

**Cumberland
Council**

Copeland Local Plan 2021-2039

November 2024

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List of Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
CIRIA	Construction Industry Research and Information Association
CLCA	Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment
CLEP	Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership
CoNE	Centre of Nuclear Excellence
DCO	Development Consent Order
DfT	Department for Transport
DPH	Dwellings per Hectare
EDNA	Economic Development Needs Assessment
ELAS	Employment Land Availability Study
EqIA	Equalities Impact Assessment
FHSF	Future High Streets Fund
HeIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HMO	Houses in Multiple Occupancy
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
ISH	Industrial Solutions Hub
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LCWIP	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
LDO	Local Development Order
LEZ	Local Enterprise Zone
LIS	Local Industrial Strategy
LDNP	Lake District National Park
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategy

NDA	Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
NM	Nautical Miles
NNL	National Nuclear Laboratory
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Policy Guidance
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
PDL	Previously Developed Land
R&D	Research and Development
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAA	Site Access Assessment
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SLCA	Settlement Landscape Character Assessment
SMP	Shoreline Management Plan
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPZ	(Groundwater) Source Protection Zone
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
TIS	Transport Improvement Study
TIP	Town Improvement Plan
WHS	World Heritage Site

1 Foreword

1.1 Context

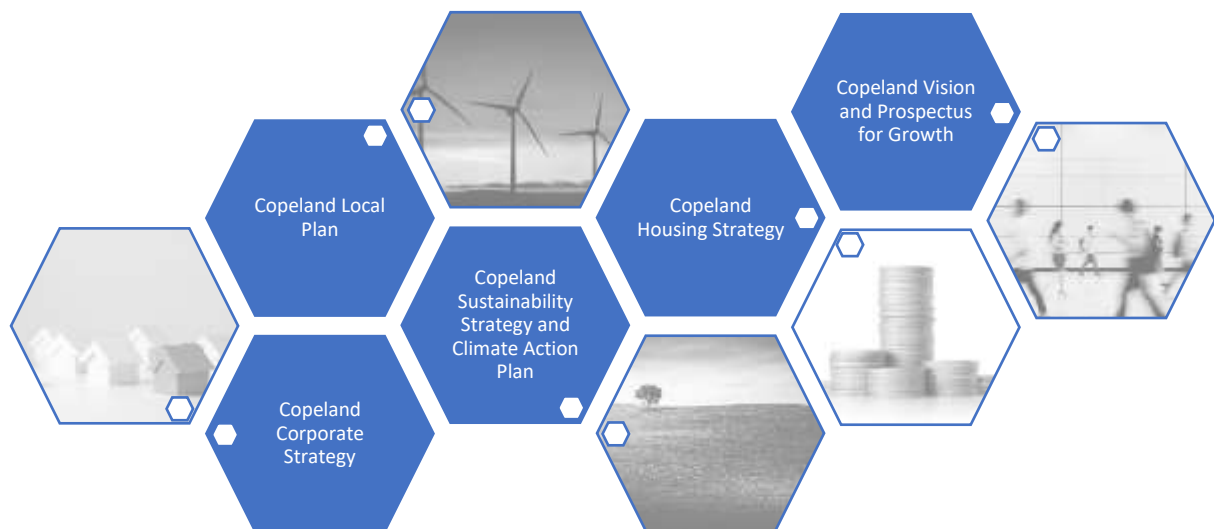
- 1.1.1 Copeland is Open for Business. With our beautiful beaches, unique historic environment, stunning natural landscapes, clean air and vibrant communities, Copeland has a lot to offer. Copeland is one of the most affordable and attractive places to live and work in the UK, with one of the highest average salaries in Cumbria, supported by a thriving nuclear sector, and low average house prices¹.
- 1.1.2 The Local Plan will help us share this message and will sit alongside and support the *Copeland Vision 2040*, *Copeland Corporate Strategy 2020-2024*, *Copeland Vision and Prospectus 2020* and *Copeland Housing Strategy 2018-2023*. It will be a key driver for change over the period 2021-2039 identifying opportunities to enhance Copeland's strengths, address its weaknesses and ensure that Copeland is a place where people and business can thrive.

¹ Compared to Cumbria and national averages

2 Introduction

2.1 Scope

- 2.1.1 The Local Plan sets out the Council's policies and sites for allocation for the areas of Copeland that lie outside the Lake District National Park. The LDNP area is shown in green in Figure 1.
- 2.1.2 Development within the National Park boundary is addressed in the Lake District National Park Local Plan.
- 2.1.3 The diagrams below identify and contain extracts from Copeland's key strategic documents which the Local Plan will help deliver.



Copeland Vision and Prospectus for Growth 2020

Clean Growth: We will become an exemplar for clean growth by leading the first wave of investment and innovation in new zero-carbon energy technologies, through a coherent approach to renewables and achieving the full energy potential of our natural resources.

Innovation: We will create jobs and growth by building upon our assets and strengthening networks between our major organisations, our supply chains and our universities, commercialising innovation and extending our reach across sectors on a global scale.

Experience Economy: Whitehaven and the Lake District Coast will be at the heart of a higher value experience economy, attracting more visitor spending, making the most of our stunning landscapes and heritage, the Cumbria Coast Line, and the C2C cycle route.

Connecting People: We will connect our residents, innovators and visitors to each other and the rest of the world through investment in sustainable, high quality transport and state-of-the-art digital infrastructure.

Great Places: We will grow and diversify the skills in our workforce, promote the health and wellbeing of our residents and maximise value from our local assets by ensuring our towns are great places to live.

Copeland Corporate Strategy Vision

The Council is a commercially focussed organisation with a national reputation for high quality services.

Copeland Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan

The Sustainability Strategy & Climate Action Plan:

- Highlights progress against the 2021 Climate Action Plan
- Documents the Council's carbon footprint
- For the first time, sets a carbon reduction target for our organisation and science-based carbon budgets for Copeland
- Sets the strategic sustainability priorities for Copeland
- Identifies climate adaptation and mitigation strategies for Copeland
- Sets out how we intend to take forward the recommendations made by the Copeland People's Panel on Climate Change
- Identifies priority actions for the Council in 2022/23
- Outlines the role of stakeholders in helping us to meet our Net Zero targets and build resilience in Copeland.

Copeland Housing Strategy Vision

Together we will sustain and grow our local economy and housing market by delivering the right mix of homes in the right places to address the changing needs of Copeland's population, businesses and services. We will build truly sustainable communities and places where everyone can benefit, contribute and live a better life in Copeland.

2.1.4 There are a number of challenges facing our communities, many of which have been magnified by Covid-19. We have risen to the challenge by producing a Local Plan which is flexible, aspirational and visionary but which is also based upon up-to-date evidence to ensure it remains sound.

2.1.5 Covid-19 has reminded us of the importance of our public open spaces² to health and wellbeing and the importance of digital connectivity to allow flexible working

² The importance of green spaces, particularly in our towns and the surge in people's use of such spaces during Covid-19 has been reported by the National Trust here: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/press-release/new-research-shows-55bn-fund-needed-to-level-up-access-to-urban-green-space-as-part-of-uks-green-recovery>

and connections with family and friends. It has also highlighted the fact that our retail, leisure and tourism offer will play a key part in our economic recovery and we will do all we can to support those sectors and help them respond to changing needs and keep our communities vibrant.

Elements of planning outside of the Copeland Local Plan's remit

- 2.1.6 It needs to be noted that there are some elements of the planning system that are outside of the Council's jurisdiction as the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.1.7 As approximately two thirds of Copeland lies within the Lake District National Park it is important that our Local Plan supports the Lake District National Park Local Plan, particularly as the boundary between the two planning authority areas crosses, or comes close to, a number of our settlements. While we may be consulted on particular applications within the National Park (generally those close to our boundary), we have no jurisdiction over planning decisions made within that area.
- 2.1.8 Several other elements of the planning system are outside of Cumberland's planning remit and are dealt with at a national level. These are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Developments outside the Local Plan remit

Field of planning	Responsibility of	Explanation
Areas of Copeland within the Lake District National Park Boundary	LDNPA	This comes under the planning remit of the Lake District National Park Authority rather than Cumberland Council ³ . The Council does however have a statutory duty to conserve and enhance the setting of the Lake District National Park.
Highways	Highways Authority National Highways	Whilst Highways improvements can be promoted and supported by the Local Plan, their delivery can come under the jurisdiction of either Cumberland Council for local road networks, or National Highways for Strategic Road Networks
Minerals and Waste Planning (including Low Level Waste Repository and radioactive waste matters at Sellafield)	Cumberland Council	Whilst Minerals and Waste matters come under the remit of Cumberland Council, planning applications are determined in accordance with the Cumbria Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2015-2030 rather than the Copeland Local Plan. The Council has considered whether any of the allocations in the Plan will affect Mineral Safeguarding Areas.
Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)	Planning Inspectorate	Applications for NSIPs are submitted to the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Directorate and are determined by the Secretary of State. More information can be found below.

³ For more information on the LDNPA Local Plan, please visit:
<https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/planning/planningpolicies/local-plan>

- 2.1.9 It should also be noted that several of our communities have produced Town, Parish or Community Plans that identify the aspirations of local residents. Whilst such plans are not material planning considerations developers are advised to find out whether there is such a plan covering their area of interest and consider the kinds of development the communities would like to see.

The Approach to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

- 2.1.10 Applications for planning consent, known as Development Consent Orders (DCOs) for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) are submitted to the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Directorate and are determined by the Secretary of State who makes the final decision.
- 2.1.11 The Government's National Policy Statement currently identifies two NSIP developments within or affecting Copeland, however both are on hold at present⁴. These are:
- A new nuclear power station at Moorside, close to the Sellafield site;
 - Electricity connection of large-scale energy generation at Moorside with the wider National Grid network
- 2.1.12 Planning policies for NSIPs are set out in National Policy Statements and do not form part of the Development Plan. The Council does however have to give them consideration when developing the Local Plan.
- 2.1.13 When determining Development Consent Order applications for NSIPs the Government will consult the Council. The Council will then prepare a Local Impact Report, to which the Planning Act 2008 (Section 104(2)(b) and (d)) states that the Secretary of State must have regard to. The Local Plan will inform the Local Impact Report along with any other evidence and considerations. The Council will also seek a Statement of Common Ground with the developer before an application is submitted to the National Infrastructure Directorate.
- 2.1.14 The Council will be the decision maker for any ancillary development linked to the NSIP (but not included in the DCO) under its powers as a Local Planning Authority to help the effective delivery of the NSIP. Any such development will be considered against the Development Plan and the National Policy Statement.
- 2.1.15 There may also be occasions where supporting or preliminary work for NSIPs is required before the DCO work. If this happens any proposals will be considered in line with the policies in this Local Plan.

2.2 Producing the new Plan

- 2.2.1 The Local Plan is a key part of the Development Plan for Copeland. This Local Plan will replace and supersede the *Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 Core Strategy and*

⁴ This provides opportunities to consider alternative and/or additional uses at the site, including the creation of a Clean Energy Park

Development Management Policies (the Core Strategy), which was adopted in December 2013, and the Saved Policies for the *Copeland Local Plan 2001-2016*.

2.2.2 Planning decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.2.3 A number of circumstances have changed since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2013 and producing a new Local Plan has allowed the Council to reflect upon these changes and plan for development accordingly. Significant changes include the production of:

- Updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2019 and 2021 and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- New Use Class Order 2020
- Copeland Vision 2040
- Copeland Housing Strategy 2018-2023
- Copeland Vision and Prospectus for Growth 2020
- Copeland Corporate Strategy 2020-2024
- Cumbria Local Industrial Strategy 2019⁵
- Town Improvement Plans for Millom and Cleator Moor
- Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan (The Four Pronged Attack) 2014-2024
- Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus: Five Proposals for Our Nuclear Future 2020

2.2.4 And other significant changes including:

- The commitment made by Cumbrian Authorities to have a net zero carbon county by 2037 (resulting in the creation of a Copeland People's Panel for Climate and the production of a Copeland Sustainability Strategy)
- The pausing of the new nuclear facility project at Moorside
- The change in Sellafield's 'missions' and the opportunities this provides, and the potential for other nuclear new build
- The development of proposals for a new Industrial Solutions Hub and Clean Energy Park in Copeland
- The development of proposals for a new Metallurgical Coal Mine in Whitehaven
- Successful bids for Town Deal Funding (Cleator Moor and Millom) and Borderlands Community funding (Egremont) by the Council
- Changes to shopping patterns post Covid-19 and the need for us to reflect on the role and function of our town centres
- Changes to the way our residents work and access goods and services (flexible working) post Covid-19 and the renewed importance of digital connectivity
- The development of a new Lake District Coast brand for Copeland
- The inscription of the Lake District as a World Heritage Site in 2017
- The commitment made by Cumberland Council to work with relevant bodies to extend the St Bees Heritage Coast towards Whitehaven⁶

⁵ Produced by Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership

⁶ The extended Heritage Coast is referred to in the Local Plan as the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast

- Brexit

2.3 Evidence Documents

- 2.3.1 A number of evidence documents support the Local Plan. These cover a range of social, economic and environmental considerations. The following reports have been prepared to inform the emerging policies and allocations and ensure the Local Plan is sound.
- 2.3.2 Documents can be found at the following link:
<https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/local-plan-2021-2038-examination-library>

Table 2: Local Plan Evidence Base

Annual Monitoring Report	Open Space Assessment and 2021 Addendum
Copeland Vision and Prospectus	Playing Pitch Strategy Update 2022
Cumbria Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment	Settlement Landscape Character Assessment 2021
Development Strategy Topic Paper and Update	Stage 1 Economic Viability Assessment
Ecology Assessments 2021	Stage 2 Economic Viability Assessment 2021
Economic Development Needs Assessment 2021	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2021
Employment Land Availability Study 2021	Strategic Housing Market and Objectively Assessed Needs Assessment 2019 and 2021 Update
Equalities Impact Assessment	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2021
Green Infrastructure Strategy	Site Access Assessment 2021
Heritage Impact Assessment	Sports and Physical Activity Strategy inc. Playing Pitch Strategy, Indoor Facilities Study and Play Strategy 2021
Infrastructure Delivery Plan Parts 1 (2020) and 2 (2021)	Town Improvement Plans for Cleator Moor and Millom 2021
Landscape Character Assessment (non-settlement) 2021	Transport Modelling 2021
Local Housing Needs Study 2021	Transport Improvements Study 2021
Local Green Space Document 2020 and 2021 Addendum	Village Services Survey 2021
Masterplan Spatial Frameworks for Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom	West Cumbria Retail, Leisure and Town Centre Study 2020 and Copeland Update 2021
Marine Conservation Zone Assessment 2020 and 2021 Update	Wind Energy Technical Document and 2021 Update
Southern Lakeland Peninsulas Landscape Evaluation 2019	Whitehaven Parking Strategy

Review of the defined area of St Bees Heritage Coast and the case to extend northwards	
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2.4 Sustainability Appraisal

- 2.4.1 The Local Plan has been informed by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA).
- 2.4.2 The SA and SEA process is required by European and National legislation, with the NPPF adding that planning policies should be based on up-to-date evidence about the natural environment and other key characteristics of the area. It is an integral part of the plan preparation process that considers all the likely significant effects on social, environmental and economic factors and promotes sustainability.
- 2.4.3 The purpose of a Health Impact Assessment is to ensure that the Local Plan minimises negative and maximises positive health impacts. Although a Health Impact Assessment is not a requirement under the Regulations, the SA process allows for consideration of health impacts therefore it is sensible to combine the two as an Integrated Assessment (IA).

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Update 2019

- 2.4.4 An SA Scoping Report⁷ was produced in January 2018 and was updated in November 2019 to reflect the production of the Issues and Options consultation document and take into account feedback from statutory consultees.
- 2.4.5 The Scoping Report identified the key social, environmental and economic issues facing Copeland through a review of the latest data and relevant documents from European legislation to local strategies.
- 2.4.6 The Integrated Assessment Scoping Report introduced a number of locally specific Sustainability Objectives which emerging policies would be assessed against. These are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Sustainability Objectives

Number	Name	IA Objective
Environmental objectives		
ENV1	Biodiversity	To conserve and enhance biodiversity in Copeland
ENV2	Landscape and heritage	To protect and enhance places, landscape and buildings of historic, cultural and archaeological value
ENV3	Water resources	To maintain and enhance the water quality of Copeland's inland and coastal water and coasts and to sustainably manage water resources

⁷ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/attachments/integrated-assessment-scoping-report>

ENV4	Climate change	To promote adaptation to climate change
ENV5	Flood risk	To reduce flood risk in Copeland from surface water, rivers, estuaries and sea level change
ENV6	Energy	Increase energy efficiency in the built environment, and promote the use of energy from renewable sources
ENV7	Land Quality	To protect and improve land quality in Copeland
ENV8	Air Quality	To improve air quality In Copeland
ENV9	Waste and recycling	To minimise waste production and increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates
Social Objectives		
SOC1	Accessibility	To improve access to services and facilities in Copeland
SOC2	Health and Wellbeing	To improve physical and mental health and wellbeing of people and reduce health inequalities in Copeland
SOC3	Education	To improve education, skills and qualifications in Copeland
Economic Objectives		
ECO1	Sustainable economy	To support a strong, diverse, vibrant and sustainable local economy to foster inclusive local economic growth
ECO2	Leisure and Tourism	Support the sustainable development of the sustainable leisure and tourism industry
ECO3	Housing	To improve access to a range of good quality housing that meets the needs of the Copeland community
ECO4	Retail	To maintain, enhance and develop a diversity of retail services in Copeland
ECO5	Transport	To enhance and develop sustainable transport networks in Copeland

Sustainability Appraisal Reports

- 2.4.7 The SA process is an iterative one and an assessment has been carried out at each stage of Local Plan production. Each SA Report is included on the Council's website and shows the changes to the Plan at each stage that the assessment has recommended and the Council has subsequently made.

2.5 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 2.5.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) requires that a Habitats Regulations Assessment should be carried out where it is likely that the Plan will have significant effects on former Natura 2000 Sites⁸. Following Brexit, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) now form the UK National Site Network.
- 2.5.2 A HRA of the policies and proposals in the Local Plan, and earlier drafts, has been carried out. The first stage of the process, the Screening stage, identified that significant effects are likely and therefore an Appropriate Assessment (AA) that considers the scale of the effects in more detail and proposes mitigation to overcome the effects has been produced.
- 2.5.3 The results of the HRA have been taken into account when considering which sites to take forward as allocations, and those which are likely to have significant effects on the National Site Network and Ramsar sites have been avoided where possible.
- 2.5.4 It has been more difficult to avoid likely effects caused by policies as these are required to help achieve our objectives. It is therefore important that the mitigation measures identified by the HRA in the AA document are taken forward and a further Appropriate Assessment is carried out at planning application stage where necessary.

2.6 Equalities Impact Assessment

- 2.6.1 The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure that the emerging Local Plan does not lead to direct or indirect unlawful discrimination against groups with Protected Characteristics⁹. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been published alongside the Local Plan to identify and assess any harm that would be caused by the policies or proposals in the Local Plan, promote equal opportunities (e.g. by helping to address existing discrimination or disadvantage) and foster good relationships.

2.7 Duty to Co-operate

- 2.7.1 The Council has a duty to engage with neighbouring authorities and infrastructure providers on issues that cross administrative boundaries. We have continued to work with our colleagues in neighbouring districts throughout the Local Plan process to ensure that the proposals in our Local Plan avoid harm to, and where possible support, their objectives. The Local Plan is accompanied by a Duty to Co-operate Statement and Statements of Common Ground which demonstrates that there has been effective cooperation to suitably address cross boundary issues.

⁸ European habitats and species

⁹ See Glossary for definition

2.8 Using the Plan

2.8.1 The Copeland Local Plan contains strategic policies (outlined in purple) to help diversify and strengthen our economy, unlock our town centres and improve housing quality and choice. It also contains policies that protect and enhance those aspects that make Copeland special and unique, such as our natural spaces and heritage assets, recognising that they are important for the health and wellbeing of our residents as well as attracting visitors to our area.

