of the AONB, the lowland fells and river corridors on the fringe of the Lake District.

The character and beauty of the landscape significantly improves the quality of life of residents, and has major social and health benefits. It is also a major attraction for those wishing to visit the area, thereby performing an important role for the local economy.

Consequently, the management and protection of the landscape within the Allerdale plan area is a high priority.



NE2 Preferred Option – Protecting Landscape Character

The landscape character and local distinctiveness of the district shall be protected, conserved and where possible enhanced.

Landscape Character Assessments will usually be required for all major residential, commercial and industrial developments and may also be required for any other development which the LPA considers may impact upon the landscape, particularly within sensitive or protected areas.

Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment Toolkit (or successor documents) will be used to inform the detailed assessment of individual proposals. Proposals for development will be expected take into account the key characteristics, local distinctiveness and sensitivity to change of the landscape character types described in the document.

Within the Solway Coast AONB and Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site (as defined on the proposals map) there will be a general presumption in favour of the conservation of their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. Proposals will be expected to have regard to the AONB Landscape Character Assessment and support the objectives set out in the AONB Management Plan.

The Council will support proposals that involve the removal or a reduction in the impact of existing structures and land uses that are detrimental to the visual quality of the landscape.

The Council will encourage proposals that enhance public access and recreation opportunities by contributing to the network of Green Infrastructure across Allerdale.

Sustainability Appraisal

In general the preferred approach is considered to be the most sustainable, providing key benefits across the natural and environmental categories. The approach seeks to improve and protect local environments, improve access to countryside and open space, and benefit quality of life and the tourism. Although there is some potential for conflicts to arise in the implementation of the policy it is considered that it should be possible to avoid, or provide mitigation and therefore optimise the potential benefits.

Justification for preferred option NE2

This policy option is preferred as it is in line with national guidance and sends a clear policy message that all landscapes are valued. The inclusion of management guidelines make the approach more proactive and positive as it encourages enhancement and management rather than just preventing development from taking place at all. The policy provides an extra level

of protection for nationally protected landscapes in order to safeguard their special interests. It gives flexibility to consider the opportunity of betterment as a material consideration in the assessment of applications and supports the objectives of the Council's green infrastructure and open space strategies. It also supports the enhancement of opportunities for countryside recreation.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO5a, SO6e, SO5b, SO5c, SO6a, SO6c, SO1b, SO1e, SO5d
National Planning Policy Framework	10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 4
Evidence Base	Green Infrastructure Study, Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment, Solway AONB Management Plan 2009 - 2014
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	DM NE1

Alternative policy options

NE2a No landscape policy in the core strategy

National guidance only offers policy protection to landscapes of national importance (i.e. Solway Coast AONB and Hadrian's Wall WHS), this approach may lead to the erosion of the visual quality of landscapes lying outside of these areas – lack of policy guidance would undermine the ability to protect and preserve.

NE2b Adopt a policy that continues the use of local landscape designations

Local designations only cover areas identified on a map there is no protection offered for areas outside these designations. Current local landscape designation boundaries do not fully reflect the areas defined in the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance document. This option does not follow national policy and the approach would rely on potentially outdated designations.

NE3 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Key Issues

- Requirement to safeguard internationally protected sites and species;
- Protect locally important sites of biological and geological interest;
- Ensure that impact on biodiversity is a key consideration in development proposals;
- Recognise the value of previously developed land as a biodiversity habitat.

Introduction

The Borough of Allerdale boasts many important biodiversity and geodiversity assets. The Upper Solway Flats and Marshes (Solway Firth) and the river Derwent/Cocker system are considered to be the key sites within the plan area, being of international importance and Special Areas of Conservation under the EC Habitats Directive. The Upper Solway Flats and Marshes are important as an estuarine habitat for populations of wintering and passage waders and wildfowl. The river Derwent/Cocker system is the largest nutrient poor river in England that still retains high water quality and a natural channel and is a habitat for otters and several protected species of fish.

There are also 17 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and 12 Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGGs), which are areas of national importance for nature conservation and geology. A number of protected species are found within these designated sites, such as the Small Blue



Butterfly, Natterjack Toad, Red Squirrel, river Salmon, Barn Owls and Hen Harriers.

It is important to recognise that valuable assets, particularly those related to biodiversity, can be found in both the rural and urban settings of the Borough. Vacant brownfield land can provide an ideal habitat in which plant and animal wildlife can thrive, especially if left undeveloped and undisturbed. Parks, green spaces, roadside verges and rivers cumulatively create a network of biodiversity sites and 'corridors' in which wildlife can both reside in and travel through. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that development within both rural and urban areas does not damage discrete habitats or encroach upon land forming part of the wider network of wildlife corridors.

NE3 Preferred Option – Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Conditions for biodiversity will be maintained and improved and important geodiversity assets will be protected. Nationally and internationally protected sites and species will be afforded the highest level of protection. A high priority also given to the protection of locally identified assets.

All developments, projects and activities will be expected to:

- Provide an appropriate level of protection to legally protected sites and species;
- Maintain, and where appropriate enhance, conditions for priority habitats and species identified in the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan or the Cumbria Biological Data Centre at Tully House;
- Maintain and where appropriate enhance recognised geodiversity assets identified in the Local Geodiversity Action Plan for Cumbria;
- Protect soil resources in line with the objectives of Policy NE4;
- Contribute to Allerdale's green infrastructure network, in line with objectives of policy NE1.

Development that present significant economic or social benefits for the local community may be permitted where the Council and relevant partner organisations are satisfied that any necessary impacts can be mitigated through appropriate habitat creation, restoration or enhancement on site or elsewhere via planning conditions, agreements or obligations.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach is the most sustainable of the options as the assessment identifies many beneficial effects especially related to natural and environmental objectives. Alternative approach NE3b restricts development where harm would occur, and while it performs more strongly in certain areas, it is considered that this may be a too restrictive and inflexible approach, especially where suitable and appropriate mitigation and compensation measures can be identified.

Justification for Preferred Option NE3

This policy approach would be flexible and allow proposals that presented a threat to, or would have an adverse impact on, a site of biological or geological interest to be considered if they included acceptable mitigation or compensatory measures. It would also see the incremental enhancement of biodiversity assets through the incorporation/creation of sites and habitats within development proposals.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO6a, SO6b, SO6e, SO1b, SO6d
National Planning Policy Framework	11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 4
Evidence Base	Green Infrastructure Study, Local Geodiversity Action Plan, Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment, The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan, Solway AONB Management Plan 2009 - 2014, River Derwent Catchment Flood Management Plan, Shoreline Management Plan 2
Links to Core Strategy Policies	EN4
Key Development Management Policies	DM EC2, DM NE3

Alternative policy options

NE3a Do not include biodiversity/geodiversity policy in the core strategy

This option is not considered reasonable as it would not be in accordance with national policy, would fail to recognise the importance of biodiversity/geodiversity within the Allerdale plan area. It would also be contrary to the responses received from the local community during our consultation exercises which indicate that the prevailing consensus is that the Council should adopt a more proactive approach to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity assets.

NE3b Include a policy that seeks to resist development posing harm to sites of biological or geological interest

This option does not embrace the pro-active approach to protecting, enhancing and increasing biodiversity and habitats called for by the local community. It may also prevent development from occurring in circumstances where satisfactory mitigation or compensatory measures could be implemented.

Key Issues

- Maintaining the high air quality levels within the Borough, minimise emissions and the release of other pollutants into the atmosphere;
- Protect soil quality to ensure that it can carry out essential functions, particularly to regulate the drainage, flow and storage of water;
- Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land in the Borough;
- Protect river and sea water quality.

Introduction

In terms of air quality, the Borough has relatively low levels of pollution due to the relatively rural nature of the area and, to date, no Air Quality Management Areas have been designated. However, air quality in both urban and rural areas is constantly threatened by pollution from human activity. Although pollutants associated with the burning of fossil fuels for domestic and industrial purposes have declined nationally, pollutants and particulates produced mainly by motor vehicles have increased. In Allerdale, traffic congestion in some of the larger settlements, combined with atmospheric conditions, can give rise to periodic localised air quality issues.

Maintaining high quality soil is important as it performs a range of essential functions such as recycling nutrients, regulating the drainage, flow and storage of water and acting as a filter to protect water quality. In addition there is a need to ensure that the best and most versatile agricultural land should be retained for present and future uses.