2.8.2 The Local Plan also contains a number of development management policies (outlined in green) that are positively worded and flexible to help to shape rather than stifle development. The policies set out clearly and up-front, what will be required of developers to help maximise the benefits of development to our communities.

The Local Plan must be read as a whole. Determining whether a proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan as a whole is “a matter of planning judgement for the Council as planning decision-maker”.

R (on the application of Corbett) v Cornwall Council [2020] EWCA Civ 508

2.8.3 The chapters in the Local Plan are arranged as follows:

- **Vision and Objectives:** This sets out what the Local Plan aims to achieve
- **Spatial Portrait:** This identifies Copeland’s key assets and future opportunities in a visual form
- **Development Strategy:** This sets out the Council’s commitment to addressing climate change and identifies where development will take place across Copeland (settlement hierarchy)
- **Development Standards:** This identifies the types of infrastructure developers will be expected to contribute towards through Section 106 and Section 278 agreements and sets out what we will expect in terms of design standards
- **Copeland’s Economy:** This contains strategic and development management policies relating to the economy, low carbon and renewable energy, nuclear, retail, leisure and tourism sectors
- **Copeland’s Communities:** This contains strategic and development management policies relating to housing and community facilities, including sports and cultural facilities
- **Copeland’s Places:** This contains strategic and development management policies relating to Copeland’s natural and built environment
- **Copeland’s Connectivity:** This contains strategic and development management policies relating to physical and digital connectivity
- **Monitoring:** This chapter sets out how the success of the Local Plan policies will be assessed

- 2.8.4 Appendix A-outlines how each of the policies in the *Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028: Core Strategy and Development Management Policies* document are superseded by policies and proposals in this new Copeland Local Plan.
- 2.8.5 Appendix F contains profiles of the sites allocated for housing under Policy H5. The profiles describe the sites and contain a list of site specific considerations and requirements developers must address as part of their proposals. The list has been produced through engagement with a range of bodies and agencies and is intended to reduce the impacts of development.
- 2.8.6 We will also produce a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Technical Documents to support the Local Plan and provide further guidance for developers, including Housing, Design, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure SPDs.

3 Vision and Objectives

3.1 Developing the Vision and Objectives

- 3.1.1 Preparing a new Local Plan has allowed us to redefine what sort of place we want Copeland to be in the future. We have developed an exciting and innovative Vision for the development of Copeland to 2039 that clearly defines and reflects our priorities and the key drivers which will allow us to unlock Copeland's potential. A fundamental part of achieving the vision is to identify a set of overarching objectives that define what the Local Plan Policies will achieve and how we will address key issues and challenges within Copeland.
- 3.1.2 The development of the Vision and Objectives has been informed through building upon and improving objectives from the existing *Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028*. These have been considered alongside key corporate documents in conjunction with the Sustainability Appraisal process to ensure a comprehensive and achievable set of ambitions for Copeland. These will be set out in the following sections.

3.2 Vision for Copeland

By 2039, Copeland will be a place with a prosperous, diverse economy that capitalises on our strengths and facilitates growth, including the opportunities presented by the digital revolution, our thriving nuclear and clean energy sectors, and our target for net zero carbon by 2037. We will maximise our tourism assets, support vibrant town centres with a strong retail offer and enhance community facilities, providing opportunities for leisure, culture and interaction. We will make the most of our natural and built environment, protecting, enhancing and promoting our magnificent landscapes and coastlines, cultural heritage and biodiversity. We will create inclusive and resilient communities, where everyone has access to high quality housing, transport, education and employment opportunities, improving their quality of life, health and happiness.

3.3 Strategic Objectives

- 3.3.1 In order to achieve our Vision, the Local Plan must achieve the following objectives, these are grouped according to the chapters in the Plan.
- 3.3.2 Policies that help the Council achieve the economic, community, places and connectivity objectives will be identified with the following icons respectively:



Copeland's Economy

Economic prosperity

Promote the diversification of Copeland's rural and urban economic base to enable a prosperous, resilient economy, including creative and knowledge-based industries, specialist engineering and the energy sector.

Employment Sites

Provide and maintain a wide range of modern, high-quality employment sites and premises within Copeland's key towns, including the specialist knowledge-based employment cluster at Westlakes Science and Technology Park and Leconfield.

Clean Energy Generation

Support the role of the nuclear industry within Copeland, including the delivery of the Sellafield mission, sooner, safer and cost effectively. Encourage opportunities for new clean energy development, including nuclear new build, advanced nuclear technologies and associated infrastructure developments to produce low carbon electricity, heat and fuels. Support the delivery of the Cumbria net zero carbon target by 2037 in line with the Government's Clean Growth Agenda.

Tourism Opportunities

Promote Copeland's diverse tourism opportunities by utilising and enhancing our built heritage and tourism assets. Recognise and enhance the opportunities offered by Copeland's unique geographical location, including the potential of the unspoiled coast, beach destinations and the western Lake District.

Town Centre Improvements

Enhance the vitality, viability and resilience of town centres and Local Service Centres, recognising their distinctive and unique characters, by improving the housing, retail, leisure and cultural offer for visitors and residents and by ensuring they are adaptable to change.

Educational Attainment

Improve educational attainment by securing new facilities that meet the needs of the current and future population of all ages. Support existing educational facilities such as higher education at Westlakes Science and Technology Park.

Copeland's Communities

Strategic Development

Focus major development in Whitehaven, and encourage complementary and additional development in Cleator Moor, Millom and Egremont and in Local Service Centres and Sustainable Villages where opportunities exist, in line with strategic infrastructure provision and environmental capacity.

Improved Housing Market

Enable a 'balanced housing market' which regenerates the existing housing stock whilst ensuring that all housing is of high quality and design, is situated in attractive locations and responds to differing needs and aspirations, including making provision for affordable and specialist housing.

Sustainable Communities

Ensure that settlements are sustainable and meet the range of needs of their communities by, as far as possible, protecting existing community facilities (including green infrastructure) and supporting appropriate new provision across Copeland where it is suitable for their role and function. Direct an appropriate scale of additional development to rural areas and support measures to improve the viability of farming to help foster sustainable rural communities.

Physical and Mental Health

Ensure that development contributes to the improvement of physical and mental health and wellbeing, reducing health inequalities and providing access for all within the natural and built environment. Ensure that development provides opportunities for social interaction, to foster resilient, cohesive and inclusive communities.

Population Growth

Increase Copeland's population to support economic growth by reducing out-migration (particularly of working age people), attracting new, permanent residents and improving life expectancy.

High Quality Design

Support development that meets the highest possible standards in terms of sustainable design and construction, energy efficiency, provision for biodiversity, safety, security and accessibility. Support development that relates well to the existing built environment, enhances the public realm, protects amenity and creates quality places.

Copeland's Places

Climate Change Mitigation

Mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change by directing development away from areas of flood risk and coastal erosion and by securing nature-based solutions which improve the extent of tree cover and green and blue infrastructure to create connected and resilient wildlife corridors, store carbon and help people adapt to climate change.

Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity

Protect and enhance the rich biodiversity and geodiversity both within and outside of Copeland's many nationally and internationally designated sites, ensuring that existing habitats are extended and effectively connected, that new habitats are created and that lost habitats are restored, all in ways that secure biodiversity net gain and defend against ecological collapse.

Landscapes and Heritage

Conserve and enhance all landscapes and heritage within Copeland, including attaching great weight to the conservation and enhancement of the setting of the Lake District National Park, World Heritage Sites and the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast, in

addition to the many other places and buildings of historical, cultural and archaeological importance and their settings.

Waste Reduction

Promote the reuse of materials, minimise waste production and increase recycling and recovery rates. Facilitate the efficient use of land, including restoring and remediating previously developed land and existing buildings for development, where this does not threaten valued biodiversity features.

Safeguarding Natural Resources

Safeguard and where possible enhance the natural (including water, mineral and soil) resources in Copeland and, in addition, address the impacts of mining, iron working, nuclear energy and other former land uses.

Copeland's Connectivity

Digital Connectivity

Reduce the need to travel, and promote growth, by supporting enhanced high speed digital connectivity, improved mobile and rural broadband access and infrastructure.

Transport Improvements

Enable sustainable, active and low impact travel, improving access to key services and employment opportunities as well as the leisure opportunities of the coast and Lakeland fringe. Develop and maintain safe, efficient, high quality, modern and integrated transport networks with good internal links and connections to key routes, including the West Coast Main Line via both Carlisle and Barrow on the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line, and the M6 via both the A595/A66 and A595/A590.

4 Spatial Portrait

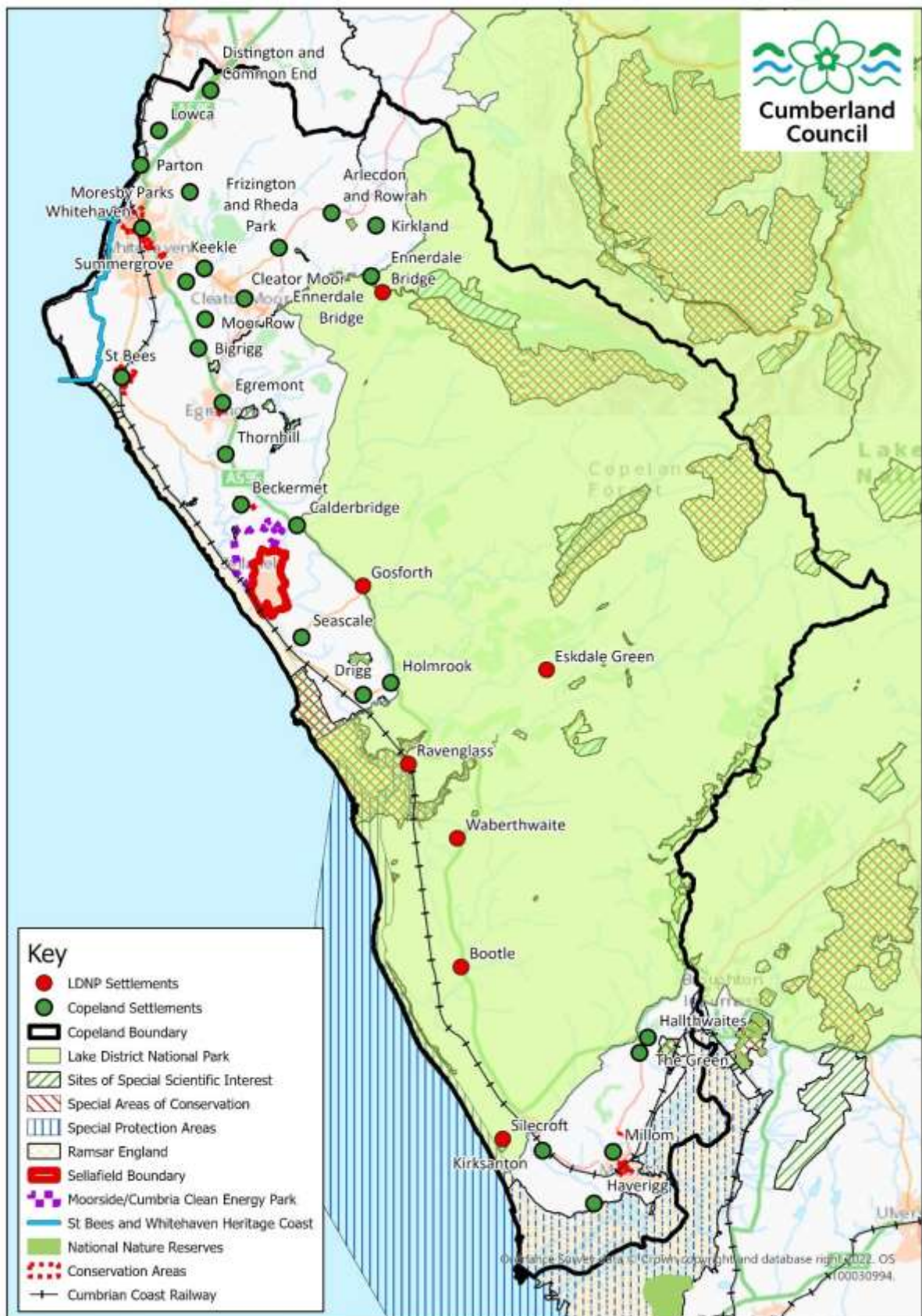
4.1 Defining Copeland

- 4.1.1 Copeland is located on the west coast of Cumbria and is primarily rural in nature. It has a population of 68,041 residents¹⁰, 25,098 of which live within our largest town Whitehaven.
- 4.1.2 Copeland also contains three market towns, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom, the latter of which is located in the south of Copeland. Millom in the south has strong connections to the Barrow area¹¹ which contains a number of services, such as schools, hospitals and leisure facilities, that are used by Millom residents. The journey time from Millom to Barrow is approximately 35-45 minutes, compared to a journey time of almost an hour between Millom and Whitehaven. Connectivity between the north and south of Copeland is poor, with the A595 and the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line being the key routes.
- 4.1.3 Copeland is renowned for its attractive and varied landscapes which include parts of the Lake District National Park, the only area of Heritage Coast in the north-west of England and a number of picturesque rural villages. Copeland also has a wealth of heritage assets, many of which are located within its towns and villages and provide a sense of place and civic pride. These include evidence of Roman and Viking activity such as the Roman Fort at Parton, remnants of Copeland's industrial history and examples of fine Georgian architecture in Whitehaven's town centre.
- 4.1.4 Copeland has an ageing and falling population. The Local Plan has a key role to play in reversing this trend and attracting additional residents into Copeland. This is important if the economic aspirations of the Council, which include maintaining its position at the forefront of the UK's nuclear and clean energy sectors, are to be achieved.
- 4.1.5 As well as supporting growth within the nuclear and clean energy sectors, the Local Plan also aims to support and enhance our tourism, retail and leisure sectors. This will be important in order to diversify the economy and provide additional job opportunities for our residents.
- 4.1.6 The following Key Diagram provides a summary of Copeland at a strategic level. Individual maps of each settlement identified within the Local Plan can be seen in Appendix B.

¹⁰ Cumbria Observatory 2020

¹¹ Barrow is within Westmorland and Furness authority following Local Government Reorganisation in 2023.

Figure 1: Key Diagram



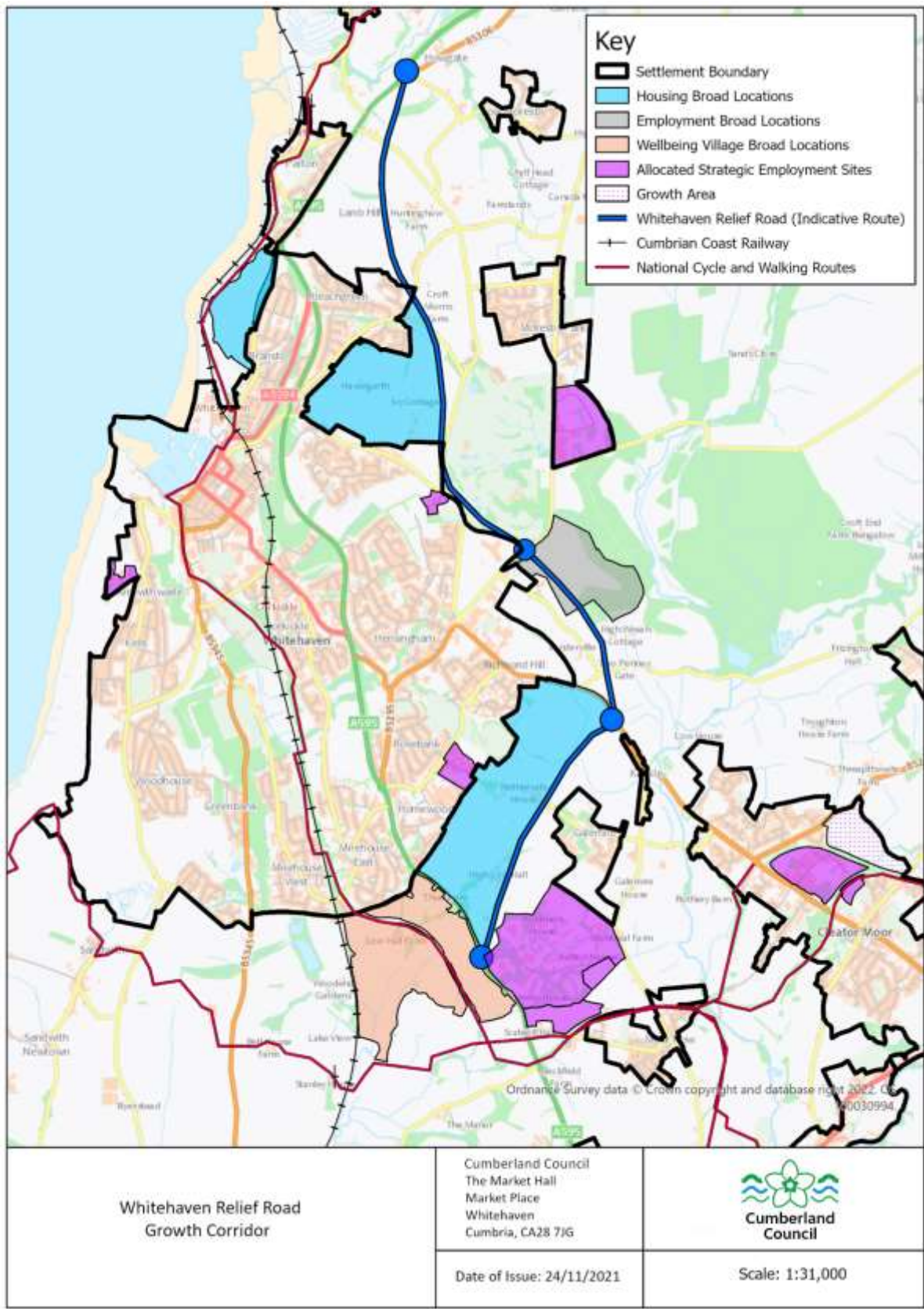
4.2 Longer Term Growth Aspirations

- 4.2.1 In the longer term, Figure 2 identifies a number of potential Broad Locations. In terms of housing, these are broad areas of search where growth could be delivered if at the Local Plan Review stage¹² it becomes apparent that there are insufficient specific, deliverable sites to deliver the Local Plan Strategy. It is highly unlikely that all potential Broad Locations for housing would be required to come forward at any one time and if required a decision will be made at that time to ascertain the most suitable area. This will depend on a number of factors such as land availability, statutory consultee comments and whether funding has been identified to bring forward the Whitehaven Relief Road etc. The delivery of the Local Plan is not dependent on the success of these schemes but the Council will proactively support their development.
- 4.2.2 The Wellbeing Village Broad Location at Mirehouse South, which is a greenfield site situated in the Pow Beck Valley, differs to the others. The site was identified as an Associated Development Site to support the construction of Moorside Power Station, providing worker accommodation while development was ongoing. The longer-term ambition for the site is the delivery of a high-quality wellbeing village given its location close to the A595, West Cumberland Hospital, Westlakes Science Park and coastal areas. The site would contain a significant amount of landscaping and open space that can be used by residents of the neighbouring Mirehouse Estate. The site could also contain specialist housing such as student accommodation, housing for health workers and/or extra care housing. The site will be retained for these purposes and standard market housing development will not be supported. The position will be reviewed at Local Plan review stage.
- 4.2.3 The Council has begun producing development principles for the site and these will be used to inform discussions regarding any future development in the area to help inform a masterplan. It should also be noted that the site is located on a Minerals Safeguarding Area for sand and gravel. The Council will need to determine whether prior extraction of the mineral should be carried out before development commences
- 4.2.4 The Employment Broad Location at Hensingham Common, shown on Figure 2, could be considered as a future, long term area of search for employment uses, subject to land being available. It would be most suited to this use given its location close to the Whitehaven Relief Road and other the strategic employment sites of Leconfield and Westlakes Science Park
- 4.2.5 The Relief Road remains a priority for the Council. It will reduce pressure on the town centre road network improving access for residents and shoppers, reduce commuting time, improve connectivity between Copeland's strategic employment sites and provide a new physical edge to the town creating potential for new growth area within it. The indicative route of the relief road and potential key junctions are shown in Figure 2. The development of appropriate

¹² The NPPF requires a Local Plan to be reviewed 5 years from the Plan's adoption at the latest

route options for this scheme by National Highways would be subject to extensive design work and further public consultation.

Figure 2: Longer Term Growth Aspirations



5 Development Strategy



Policies: DS1-DS2

5.1 Development Strategy Headlines



Strengths

- Copeland has the lowest carbon footprint of any area in Cumbria
- Agreed ambitions to achieve the Cumbria wide goal of net zero carbon by 2037
- Range of services and facilities within the towns and larger villages
- Railway line which links settlements along the coast
- Attractive rural environment



Challenges

- Vulnerable to climate change given our coastal location and the the number of waterbodies
- Ageing population
- Challenging rural geography
- Limited public transport provision



Opportunities

- Inclusion of additional settlements within the hierarchy to allow appropriately scaled development in some smaller villages to support local services
- Additional rural development to provide housing choice and reduce social isolation

5.2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 5.2.1 At the core of the Local Plan is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means that planning applications will be approved where they accord with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise¹³.
- 5.2.2 Sustainable development has three dimensions, which are mutually dependent and of equal importance: economic, social and environmental. The Local Plan therefore aims to strike a balance between promoting development to meet the needs and aspirations of Copeland whilst minimising, and preventing where possible, negative impacts, such as waste, pollution and damage to the built and natural environment.
- 5.2.3 The Council will take a positive approach to sustainable development by approving applications without delay where they accord with the Development Plan (and where relevant, any neighbourhood plan), unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Full consideration will also be given to the relevant policies with the NPPF.
- 5.2.4 The Council is committed to early, meaningful engagement with developers and relevant bodies to improve the quality of development. We will work proactively with developers to highlight any areas where there is conflict with the Development Plan, and suggest solutions, at an early stage in the application process. This supports paragraph 39 of the NPPF which states that early engagement *“has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community”*.
- 5.2.5 Planning conditions will be attached to planning approvals where they are necessary, relevant to planning and the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise, and reasonable.

5.3 Addressing Climate Change

What is climate change?

- 5.3.1 Climate change is one of the most challenging issues facing the world today and reducing the impacts of climate change is one of the key drivers behind sustainable development.
- 5.3.2 While climate change is recognised as a global issue, its consequences will be felt at the local level from the associated impacts of increasing temperatures, rising sea levels and extreme weather conditions. Copeland is particularly vulnerable to climate change given its coastal location and the fact that it contains a number of waterbodies. It is therefore vital that planning policy makes a positive

¹³ A definition of material considerations can be found in the PPG, paragraph 008
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/determining-a-planning-application#how-decisions-on-applications>

contribution towards helping to mitigate the impacts of climate change for our future generations.

Key Legislation and Policy

5.3.3 Paragraph 152 of the NPPF states the following:

“The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.”

5.3.4 The Climate Change Act 2008 sets a legally binding target to reduce the UK’s greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% in 2050 from 1990 levels. The Act introduced a system of carbon budgets including a target that the annual equivalent of the carbon budget for the period including 2020 is at least 34% lower than in 1990.

5.3.5 In May 2019, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) outlined proposals for the UK Government to bring forward legislation to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050. Subsequently, the UK parliament amended the Climate Change Act of 2008, committing the UK to becoming “Net Zero Carbon” by 2050. The Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership has accelerated this target, working towards an ambitious goal to make Cumbria the first carbon neutral county in the UK by 2037.

5.3.6 In light of the Government’s strategy for net zero carbon by 2050, the Clean Growth Strategy (updated 2018) sets out a comprehensive set of policies and proposals that aim to accelerate the pace of ‘clean growth’ i.e. deliver increased economic growth and decreased emissions.¹⁴

5.3.7 The Government approved changes to Part L of the Building Regulations in October 2019 (the Future Homes Standard) which removes the ability of planning authorities to set higher energy efficiency standards than those set out in the Building Regulations. The Standard will be introduced by 2025 and will require new homes to be “*future proofed with low carbon heating and world-leading levels of energy efficiency*”.

Achieving net zero carbon in Copeland

5.3.8 In order to help Cumbria meet the target of net zero carbon by 2037, it is important that change happens on a number of scales, and Local Planning Authorities have a vital role to play within that.


5.3.9 In April 2019, all Cumbrian Local Authorities and the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) formally adopted the Cumbria Joint Public Health Strategy incorporating a pledge for Cumbria, “*to become a ‘carbon neutral’ county and to*

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy/clean-growth-strategy-executive-summary>

mitigate the likely impact of existing climate change". In order to take meaningful action towards the County's net-zero carbon commitment, the Cumbria Climate Action Group was formed under the Cumbria Joint Leaders Board and Chief Executive's Group.

- 5.3.10 Copeland is at the Centre of Nuclear Excellence (CoNE), and recognised as a key player of 'The Clean Energy Coast' brand. The Energy Coast is made up of a 325 member strong business cluster. These are the front runners in clean technology solutions and in pioneering new ways to achieve net zero carbon and overcome some of the most complex environmental challenges, developing world leading capability in areas such as robotics and artificial intelligence.
- 5.3.11 In December 2019, the Council agreed a Climate and Environment Position Statement, which highlights Copeland's low-carbon history, and our corporate commitment to changing for the better, to limit damage to the environment and to identifying longer-term strategic ambitions to become a low-carbon authority. The statement also sets out our ambitions and responsibilities as a leader in the community.
- 5.3.12 The Council's Corporate Strategy for 2020-2024 includes an ambition to, *"lead by example in developing a Climate Position Statement to create awareness, making meaningful step changes in our operations to reduce both the carbon footprint of the Council but also challenge our residents and businesses in Copeland to do likewise"*.
- 5.3.13 In December 2020, the Council produced a revised Climate Change Policy (2020-2023), which sets out the following objectives:
- To commit to becoming a truly sustainable organisation, with the ability to deliver the quality of services expected of the Council for Copeland's people and communities now and in the future;
 - To take meaningful action to limit the harmful effects of climate change, and to protect and enhance the environment; and
 - To continue our journey towards becoming a low-carbon Council
- 5.3.14 The Climate Change Policy is accompanied by a Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Plan (April 2022), which is an action-focussed document outlining plans to change the way we operate to take greater consideration of sustainability and to immediately reduce our footprint across the organisation.
- 5.3.15 In July 2021, we launched the People's Panel on Climate Change alongside the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership. This is a citizen's jury panel made up of randomly selected Copeland residents to help shape Copeland's response to Climate Change. The role of the panel is to debate and make recommendations to the Council and other organisations on where their priorities should lie to achieve the goal of net zero carbon by 2037. Supporting the People's Panel is an oversight panel made up of local stakeholders from public and private sectors, who will guide the panel and actively support the successful implementation of the Panel's recommendations.

- 5.3.16 The Council is committed to challenging the causes and impacts of climate change by working with partners and developers to deliver energy efficient developments. The Local Plan has a key role to play in this by ensuring that new development does not increase the emissions responsible for climate change. A number of measures that developers can take to reduce environmental impacts of development are shown in the box below.

Measures Developers can take to reduce the environmental impacts of their developments	
	Adopt Passivhaus principles
	Avoid the use of fossil fuels in heating and power generation
	Reuse existing materials on site where possible
	Offset any carbon intensive energy usage over the lifetime of the development
	Incorporate renewable technologies
	Incorporate active and low carbon travel options
	Avoid deforestation and tree/hedgerow loss – increase tree and hedgerow cover
	Incorporate sustainable drainage systems and water harvesting measures
	Use permeable materials for areas of hardsurfacing
	Reuse previously developed land
	Build at higher densities
	Reuse and refurbish existing buildings
	Use sustainable land use management, forestry and farming practices and agri-environmental schemes
	Preserve and enhance existing local greenspaces and/or provide additional ones
	Incorporate green roofs and walls
	Provide space for the storage of recycling containers
	Provide at least 10% biodiversity net gain

- 5.3.17 Where possible, proposals should make use of existing buildings as often the restoration, refurbishment and retrofit of existing buildings can have less of a carbon impact than new build developments, as set out in the development standards chapter.
- 5.3.18 Where reuse is not an option, there are a number of measures that can be incorporated into new developments to reduce their carbon footprint. These include passive design measures (relating to building location and orientation, building layout, air tightness and insulation, solar gain and access, thermal mass, shading and ventilation) which take into consideration local climate and site conditions and responds to this, in order to maximise amenity whilst minimising

energy usage¹⁵. Other methods, such as directing development away from areas of high flood risk, increasing green infrastructure¹⁶ and promoting low carbon travel can also be highly beneficial.

- 5.3.19 A Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be produced to give guidance to developers on how sustainable development can be achieved.

5.4 Settlement Hierarchy

Purpose of a Settlement Hierarchy

- 5.4.1 Identifying areas for growth is one of the most important ways the Local Plan can contribute to sustainable development and mitigate climate change. It forms the basis for the Council's Development Strategy which sets out how much growth should go where. The Development Strategy is divided by development type (housing, retail, leisure, tourism and employment) and is set out within each relevant chapter.
- 5.4.2 Categorising Copeland's settlements recognises their different characters, roles and functions and helps distinguish between them and areas of open countryside (which includes smaller hamlets and clusters of buildings).

Proposed Settlement Hierarchy

- 5.4.3 The settlement hierarchy is identified in Policy DS1 and Figures 3 and 4. It directs the majority of development over the plan period to the four towns, Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom. These are the most sustainable parts of Copeland as they contain a high number and a broad range of services, as well as greater infrastructure to support further development. Directing new development to the towns will help improve their offer, increase their attractiveness, help support regeneration strategies and reduce the need to travel.
- 5.4.4 Whilst the towns remain the focus for growth over the Plan period, the hierarchy also acknowledges that development is also important in rural areas, helping to increase community resilience, sustain existing services and enable residents to stay within their communities as their housing needs change. New development can also help reduce social isolation, particularly in places such as Copeland which have an ageing population.
- 5.4.5 Rural areas have also become more popular since the outbreak of Covid-19 with more people now being able to live further from work due to the increase in the availability of home-working and more flexible working patterns. In 2020 Rightmove reported that they saw a 126% increase in the number of enquiries from city residents about village homes across June and July compared to previous year's figures¹⁷.

¹⁵ [What is Passivhaus? \(passivhaustrust.org.uk\)](https://passivhaustrust.org.uk/)

¹⁶ For further information please see the Natural Environment chapter

¹⁷ <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/news/articles/property-news/escape-to-the-country>

- 5.4.6 The hierarchy contains five tiers of settlements in total (excluding the open countryside), compared to only three tiers within the Core Strategy. Beneath the Principal Town and Key Service Centres are three tiers of villages where development would be supported in principle: Local Service Centres, Sustainable Rural Villages and Rural Villages. A definition of each is included within Policy DS1.
- 5.4.7 As well as an increased number of tiers, the hierarchy also allows for development in a greater number of villages within those tiers than the Core Strategy. It identifies 24, villages (including village clusters) compared to the 14 villages identified in the Core Strategy.
- 5.4.8 Villages clusters are two or more settlements that are connected by safe, accessible walking routes of less than a mile¹⁸. These are identified in the settlement hierarchy.
- 5.4.9 Forming clusters has resulted in some settlements featuring within a higher tier than they would have done if the hierarchy was based on services within that village alone. This recognises the fact that settlements do not operate in isolation and share services.

Cleator and Cleator Moor are an example of a settlement cluster. Cleator Moor, being one of our towns, benefits from a range of services and supports those located in Cleator. The two settlements are well linked by safe, pedestrian routes meaning that Cleator is a good place to direct additional housing development to.

¹⁸ A mile between the closest edges of each settlement

Figure 3: Settlement Hierarchy Copeland North

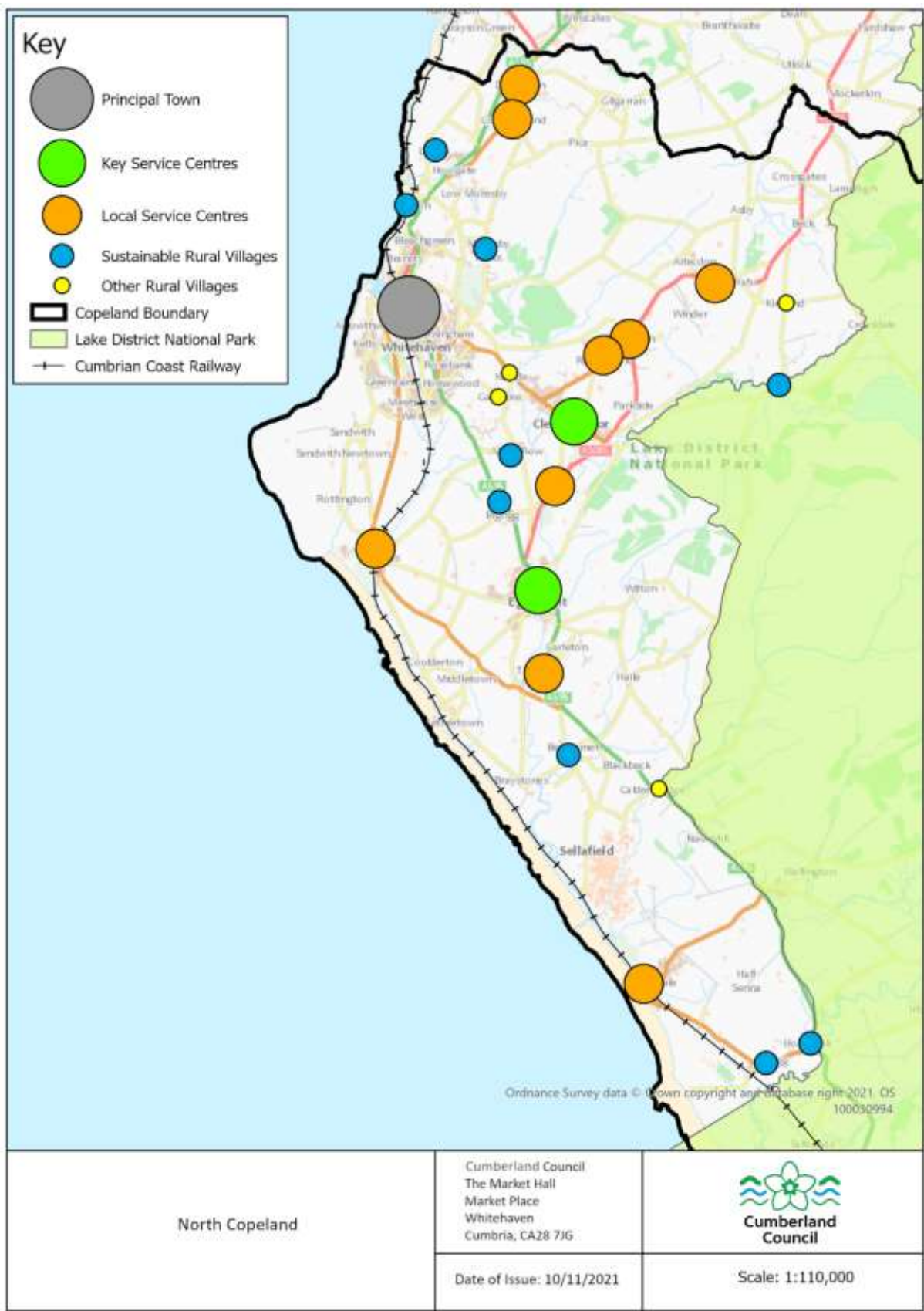
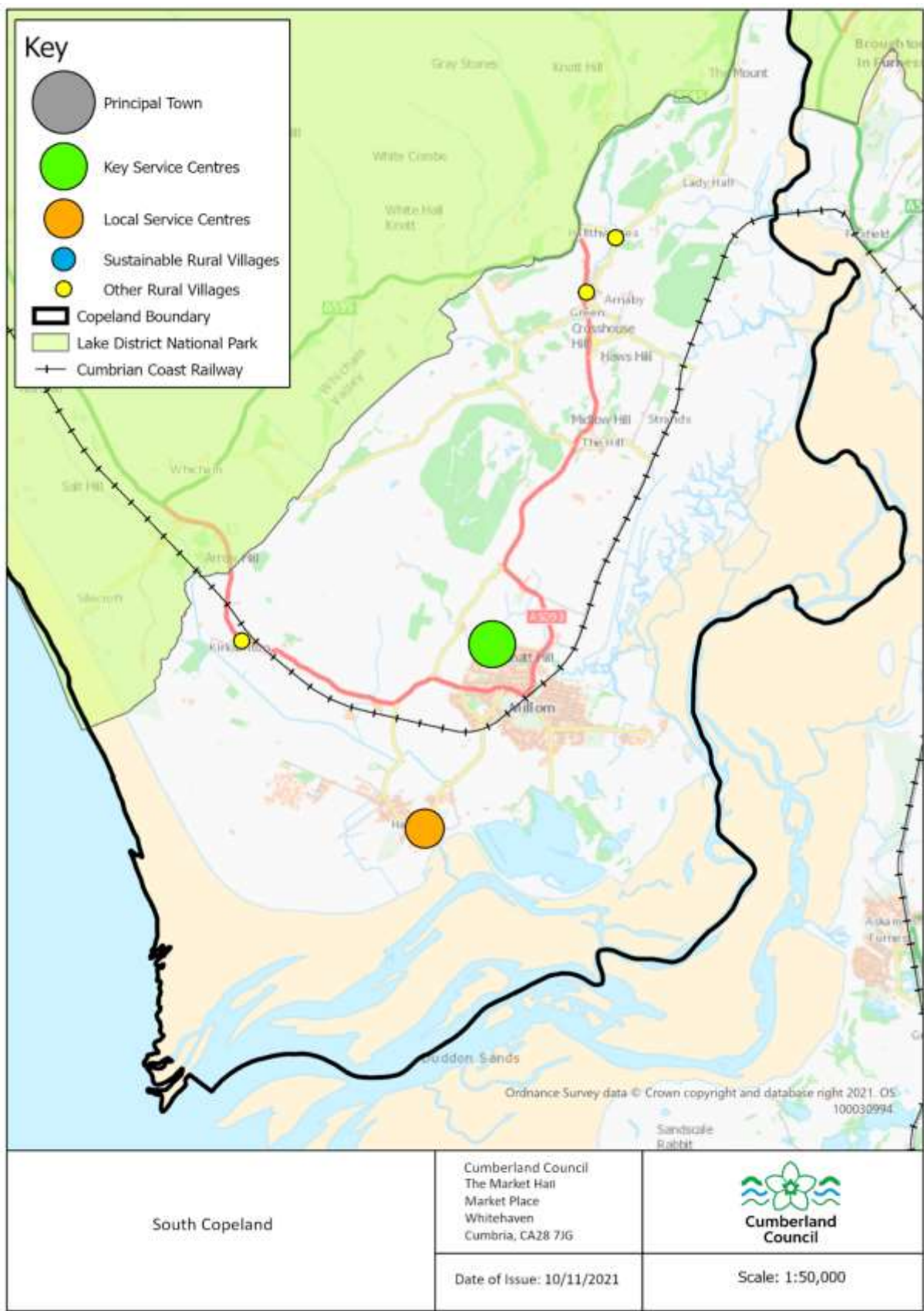


Figure 4: Settlement Hierarchy Copeland South



Methodology

- 5.4.10 When developing the hierarchy, consideration was given to matters such as the number and type of services, employment developments and public transport provision as well as pedestrian and cycle links between settlements.
- 5.4.11 A safe walking route is one that has street lighting and a continuous pavement. A frequent bus or train service is one that runs from morning to evening and provides a number of options for leaving and returning to the village on the same day.
- 5.4.12 When considering train links, the distance from the station to the main settlement and the safety of the route was considered. For example, whilst The Green benefits from a regular train service to Millom, Green Road station is over a mile away from the main settlement and the route to the station is not considered to be safe, lacking a pavement and lighting in parts.
- 5.4.13 Settlements within the parts of Copeland in the National Park are dealt with in the Lake District National Park Local Plan. The importance of services within such villages, for example Gosforth, is however recognised particularly in terms of how they serve residents within the Copeland Local Plan area. When scoring settlements that are partly within the Copeland Local Plan area and partly within the Lake District National Park Plan area, points were awarded for services in the village as a whole regardless of planning jurisdiction. The villages, identified in the LDNP Local Plan, in closest proximity to the Copeland Local Plan boundary are listed at the bottom of Policy DS1.
- 5.4.14 The Village Services Survey 2021 was used to score and rank settlements within Copeland using a matrix system. The scores given to each settlement are contained within the Settlement Hierarchy and Development Strategy Update 2022¹⁹.
- 5.4.15 What the hierarchy means in practice, in terms of the scale of housing, retail, leisure and employment that will be supported within each tier, is considered under each relevant chapter.