Almost the entire Borough is covered by the river Derwent catchment, which incorporates four significant river systems (Derwent, Ellen, Wampool and Waver) which drain the northern fells of the Lake District and the Solway Basin into the Irish Sea. These are sensitive water courses with sites of important nature conservation and biodiversity. The quality of bathing water around the coast is of importance as is ensuring that river and sea water quality continues to meet the standards and objectives set out in the EU Water Framework Directive and North West River Basin Management Plan.

NE4 Preferred Option - Air, Soil and Water Quality

The quality of air, soil and water resources within Allerdale will be protected and opportunities for enhancement will be pursued.

Unless adequate mitigation measures can be secured, development proposals will be resisted that would have a demonstrable direct adverse impact on:

- air quality and/or atmospheric conditions;
- the characteristics of surrounding soils and substrata - through either physical (compaction, erosion) or chemical (pollution, contamination);
- the chemical composition and quality of waterbodies in Allerdale.

Development proposals that pose a threat to identified biodiversity and geodiversity assets will not be permitted unless they are in conformity with the objectives and criteria set out in Policy NE3

The best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification system) will be safeguarded from development unless it can be demonstrated that the need for the development outweighs the long-term protection of the land

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred option provides a sustainable policy approach, and the assessment identifies many beneficial effects especially related to environmental objectives. The alternative approach is considered that this may be a too restrictive and inflexible; especially where suitable and appropriate mitigation and compensation measures can be identified.

Justification for Preferred Option NE4

This policy supports the sustainable development objectives of the Council and gives a clear message to developers that protection of the natural environment is a key objective. It would provide the necessary basis for a firm approach in requiring the consideration and inclusion of mitigation measures in development proposals to reduce environmental impact. The policy would support the Council's ambition to address the wider impacts of climate change within the Borough. It would also ensure that the Best and Most Versatile agricultural land is safeguarded from development.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO5f, SO6b, SO6d, SO1b, SO6a, SO1e
National Planning Policy Framework	3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy; 8 - Promoting healthy communities; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	-
Evidence Base	Solway Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009 – 2014, Allerdale Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, River Derwent Catchment Flood Management Plan, Shoreline Management Plan 2
Links to Core Strategy Policies	NE3
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

NE4a Do not include an air, soil and water quality policy in the core strategy

National policy states that local development plans should aim to minimise pollution to air, soil and water quality. Omission of a policy would mean that mitigative measures may not be of a sufficient standard, or at worst, not included. Under this option action against environmental pollution would be reactive, once the event had occurred, rather than proactive and preventative.

NE4b A strict policy that advocates the refusal of development that would have an adverse impact on air, soil and water quality

An overly strict policy may deter industrial and commercial investment. The assessment of the degree of impact warranting refusal could be prone to an element of subjectivity and therefore decisions may be difficult to defend.

NE5 - Open Space and Recreation

Key Issues

- Shortfall of open space, sports and recreational facilities within identified settlements;
- Poor level of provision for children and young people;
- Need to improve the attractiveness and usability of open space, sports and recreational facilities throughout the Borough.

Introduction



Open space incorporates a number of different types:

- Parks and gardens: urban parks, country parks and formal gardens
- Natural and semi-natural green space: woodland, commons, wetlands, nature reserves
- Outdoor sports facilities: playing fields/pitches, bowling greens, golf courses
- Allotments
- Amenity green space: space in and around housing
- Recreation areas for children/young people: local play areas, multi-use areas, skate parks

Overall the Borough has a small shortfall of open space provision in quantity terms, with the exception of Workington which has a significant surplus. Wigton, Cockermouth, Aspatria, Silloth and Maryport all have deficiencies in the overall provision of open space, the main contributing factor being an undersupply of parks and natural and semi natural green space. Of particular importance is the Borough-wide shortfall in the provision of open space for children and, most critically, young people.

NE5 Preferred Option - Open space and Recreation

The Council will seek to safeguard existing areas of open space, sports and recreational facilities.

Development proposals that will result in the loss of open space, sports and recreational facilities will not be permitted. In exceptional circumstances, development may be permitted where:

- replacement open space, to a similar standard, can be provided at an accessible location close by
- improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space.

The Council will protect the structure, character, principal components and setting of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest within Allerdale. Proposals within or adjacent that are deemed to have a detrimental impact will not be permitted. The Council will support proposals that involve the removal of inappropriate structures and/or uses that detract from their special historic interest.

Development on land adjoining areas of open space and sports and recreational facilities that would erode the quality and/or jeopardise its use and enjoyment by the public will be strongly resisted.

All proposals for new housing development should make provision for the open space needs of residents through appropriate on or off-site provision, or through contributions towards the provision or improvement of existing leisure or recreational facilities, including open space. Where appropriate, developer contributions may be sought towards the creation of new areas of open space in localities where a specific deficit has been identified within the Allerdale Open Space Study.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred approach gives rise to a wide range of potentially beneficial effects especially social. The slight areas of concern relate to the approach to determining when loss of open space or facilities would be allowed, however, the effect would be dependent on the type and scale of the development and the specific nature of the 'loss, furthermore, the policy contains material to ensure any loss is mitigated. Overall, the preferred approach in combination is still considered the most sustainable.

Justification for Preferred Option NE5

This policy will contribute to the Council's objective of improving the quality of open space within the Borough and introduces a flexible approach to facilitate the upgrading of poor quality and underused open space. It will provide the necessary amount and quality of open space for increases in population and safeguard historic parks and gardens from development whilst supporting schemes that involve the removal of unsympathetic features. The policy will contribute to the Council's objective of improving the quality of open space within the Borough and will also help to address the settlement specific deficiencies raised in the Open Space Audit.

Strategic Objectives	SO1e, SO1b, SO5b, SO5c, SO5d, SO6a, SO6e, SO5a, SO6d
National Planning Policy Framework	10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	1, 4
Evidence Base	Green Infrastructure Study, Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study, Cumbria Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Cumbria Strategic Cycle Network Map, Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment, The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan, Solway Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009 – 2014, Allerdale Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, River Derwent Catchment Flood Management Plan, Shoreline Management Plan 2
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	-

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Alternative policy options

NE5a Do not include an open space, sports and recreational facilities in the core strategy

National policy states that open space can make a significant contribution to the health and well being of communities, and therefore policies that seek to protect, improve and facilitate the delivery will be important to meet this aim. This option would be contrary to the Council's objective of providing quality of open space within the Borough. It would not support the

objectives set out in the Council's Open Space Audit.

NE5b Include a policy that safeguards existing open space, sports and recreational facilities from development

This option does not encourage the provision of new open space, sports and recreational facilities and therefore is considered inappropriate given that Allerdale has deficiencies in most key settlements. It does not allow the flexibility to allow development on open space, sports and recreational facilities that could facilitate the restoration upgrading of residual areas that could be more beneficial to the local community.

Q22) Are there any green areas that have particular importance to you and the community (NE5)?