Impacts of Covid-19 on Services

- 5.4.16 The Village Services Survey was carried out following the removal of most Covid-19 restrictions. It is accepted that the pandemic may have resulted in loss of some services however when comparing the data from the survey in 2019 to the latest one the impact was less than expected. Where a business was closed temporarily due to the pandemic this was often notified by a sign on the premises. Where this was the case, points were still awarded for the service as it was anticipated that the business would become operational again in the near future.

¹⁹ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/copeland-local-plan-2021-2038-evidence-base>

- 5.4.17 The settlement hierarchy will be reviewed as part of any future Local Plan Review. At present the NPPF requires Local Authorities to review Local Plans at least once every five years.
- 5.4.18 As stated above the Covid-19 pandemic has altered the way we work and shop with more people able to do both remotely where an internet connection is available. However, as the Council has no control over internet provision and given that not everyone has the option of working remotely, points have not been awarded to a settlement if it has internet provision.

Strategic Policy DS1: Settlement Hierarchy



The Council will support development within the settlements specifically listed below. Development must be proportionate in terms of nature and scale to the role and function of the settlement, unless it has been identified within the Plan to meet the strategic growth needs of Plan area .

The amount of development (housing, retail and leisure, employment) apportioned to each tier of the hierarchy is identified within the relevant chapter. Delivery will be closely monitored against these figures.

Hierarchy of Settlement	Definition	Settlements
Principal Town	<p>The largest settlement in terms of population by a considerable margin with the broadest range of day-to-day services including the West Cumberland Hospital, a number of secondary schools and an extensive choice of convenience and comparison goods stores and employment opportunities. Well connected to neighbouring settlements by public transport.</p> <p>The town will continue to be the primary focus for new development in the Plan area (town centre, retail, employment and housing), with large scale housing extensions, windfalls and infill development.</p>	Whitehaven

Key Service Centres	<p>Copeland's towns are self-sufficient providing a wide range of services, including convenience and comparison stores, employment opportunities, schools and healthcare. They also act as service hubs for nearby villages.</p> <p>The focus will be for town centre developments, employment development and medium scale housing extensions, windfall and infill development.</p>	Cleator Moor
		Egremont
		Millom
Local Service Centres Villages that scored 15 points or more in the Village Services Survey July 2021	<p>These centres have a supporting role to Copeland's towns containing a broad range of services. Settlements operate independently to meet day to day needs or as a well-connected cluster, linked to a neighbouring town or village of a similar scale by a frequent public transport service and/or safe pedestrian routes a mile or less in length.</p> <p>The focus will be to support the retention and small scale growth of existing services and businesses. Development will be focussed on existing employment allocations, moderate housing allocations, windfall and infill development.</p>	Arlecdon & Rowrah
		Cleator
		Distington & Common End
		Frizington & Rheda
		Haverigg
		Seascale
		St Bees
		Thornhill
Sustainable Rural Villages Villages that scored between 10 and 14 points in the Village Services Survey July 2021	<p>Settlements which offer a limited number of services but which could support a limited amount of growth to maintain communities.</p> <p>The focus will be to support the retention and small scale growth of existing services and businesses. Small scale housing allocations, windfall and infill development will be supported in principle. The focus for employment development will be Whitehaven Commercial Park.</p>	Beckermest
		Bigrigg
		Drigg
		Ennerdale Bridge
		Holmrook
		Moresby Parks
		Moor Row
		Lowca
		Parton
Rural Villages Villages that scored between 5 and 9 points in the Village	<p>Smaller settlements which offer one or two key services but which are physically separated from settlements within a higher tier. Public transport and pedestrian links are poor therefore reliance is likely to be on the private vehicle. Limited development would enable</p>	Calderbridge
		Hallthwaites
		Keekle
		Kirkland
		Kirksanton

<p>Services Survey July 2021</p>	<p>future housing needs to be met and support existing local services.</p> <p>Existing services will be retained and development will be small scale, and primarily windfall and infill developments.</p>	<p>Summergrove The Green</p>
<p>Open Countryside</p>	<p>Remaining parts of the Copeland Local Plan Area including smaller settlements or areas of sparse development not listed above.</p> <p>Policy DS2 lists the exceptional circumstances where development within the open countryside would be supported.</p>	
<p>LDNPA 'Rural Service Centres' close to the Copeland Local Plan boundary</p>	<p>Settlements within Copeland but outside the jurisdiction of the Copeland Local Plan. Please see the Lake District National Park Local Plan for further information regarding these.</p>	<p>Gosforth</p>
<p>LDNPA 'Villages' close to the Copeland Local Plan boundary</p>		<p>Silecroft Remaining part of Ennerdale Bridge</p>

5.5 Settlement Boundaries

- 5.5.1 Settlement boundaries are a well utilised planning tool for guiding and identifying limits to development for an individual settlement, particularly in rural areas. Land outside of the boundaries (including in smaller villages and hamlets not listed in the hierarchy) is defined as open countryside for planning purposes where development is generally restricted.
- 5.5.2 Identifying settlement boundaries provides an element of certainty for developers and residents and ensures that development is plan-led in accordance with paragraph 15 of the NPPF. They are also a useful means of preventing sprawl, protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and maintaining settlement character and form.
- 5.5.3 Settlement boundaries have been defined using the existing settlement boundaries identified in Core Strategy Hierarchy where these exist as a starting point. Consideration was then given to the following:
- the existing built development form;
 - whether there were any opportunities to extend the boundary to allow future additional windfall development²⁰ to come forward on suitable sites without causing unacceptable harm or intrusion into the open countryside. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was used as the basis for this assessment as it assessed the availability, suitability and achievability of sites within Copeland. When assessing suitability, the SHLAA considered a number of evidence documents including the Settlement Landscape Character Assessment, ecology assessments, Landscape Character Assessment, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and also comments received from statutory consultees;
 - whether any extension would cause two or more settlements to merge;
 - whether there were any sites with extant planning permissions, completed developments or allocations outside the Core Strategy boundaries that should be brought in;
 - whether the settlement crossed over the boundary with the National Park (meaning part of it would come under the jurisdiction of the LDNPA Local Plan);
 - the amount of land that would be required to meet housing needs identified in each tier of the proposed hierarchy.
- 5.5.4 The Council has taken a positive approach to identifying settlement boundaries and has considered the suitability and availability of all land adjoining the settlements listed in the hierarchy through the SHLAA process.

²⁰ Windfall development within an extended boundary would still require a planning application where it would be judged against the Development Plan.

- 5.5.5 Smaller sites on the edge of the settlement have also been considered, even though they are excluded from the SHLAA assessment due to their size²¹, and the boundary has been amended to include such sites where they constitute an appropriate rounding off of the settlement or where they are required to provide access to a larger housing allocation.
- 5.5.6 The review identified that the boundaries of all settlements identified in the Core Strategy should be amended. It also identified a number of villages that weren't in the settlement hierarchy in the Core Strategy where a whole new boundary was required.
- 5.5.7 The Settlement Boundaries are identified in Appendix B and on the Proposals Map. Boundaries are based on land ownership and/or clearly delineated curtilage edges or landscape features (both natural and unnatural) such as hedgerows or roads in most cases.
- 5.5.8 Policy DS2 supports development in principle within the settlement boundaries where it accords with the Development Plan. It also allows for suitable windfall developments to take place on sites directly adjoining and well-connected²² to towns and villages identified in the hierarchy subject to certain criteria. Any development should be commensurate with the role, form, scale and infrastructure capacity of the settlement. This provides flexibility, as sites within the boundaries may not always come forward as anticipated, whilst ensuring that isolated homes are avoided in line with national planning policy. It also ensures that important landscapes and the character of settlements are protected.
- 5.5.9 Developers will be expected to provide evidence to justify an open countryside location when applying for the types of development listed under Policy DS2, criterion 2. Further information regarding the type of evidence that will be required can be found in the following policies and paragraphs:
- Nuclear related development: Policies NU3 and NU4
 - Renewable Energy Proposals including wind developments: Section 9.3 and Policies CC1 and CC2 (see also the Wind Energy Technical Document)
 - Essential Infrastructure to support energy developments and other infrastructure: Policies CC1, CC2 and NU3
 - Agricultural, forestry, farm diversification or tourism proposals: Policies RE1, RE2, T1 and H16 (see also the Housing Technical Paper)

²¹ Sites under 0.25ha are excluded from SHLAA assessment

²² The Settlement Hierarchy and Development Strategy Paper identifies safe pedestrian routes to be those that are a mile or less long, with a lit pavement.

Strategic Policy DS2: Settlement Boundaries



Settlement boundaries are identified for all settlements in the hierarchy and are shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map. Development within these boundaries will be supported in principle where it accords with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

To ensure the delivery of allocated sites is not prejudiced, development outside the settlement boundaries will only be accepted in the following cases:

- 1) Where the proposal is for housing and;
 - a) the site is well related to and directly adjoins an identified settlement boundary; and
 - b) the site is or can be physically connected to the settlement it adjoins by safe pedestrian routes; and
 - c) the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites; or
 - there has been previous under-delivery of housing against the requirement for 3 years or more or
 - the proposal is for a specific type of housing supported by Policies H15, H16 or H17.
- 2) The proposal is for one of the following types of development and a proven need for an open countryside location has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council:
 - Nuclear related developments
 - Renewable energy proposals, including wind farms
 - Essential infrastructure to support energy developments and other infrastructure
 - Appropriate rural developments such as agricultural, forestry, farm diversification or tourism proposals which are dependent on such a location

6 Development Standards



Policies DS3-DS9

6.1 Development Standards Headlines



Strengths

Areas of best and most versatile agricultural land in the south of the Copeland
Clean air - no air quality management zones
Dark skies



Challenges

Large parts of Copeland at risk from fluvial and coastal flooding
Rural nature of Copeland increases the reliance on private vehicles, contributing to carbon emissions
Issues of development viability reduce the amount of facilities and improvements that could be provided through developer contributions



Opportunities

Opportunity to develop SPDs on Design and Obligations
Opportunities to decarbonise transport, including improved active travel routes and the increased provision of Electric Vehicles.
Opportunities for developers to contribute towards the net zero carbon target, including the restoration, refurbishment and retrofit of existing buildings

6.2 Development and Infrastructure

6.2.1 When planning for new development it is necessary to understand the infrastructure that will be needed to support it. A requirement of the NPPF is for Local Plans to set out the contributions expected from development to fund new infrastructure, as this will give developers some certainty on infrastructure requirements at the earliest stage. Such policies should however, not undermine the deliverability of the plan.

6.2.2 To understand infrastructure needs associated with allocated sites and future windfall developments, the Council have prepared the following evidence base documents, all of which are available to view on the Council's website. The evidence base documents form the starting point for the discussions and reflect a point in time; more up to date evidence, submitted at the time of a planning application, may supersede the documents listed.

Transport Improvement Study 2021 (TIS)

6.2.3 The TIS identifies which improvements will be required to the existing road network to make sure it has the capacity to cope with traffic from new development on allocated sites. Improvements identified are sustainable, deliverable and proportionate and promote health and access for all.

Site Access Assessments 2021

6.2.4 The SAA is complementary to the TIS and is made up of two parts, a phase 1 and phase 2 assessment. Phase 1 provides a review of 37 sites considered for inclusion within the Local Plan in terms of their ability to provide a suitable access. This considers the deliverability of the sites and identifies any access issues which might need to be overcome at application stage. The phase 2 assessment provides a more detailed view of six sites in terms of outline access designs and associated scheme costings.

Open Space Assessment 2020 (OSA) and 2022 Update

6.2.5 The OSA includes an assessment of 299 open spaces in Copeland by typology and settlement. It considers the value and quality of each and looks at provision against the Plan area average. The OSA identifies shortages of different types of open space within different settlements. An addendum to the OSA was produced in 2022 which considers and assesses an open space in Kirksanton. The OSA and any subsequent updates will be considered when identifying whether developer contributions will be required towards new or improved open spaces.

A Ten-Year Sports and Physical Activity Strategy 2021

6.2.6 This document includes an assessment of the supply and demand for indoor and outdoor sports and recreation facilities in Copeland. It comprises a Built Facilities Study, Playing Pitch Strategy and Play Strategy. The PPS element could not be fully completed at that time due to Covid-19 and was completed in Summer 2023. The Strategy identifies gaps within sporting provision across Copeland and makes a number of recommendations to help address those and improve participation rates.

Housing Needs Study 2020 (HNS) and Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2021 (SHMA)

- 6.2.7 The HNS and SHMA identify the type of housing that will be required within the Local Plan area over the plan period. It also identifies an affordable housing requirement as set out within Policy H8.

Housing Allocations Site Profiles 2021

- 6.2.8 This document identifies any additional known constraints on the housing allocations. Mitigating such constraints can help inform the design of schemes, but may also lead to additional costs for developers. The profiles have been updated at each stage of the Local Plan process and now form part of the Plan themselves, rather than being a separate evidence document. Developers must give full consideration to the profiles within the plan when drafting their proposals and demonstrate how they have done so in their planning applications.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2021 and 2022 Update

- 6.2.9 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) pulls together information from the above documents, assesses the current level of infrastructure provision across Copeland and identifies the level of planned infrastructure required to support new development across the plan period. Where growth exceeds capacity, the additional infrastructure required is identified, with a broad estimated cost, timeframe, funding sources and details of who is responsible for delivery. The Council will regularly review and update the IDP where necessary to ensure the information within it is up to date for the purposes of transparency.
- 6.2.10 The Council has, and will continue to, engage with infrastructure bodies such as and National Highways and utility providers such as United Utilities and Electricity North West, to ensure that constraints can be overcome and determine any appropriate mitigation. Engagement is also important to ensure that their programmes of improvements take into consideration projected growth across Copeland and support the delivery of the Local Plan.
- 6.2.11 The types of infrastructure that are considered in the IDP are: coastal change management, flood risk and drainage, highways and transport (including walking and cycle routes), electric vehicle charging, low carbon vehicle infrastructure, utilities (gas, electricity, water and waste water and broadband), education, health and social care, sport and leisure, green infrastructure and open space.

Developer Contributions

- 6.2.12 Developer contributions are essential to help deliver the necessary infrastructure to support new development. Contributions are gained through planning obligations such as Section 106 agreements and Section 278 highways agreements. The Council currently has no intention to produce a Community Infrastructure Levy at present given the viability issues across Copeland.
- 6.2.13 When identifying and collecting contributions the Council will ensure compliance with the three tests set out in paragraph 57 of the NPPF. This means that contributions must be:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Cumbria County Council Planning Obligations Policy (2013)²³

- 6.2.14 This document set out how Cumbria County Council, as highways, education and Lead Local Flood Authority calculates the level of contributions requested for highways, social care and education improvements and drainage/flood reduction measures.

6.3 Viability

- 6.3.1 In compliance with national policy, the level of developer contributions required through the Local Plan have been subject to viability testing. The Council's aim is to strike the appropriate balance by negotiating the delivery of infrastructure to support new development, when the viability of a site allows.
- 6.3.2 A Stage One Copeland Economic Viability Assessment was completed in 2017. This provided a generic, formula based approach to assess the viability of an appropriate spectrum of representative types of development scenario within Copeland. At this stage the viability modelling identified a mixed picture of viability which is not uncommon with neighbouring authorities and the wider region.
- 6.3.3 A Stage 2 Viability Assessment was produced in 2021. In order to ensure the Assessment was robust and the assumptions within it were realistic, the views gained from the development industry were vital. Comments were received during the consultation on the Local Plan that related to the Viability Study. Further evidence to inform the study, such as the updated IDP, was also received. In light of this an update was produced in 2022 which shows that the Local Plan as a whole is viable and deliverable.
- 6.3.4 Viability testing through the Local Plan process, removes the need for further viability assessment at planning application stage. In rare cases however an applicant may wish to demonstrate that particular circumstances have changed and this justifies a need for a more up-to-date site specific assessment. In such cases, national guidance should be considered and detailed evidence should be submitted. Where a viability assessment is submitted alongside a planning application this will be assessed by the Council at the expense of the applicant.
- 6.3.5 The Council will publish an Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement summarising developer contributions, received through Section 106 and Section 278 planning contributions. The statement provides detail on how developer contributions are supporting new development and local infrastructure. The statement is available on the Council's website alongside the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Reports.

²³ <https://cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/538/755/1599/41590142248.PDF>

- 6.3.6 Policy DS3 sets out contributions for the enhancement of existing, or the provision of new, infrastructure. Applicants are advised to discuss proposals with the Council at the earliest stage to determine the exact level of contributions required.

Strategic Policy DS3: Planning Obligations



The Council will secure the following infrastructure provision/enhancements through planning obligations to mitigate the impact of development where it is reasonable, necessary and directly related to the development (please note this list is not exhaustive):

- Transport and Highways improvements (including public transport, sustainable transport solutions, footpaths and cycleways)
- Car parking and cycle parking/storage
- Electric vehicle charging points
- Travel Plans
- Drainage infrastructure, flood risk mitigation measures and surface water management
- Digital connectivity
- Low carbon energy and renewable energy infrastructure
- Affordable housing
- Education and health facilities
- Community facilities including social care and sports facilities
- Green infrastructure including public open space, play areas, and allotments
- Environmental improvements such as landscaping, tree planting, public art, biodiversity net gain, measures to conserve and enhance heritage assets
- Compensatory habitats

The necessary management and monitoring arrangements must be agreed with the Council and put in place as early as possible in the development process. Infrastructure delivered through obligations must be provided on site unless specific circumstances make off-site contributions more appropriate. When determining the nature and scale of any planning obligations sought, account will be taken of specific site conditions, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and other material considerations.

Where an applicant considers that the provision of appropriate infrastructure would make the development unviable a site specific viability assessment must be submitted to the Council as early as possible within the planning application process. The site specific viability assessment must clearly state the particular circumstances that justify the need for the assessment (e.g. setting out if there have been any change in site

circumstances since the Plan's adoption or why they consider the Local Plan Viability Assessment to no longer be up to date). Where the findings of the site specific assessment have been agreed by the Council which conclude that the development would be unviable, a proportionate reduction of contributions will then be agreed between the relevant parties.

6.4 Design and Construction

6.4.1 High quality design is crucial to promoting sustainable development and ensures that the character and appearance of an area is protected and enhanced. A well-designed development will enhance the existing built and natural environment, be appropriate to its intended use and support safer communities, good health and wellbeing. It can also help Copeland become a front runner in energy efficiency and the digital economy.

6.4.2 Policy DS4 provides a summary of the standards expected on new developments. The following paragraphs provide some additional information regarding some of the key criteria within the policy.

Active Design

6.4.3 The principles of active design should be considered by developers at the earliest opportunity in order to create spaces that allow residents and visitors to lead active and healthy lifestyles. Planning applications will be assessed to determine whether and how they take opportunities available to promote active design and facilitate sport and physical activity, and applicants should set out how their designs have embraced active design principles within their Design and Access Statements where these are required.

6.4.4 Sport England have produced helpful guidance on Active Design and further details can be found within the Sports, Health and Culture and Connectivity Chapters.²⁴ Developers are also encouraged to use Sport England's Active Design Checklist which is a useful way of applying active design principles to specific proposals.