NE6 - Countryside and Coastal Access and Recreation

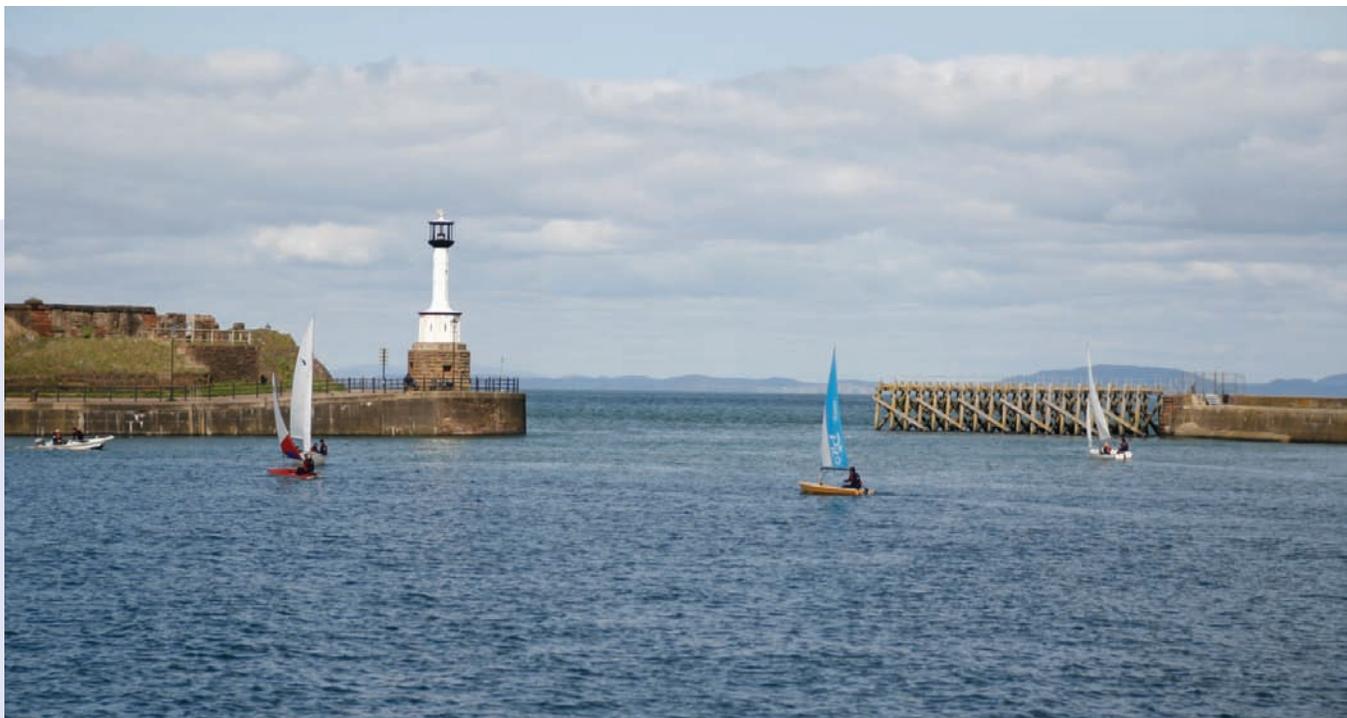
Key Issues

- Need to improve public access to community woodlands and country parks;
- Need to increase and promote links (public transport, footpaths, cycleways, bridleways) between existing parks, woodland and moorland and the urban area and villages;
- Need to improve accessibility for those groups in society who currently find it difficult to access the countryside and enjoy its recreational potential.

Introduction

Allerdale's countryside lends itself to the provision of opportunities for a wide range of countryside recreation activities for both the local population and for visitors. Hill walking, rambling, cycling, horse riding and angling constitute the more traditional countryside recreational pursuits, however the demand has grown for activities such as adventure/assault courses, rock climbing, abseiling, mountain biking, quad biking and kayaking. Such activities can make a significant contribution to the rural economy but often bring with them a resulting need for ancillary facilities – it is therefore of importance to ensure that new recreational development is sustainable and has minimal impact upon the environment.

The Borough has a well-used public rights of way network, which provides a major opportunity to improve the well-being of individuals through exercise and access to the countryside. This should be maintained and enhanced, recognising the need of visitors and local communities, to enable people to visit and enjoy the region's countryside and ensure that it can be enjoyed by all, as well as providing opportunities to enhance green infrastructure networks and reduce car use for shorter journeys within or between settlements. Rights of Way Improvement Plans should be used to establish the needs of an area to access both rural and urban areas.



NE6 Preferred Option - Countryside and coastal access and recreation

Proposals will be encouraged that would improve and promote access to and within the countryside and coastal areas through new outdoor recreational opportunities, provided that:

- The development or activity would have no adverse environmental impact;
- Any associated services or facilities are of a scale and type appropriate to the development and provide ancillary services only;
- The development or activity require a countryside location.

Any major housing, employment or tourism development proposals in the vicinity of the Public Rights of Way network should make appropriate connections in order to improve accessibility and integration with the green infrastructure network.

Development that would either obstruct and/or adversely affect the ability of the public to use a Public Right of Way will be resisted unless a diversion order has been obtained from the appropriate authority.

Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred policy approach facilitates sustainable leisure and recreational opportunities that require a countryside location, and as a result it performs well against the sustainability objectives and in comparison to the alternative options and therefore it is considered the most sustainable approach.

Justification for Preferred Option NE6

This policy supports national policy by facilitating sustainable leisure and recreational opportunities that require a countryside location. It would support the objectives of the Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy and ensure that the character and nature interests of the countryside are protected. It ensures that proposals for recreation do not have a harmful effect on the amenity of nearby residents as well as ensuring the integration of development proposals adjacent to public rights of way thereby improving access to the countryside. It also prevents the obstruction of Public Right of Way unless a diversion order had been obtained by the applicant/developer.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO1b, SO5a, SO5c, SO6c, SO6d, SO6e
National Planning Policy Framework	10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 4
Evidence Base	Green Infrastructure Study, Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy, Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study, Cumbria Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Cumbria Strategic Cycle Network Map, Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment, The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan, Solway Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009 – 2014, Allerdale Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, River Derwent Catchment Flood Management Plan, Shoreline Management Plan 2
Links to Core Strategy Policies	-
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

NE6a Do not include a countryside and coastal access and recreation policy in the core strategy

This option would mean that the Core strategy would not support the objectives set out in the Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy. It would not support the overarching objective of supporting appropriate sustainable development in rural areas. It would also not address the issue of development proposals blocking or affecting Public Rights of Way.

NE7 - Shoreline Management and Coastal Development

Key Issues

- The coastline is a key environmental and economic asset;
- The coast contains an abundance of wildlife species and biodiversity habitats;
- Need to maintain flood and coastal defences along the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line and the towns and ports of Workington, Maryport and Silloth;
- Undeveloped and undefended coastline can be used as a natural defence and retreat where necessary.

Introduction

The majority of Allerdale's northern coastline is internationally protected and is an extremely important resource from both environmental and economic perspectives.

The North West England and North Wales Shoreline Management Plan sets out a strategy for managing risks due to flooding and coastal erosion along the Allerdale coastline. The southern section, which includes the towns and ports of Workington and Maryport, are key coastal centres and consequently, these areas will be protected into the long term. The Cumbrian Coastal Railway runs adjacent to coastline between Whitehaven and Maryport and therefore the need to maintain flooding and erosion defences along this section will also be necessary.

In contrast, the long term plan for the majority of the northern section of the coastline is to allow for a naturally evolving shoreline by enabling sediment to build up on beaches and allow the dunes to evolve unconstrained as a natural defence.



NE7 Preferred Option - Shoreline management and coastal development

Any proposals for new dwellings or conversion of existing buildings to residential use, will not be permitted in the Coastal Change Management Area identified on the Proposals Map. Proposals for new community facilities, commercial and business uses will only be permitted in the Coastal Change Management Area in circumstances where:

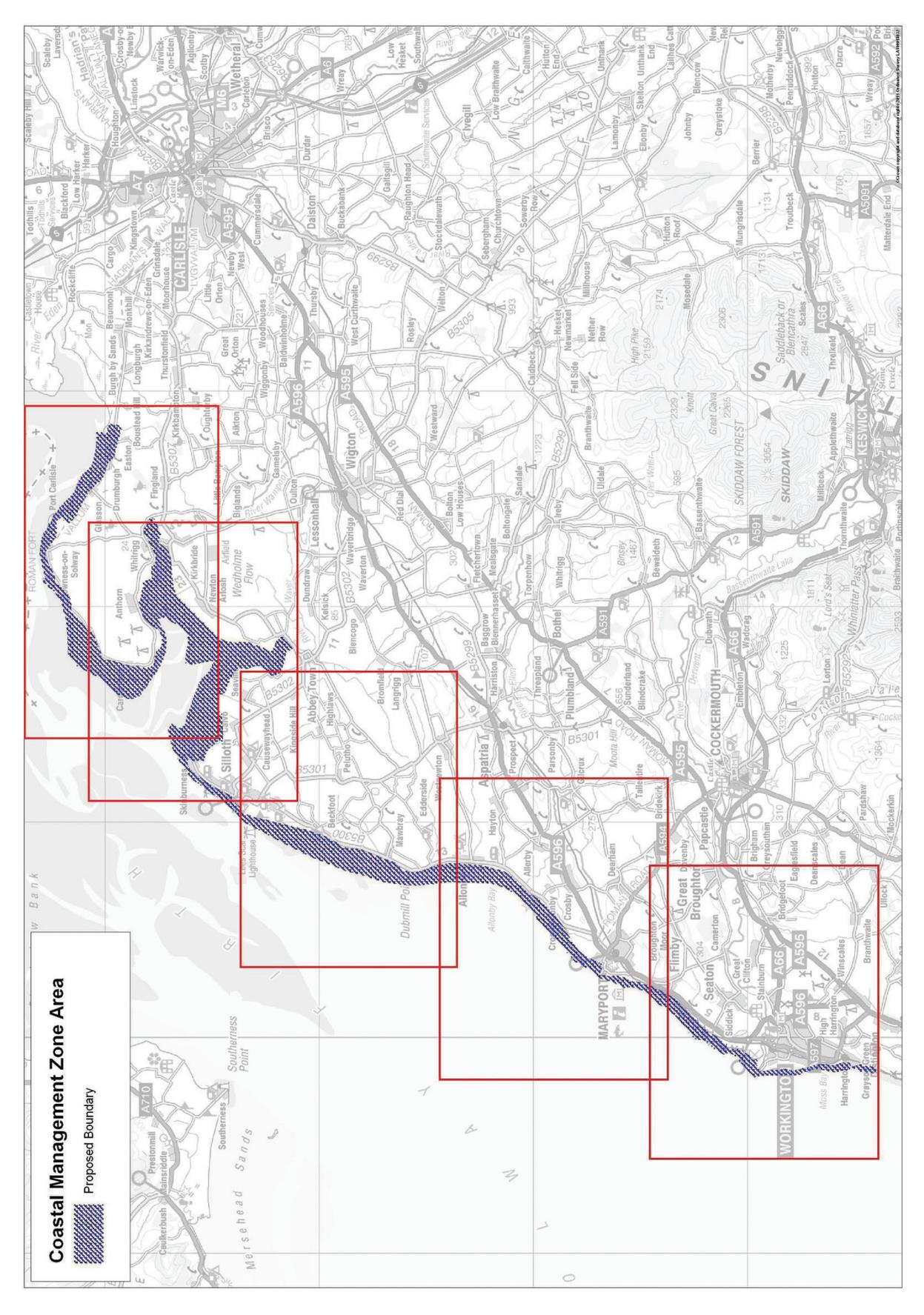
- the need for a coastal location can be justified and;
- a Coastal Erosion Vulnerability Assessment has been submitted that confirms that there will be no increased risk to life or significant increase in risk to property.

Proposals for new or replacement coastal defence schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the works are consistent with the management approach for the frontage presented in the relevant Shoreline Management Plan and there will be no material adverse impact on the environment.

Proposals for the relocation and replacement of community facilities, commercial business uses and dwellings that are under significant threat of collapse due to coastal erosion will be permitted, provided that:

- The replacement building[s] is located an appropriate distance inland with regard to the Coastal Change Management Area indicated on the proposals map and other information in the relevant Shoreline Management Plan and where possible it is in a location that is close to the coastal community from which it was displaced;
- The replacement building[s] is of a comparable size in terms of volume and floorspace to the existing building[s];
- The existing site is either cleared and made safe or put to a temporary use beneficial to the local community;
- The proposal does not have a detrimental impact upon the landscape, townscape or biodiversity of the area. [Having regards to Policies NE2, NE3 & BE1].

Coastal Change Map



Sustainability Appraisal

The preferred option performs strongly in those areas of relevance, in particularly those categories related to social and environmental objectives. Particular strengths relate to the benefits in terms of improving health and well-being, protecting and enhancing biodiversity and landscape and supporting and growing local employment opportunities. Conversely, the alternative approach performed poorly across all objectives.

Justification for Preferred Option NE7

This policy approach is in accordance with national policy guidance which states that LPAs should identify Coastal Change Management Area (CCMAs). CCMAs will identify the areas of coastline to be left unprotected and therefore be vulnerable to change. The policy will ensure that coastal defence proposals were aligned with the actions/schemes set out in the Shoreline Management Plan. It will also give an element of certainty to coastal communities that facilities in those locations vulnerable to coastal change and/or erosion could be relocated.

Compliance with other policies and strategies

Strategic Objectives	SO5a, SO5b, SO6b, SO5c, SO6e
National Planning Policy Framework	10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; Plan Making.
West Cumbria Sustainable Community Strategy	6.2, 6.3, 6.4
Allerdale Council Plan priorities	2, 4
Evidence Base	Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment, The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan, Solway Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2009 – 2014, Allerdale Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, River Derwent Catchment Flood Management Plan, Shoreline Management Plan 2
Links to Core Strategy Policies	BE1, NE2, NE3
Key Development Management Policies	-

Alternative policy options

NE7a Do not include an shoreline management and coastal development policy in the core strategy

National policy states that local development documents should include policies that identify

Coastal Change Management Area (CCMAs) within the plan area. This option could leave coastline areas vulnerable to potential development that could cause both visual and structural harm. It could also result in development occurring in areas vulnerable to erosion thereby putting future occupants at risk.

Q23) Do you agree with the strategy for the natural environment set out in the policies (NE1-7)?

Monitoring and Implementation

The Local Plan must be able to respond to changing needs and circumstances at the national, regional and local level. Monitoring will help assess the effectiveness of the policies in delivering the vision and objectives of the spatial strategy and may indicate when policy changes may be required.

Monitoring will take an objective-led approach to the selection of targets and indicators, which will help provide a consistent basis for monitoring the performance of the strategy against the overall objectives. Where appropriate, the Core Strategy will set targets for each policy, and will set out how the policy will be implemented and monitored. Specific targets have been included where clear outputs may be required. As the Development Management DPD has been designed to implement and support the Core Strategy the indicative monitoring framework outlined in Appendix 4 of the Core Strategy will be used as a basis to monitor both policy documents.

Each year Allerdale Borough Council will produce an Annual Monitoring Report containing information on the progress of the implementation of the Local Plan and an assessment of the effectiveness of the policies in the Core Strategy, and will also evaluate the wider Local Plan Policies and documents. This monitoring will indicate progress towards targets and show where policies are not working which will inform any changes to the Local Plan.

APPENDIX 1 - GLOSSARY

Appendix 1 - Glossary

Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	An area where levels of pollution and air quality might not meet national air quality objectives. If it does not, a plan is prepared to improve the air quality - a Local Air Quality Action Plan.
Adoption	The final confirmation of a Local Development Document as having statutory status by a Local Planning Authority (LPA).
Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Full definition in NPPF
Amenity	A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character of an area, for example open land, trees, historic buildings and how they relate to each other.
Ancillary use / operation	A subsidiary or secondary use or operation connected to the main use of a building or piece of land.
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	An annual report on the wider social, economic and environmental position of the Borough, and provides monitoring of the effectiveness of plan policies
Appropriate assessment (AA)	An appropriate assessment, also known as a habitat regulations assessment, is the process of considering emerging policies against the habitats directive.
Area action plan (AAP)	An area action plan is used to provide a planning framework for areas of change and areas of conservation. They have the status of development plan documents.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	An area with legal protection because of its natural beauty and high landscape quality.
Brownfield Land	Land that has been previously developed excludes the gardens of houses. Sometimes referred as previously developed land.
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment

	Environmental Assessment Methodology which assesses the sustainability credentials of industrial, commercial and institutional buildings.
Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA)	An area identified in Local Plans as likely to be affected by coastal change (physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion).
Core Strategy (CS)	A core strategy sets out the long term spatial vision for the local planning authority area, as well as the spatial objectives and the strategic policies to deliver that vision. The core strategy has the status of a development plan document.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	A mechanism by which councils can secure monies from development to help fund both strategic and local infrastructure needs.
Development plan	This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans, and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. (Regional strategies remain part of the development plan until they are abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the outcome of the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.)
Development plan documents (DPD's)	Development plan documents consist of spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination together with the relevant regional spatial strategy. These form the development plan for a council area for the purposes of the planning and compulsory purchase Act 2004. They can include a core strategy, site specific allocations of land, area action plans (where needed) and other documents deemed necessary by the council to deliver the spatial strategy in a justified and effective manner.
Evidence base	A series of technical studies and

	reports are prepared to support the preparation of the Local Plan documents and inform the policies. It is made up of the views of stakeholders and background facts about the area.
Examination in Public / Hearing	This is essentially a public inquiry conducted by an independent inspector to test the soundness of the documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) to decide if they are legally compliant and produced using good evidence.
Front loading	Front loading is the idea that a strong emphasis needs to be placed upon work at the early stages of the plan making process, so that the later stages will run more smoothly and swiftly.
Green Infrastructure (GI)	Open land in both the natural and built environments, from countryside through to urban parks and play areas that provide a range of functions, such as contributing to biodiversity, alleviating flood risk and provides recreation.
Heritage Assets	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Housing Market Area (HMA)	Sub-regional housing market areas are geographical areas defined by household demand and preferences for housing. They reflect the key functional linkages between places where people live and work.
Issues & Options	Preparation of the development plan document when local planning authorities should gather evidence about their area and engage with stakeholders
Infrastructure	Essential facilities, services, and organisational structures needed to create neighbourhoods and support new development. Refers to the full

	range of transport networks, utilities, services and facilities such as roads, sewers, as well as social infrastructure such as schools and healthcare centres.
Lifetime Homes	A home that is built to 16 specific design standards so that is accessible, adaptable and is suited to for a wide range of household types, from couples with young children through to older single people.
Local development order	An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.
Local development scheme (LDS)	The local development scheme sets out the programme for preparing local development documents.
Local distinctiveness	Local distinctiveness is the physical, environmental, economic or social factors that characterise an area (and most likely a combination of all four), as well as how an area interacts with others.
Local Plan	The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current core strategies or other planning policies, which under the regulations would be considered to be development plan documents, form part of the Local Plan. The term includes old policies which have been saved under the 2004 Act.
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	An umbrella group of businesses, voluntary and statutory bodies, who are working together in an administrative area to deal with local priorities.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Replaced PPS series in March 2012.