Inclusive design

6.4.5 Consideration should be given to how *all* users will experience and interact with the proposed space or building, taking account of ability, language, age, gender, culture etc. Developers should look to incorporate principles such as dementia friendly principles where possible and should take into account the Equality Act 2010 (or any legislation that replaces it) when developing proposals.

Designing out crime

6.4.6 When drafting proposals applicants should remove opportunities for crime and in doing so reduce the vulnerability of people and property and the fear of crime. Simple design measures such as ensuring public spaces are overlooked or providing appropriate lighting should be considered early in the planning process.

²⁴ <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design>.

Secured by Design have developed a series of guides to help developers design out crime²⁵.

Protecting heritage

- 6.4.7 Copeland's heritage is an important aspect of the built environment. The Council has produced a number of Conservation Area Design Guides that should be considered when dealing with sites within Conservation Areas to help safeguard and enhance their character. Further information, regarding these guides, and other relevant documents which should be considered when determining applications that affect the historic environment, can be found within the Built Environment chapter.

Light Pollution

- 6.4.8 Copeland's dark skies are one of its key assets, however this is being eroded through inappropriate, artificial lighting which causes light pollution and can have serious effects upon health and wellbeing, biodiversity and our climate. The Friends of the Lake District have produced a suite of useful guidance²⁶ which developers are encouraged to review when drawing up proposals.

Reuse of buildings

- 6.4.9 One of the ways in which the environmental impacts of development can be minimised is through the reuse of existing buildings where possible. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors estimates that 35% of the lifecycle carbon from a typical office development (increasing to 51% for residential premises) is emitted before the building is even opened²⁷. Opportunities for the sympathetic restoration and reuse of buildings, in particular, historic buildings, should be sought where possible. Historic England have produced guidance for developers in their Responsible Retrofit of Traditional Buildings (2015)²⁸ document.

Sustainable Construction

- 6.4.10 Developers are encouraged, and in some cases will be required, to produce a Construction Environmental Management Plan to identify how construction will avoid, minimise or mitigate adverse effects on the environment and surrounding communities during construction and to help ensure that development is compliant with environmental regulations and legislation. Such plans should identify the biodiversity features of a site which will be managed to maintain and enhance the site's nature conservation value. They are also a useful way of making site personnel aware of the site's biodiversity value and ensure they adapt their working practices accordingly (e.g. by not laying heavy materials down on a root protection zone)
- 6.4.11 The Council strongly encourages developers to meet high design standards to create quality places. The Council intends to produce a Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will provide more detailed design guidance for

²⁵ <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides>

²⁶ <https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/lighting-policy>

²⁷ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-53642581>

²⁸ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/planning-responsible-retrofit-of-traditional-buildings/>

applicants seeking planning permission and support the policies within the Plan and the Government aims of achieving high quality design set out in the NPPF.

Policy DS4: Design and Development Standards



The Council will expect all new development to meet high-quality design standards which contribute positively to the health and wellbeing of residents. This means that developments must:

- a) Make use of existing buildings on site wherever practicable and deliverable, unless they have a negative impact upon the street scene;
- b) Create and enhance locally distinctive places which are sympathetic to the surrounding context of the built, historic and natural environment and local landscape character;
- c) Use good quality building materials that reflects local character and vernacular and are sourced locally where possible;
- d) Incorporate high quality, inclusive and useful open spaces;
- e) Create layouts that provide safe, accessible and convenient pedestrian and cycling routes that encourage walking and cycling based on Active Design principles and provide connections to existing walking and cycling routes where possible;
- f) Not give rise to severe impacts on highway safety and/or a severe impact on the capacity of the highway network and allow for the safe access and manoeuvring of refuse and recycling vehicles. Should a development create such an impact then mitigation measures will be sought;
- g) Take the needs of people with mental and physical disabilities into consideration, including through adopting dementia friendly principles;
- h) Create opportunities that encourage social interaction;
- i) Be built to an appropriate density that enables effective use of land, whilst maintaining high levels of amenity;
- j) Be of flexible and adaptable design where appropriate;
- k) Incorporate measures to design out crime and reduce the fear of crime, taking into consideration secured by design principles;
- l) Be laid out in a way that maximises solar gain to internal spaces to promote energy efficiency and sustainable solutions;
- m) Use appropriate levels and types of external lighting that does not create light pollution and helps maintain dark skies in line with up to date good lighting guidance;
- n) Mitigate noise pollution through good layout, design and appropriate screening;
- o) Address land contamination and land stability issues with appropriate remediation measures;
- p) Include water efficiency measures such as rainwater recycling measures, green roofs and water butts where possible and appropriate; and

- q) Ensure there is appropriate provision to allow residents to recycle household waste.

Developers must take a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to development by respecting existing site constraints including utilities infrastructure on site. Applications for major development proposals should also produce and include a Construction Environmental Management Plan as part of their applications.

6.5 Landscaping

- 6.5.1 National policy requires Councils to protect and enhance valued landscapes. A Settlement Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Character Assessment have been produced to identify strategic areas of valued landscape in Copeland. These documents are discussed further in the Natural Environment chapter.
- 6.5.2 In order to maintain and enhance these strategic landscapes, the Council will expect a high-quality landscaping scheme to be submitted where appropriate. Opportunities should be taken to connect areas of landscape at a local, site scale to the more strategic areas of landscape where appropriate.
- 6.5.3 Landscaping is comprised of both soft and hard landscaping. Soft landscaping comprises the living parts of the landscape such as trees, hedgerows, grass, plants etc. Hard landscaping comprises elements such as hard surfacing (e.g. footpaths, decked areas, fencing, walls, drainage channels etc.).
- 6.5.4 Good quality landscaping can have several benefits providing space for biodiversity, improving health and wellbeing and reducing surface water run-off. It should not however be used as a means of “hiding” poor quality development that is not in keeping with the character of an area.
- 6.5.5 Consideration needs to be given to how landscaping features may change over time, for example how trees within a front garden will grow and potentially affect lighting to a property or visibility from a driveway. Roots and leaves can also affect SuDS systems in close proximity so this also needs to be taken into account when designing a landscaping scheme.
- 6.5.6 When developing landscaping schemes, consideration also needs to be given to the policies within the Natural Environment chapter.

Policy DS5: Hard and Soft Landscaping



Where appropriate a high-quality landscaping scheme should be submitted with all proposals for development. This should include:

- A management plan which identifies all existing trees, hedgerows, ponds and other wildlife features and demonstrates how they will be integrated within the development. Landscaping should be well assimilated into the wider surrounding landscape.
- Details of the position, species and number of new trees, hedgerows and landscape features. Species used should be appropriate for the location and should be native where possible with consideration given to future growth rates and proximity to buildings.
- Details of any trees, hedgerows and landscape features that will be lost or replaced
- Details of any hard landscaping proposed including materials, levels etc.
- Details of future maintenance of the landscaping and replacement/replanting should the landscaping fail.

Ancient hedgerows or woodlands should only be removed in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Consideration should be given to the role landscaping can play in reducing surface water discharge, for example through the planting of trees, the use of permeable surfacing for driveways etc.

Opportunities should be taken to connect new areas of soft landscaping to existing areas of green infrastructure networks where possible.

6.6 Reducing Flood Risk

Coastal and Fluvial Flooding

6.6.1 Given its coastal location, parts of Copeland are at risk from coastal flooding.

6.6.2 The North West England and North Wales Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) extends from Great Orme's Head in North Wales to the Scottish Border. The document was adopted in 2010 and is currently under review. It provides a high-level assessment of the risks associated with coastal processes, and includes a strategy for coastal flooding and erosion risk management. The SMP indicates 'Holding the Line' for all major settlements and a 'Managed Realignment' at

Eskmeals, which entails making sure the road there will be protected until a realigned route is provided. The policy for most of the undeveloped coast in Copeland is 'No Active Intervention', which means there is no planned investment in coastal defences on those stretches.

- 6.6.3 The Cumbria Coastal Strategy, produced in April 2020, builds upon the Shoreline Management Plan. The Environment Agency has a national and regional overseeing role working with Coastal Protection Authorities. Cumberland Council is a Coastal Protection Authority and oversees flood and coastal erosion on the Copeland coast. Responsibility for managing each section of coastline lies with the landowner/asset owner.
- 6.6.4 As well as being at risk from coastal erosion and flooding, there are also a number of waterbodies within Copeland that are prone to flooding. The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, produced in 2021, identifies localised flooding issues in the South of Copeland, North Whitehaven and Cleator Moor. These areas are particularly susceptible to flash flood events.

Waste Water

- 6.6.5 Flooding can also occur when the public sewer network reaches capacity. When identifying flood risk prior to submitting a planning application, developers are encouraged to engage in early dialogue with the relevant wastewater undertaker for the area to identify whether there are any existing public sewers on or near the site which are at a risk of flooding and/or whether there is a record of previous flooding from public sewers on or near the site. This information will then be considered appropriately during the application process in accordance with national policy and guidance.

Measures to Reduce Risk

- 6.6.6 The NPPF directs development away from areas at the greatest risk of flooding. New development should be located in Flood Risk Zone 1 where possible. Development proposals in Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3 are subject to the sequential test to demonstrate there are no sites available at a lower risk of flooding. Only where there are no such sites available in Flood Risk Zones 1 and 2 will development be supported in Zone 3 subject to the exception test. Further information on the sequential and exception tests can be found in the NPPF and NPPG.
- 6.6.7 The Council will continue to work with partners to manage the risks associated with coastal erosion and flooding. When identifying potential sites for allocation through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) process, consideration was given to flood risk at the earliest stage and housing sites were excluded from the SHLAA where more than 50% of the site was in Flood Risk Zone 2 or 3²⁹. It is accepted that mitigation can be put into place to allow development to come forward on such sites through a planning application, however it is the role of the Local Plan to direct development to those areas at least risk of flooding

²⁹ Unless the area of the site outside the flood risk zone measured more than 0.25ha

where possible³⁰. Reserved Matters and applications for full planning permission should provide details on the approach to foul and surface water drainage by submitting a Foul and Surface Water Management Strategy which includes details of finished floor and ground levels, details of the levels of the proposed drainage system and details of future maintenance and management regimes. The Council's validation list sets out where this is required.

- 6.6.8 Applicants will be expected to include details of how the approach to drainage on any phase of the development has regard to interconnecting phases within a larger site, for example, to avoid a proliferation of pumping stations.
- 6.6.9 A number of brownfield Opportunity Sites within Whitehaven town centre are at risk of flooding along with parts of the Harbour, Midgley Gill and Pow Beck valleys. Such sites aren't allocated for a specific use and a site specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required as part of any future planning application.

Nature Based Solutions

- 6.6.10 Developers are encouraged to incorporate nature based solutions to reducing flood risk within their proposals, this could include simple measures such as including trees within their developments which can play a significant part in reducing surface water run-off. The Environment Agency have produced guidance on other measures that can be incorporated into developments³¹.

Strategic Policy DS6: Reducing Flood Risk



The Council will ensure that flood risk is reduced and mitigated in Copeland through:

- a) Directing development to allocated sites outside areas of flood risk where possible, unless it can be demonstrated that it would provide wider sustainable benefits outweighing the flood risk and that the development would be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere;
- b) Only permitting windfall development in areas of flood risk where applicants have carried out the flood risk sequential and exception tests to the satisfaction of the Council and appropriate mitigation is provided;
- c) Supporting measures to address the constraints of existing drainage infrastructure capacity;
- d) Avoiding development in areas where the existing drainage infrastructure is inadequate, unless appropriate mitigation is provided;

³⁰ This may not always be possible, for example if development is required to deliver regeneration on a town centre site.

³¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/use-nature-based-solutions-to-reduce-flooding-in-your-area>

- e) Supporting new flood defence measures to protect against both tidal and fluvial flooding in the Plan area, including appropriate land management as part of a catchment wide approach;
- f) Ensuring that any development that incorporates flood mitigation strategies does not have adverse effects on water quality;
- g) Requiring the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems where appropriate; and
- h) Working with partners to manage the risks associated with coastal erosion and flooding and ensure that all new development is located outside areas identified as being at risk either now or in future revisions of the Shoreline Management Plan.

Sustainable Drainage

- 6.6.11 The need to minimise future development's vulnerability to climate change is a significant factor in the design and construction of new development, particularly in terms of reducing flood risk through its location and active management of surface water. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), dependent on site specific characteristics, can aid the reduction of the rate and volume of surface water run-off and therefore reduce flood risk. Where possible and appropriate all new development must incorporate SuDS in accordance with Policy DS7 below.
- 6.6.12 It is acknowledged that SuDS may not be appropriate in all cases³², for example SuDS that incorporate any form of soakaway on contaminated brownfield sites may pose a risk to land and groundwater quality through the movement of soluble contamination.
- 6.6.13 Applications for new development within the surface water or ground water catchment area of pollution sensitive National Site Networks or Ramsar sites must be supported by a project level Appropriate Assessment. This must include details of sustainable drainage measures to be employed once operational and water quality control measures within construction plans must be adhered to. In particular, development within the catchment of the River Ehen SAC, its tributaries and the downstream catchment of the SAC must include stringent measures to avoid the risk of pollution.

Policy DS7: Sustainable Drainage



New development must incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems unless it can be demonstrated that this not appropriate. Drainage systems should be well designed with

³² For example, if the site lies on heavy clay

consideration given to the additional benefits they can provide as spaces for landscape, biodiversity and recreation.

Development on greenfield sites should seek to achieve pre-development or better levels of surface water run-off and on previously developed sites, a reduction in surface water discharge should be sought. In demonstrating a reduction clear evidence of existing connections from the site and associated rates of discharge calculations should be provided. In both cases, measures should be put in place to prevent pollution entering watercourses with surface water managed at source.

Where identified on the local validation list applicants should submit a Drainage Strategy that shows how foul and surface water will be effectively managed and maintained. Where SuDS are being incorporated details of their long-term management should be provided. This will be secured through the use of s106 agreements.

Surface water should be discharged in the following order of priority:

1. To a suitable soakaway or some other form of infiltration system
2. An attenuated discharge to a surface water body such as a watercourse giving full consideration to the catchment and sub-catchments
3. An attenuated discharge to a public surface water sewer, highway drain or another discharge system where there is clear evidence, to the satisfaction of the Council, that alternative preferred options are not available
4. An attenuated discharge to a public combined sewer where there is clear evidence, to the satisfaction of the Council, that alternative preferred options are not available

6.7 Soils, Contamination and Land Stability

Soils and Contamination

- 6.7.1 Soil has an important role within ecosystems, providing habitats, storing carbon and filtering water and is vital for agriculture. Soils are however at risk of degradation which involves both the physical loss (erosion) and the reduction in quality of topsoil associated with nutrient decline and contamination³³.
- 6.7.2 Construction activity can have a negative impact upon soils through contamination, compaction and by covering soils with impermeable materials. It can also have a positive impact through remediation, with the use of brownfield sites for development presenting a positive opportunity for remediation of despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.
- 6.7.3 Applications for major developments on greenfield sites will require a Soil Resource Plan. This should contain guidance on the methods that will be used

³³ <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn265.pdf>

during construction for recovering, storing and reusing soils whilst preventing a loss in quality. Defra has produced guidance for developers on what a Resource Plan should contain³⁴

- 6.7.4 Copeland contains areas of Best and Most Versatile Land. This is land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification and is the most flexible, productive and efficient for farming. Such land should be protected from development and maintained for agriculture.
- 6.7.5 The Council recognises that developing on brownfield land can be more costly and affect a scheme's viability. To help with this there is often support and funding available (such as Homes England's Brownfield Land Fund) to support development on such challenging sites, and the Council would expect applicants to provide evidence illustrating that such opportunities have been fully pursued to ensure developments meet the policy requirements within this Local Plan.

Land stability

- 6.7.6 Copeland has a strong mining history and there are a number of recorded mining features present at surface and shallow depth which pose a potential risk to land stability and public safety. Given this it is important that a risk assessment is carried out where necessary.

Policy DS8: Soils, Contamination and Land Stability



Soils

In order to reduce soil degradation and surface water run-off developers are required to:

- Use sustainable construction measures as set out in the Construction Code of Practice for Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites;
- Submit a Soil Resource Plan with applications for major development on greenfield sites;
- Provide details of how any adverse impacts on the soil resource can be avoided or mitigated; and
- Avoid development that results in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land or areas of deep peat where possible.

Contamination and Land Stability

The Council will proactively work with developers and other partners to identify opportunities to remediate contaminated and unstable sites.

³⁴ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b2264ff40f0b634cfb50650/pb13298-code-of-practice-090910.pdf>

Development sites likely to have caused detriment to land quality will need to be risk assessed. Some sites will be more sensitive due to the location of sensitive environmental and human health receptors e.g. flood risk areas, surface waters, vulnerable aquifers, housing, schools, hospitals, children's play areas.

It is the developer's responsibility to secure safe development and provide the necessary information at the time of the application. The minimum information that should be provided by an applicant is the report of a Preliminary Investigation (desk study, site reconnaissance and preliminary risk assessment) or Coal Mining Risk Assessment, where necessary. The findings of this assessment should determine if further investigation is needed.

Where contamination and/or land stability issues are identified, development proposals should incorporate appropriate remediation and subsequent management measures to remove unacceptable risks. The full implementation of approved remediation measures will normally be required prior to the commencement of, or the occupation of, the proposed development of any phase.

6.8 Air Quality

- 6.8.1 One of the Copeland's key assets is its clean air and the Council's Environmental Health team will continue to monitor air quality within Copeland.
- 6.8.2 The Council produced its Air Quality Annual Status Report in 2019. This states that air quality in Copeland is typically very good with NO² levels well below the annual mean objective of 40 µg/m³. The quality of air does however vary across Copeland, with the highest levels of NO² found in central Whitehaven of (24.3 µg/m³ annual average), compared to the lowest levels (4.0 µg/m³ annual average) in the heart of Wasdale. The main polluter in Copeland is road traffic. This is likely to increase across Copeland, if the Local Plan strategy is successful in reversing population decline and attracting growth.
- 6.8.3 The Habitats Regulations Assessment supporting the Local Plan has considered the impact of policies and allocations on air quality in relation to protected sites. Transport movements associated with the allocations have been modelled and where increases are likely on transport corridors within 200m of sensitive designated sites this has been identified in the HRA.
- 6.8.4 The Local Plan aims to minimise the impacts of new development on air quality by:
- Focussing new housing development close to key services minimising the need to travel.

- Supporting the use of renewable energy and sustainable modes of travel (the role sustainable transport can play in improving air quality is considered further within the Connectivity chapter).
- Enhancing the green infrastructure network.
- Requiring Construction Environmental Management Plans to be submitted alongside applications for major development.
- Locating new development away from sensitive sites such as those designated for nature where possible.

6.8.5 Policy DS9 states that planning permission will only be granted where proposals will not give rise to unacceptable levels of air pollution. Unacceptable levels include those that would potentially lead to likely significant effects on National Site Network and Ramsar sites where mitigation is not possible. Advice will be sought from the Council's Environmental Health team as to whether a proposal is likely to cause levels that would exceed relevant air quality standards and cause unacceptable harm to health and the environment. Where air quality monitoring identifies a decrease in air quality in residential areas or designated sites the Council will work with partners to mitigate impacts, for example through increasing Green Infrastructure in those areas where it is possible and appropriate.

Ammonia Emissions

6.8.6 There are several designated sites within the Copeland boundary that are over their critical threshold levels for ammonia. Whilst some of these sites fall outside the Copeland Local Plan area there is potential for development within it to have additional effects. These are:

- Duddon Valley Woodlands SSSI, Greendale Mires SSSI, Silver Tarn, Hollas and Harnsey Mosses SSSI, Brantrake Moss and Devoke Water SSSI, Ennerdale SSSI, Haile Great Wood SSSI, Milkingstead Wood SSSI, Hallsenna Moor SSSI, Duddon Estuary SSSI, Pillar and Ennerdale Fells SSSI, Duddon Mosses SSSI, Black Moss SSSI and Wasdale Screes SSSI.