Neighbourhood plans	A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
Planning Inspectorate	Responsible for the processing of appeals against the refusal of planning permissions and also for examining DPD's.
Planning Obligation or Section 106	Contributions secured by the Council to help provide or fund infrastructure items or services that will help make development acceptable in planning terms.
Planning Policy Statement (PPS)	Set out national planning policy in relation to a variety of issues that regional and local policies should consider. Replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012.
Preferred Option	Document produced as part of the preparation of Development Plan Documents, and issued for formal public participation. It shows the favoured 'direction' of a Development Plan Document.
Proposals map	A proposal map is an illustration on a base map, reproduced from or based upon a map base to a registered scale, of all the policies contained in development plan documents. It must be revised as each new development plan document is adopted and it should always reflect the up to date planning strategy in the area. Proposals for changes to the adopted proposals map accompany submitted development plan documents in the form of a submission proposal map.
Ramsar	A wetland site of international importance
Regional spatial strategy (RSS)	The regional spatial strategy sets out the region's policies in relation to the development and use of land. The Government announced its intention to remove the RSS in July 2010, however, until this is finalised it continues to form part of the development plan for local planning authorities.

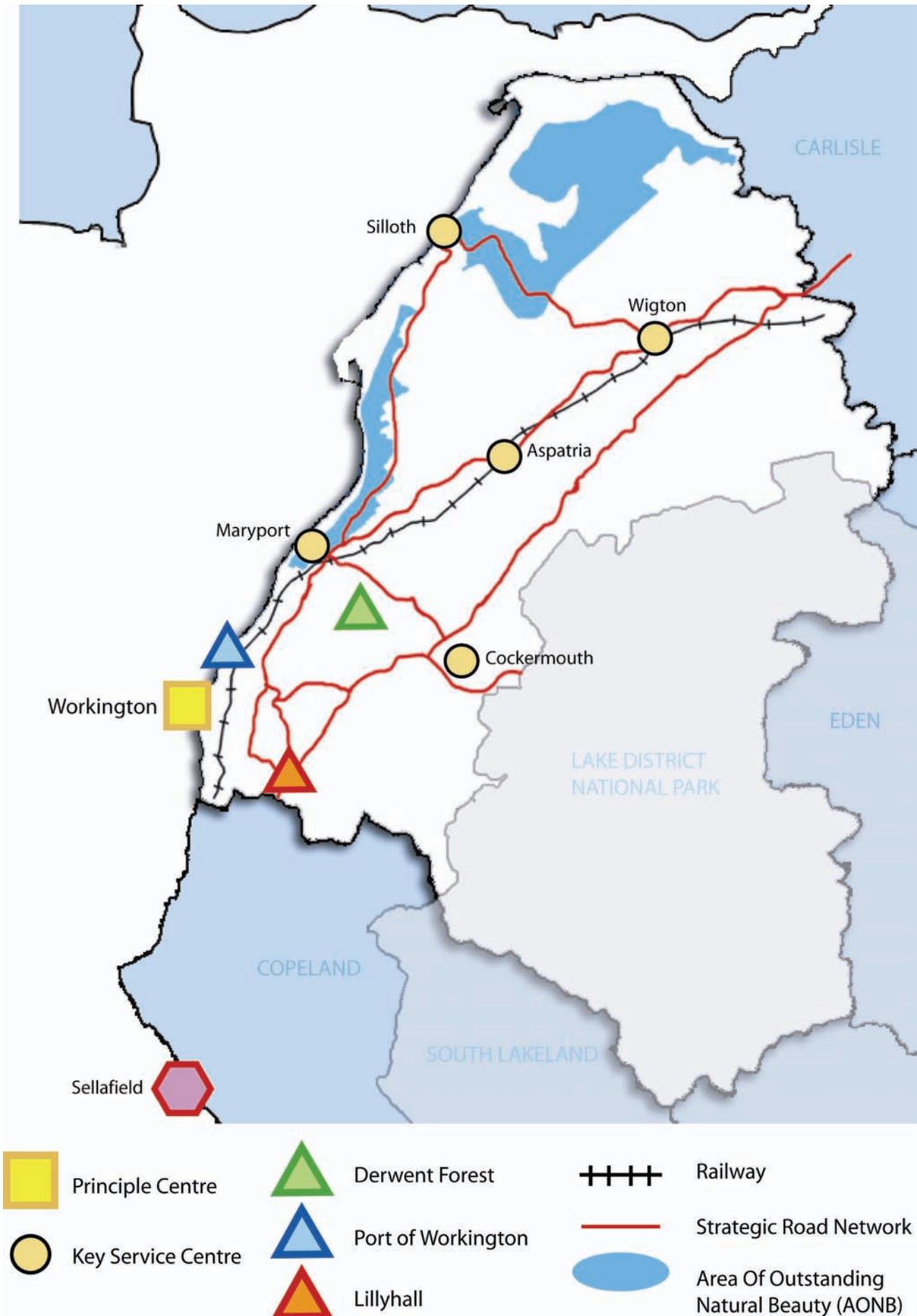
Regulations	The regulations refer to the town and country planning (local development) (England) (amendment) (the town and country planning (local development) (England) regulations 2004.
Rural Exception Site	A site that is within or adjoins existing rural communities which may be subject to policies of restraint, such as Green Belt, and which would not otherwise be released for housing, but may only be developed in order to provide affordable housing to meet local needs in perpetuity.
Site specific allocations	Allocations of sites for specific of mixed uses or development to be contained in Development Plan Documents. Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual purposes.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A site or area of land protected for its special wildlife, habitat or landscape value.
Soundness	Soundness means founded on a robust and credible evidence base and the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives. For something to be sound is must also be deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	The statement of community involvement sets out the standards which authorities must achieve in involving local communities in the preparation of local development documents and development management decisions.
Strategic environment assessment (SEA)	A strategic environment assessment is a generic term used to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The European SEA directive (2001/42/EC) requires a formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	Examines the likelihood that rivers and watercourses will flood and the

	mechanisms that can be implemented to reduce flood risk.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	These are studies of the operation of Housing Market Areas that are used to inform the development of planning and housing policy. It provides an analysis of the characteristics of the housing market in Allerdale, how key factors work together, and the probable scale of change in housing need and demand.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	This is used to identify sites which may be suitable for housing development over the next 15 years. Each site within the SHLAA has been assessed to establish whether it is likely to be suitable for housing development and, if so, when it might come forward for development. It is important to note that the SHLAA does not determine whether housing will be built on any particular site, but merely undertakes a technical exercise on the availability of land in the Borough.
Submission	Submission of the local development plan documents, as proposed for adoption, to the Secretary of State.
Supplementary plan documents (SPD)	Supplementary plan documents provide supplementary information about the policies in development plan documents. They do not form part of the development plan and are not subject to independent examination.
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	A sustainability appraisal is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors), and are required in the act to be undertaken for all local development documents.
Sustainable development	Is a central aim of national policy to achieve social progress, protect the environment, make prudent use of resources and maintain economic growth.
Sustainable Community Strategy	Prepared by Local Strategic Partnerships as a set of goals and actions which they wish to promote.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUD's)	Drainage systems which absorb rain water back into the ground rather than into man-made drains and sewers.
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APPENDIX 2 – KEY DIAGRAM

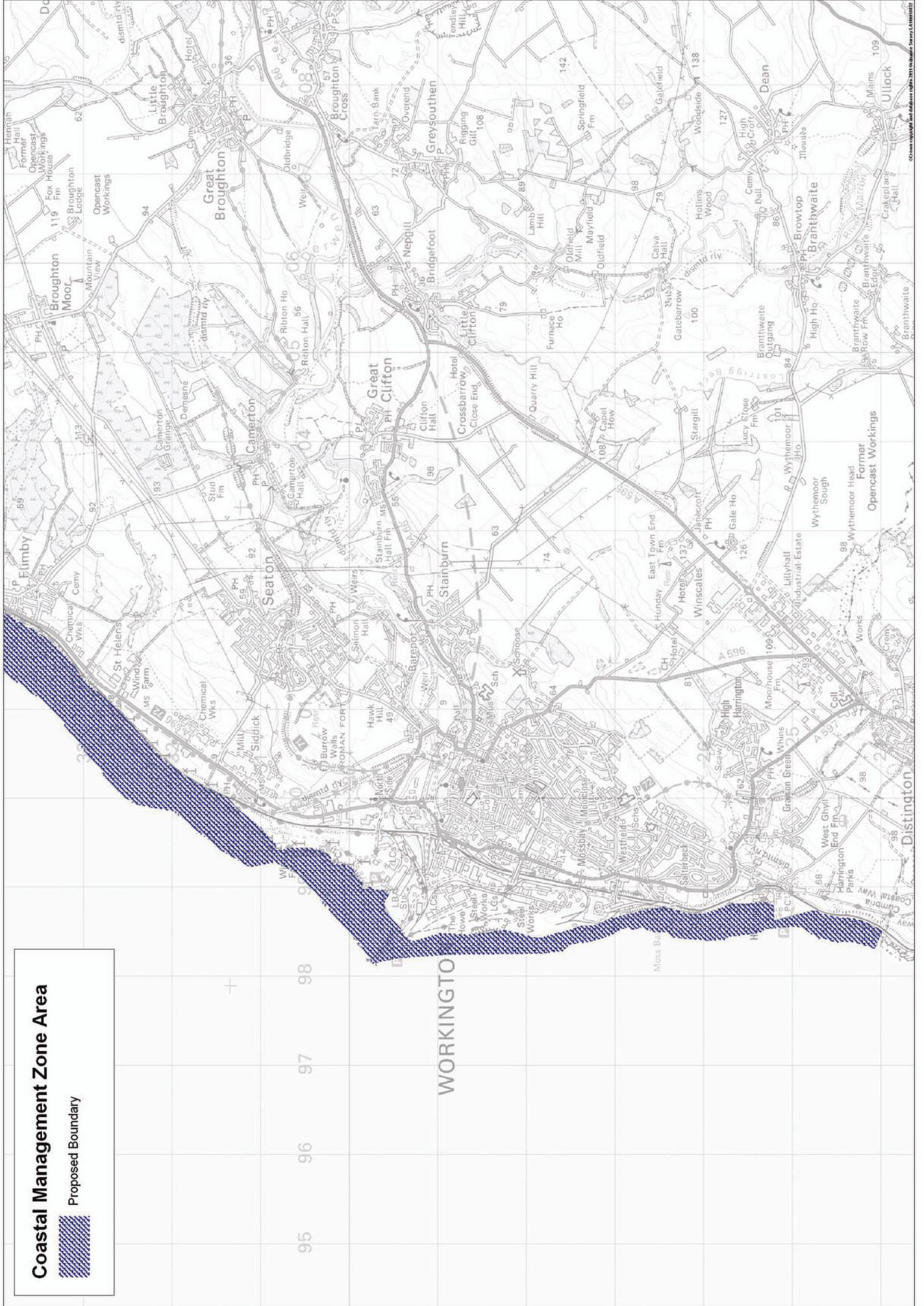
Appendix 2 – Key Diagram



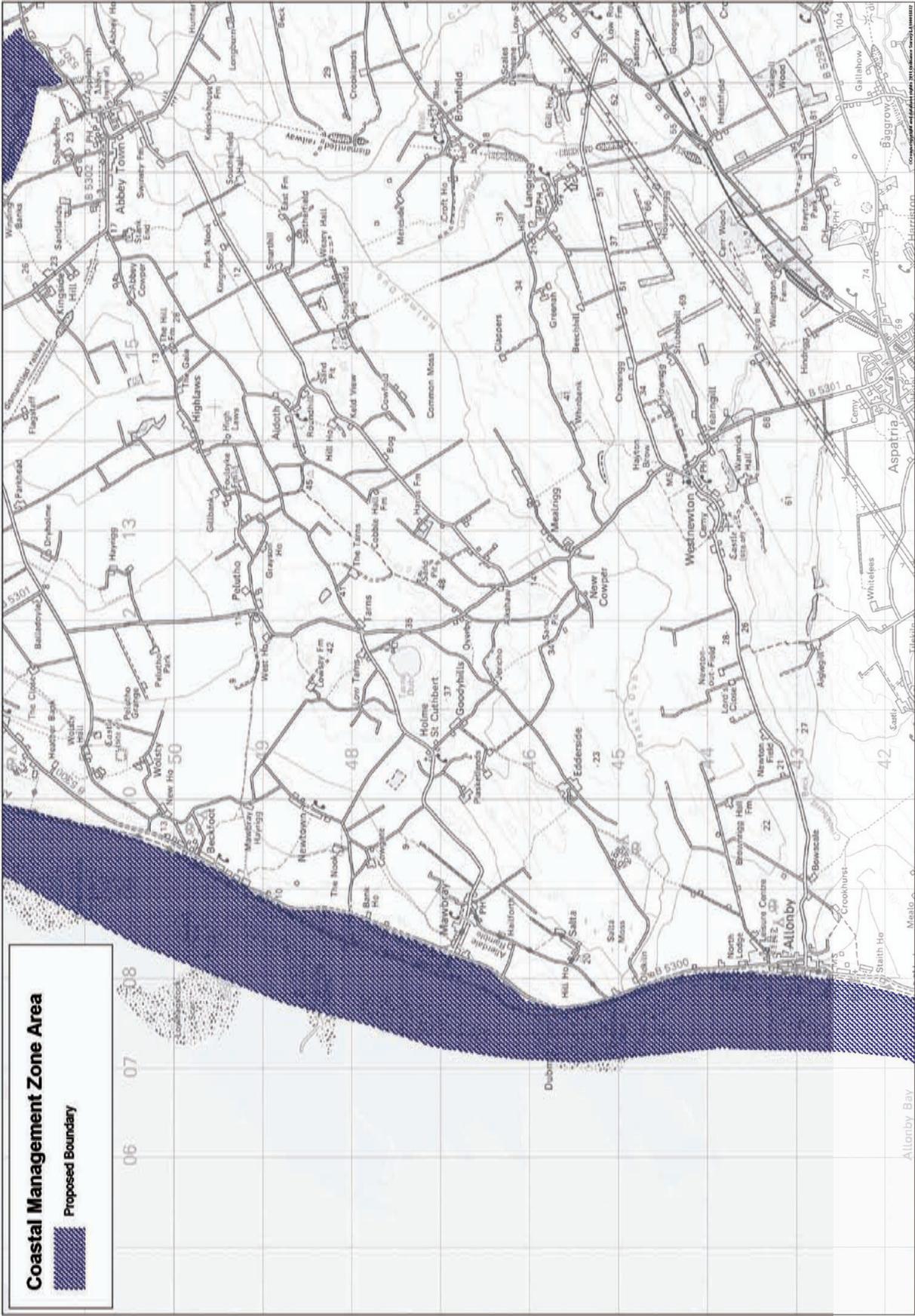
APPENDIX 3 – COASTAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT AREA