6.8.7 The Council will support landowners who wish to implement ammonia reduction measures from farming practices where possible, such measures were suggested in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report as an additional means of reducing emissions³⁵.

6.8.8 Some farming activities such as slurry spreading does not require planning permission. However, where permission is required, such as proposals for new or extended farming development and some industrial developments, should include details of measures to reduce ammonia measures where appropriate. For

³⁵ Further guidance for landowners is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-good-agricultural-practice-for-reducing-ammonia-emissions/code-of-good-agricultural-practice-cogap-for-reducing-ammonia-emissions>

example, proposals for new animal housing linked to an increase in cattle should include provisions for storing and covering manure appropriately.

Policy DS9: Protecting Air Quality



Development proposals will only be granted planning permission where they will not give rise to unacceptable levels of air pollution. The Council will continue to monitor air quality in the Copeland area and will introduce Air Quality Management Areas as necessary.

Applications for new or extended farming developments must include details of measures to reduce ammonia emissions where appropriate.

7 Copeland's Economy



Policies E1-E7

7.1 Economy Headlines



Strengths

High concentration of manufacturing and construction skills from work associated with Sellafield

High median earnings

High entry rates into apprenticeships

Key strategies in places such as Cumbria Industrial Strategy, Copeland Vision 2040 and Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus



Challenges

Ageing workforce

Low rates of enterprise creation

High youth unemployment

Average earnings are inflated by the number of people working at Sellafield but living outside of Copeland

Distance from the Motorway and wider Strategic Road Network



Opportunities

Creation of a business cluster building on existing specialisms in the nuclear and energy sector

Potential to grow the supply chain and expand their specialisms into non-nuclear sectors from Copeland

Cumbria Clean Energy Park

Growth of Artificial Intelligence/Robotics sector

7.2 Introducing the Chapter

- 7.2.1 Copeland's economy is changing; whether that is changes to the mission at Sellafield and the increased role of the supply chain in the site's environmental remediation, opportunities for new cutting edge clean energy generation, or changing shopping patterns and focus for our town centres, there are many opportunities that will arise in the coming years and this chapter of the Local Plan aims to provide the framework to support these transitions and maximise the potential.
- 7.2.2 This chapter describes Copeland's economy in general and the policies and sites that will support the growth and transformation of Copeland , which include:
- Changes at the Sellafield site, and opportunities to broaden and grow the supply chain
 - Developing an energy business cluster that can create a 'Cumbria advantage' to incentivise clean energy supply chain organisations to locate, grow, export and diversify from the region
 - New low carbon energy generation
 - Growth of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotics
 - The transformation of our town centres and the regeneration sites to support this
- 7.2.3 Other chapters following this focus on the rural economy, clean and renewable energy, nuclear, retail, leisure and town centres, and the tourism sector.
- 7.2.4 Growing Copeland's economy is a key priority for the Council, which has recently published its growth strategy: *Copeland Visions 2040*, and also played a major role in producing the *Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus*.
- 7.2.5 The policies and allocations within this chapter provide the flexibility to direct and realise the short, medium and longer term economic goals and ambitions of the Council to ensure that every opportunity is considered and supported where appropriate.

7.3 Defining Copeland's Economy

- 7.3.1 Copeland's economy is unique. It is a self-contained Functional Economic Market Area (EDNA 2021), with most economic activity shared with neighbouring Allerdale.
- 7.3.2 Copeland is home to Sellafield Ltd. The number of Sellafield Ltd employees working in West Cumbria is approximately 10,000 of which around 7,000 work on the Sellafield site. In terms of the supply chain, there are also many thousands working in West Cumbria – both on the Sellafield site and in satellite premises throughout West Cumbria. It occupies a prominent position on Britain's Energy Coast' and is the UK's Centre of Nuclear Excellence. These bring about specific skills and opportunities that can be built upon to apply in other industries and export across the UK and world from Copeland.
- 7.3.3 Copeland shares many sectors with the rest of Cumbria, albeit often on a slightly reduced share, and these cover a number of established and emerging industries. It is in the Manufacturing and Construction sectors though that Copeland has a strong sectoral advantage when compared to the rest of the county and England, linked to operations at Sellafield, and there is a real opportunity to build on this and develop a nuclear business cluster in Copeland .
- 7.3.4 This business cluster can be based around a range of transferable skills and capabilities in areas such as clean energy, robotics, research and engineering that are stimulated from the Sellafield mission, but can then be further developed and refined for new sectors and markets.
- 7.3.5 Table 4 highlights these specialisms when compared to both Cumbria and England.

Table 4: Location Quotient Broad Sector Specialisms - Copeland vs Cumbria and England 2019

Sector	Copeland vs. Cumbria	Copeland vs. England
Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	0.77	3.17
Mining, quarrying & utilities (B, D and E)	0.83	0.87
Manufacturing (C)	2.20	4.29
Construction (F)	1.28	1.39
Motor trades (Part G)	0.41	0.58
Wholesale (Part G)	0.41	0.28
Retail (Part G)	0.60	0.68
Transport & storage (inc. postal) (H)	0.48	0.45
Accommodation & food services (I)	0.51	0.74
Information & communication (J)	0.48	0.13
Financial & insurance (K)	0.43	0.12
Property (L)	0.36	0.24
Professional, scientific & technical (M)	1.19	0.76
Business administration & support services (N)	1.10	0.63

Sector	Copeland vs. Cumbria	Copeland vs. England
Public administration & defence (O)	1.30	1.42
Education (P)	0.83	0.58
Health (Q)	0.89	0.90
Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R, S, T,U)	0.65	0.60

Source: EDNA 2021

- 7.3.6 In terms of occupation type and skills, Copeland has a greater proportion of employees working in professional and technical occupations than in Cumbria, and the North West and Britain, which can largely be attributed to the nuclear and research sectors as can be seen from Table 5 below.

Table 5: Employment by Occupation (Jul 2020-Jun 2021)

	Copeland (No.)	Copeland (%)	Cumbria (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
Soc 2010 Major Group 1-3	14,500	48	42.3	47.3	50
1 Managers, Directors And Senior Officials	#	#	12.5	10.2	10.9
2 Professional Occupations	6,400	21.3	15.4	22.2	23.3
3 Associate Professional & Technical	5,300	17.5	14.3	14.7	15.6
Soc 2010 Major Group 4-5	5,800	19.3	23.4	19.5	19.2
4 Administrative & Secretarial	#	#	11.4	10.6	10.2
5 Skilled Trades Occupations	#	#	11.8	8.8	9
Soc 2010 Major Group 6-7	5,500	18.3	15.9	16.8	16.1
6 Caring, Leisure And Other Service Occupations	#	#	7.4	8.7	9
7 Sales And Customer Service Occs	#	#	8.4	8	7.1
Soc 2010 Major Group 8-9	4,300	14.4	18.4	16.5	14.7
8 Process Plant & Machine Operatives	#	#	7.6	6.3	5.6
9 Elementary Occupations	#	#	10.8	10.2	9.1

Source: ONS annual population survey

- 7.3.7 Table 6 demonstrates that Copeland is home to almost 3,000 businesses (2017) the overwhelming majority are considered to be 'micro' in size, meaning they employ nine employees or less. Copeland's businesses are typically smaller than in the rest of Cumbria, the North West and UK.

Table 6: Business Size (Employees)

	Micro (0 to 9)	Small (10 to 49)	Medium (50 to 249)	Large (250+)	Total
Copeland	85.49%	11.92%	2.07%	0.35%	2,895
Cumbria	84.37%	13.20%	2.18%	0.25%	100%
North West	83.34%	13.34%	2.88%	0.43%	100%
England	84.89%	12.17%	2.56%	0.38%	100%

Source: BRES 2020 (Copeland EDNA 2021)

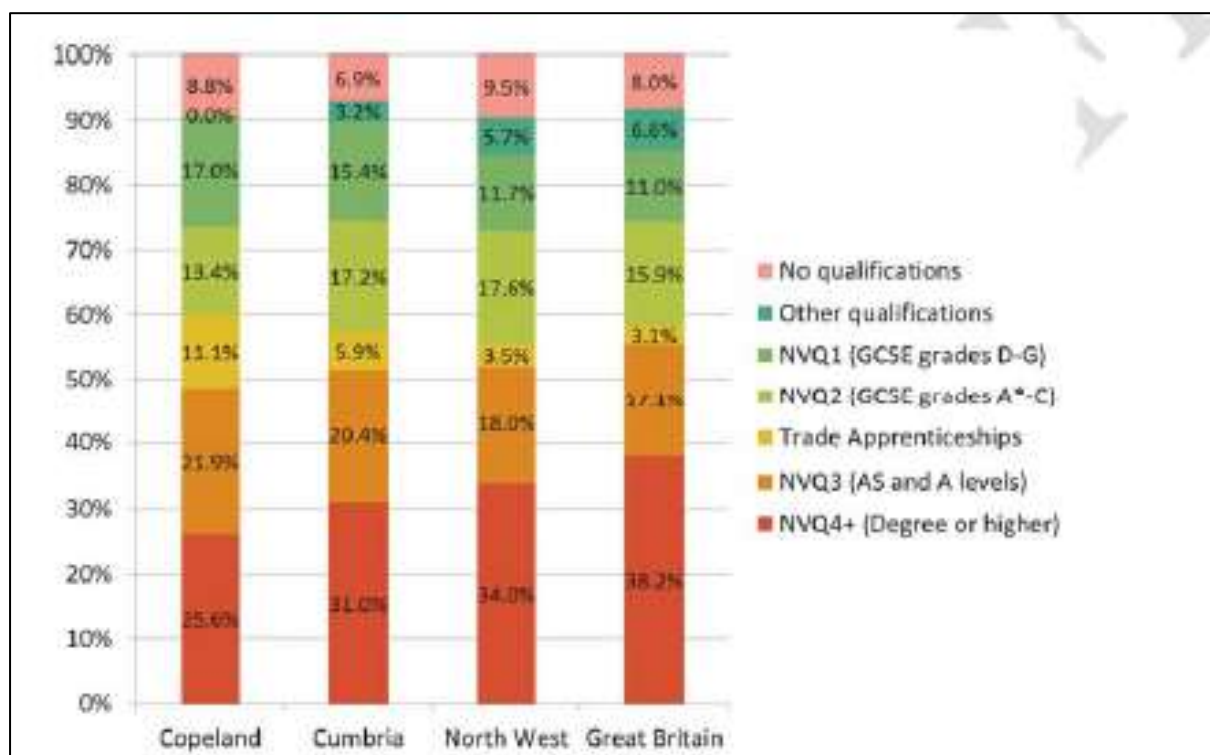
- 7.3.8 Figure 5 below identifies that whilst Copeland has a lower proportion of residents with a degree (or equivalent) or higher, it has over three times the proportion of residents with a trade apprenticeship than the British average. Copeland historically suffers from higher levels of youth unemployment and low levels of educational attainment when leaving education. The higher than average proportion of trade apprenticeships is a positive step in rectifying this problem, which could in part be attributed to the success of West Lakes Academy in Egremont and the Sellafield apprenticeship programme.

Table 7: Qualifications (Jan 2020-Dec 2020)

	Copeland (No.)	Copeland (%)	Cumbria (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
NVQ4 And Above	17,500	43.4	38.1	38.6	43.1
NVQ3 And Above	24,500	60.9	59.1	57.9	61.3
NVQ2 And Above	31,700	78.7	77.3	76.6	78.1
NVQ1 And Above	38,100	94.5	91.8	87.2	87.7

Source: ONS annual population survey

Figure 5: Population Qualifications



Source: ONS 2017

7.4 Moving Forward – Economic Growth

- 7.4.1 Copeland is going through a period of change and transformation, which brings with it new opportunities, placing Copeland in a key position to provide existing

and new businesses, as well as entrepreneurs and start-ups with the right environment to operate from. The key drivers for change are:

- **Copeland Vision 2040³⁶**: which sets out the Council and its partners' ambitious growth strategy for Copeland over the next twenty years.
- **Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus³⁷**: which outlines how a sector that has underpinned Copeland's economy for more than half a century can develop and diversify into more new cutting edge technologies.
- Recognition of the severity of climate change, the creation of Copeland's Climate Change Panel and the opportunities available for new renewable technologies in Copeland.
- Cumbria Clean Energy Park and the creation of the Moorside Clean Energy Hub as a location, alongside the Sellafield site where the above opportunities can be located³⁸.
- New opportunities linked to robotics and Artificial Intelligence, and the potential to place Copeland at the forefront of these technologies.
- The change of mission on Sellafield site to environmental clean-up and the Programme and Project Partners (PPP) Framework which will increase the supply chain in Copeland and the potential to transfer existing skills and technologies to other sectors and markets.
- The potential to create a business cluster around nuclear and energy expertise that already exists in Copeland and create a physical location for the Industrial Solutions Hub (ISH), which is a cluster of networked public, private and academic organisations that can grow, diversify and export nuclear and non-nuclear products and services from west Cumbria into UK and international markets.
- The outstanding environmental quality and relative affordability in Copeland making it an attractive place to locate/relocate a business.
- Improved digital connectivity, and the potential for a digital grid in Whitehaven.
- A ready-made work force with the transferrable skills required to adapt to the creation, manufacturing and maintenance of new technology.
- Proposals for a new metallurgical coal mine to the south of Whitehaven 'West Cumbria Mining'. If approved, this will directly create 500 new jobs and an additional 200 supply chain opportunities, with 80% of jobs being available to local communities.
- West Cumberland Hospital and Medical School in Whitehaven and the UCLAN centre for excellence in rural medicine.
- Cumbria Local Industrial Strategy.

³⁶ https://www.copeland.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/copeland_vision.pdf

³⁷ https://www.copeland.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/cumbria_nuclear_prospectus.pdf

³⁸ <https://www.snclavalin.com/~media/Files/S/SNC-Lavalin/download-centre/en/brochure/moorside-clean-energy-hub.pdf>

- 7.4.2 It is important that the Local Plan provides a positive framework for these opportunities to enable them to come to fruition. To gain a better understanding of the implications the Council commissioned an Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA), which was produced in 2021 to help quantify the opportunity the Local Plan will need to provide for.
- 7.4.3 As much of the growth requirements predicted in the EDNA are from major new and transformational projects, the Local Plan needs to provide the flexibility for this step change for the local economy.

Strategic Policy E1: Economic Growth



The economy of Copeland will be strengthened and broadened to provide a diverse range of employment and economic opportunities that will attract new key industries and provide the flexibility to accommodate existing businesses and new initiatives by:

- Maintaining, enhancing, regenerating and where appropriate extending the employment base in our towns and settlements in accordance with the Development Strategy, and supporting the economies of our rural communities;
- Developing a positive brand for the area, building on the 'Energy Coast' to attract inward investment and drive exports;
- Maximising Copeland's expertise and innovation in energy, nuclear decommissioning and clean growth through innovative businesses, and supporting the clustering of such businesses;
- Prioritising high-quality office provision within Whitehaven and the Key Service Centres to meet inward investment needs;
- Supporting flexible workspace, collaborative spaces and touch down zones;
- Creating a broader based and resilient economy, that encourages a skilled work force to remain in or relocate to Copeland;
- Placing digital and data at the heart of Copeland's economy;
- Promoting investment in the public realm of employment sites and working with owners to achieve improvement and regeneration of appropriate sites;
- Supporting the establishment and success of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with the inclusion of provision for starter units, start-up businesses, collaborative space for business to grow, live-work units on new and regenerated employment sites and offices;
- Working with learning and training bodies, job centres and higher education providers to develop a skilled workforce and improve employability;
- Supporting economic development associated with learning and training centres;
- Helping the economy in rural areas by supporting rural enterprises and rural diversification that will encourage, tourism, recreation, rural regeneration, and farm diversification, and complement new appropriate agriculture and forestry development where appropriate.

7.5 Location of Employment

- 7.5.1 In supporting the Council's growth ambitions, it is vital to ensure that there is enough suitable and flexible employment land for business development including manufacturing, warehousing, new initiatives, start-ups and the availability of flexible business space, town centre offices and other sustainable locations for the lifetime of the Local Plan. Going forward, there is likely to be an increased demand for flexible work space and new provisions for flexible homeworking, and community and digital hubs which must also be accommodated for.
- 7.5.2 In order to have a better understanding of the likely future needs and provisions for employment land, the Council commissioned an Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) 2021 to quantify the likely needs arising over the Plan period. The EDNA considered the economic baseline and general forecasts of future jobs growth based on market signal, economic trends and forecasting data to understand the likely needs for different types of employment floorspace. In addition to this, the EDNA modelled the likely additional jobs created from a number of major projects and opportunities discussed earlier that could take place by 2038 as a growth scenario. This could then be used to calculate the likely employment land needs associated with each.
- 7.5.3 The projects were packaged into five main components as follows:
- **Sellafield Off-Siting** (i.e. the moving of non-essential staff and functions off the Sellafield site)
 - **Sellafield Supply Chain** (the growth of the supply chain supporting Sellafield Ltd with their mission to remediate the site, together with opportunities for these companies to build on capabilities developed at Sellafield to diversify, expand, grow and move into new markets with skills developed in West Cumbria)
 - **Clean Energy Park** (this could be large scale nuclear generation at Moorside, Advanced Modular Reactors/Small Modular Reactors, Fusion technology and hydrogen production)
 - **Woodhouse Colliery** (jobs created directly and in the wider supply chain)
 - **AI Campus** (creating centre of excellence in AI and robotics, building on local advantage from the nuclear sector)
- 7.5.4 The growth scenario was considered in this way so the implications of one element coming forward, or not, could easily be understood and planned for.
- 7.5.5 The EDNA found that the likely employment land requirement to support economic growth in is 39.9ha. This is broken down in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Total Employment Land Needs to Support Economic Growth

	E(g)i/ii ³⁹	E(g)iii/B2	B8	Total
Experian Labour Demand Forecast	2.7	5.2	4.1	12.0
Sellafield Off-Siting	3.2	1.9	0.1	5.2
Sellafield Supply Chain	2.5	3.2	5.3	11.0
Clean Energy Park*	0.9	3.7	2.9	7.5
Woodhouse Colliery	0.3	1.3	1.3	2.8
AI Campus	0.9	0.4	0.1	1.4
Growth Scenario Total	10.5	15.7	13.8	39.9

*Requirement for 2021-35

Source: Copeland EDNA 2021 (Derived from Tables 71 and 73)

- 7.5.6 The economic objective, as set out in paragraph 8a of the NPPF, places an emphasis on Local Plans to ensure that there is enough suitable employment land in terms of use type, quality and quantity. The Council carried out a 'Call for Employment Sites' in early 2020 to ensure that all potentially suitable land was considered to meet the needs identified.
- 7.5.7 These sites were then independently assessed through the Employment Land Availability Study (ELAS) 2021, to consider each of the site's suitability, availability and deliverability in the Plan period. The ELAS identified approximately 39 hectares of available employment land for allocation. On top of this there are some existing employment sites that have small undeveloped areas which may also provide some suitable land and the town centres can accommodate some office (E(g)i) developments.

Strategic Policy E2: Location of Employment



Proposals for employment development (i.e. B2, B8 and E(g) Uses) will be supported where they:

- Provide the type and scale of development that is appropriate for its settlement as identified in the table below;
- Are located on allocated employment sites or existing employment land either through the reuse or redevelopment of existing premises and where appropriate intensification of use

³⁹ The E(g) Use Class has broadly replaced the B1 Employment Use Class in the Government's update to the Use Class order in 2020

Where the following impacts occur, development will only be supported where the mitigation measures proposed are deemed by the Council to make the development acceptable:

- Transport impact
- Vulnerability to flooding
- Impact on residential amenity
- Impact on the landscape character, settlement character
- Impact on biodiversity
- Impact on the historic environment and heritage assets

Applications for economic development in the open countryside must be supported by a written statement justifying its rural location to the satisfaction of the Council.