Coastal Management Zone Area

 Proposed Boundary

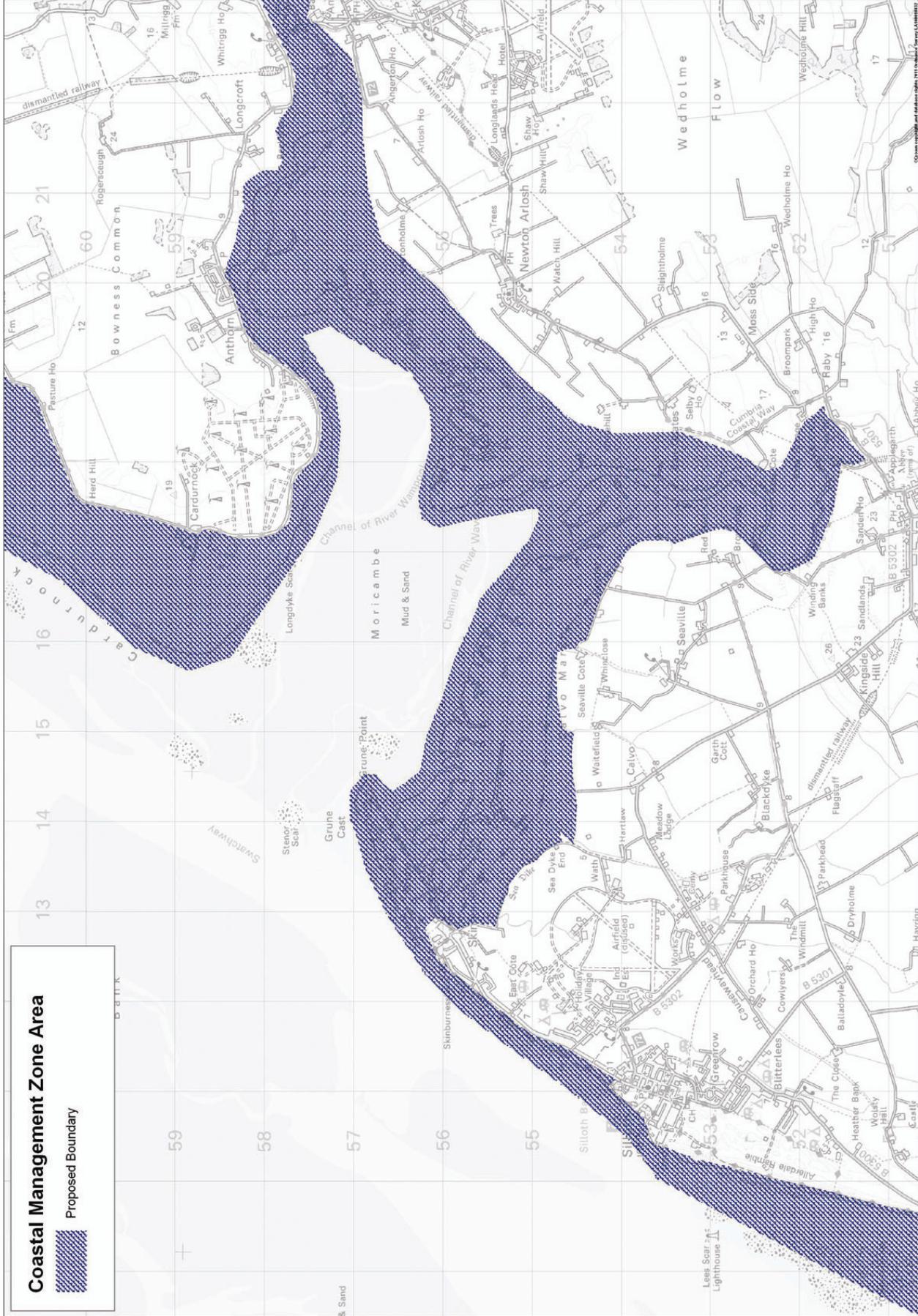


WORKINGTON



Coastal Management Zone Area

Proposed Boundary



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APPENDIX 4 – MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Appendix 4 – Monitoring Framework

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
S1	N/A	Meeting of objectives within the Core Strategy.	N/A	Underpins all other policies.
S2	N/A	Meeting of objectives within the “Built Environment” and “Natural Environment” chapters.	N/A	Underpins most policies.
S3	N/A	Meeting of objectives within the “Economy” chapter.	N/A	Relevant to the Economy chapter.
S4	Amount of contributions and area of spending. Including Section 106, Section 278 and Community Infrastructure Levy (if adopted).	Meeting of objectives within “Economy”, “Housing”, “Built Environment” and “Natural Environment” chapters.	N/A	Contributes to the delivery of policies within the Core Strategy, in particular Housing, Economy, Built Environment and Natural Environment chapters.
S5	Net amount of housing and employment developments.	<p>For housing development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4,560 dwellings over the plan period or equiv. to 304 dwellings pa <p>For employment development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 45> hectare over the plan period or equiv. to 3> hectares pa <p>Maintain a supply of readily available land:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 yrs supply for housing development - 15> ha for employment development 	Should include any residual requirement from previous years of delivery.	Links to policy S6, S7 and S9.

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
	Distribution of housing and employment developments.	Meeting of targets within policy S6, S7 and S9.	N/A	
S6	Location of housing and employment developments.	Majority of development focus within defined "development limits" of settlements within the "Settlement Hierarchy".	N/A	Links to S8
S7	Location of development.	Majority of development focus within the Principal Centre and appropriate level of development in other settlements reflective of their function and role within the hierarchy.	N/A	Links to S6 and S9.
S8	Location of development.	Development focus within defined "development limits" of settlements.	N/A	Links to S6.
S9	Location of housing and employment development and land supply.	<p>Distribution of growth according to policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principle Centre: 35% - Key Service Centres: 39% - Local Service Centres: 20% - Rural Villages: 6% <p>Maintain a supply of readily available housing land (5 yrs supply) which complements the distribution hierarchy in the policy.</p>	N/A	Links to S5.

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
		<p>Maintain a supply of readily available employment land (15> ha) which broadly follows the distribution hierarchy in the policy:</p> <p>The test should include how the supply “fits” with emerging economic strategies and its ability to accommodate “choice and churn” in the market.</p> <p>Meeting of specific outcomes (where appropriate).</p>		
S10 to S15	Locality specific outcomes (refer to policies S10 to S15).		Locality summaries will be produced to assess these policies.	Links to policies within Housing, Economy, Built Environment and Natural Environment chapters.
HO1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Links to the rest of housing chapter.
HO2	Net delivery of affordable dwellings.	<p>Net affordable housing requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workington and Maryport HMA: 529> units over 5 yrs or equiv. to 106> units pa - Wigton HMA: 145 units over 5 yrs or equiv. to 29 units pa - Cockermonth HMA: 190 units over 5 yrs or equiv. to 38 units pa 	Targets could be revise pending updates of the SHMA.	Links to S4, HO1 and HO3.

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
	Tenure split of addition affordable provision (gross).	<p>Tenure split according to policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worthington and Maryport HMA: 80% socially rented and 20% intermediate - Cockermouth HMA: 70% socially rented and 30% intermediate - Wigton HMA: 60% socially rented and 40% intermediate 		
	Number of schemes (over the threshold) considered unviable and justifying a lower affordable housing contribution or tenure mix.	N/A		
HO3	N/A	N/A	N/A	Links to rest housing chapter.
HO4	Number of Long Term Empty properties.	Decrease in the number of Long Term Empty properties.	The number of Long Term Empty properties should be considered in net terms	Links to S4, HO2, HO3, NE1 and EN5.
	Condition of existing housing stock.	Reduce the level of "unfit" housing stock.		
	Number of demolition / selective clearance.	N/A		
	Environmental improvements and the provision of recreational green open space.	N/A		
	Number of housing market renewal schemes deliver through developer contributions.	N/A		

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
HO5	Number of rural exception affordable dwellings.	N/A	Examines its contribution to affordable requirements and supply of available land for housing in the area.	Links to S4 and HO2.
	Number of rural worker's dwellings.	N/A	Examines the need for rural worker's dwellings in that area.	
HO6	Number of removal of agricultural occupancy conditions.	N/A	Removal of conditions should reflect the need for new rural worker's dwellings in the area.	Links to HO1 and HO3.
	Number of extra care housing.	Contribute to targets set in current and emerging strategies.	N/A	
HO7	Number of residential annexes.	N/A	Examines its contribution to elderly requirements in the area, particularly in the absence of other elderly care provisions.	Links to S4, HO1 and HO3.
	Accessibility of extra care housing / residential annexes to key services.	Align with Allerdale average.	N/A	
	Number of residential care homes.	Contribute to targets set in current and emerging strategies.	Commentary on the provision of continuing care / retirement communities.	
	Number of extra care homes.	Wide distribution of provision.	N/A	
	Continuing Care / Retirement Communities.	N/A	Commentary on the take up of the initiative.	
	Number of eligible development with "Building for Life" standard (approval of 10 or more dwellings).			

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
	Number of "Building for Life" assessment achieving gold or silver standard.	N/A	Emphasis should be on the number of eligible development undergoing the assessment.	
HO8	Number of gypsy and traveller pitches	Contribute to targets set in current and emerging strategies.	N/A	Links to HO1 and HO3.
	Number of travelling show people pitches		Possible indication of unmet demand.	
EC1	Number of unauthorised site in relation to gypsy, traveller and travelling show people.	N/A	Economic and employment floorspace would include UCO B and D1 uses (including training and education facilities).	Links to EC2,
	Location of economic and employment floorspace.	Meeting of targets within policy S5 to S9.		
		High levels of B1 uses directed to town centres, in particularly within the main centres of Workington and Maryport. High levels of economic and employment floorspace directed to strategic locations, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lillyhall Industrial Estate - Workington Port - Derwent Howe The test should include how development "fits" with the policy, and emerging economic strategies and evidences.		
EC2	List of de-allocated sites.	N/A	Accompanied by justification.	Links to EC1 and EC3.

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
EC3	Location of employment floorspace.	Majority of development focused within allocated employment sites and previously development land.	N/A	
	Number of enterprises.	Increase or maintain current number of enterprises in rural areas (particularly small and medium size uses).	Bases for examining the condition for growth – whether there is a supply of suitable sites?	Links to EC1 and BE3.
	Location of employment floorspace.	N/A	Examines its contribution to economic development and opportunities.	
	Number of “Work-hubs”.	N/A		
	Number of “live work” developments.	N/A		
	Number of farm diversification schemes.	N/A		
EC4	NVQ Equivalent.	N/A	N/A	Links to EC 1.
	% of businesses that consider lack of skills an issue when recruiting.	N/A	Data only available every 2 years or more.	
	Capacity of existing education facilities	No identified capacity issues	Future provisions and demand would also be considered (reference to IDP).	
EC5	Location of “town centre” developments.	Majority of development focused within town centres and directed to the Principle Centre, with appropriate level of development in other settlements reflective of their function and role within the hierarchy.	Appropriate “town centre” developments include new retail, leisure, cultural and office floorspace.	Links to EC6, BE1, BE6, NE1 and NE5.

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
	Business activities contributing to the evening economy. Number of street markets and their level of activities.	N/A Maintain / increase number of street markets and their frequency of activities.	N/A Commentary on the level of trading / number of stalls.	
EC6	Tourism, cultural and leisure developments outside existing centres. Removal of occupancy conditions for holiday accommodation.	Development should only be through the reuse of redundant rural buildings or as extension to an existing tourism business. N/A	N/A Possible indication of decline or need for tourism accommodations in the area.	Links to EC5, BE1 and BE3.
EC7	Masterplans / development proposals at "Derwent Forest" site.	N/A	Include proposals where decision have been refused and their reason. This indicator may change once an approval is granted.	N/A
EC8	Location of renewable developments and total installed capacity. Level of objection to renewable approvals.	N/A N/A	The figure will be measure in gross terms. Indication of community's opposition to development and whether they are reasonable.	Links to NE2 and NE3.

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
EC9 EC10	Developments relating to nationally significant infrastructure project, including worker accommodations.	Preference to sustainable locations, i.e. brownfield sites within Principal and/or Key Service Centres. Ensure adequate land and premises to meet requirements for storage, assembly and manufacture of off site components.	Commentary on identified requirement in Allerdale (through joint workings / strategies).	N/A
	Related benefits, including training and employment opportunities, improvements to local infrastructure.	N/A	Draw links on its community and economic benefits.	
TR1	Accessibility of new residential developments	High level of accessibility should be achieved, in particular through public transport, cycling, walking or "composite mode".	N/A	Links to S4 and NE1.
	Rural Transport Schemes	N/A	Commentary on its provision and coverage.	
	Parking standards Level of developer contributions on transport initiatives and schemes	Meeting of standards N/A	N/A N/A	
TR2	Progress against Local Transport Plan	Delivery of projects	Include progress against other relevant strategic documents and Masterplans (should be included in LTP and its updates).	Links to S4.

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
BE1	Number of "Code for Sustainable Homes" assessment	N/A	Commentary on the take up of the initiative.	Links to Housing and Economy chapters.
	Number of "Code for Sustainable Homes" assessment achieving "level 4" or above.	Majority of assessment should achieve this rating.	Emphasis should be on the number of eligible development undergoing the assessment.	
	Number of "BREEM" assessment.	N/A	Commentary on the take up of the initiative.	
	Number of "BREEM" assessment achieving "very good" rating.	Majority of assessment should achieve this rating.	Emphasis should be on the number of eligible development undergoing the assessment.	
	Number of eligible development with "Building for Life" standard (approval of 10 or more dwellings).	N/A	Commentary on the take up of the initiative.	
	Number of "Building for Life" assessment achieving gold or silver standard.	N/A	Emphasis should be on the number of eligible development undergoing the assessment.	
	Levels of crime and anti social behaviour.	N/A	Include perception of crime and anti social behaviour.	
BE2	Development on previously developed land / brownfield sites.	With respect to the NPPF, majority of need developments should be directed to PDL or locally allocated sites.	Along with development on greenfield land / specific allocations, could provide an indication of development pressure on land in the area.	
BE3	Reuse of rural buildings.	N/A	Commentary on their type of uses (i.e. economic, residential, etc)	

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
BE4	Residential and economic developments on land of high flood risks (zones 3 & 2).	None in zones 3 & 2 (unless robustly justified)	Detail proposals accepted in zone 3 & 2, mitigation measure and sequential test taken.	Links to S4, Housing and Economy Chapters
	Planning permissions granted contrary to advice of the Environment Agency.	None	N/A	
BE5	Planning permissions granted contrary to advice of Environmental Health officers.	None	N/A	
	Related enforcement actions	N/A	N/A	
BE6	Planning permissions granted contrary to advice on conservation and archaeology (inc. English Heritage, Conservation Officer, County Archaeologist).	None	N/A	
	Related enforcement actions	N/A	N/A	
NE1	Progress against projects and objectives identified in the "Green Infrastructure Plan".	N/A	N/A	
	Amount of contributions on "green infrastructure".	N/A	N/A	
NE2	Development on Solway Coast AONB, Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.	N/A	N/A	
	Development on Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.	None	N/A	

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
	Measures to promote / protect biodiversity on site (e.g. management agreements, additional habitats, etc).	N/A	N/A	
	Amount of contributions towards biodiversity enhancement and protection.	N/A	N/A	
NE4	"Inappropriate development" on Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (grades 1, 2 and 3a).	None	Only appropriate agricultural developments should be considered.	
NE5	Loss of key sports and recreational facilities and spaces.	Any loss of such facilities should be compensated by replacement space / facilities in the locality.	N/A	
	Amount of contribution spend on open spaces, sports and recreational facilities.	N/A	Focus on areas with a shortfall in space / facilities.	
	Planning permissions granted contrary to advice on conservation (inc. English Heritage, Conservation Officer).	None	N/A	
NE6	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Policy	Indicators	Target / Objective	Notes	Relations to other Core Strategy policies
NE7	Development in Coastal Change Management Area.	<p>No new residential development should be permitted (replacement dwellings only)</p> <p>Proposals for new community facilities, commercial and business uses will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.</p>	Detail justification of new community facilities, commercial and business uses in Coastal Change Management Area.	



We would like to involve a many people as possible in producing the Allerdale Local Plan. To help encourage both communities and individuals to have their say we will be holding a number of exhibitions, surgeries and workshops during the consultation period to promote the Plan and answer any questions.

You can view the 'Preferred Options' for Core Strategy, Development Management and associated documents as follows:

- Online at www.allerdale.gov.uk/localplan;
- At the Council offices and customer service centres;
 - At any library in Allerdale;
- At the public displays which will be touring the Borough.

We would prefer you to tell us what you think by using the online form at:

www.allerdale.gov.uk/localplan

However, you can also make your comments by filling in a form which is available to download, in libraries, customer service centres, or on request from us. Emails and letters would also be welcome.

Alternatively if you would like more information on the consultation, help making a comment, or if you would like this document in an alternative format, you can contact a member of the planning policy team using the following details.

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The consultation period runs from 1 June 2012 to the 31st July 2012