Hierarchy of Settlement	Appropriate Type and Scale of Development
Principal Town	<p>A range of employment types including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of existing businesses • New start-ups and incubator facilities • Digital businesses • Improvements and expansion of the existing tourism offer • Creation of new tourism opportunities
Key Service Centre	<p>A range of small and medium scale enterprises including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of existing businesses • New start-ups and incubator facilities • Digital businesses • Improvements and expansion of the existing tourism offer • Creation of new tourism opportunities
Local Service Centre	<p>Small scale economic opportunities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversion and re-use of existing buildings • Improvements and upgrade of existing buildings and employment sites • Improvements and expansion of the existing tourism offer • Creation of new tourism opportunities
Sustainable Rural Villages	<p>Small scale economic opportunities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of existing businesses • Re-use of existing buildings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversification of existing buildings that provide economic opportunity suitable to the role of a Sustainable Rural Village
Rural Village	<p>Small scale economic opportunities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of existing businesses • Re-use of existing buildings • Diversification of existing buildings that provide economic opportunity suitable to the role of a Rural Village

7.5.8 The Council has produced a Transport Improvement Study to consider the wider impacts of the allocations in the Local Plan, and a Site Access Assessment report to demonstrate their deliverability. These documents, together with the IDP, will help developers understand likely requirements to help ensure sufficient infrastructure is in place and mitigate the impacts of development. Any requirements for Transport Assessments/Travel Plans is covered by Policy CO4.

7.5.9 Development should also encourage and enable sustainable and active modes of travel. This can be achieved via cycle to work schemes, secure cycle parking/showers etc., and walking routes within new developments, and can form part of Travel Plans.

7.5.10 This policy also relates to the operation and start-up of businesses from home where amenity (such as noise, disturbance or loss of privacy) can be more significant.

7.6 Westlakes Science and Technology Park

7.6.1 Westlakes Science and Technology Park is an internationally important site, located approximately 2 miles from Whitehaven on the A595. It is a very attractive, low density site that currently accommodates around 2,000 personnel in eleven main, modern buildings.

7.6.2 The site is a knowledge campus for the area which focuses on research and development, education, sciences and high-tech companies, primarily within nuclear, energy and medicine sectors, building on the sectors in the area and their technological transfer. Companies based at the Park provide a range of skills and services including international design, engineering and other professional services.

7.6.3 The existing site also currently has more than 6 hectares of serviced development land set over nine plots, and further expansion land allocated in the Local Plan totalling 9 hectares (gross).

7.6.4 Permitted uses on the site are at present restricted to E(g) and F1 use classes with the primary focus of science, research and learning associated with the Science Park. It is however recognised that broadening the uses on the site may make it

more attractive to potential occupiers and their staff, and would also bring benefits to nearby residents. It is important however that any new ancillary businesses support the primary function of the Science Park and do not affect the vitality and viability of nearby town centres.

- 7.6.5 A project-level HRA will be required for development proposals as there is potential for Likely Significant Effects on the River Ehen SAC. Please see paragraph 15.6.4 for further information.

Strategic Policy E3: Westlakes Science and Technology Park



The Westlakes Science and Technology Park will continue to be Copeland's knowledge campus of international significance.

Uses will be restricted to E(g) and F1 use classes, although ancillary uses may be acceptable within the boundaries of the park (e.g. a gymnasium, café, crèche) to support the effective functioning of the Science Park and its employees, where a need can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council.

Proposals should be in accordance with policies in the development plan and the Council will work with the site's owners to produce a Masterplan for Westlakes to inform its future development.

7.7 Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter

- 7.7.1 The Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter (CMIQ) is proposed as a Business Cluster, which is defined as a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field, and clustering such businesses is considered to increase the productivity with which companies can compete nationally and globally.
- 7.7.2 A number of Business Clusters already exist across the UK in fields such as Creative/Digital, Aerospace, Chemical and Motorsport, giving these areas recognition and a competitive edge by concentrating the resources and skills, attracting skilled workers at the forefront of their specialisms, and creating an environment for greater collaboration and innovation.
- 7.7.3 Copeland is already the UK's Centre of Nuclear Excellence, pioneering new technologies and processes as part of the decommissioning and environmental remediation of the Sellafield site. This forms the focus for a wide range and number of high tech, cutting edge research and development processes which

can be used on the site, and may also have applications in other sectors of the economy. Westlakes Science and Technology Park is well established and the focus for 'white collar' and research in West Cumbria, and it is intended that the CMIQ will play a complementary role alongside the Science Park.

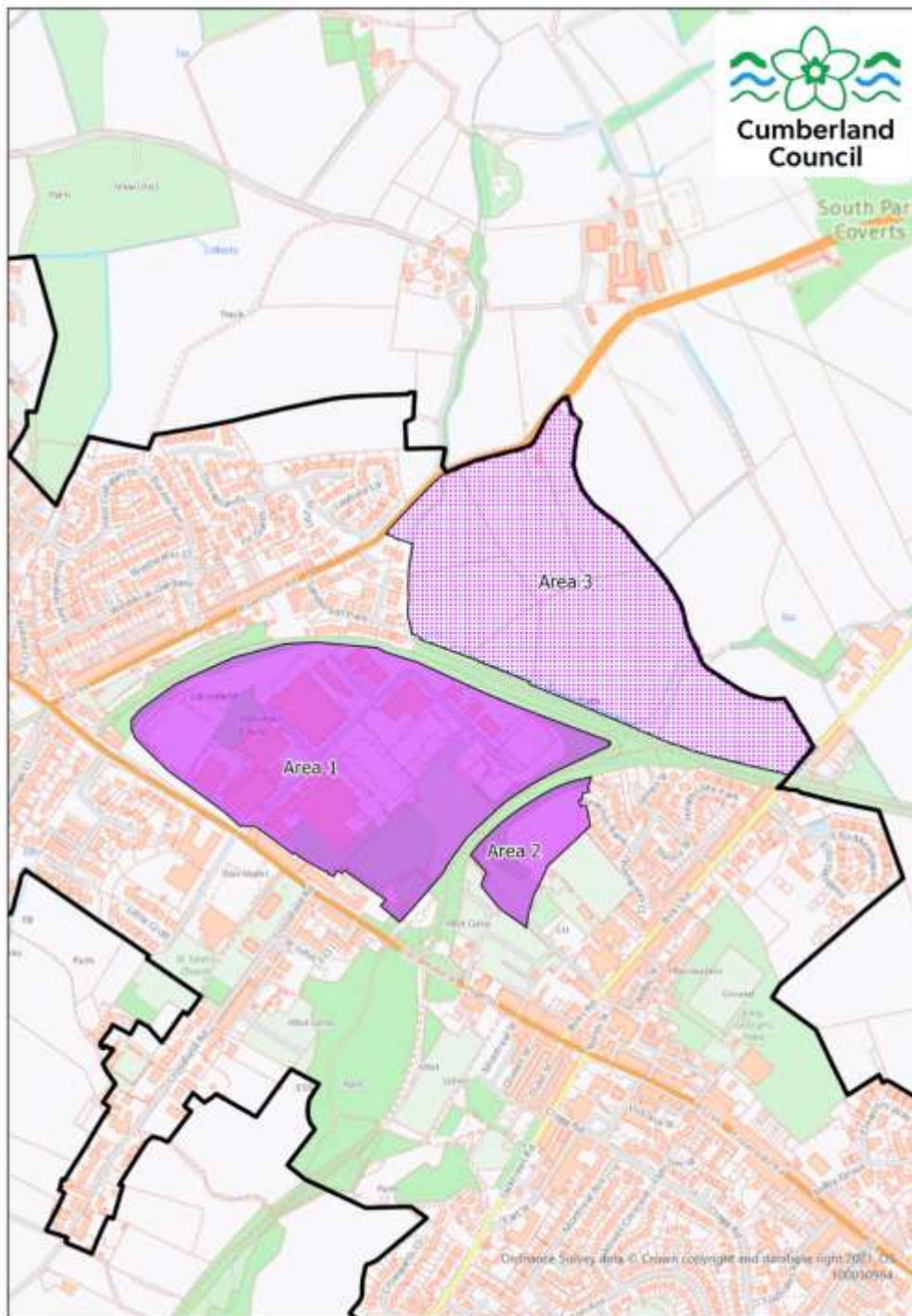
- 7.7.4 The CMIQ aimed at leveraging the economic growth potential of the Sellafield supply chain, through a cluster approach to growing and diversifying the West Cumbria economy. Included within this is the creation of an Industrial Solutions Hub ("ISH") which will provide bespoke accommodation that will be a focus for collaboration, innovation and diversification across the Cumbrian nuclear and engineering sectors. The CMIQ lays the foundations for change, via improvements to connectivity, community facilities and creating the Industrial Solutions Hub to support businesses to diversify beyond nuclear and to grow exports.
- 7.7.5 The CMIQ will provide opportunities for the supply chain in West Cumbria to grow and broaden their markets, exporting skills, processes and technologies developed in west Cumbria to the rest of the UK and other world markets. It will also support the key growth aspirations and opportunities for Copeland, a number of which have been factored into the Local Plan growth scenarios for Copeland as follows:
- Relocating Sellafield staff and businesses off-site where this is possible
 - Increased capture of Sellafield's supply chain within Copeland
 - The development of the Cumbria Clean Energy Park
- 7.7.6 Leconfield Industrial Estate in Cleator Moor has been acquired by the Council and will form the focus for the CMIQ. The Leconfield Industrial Estate and suitable adjacent land has been identified as the only location able to meet the objectives and requirements for the ISH and new business cluster. This is because its core is a large former industrial site within one of Copeland's Key Service Centres and there is also scope for expansion if demand grows from existing businesses and/or new energy related businesses want to relocate into Copeland.
- 7.7.7 It is recognised that the site will require some ancillary uses to support its primary function, which may include uses such as a café, meeting spaces, skills/training space, lecture and film theatre. These ancillary uses should be clustered together in a central hub building for use by all occupiers, and the local community where appropriate. This will provide a focal point for the site, prevent the dilution of the primary uses and help to integrate the development within the wider community.
- 7.7.8 There are three areas that can form the CMIQ at Leconfield, which are shown in Figure 6:
- Area 1 – Leconfield Industrial Estate (17.6ha)
 - Area 2 – Land to the east towards Heather Bank and Cleator Moor Medical Centre (Up to 4ha approx.)

- Area 3 – Land to the north, located between Bowthorn Road and Birks Road (14ha approx.)

7.7.9 Development will be directed towards the Leconfield Industrial Estate in the first instance, as it is the established employment area. This approach satisfies the requirement of Paragraph 119 of the NPPF which requires the maximal use of previously developed land. However, it is also recognised that the Leconfield Industrial Estate will fill up over time and, as such, the remaining plots may become increasingly unsuitable for certain uses and business requirements that support the ISH concept. In such situations, it may be necessary to allow development in the Associated Growth Areas before the existing employment allocation is fully built out.

7.7.10 As such the policy does include criteria which allows consideration of planning applications in the Associated Growth Areas if a suitable case can be made by the applicant.

Figure 6: Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter at Leconfield: Areas for Development



- 7.7.11 It is expected that development will be brought forward in accordance with an approved masterplan, which will outline matters such as design and sustainability requirements, scale and massing, phasing, amenity of neighbouring residential properties, and connections through and to the site to integrate it with the wider community. This will enable a comprehensive and coordinated approach to site development, enabling works and infrastructure provision, and ensure that each phase of development is sustainable and does not undermine or prejudice the delivery of other potential future phases.

- 7.7.12 This will ensure that all of the opportunities for the CMIQ are maximised, and that key infrastructure and services can be provided, together with structural landscaping around the edge of the site, to enable the site to respond positively to the range of companies' needs that it expects to attract to the site.
- 7.7.13 It should be noted that when part of Area 3 was assessed in the Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAS) it was considered to be suitable for the future growth of the Leconfield Estate. However it was not promoted in the ELAS as necessary to be an allocation in this Local Plan as the land was not available at that time and the land requirements identified in the EDNA 2021 could be met by alternative sites.
- 7.7.14 As such, Area 3 has not been subject to the same level of assessment (access, ecology, infrastructure etc.) as the Leconfield Industrial Estate and other employment sites, and these matters, together with a transport assessment, will need to be comprehensively addressed in the masterplan and future planning applications. The Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identified part of Area 3 as being within Flood Zone 3, and development should avoid this part of the site. However careful design should manage the flood risk and enable this part of the site to make a positive contributions towards sustainable drainage and biodiversity net gain on the site.
- 7.7.15 A project-level HRA will be required for development proposals as there is potential for Likely Significant Effects on the River Ehen SAC. Further details can be found in paragraph 15.6.4, and Appendix H summarises the HRA recommendations with regard to this site.
- 7.7.16 It should also be noted that this site is safeguarded in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2015-2030) for waste management facilities. This allocation does not preclude the site as an employment allocation. Any proposals for its development however do need to be mindful of the Mineral and Waste Local Plan allocation and appropriate mitigation will be required.

Strategic Policy E4: Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter at Leconfield



Leconfield Industrial Estate and Associated Growth Areas will be redeveloped to create the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter as the location to attract new businesses and investment, develop new markets and increase collaboration and economic clustering. The boundary of the Leconfield Industrial Estate and future Associated Growth Areas are outlined in Figure 6.

Existing Leconfield Industrial Estate (Area 1)

The primary uses on the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter development will be limited to Use Class B2, Use Class B8 and Use Class E(g) only.

Community infrastructure, community facilities and ancillary uses to support to the primary uses on the development will be supported within a single building or small cluster of buildings within the development to act as a focal point for the development and local community. This could include uses such as café/restaurant, meeting spaces and education/training spaces (i.e. Use Classes E(b), E(d), E(f), F1(a) and F1(e)).

Any development will be required to demonstrate how it retains and where possible enhances existing connections and linkages through the site and to the wider settlement of Cleator Moor.

Associated Growth Areas (Areas 2 and 3)

It is expected that the existing Leconfield Industrial Estate will be fully redeveloped before the Associated Growth Areas are considered for development. However, the development of the Associated Growth Areas as an extension of the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter will only be supported when it has been demonstrated that the proposal would satisfy the ISH concept of creating a business cluster through collaboration, innovation, and diversification, across the Cumbrian nuclear and engineering sectors and one of the following can be demonstrated:

- The Leconfield Industrial Estate has been fully redeveloped; or
- The requirements of the businesses seeking to occupy the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter cannot be met on the existing Leconfield Industrial Estate (for example, due to the use proposed or the size of the remaining plots/land being too small).

The primary uses on Growth Area 2 will be limited to Use Class E(g) and student accommodation linked to the site.

The primary uses on Growth Area 3 will be limited to Use Class B2, Use Class B8 and Use Class E(g) only.

Any development will be required to demonstrate how it links to the redevelopment of the existing Leconfield Industrial Estate and retains and where possible enhances existing connections to the wider settlement of Cleator Moor.

Development will be required to be brought forward in accordance with an approved Masterplan.

7.8 Employment Sites

- 7.8.1 In addition to the strategic sites at Westlakes Science Park and the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter, Copeland has a number of existing employment sites of differing quality, size, and available space that are generally able to meet local business needs.
- 7.8.2 The continued allocation of these sites will help to ensure that the need for local employment space can be met across Copeland as appropriate to maintain sustainable communities, and not solely be concentrated in a small number key locations.
- 7.8.3 The Council will continue to support development on existing employment sites and allocations where they are in accordance with policies in the Development Strategy.
- 7.8.4 Proposals for Sui Generis uses on the Employment Sites and Allocations will be considered on their merits.
- 7.8.5 Developers should take into account the Council's Heritage Impact Assessment that supports the Local Plan. This document identifies where there may be harm caused to nearby heritage assets through development and proposes mitigation measures. Where there is likely harm identified, developers will be required to build upon this document with a detailed site specific HeIA in accordance with Policy BE1.
- 7.8.6 It should be noted that a project level HRA may be required for development proposals in order to comply with Policy E2. Please see paragraph 15.6.4 for further information.
- 7.8.7 Early engagement with United Utilities will be required prior to the submission of a planning application to determine where there might be a public sewer or utilities infrastructure present on the site.

Strategic Policy E5: Employment Sites and Allocations



Development within the boundaries of the following employment sites and allocations will be supported where criteria set out in Policies E1 and E2 is met. Development is restricted to E(g), B2 and B8 Use Classes.

Site	Site Ref	EDNA Ref	Total Site Size (Approx)	Undeveloped Allocation (Gross Area)
Whitehaven Commercial Park, Moresby Parks	ES3	E2	17.5ha	11.0ha
Sneckyeat Rd, Whitehaven	ES4	E4	4.9ha	0.35ha

Site	Site Ref	EDNA Ref	Total Site Size (Approx)	Undeveloped Allocation (Gross Area)
Haig Business Park, Whitehaven	ES5	E3	2.6ha	0ha
Red Lonning, Whitehaven	ES6	WH021	1.8ha	0.6ha
Bridge End, Egremont	ES7	E9	12.5ha	5.0ha
Devonshire Rd, Millom	ES13	E21	5.9ha	1.3ha
Mainsgate Rd, Millom	ES12	ELA5	3.4ha	1.0ha
Furnace Row, Distington	ES8	ELA2	3.1ha	3.1ha
Frizington Rd, Frizington	ES9	E17	1.6ha	0.8ha
Haverigg Industrial Estate, Haverigg	ES11	ELA5	2.6ha	0ha
Seascale Rural Workshops	ES14	E21	1.4ha	0.7ha
Energy Coast Business Park, Haile	ES10	N/A	3.6ha	0ha

7.9 Opportunity Sites

- 7.9.1 The NPPF, paragraph 82d , highlights the need for plans to be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the Plan and allow for new and flexible working practices, and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.
- 7.9.2 Paragraphs 119-125 of the NPPF promote the effective use of land, and policies should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land for identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.
- 7.9.3 The Council has identified a number of Opportunity Sites within and on the edge of Copeland's towns together with an indication of the range of uses that may be appropriate. This should help to deliver Town Investment Plans, help support future investment and funding bids, and increase activity and vitality to the towns.
- 7.9.4 Development on the larger strategic Opportunity Sites is likely to be mixed use and the Council will require the use of a Masterplan to ensure the required infrastructure and mitigation are in place and the site is developed holistically. This must be supported by further assessments including those which consider transport, drainage, and flood risk impacts. Any heritage and flood risk issues are highlighted in the Heritage Impact Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

- 7.9.5 Developers should take into account the Council's Heritage Impact Assessment that supports the Local Plan. This document identifies where there may be harm caused to nearby heritage assets through development and it proposes mitigation measures. Where there is likely harm identified, developers will be required to build upon this document with a detailed site specific HeIA in accordance with Policy BE1. Developers should also take account of the Conservation Area Design Guide SPD and the Whitehaven Town Centre and Harbourside SPD where relevant.
- 7.9.6 Appendix C of the Employment Land Availability Study (ELAS) contains detailed site proformas for each Opportunity Site which identify key issues that any development need to address.
- 7.9.7 A project level HRA may be required for development proposals on Opportunity Sites to ensure any potential effects are avoided or mitigated. Please see paragraph 15.6.4 for further information.
- 7.9.8 Early engagement with United Utilities will be required prior to the submission of a planning application to determine where there might be a public sewer or utilities infrastructure present on the site.
- 7.9.9 Opportunity Sites will be reviewed as the sites are developed and new potential windfall sites become available within the towns. The Council is considering the option of a portfolio of sites that will be made publicly available on the Council's website and kept up to date through the annual monitoring process.

Strategic Policy E6: Opportunity Sites



The Council will support the development and/or redevelopment of Opportunity Sites in and on the edge of the towns of Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom as the focus to help regenerate these towns. The list of Opportunity Sites and their preferred uses is shown in Appendix C.

A Masterplan will be required for larger Opportunity Sites to ensure a holistic development is brought forward.

Development on Opportunity Sites within town centre boundaries must take the opportunities available to enhance the street scene and improve the vitality and viability of the centre.

7.10 Safeguarding Employment Sites

- 7.10.1 The employment sites in Copeland (both in existing employment use and Employment Allocations) will continue to be reviewed to ensure that there is sufficient supply of sites to meet future needs. Where allocations are no longer required for employment uses they may be deallocated or considered for alternative uses. In line with the NPPF the Council will take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of employment sites in line with requirements set out in Policy E7.

Policy E7: Safeguarding of Employment Sites



Employment sites will be retained and safeguarded to ensure the Council's Vision and Prospectus for Growth will be achieved. The need for employment land will be monitored over the plan period and sites will be considered for alternate uses, or deallocated, where there is clear evidence that they are no longer required to support the local economy. In cases of significant change of use, this process should be conducted through a Local Plan Review.

Where proposals are submitted for non-E(g), B2 and B8 Use Classes on employment sites, regard will be given to the following:

- The proposal meets an identified need and to what extent;
- The lack of suitable, alternative sites being available to meet that need;
- The supply of employment sites;
- The need to safeguard the integrity of neighbouring uses, including their continued use for employment purposes;
- The impact on the function of the remaining employment land, in meeting the future needs in the Plan area;
- The need to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres;
- Suitable marketing exercise has been carried out for 12 months.

Where sites are released to non-employment use consideration should be given to any significant benefits to the local area that would result from its proposed future use.

8 Rural Economy



Policies RE1-RE3

8.1 Rural Economy Headlines



Strengths

High quality, attractive rural landscapes
Areas of Best and Most Versatile
Agricultural Land



Challenges

Often considered a low wage sector
Ageing population may make it difficult to
attract new workers to the sector
Impact of Brexit and Covid-19 on sector



Opportunities

Potential and aspiration to grow the visitor
economy in Copeland
Environment Act focussed on enhancing the
quality of the country's environment and
landscapes
Opportunities for farm diversification,
including Environmental Land Management
uses
Potential for habitat banking

8.2 Rural Economy

- 8.2.1 Copeland is a predominantly rural area and is a relatively remote part of the North West. However, like much of Cumbria we have a wealth of natural resources which have shaped our development and heritage. Agriculture is an important component of our local economy as are other rural businesses such as those involving forestry or equestrian activities.

8.3 Agricultural Development

- 8.3.1 Whilst supporting rural businesses, the Council is keen to ensure that any such development is appropriately managed, so that it does not result in over intensive use of the countryside or erosion of local character. It is also important that new agricultural development does not have a negative impact upon air quality therefore measures to reduce ammonia emissions will be required where appropriate. Further information regarding the issue can be found in paragraphs 6.8.6 to 6.8.8.

Policy RE1: Agricultural Buildings



New agricultural buildings requiring planning permission will be supported where:

- a) A clear need for the building in relation to the functional operations of the agricultural business is demonstrated;
- b) The building is located within or adjacent to the existing farm complex unless justification for an alternative location is demonstrated;
- c) The building is of a scale, form and design which is appropriate to the location and will not result in adverse visual impacts or unacceptable harm to the landscape character or heritage assets;
- d) The building will not adversely impact upon the amenity of nearby residential properties; and
- e) The building implements measures to reduce ammonia emissions arising from farming practices where possible.

8.4 Equestrian Development

- 8.4.1 The Council will encourage the careful planning, design and management of land on which horses are kept. Good design should be informed by local character and distinctiveness with particular reference to farm buildings, layouts and materials.

- 8.4.2 It is important that equestrian activities have a positive impact on rural areas and protect their natural beauty. The Council seeks to encourage owners to adopt a positive approach towards managing the land, depending on the breed, size and purpose of the horses, which supports their welfare.
- 8.4.3 This approach may also be influenced by soil type and natural drainage patterns. Consideration should be given to drainage at an early stage of drawing up the proposal. This is because the use of horses on the land and areas of hard surfacing can reduce its permeability and create additional surface water run-off.
- 8.4.4 It may be appropriate in some cases for management plans to be devised and submitted to support planning applications to demonstrate how this approach will be delivered. Advice should be sought from the Authority at the earliest opportunity and prior to submitting an application on whether a management plan would be needed.

Policy RE2: Equestrian Related Development



Development proposals for equestrian related development will only be supported, where biodiversity conservation interest would not be harmed as a result, subject to the following provisions.

Commercial equestrian development:

Development of facilities related to the keeping of horses on a commercial basis will be supported in principle where:

- a) They are in locations where there is adequate road and servicing infrastructure; and
- b) Applicants can demonstrate the re-use of existing buildings on site for related equestrian use is not appropriate before new or replacement buildings are considered.

Domestic Equestrian Development:

Development of facilities related to the keeping of horses on a non-commercial basis will only be supported where:

- The proposal reuses an existing building; or
- It is well related to existing buildings and structures and
- They satisfactorily relate to existing vehicular access and bridleways.

Where this is not practical or appropriate, buildings in open countryside locations will only be permitted where they are demonstrably necessary for and designed for welfare reasons.

All development must be of a scale, form and design appropriate to the location and will not result in adverse visual impacts or unacceptable harm to landscape character or heritage assets. Permeable surfacing should be used where possible to reduce surface water run-off.

Where necessary, appropriate planning conditions will be imposed to restrict external storage and the installation of associated equipment to help protect the landscape and natural environment.

8.5 Conversion of Rural Buildings to Commercial or Community Use

- 8.5.1 Policy RE3 is relevant to conversions that require planning permission outside of identified settlement boundaries and aims to strike a balance between supporting the rural economy whilst protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the open countryside.
- 8.5.2 Applications for the conversion of rural buildings may require preliminary surveys, such as appropriate ecological surveys and/or those necessary to determine the structural soundness of the building. This will be considered through the application process.

Policy RE3: Conversion of rural buildings to commercial or community use



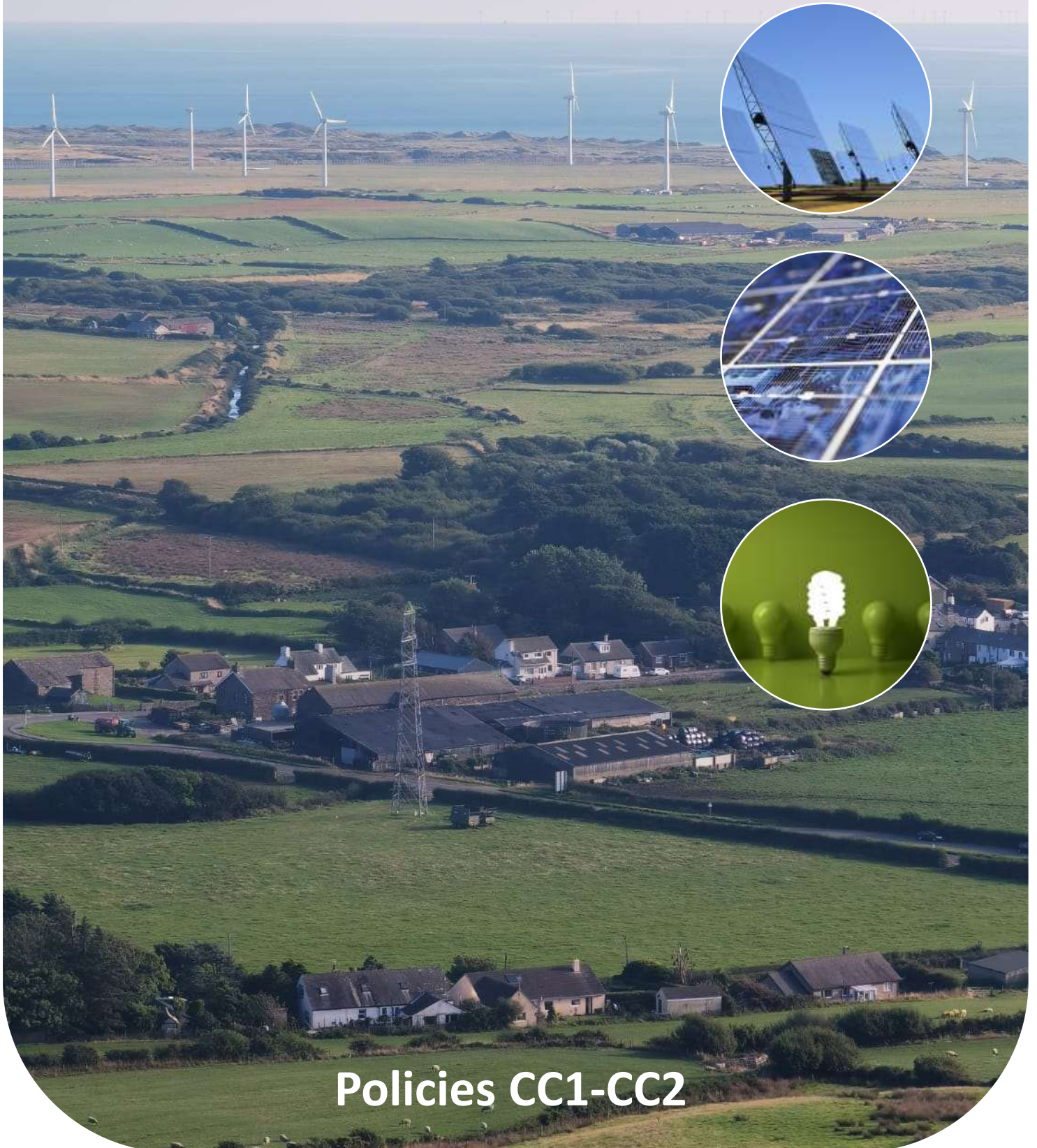
The conversion and re-use of buildings in the open countryside for commercial or community use will be supported where:

- a) The building is redundant or disused, is of a traditional design and construction and the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the historic environment, the character of the local landscape or its setting;
- b) The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for significant extension, alteration or reconstruction;
- c) The development conserves the essential character of the building and enhances the immediate surroundings;

- d) Safe road access is in place or can be created without damaging the rural character of the surrounding area;
- e) The proposed curtilage area is appropriate in scale to the character of the building and will not result in adverse visual impacts; and
- f) Conversion would not have a significant negative impact on the natural environment and appropriate ecological surveys are carried out where necessary.

When granting permission under this policy the Council will remove permitted development rights where necessary to protect the character of the building and landscape.

9 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy



Policies CC1-CC2

9.1 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Headlines



Strengths

Location on Britain's Energy Coast
Highly skilled, technical workforce in energy related disciplines
Cumbria Clean Energy Park
Areas with capacity for wind energy developments



Challenges

Balancing renewable energy generation with preserving Copeland's high quality landscapes and ecological environments
Existing electricity transmission network



Opportunities

Opportunity to expand this sector and help achieve Cumbria-wide carbon targets
Research and development of new technologies (e.g. hydrogen production and storage)

9.2 Large Scale Renewable Energy Developments

- 9.2.1 The Cumbria Renewable Energy Capacity and Deployment Study 2011 provides a detailed and localised assessment of the amount of resources available that could be used to generate renewable energy up to 2030 (potential technical capacity). It considers wind, biomass, energy from waste, hydropower and solar and heat pumps. It then identifies how much of that resource is realistically deployable – forecasting that 606MW of renewable energy could be deployed within Cumbria by 2030. The Local Plan plays an important role in supporting such resources, which also have the additional benefit of creating employment opportunities in Copeland.
- 9.2.2 Proposals for large scale renewable energy developments (excluding nuclear and wind developments) will be assessed against the criteria in Policy CC1. Proposals will need to consider issues including impacts on local amenity, the environment, landscapes and heritage. Cumulative impacts and impacts during the construction will also need to be taken into account.
- 9.2.3 The Council is keen to support opportunities for energy storage such as battery storage and other more general mechanisms for storing energy. Although such energies are not classed as clean energy solutions, they do provide opportunities to reduce energy waste. Similar facilities are already in operation at Woodend: <https://www.energypowersystems.co.uk/>.

Policy CC1: Large Scale Energy Developments (excluding nuclear and wind energy developments)



The Council is committed to supporting the transition to a carbon neutral future and will seek to maximise the renewable and carbon neutral energy generated in the Plan area where this energy generation is compatible with other sustainability objectives.

The Council will support proposals for large scale renewable and carbon neutral energy schemes and other large scale energy developments, including (but not limited to) solar farms, geothermal, low-carbon and decarbonisation, hydrogen to energy plants, and battery stores. Careful consideration should be given to siting, scale and design of the development and associated infrastructure to avoid individual and/or cumulative impacts on the following:

- Landscape character, including historic landscape character
- Residential amenity
- Visual amenity
- Biodiversity

- Geodiversity
- Flood risk
- Townscape
- Coastal change
- Heritage assets and their setting, including the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast
- Highway safety
- Aviation and defence navigation systems/communication
- The amenity of sensitive neighbouring uses (including by virtue of noise, dust, odour, air quality, traffic, glare or visual impact)
- The Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District and the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Hadrian's Wall) World Heritage Sites
- Water resources and water quality (including catchment land for public water supply purposes)

Where proposals would result in significant adverse effects on the above, proposals will only be accepted where this harm is outweighed by the wider environmental, economic, social and community benefits and in the case of the historic environment balanced against public benefit. Where harm is unavoidable, the planning application must include details of mitigation measures proposed in order to overcome or reduce such harm.

Proposals will only be considered suitable where it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by local communities during consultation have been taken into account.

Where renewable energy installations become non-operational for a period in excess of six months, the facility must be removed and the site fully restored to its original condition within one year. Additionally, a detailed plan that sets out how any impacts will be managed during construction and restoration must be submitted to the satisfaction of the Council.

9.3 Wind Energy Development

- 9.3.1 In contributing towards the achievement of renewable energy targets the Council has produced a study that identifies and assesses appropriate land to allocate as Areas Suitable for Wind Energy (Wind Energy Technical Study)⁴⁰. Full consideration must be given to the Study prior to submitting proposals for wind turbines.

⁴⁰ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/copeland-local-plan-2021-2038-evidence-base>

- 9.3.2 The Study identifies constraints to wind energy including landscape⁴¹ and capacity constraints and removes these from the area of search, leaving an area where wind energy proposals would be supported in principle. This Suitable Area is identified in Appendix D and is also available online on the Council's web-mapping site. It should be noted that applications within the suitable area are not automatically guaranteed planning permission.
- 9.3.3 The document also identifies key considerations which developers should take into account when developing proposals for wind energy developments.
- 9.3.4 It is important to recognise that landscape character, and thus landscape sensitivity, does not change abruptly, there is a gradual transition from one area to another. The acceptability of individual proposals within the suitable area will be subject to detailed assessment and consideration of effects at a local scale in accordance with the development plan.
- 9.3.5 It is also recognised that there are existing wind turbines in Copeland, outside of the suitable area, which may benefit from repowering in the future. These instances will need assessing on a case-by-case basis to determine whether the impacts of such development will have a significant detrimental impact, and whether planning permission could be granted in principle.
- 9.3.6 Policy CC2 will apply to all wind energy developments, including community wind developments⁴². The Policy requires applicants to demonstrate, in line with footnote 54 of the NPPF, that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and the proposal has their backing. Applicants are therefore encouraged to engage with the Council and local communities at the earliest stage possible prior to submitting an application.
- 9.3.7 Please note that proposals for wind energy developments are highly likely to require a project level Habitats Regulations Assessment, including details of bird species for which relevant SPA and Ramsar sites are designated.

Policy CC2: Wind Energy Developments



Large Turbines

Wind turbines 50m in height or over must be located in an Area Suitable for Wind Energy as shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map, unless the proposal is for the

⁴¹ Taking into consideration the Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment 2011, Copeland Landscape Character Assessment 2021, Copeland Settlement Landscape Character Assessment 2021, Revised Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment 2021 and Friends of the Lake District Landscape Analysis and Boundary Recommendations document 2019

⁴² Community wind projects are onshore developments that are locally owned which supply local electricity to particular community facilities. The Council will assist communities who would like to set up such projects where possible.

repowering of existing turbines or windfarms or is for a proposal to extend the life of an existing turbine.

All Turbines

Careful consideration should be given to siting, scale and design of wind energy developments and associated infrastructure to avoid individual and/or cumulative impacts on the following:

- Landscape character including historic landscape character
- Residential amenity
- Visual amenity and sensitive views
- Biodiversity
- Geodiversity
- Flood risk
- Townscape
- Coastal change
- Heritage assets and their setting including the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast
- Highway safety
- Aviation and defence navigation systems/communication
- The amenity of sensitive neighbouring uses (including by virtue of noise, dust, odour, shadow flicker, air quality, traffic, visual impact or glare)
- The Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District and the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Hadrian's Wall) World Heritage Sites
- Water resources and water quality (including catchment land for public water supply purposes)

Where proposals would result in significant adverse effects, proposals will only be accepted where this is outweighed by the wider environmental, economic, social and community benefits and in the case of the historic environment balanced against public benefit. Where harm is unavoidable, the planning application must include details of mitigation measures proposed in order to overcome or reduce such harm.

Proposals will only be considered suitable where it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by local communities during consultation have been taken account of.

Where turbines become non-operational for a period in excess of six months, the facility must be removed and the site will be fully restored to its original condition within 12 months. A detailed plan that sets out how any impacts will be managed during construction and restoration must be submitted to the satisfaction of the Council.

Proposals for the re-powering of turbines in areas which are identified as unsuitable in principle could potentially be permitted where the impacts of such development,

including cumulative effects, are considered acceptable. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

10 Nuclear Development



Policies NU1-NU4

10.1 Nuclear Development Headlines



Strengths

Copeland is recognised as the Centre for Nuclear Excellence and lies at the heart of the 'Clean Energy Coast'.

Existing Sellafield and Drigg Low Level Waste Repository Sites

Highly skilled workforce

6th highest average salaries in the UK

Identification of the Moorside site as a potential site for large scale nuclear new build



Challenges

Ageing population means there is a need to attract more people of working age to Copeland

Ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is in place to support economic growth



Opportunities

Opportunities for the development of small or advanced modular reactors to produce net zero carbon electricity

Creation of a Cumbria Clean Energy Park

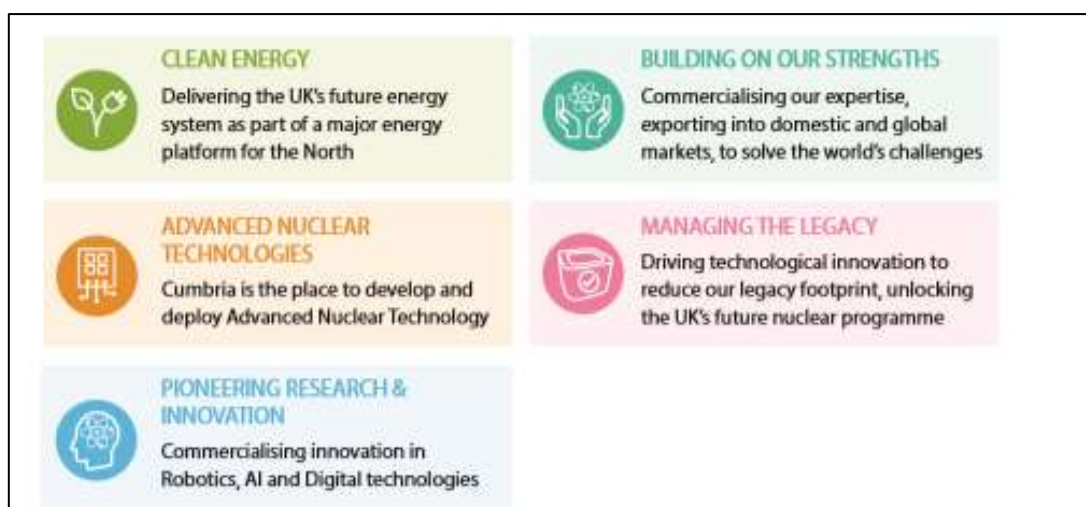
Creation of a Cleator Moor Innovation Centre to build on our existing strengths in the nuclear and clean energy sector to create a specialist cluster

10.2 Copeland's Nuclear Sector

10.2.1 This section sets out opportunities related to nuclear development in Copeland, including:

- Delivery of the Sellafield mission safely and securely in the interest of the local community, and associated supply chain and research activity;
- Opportunities associated with the Cumbria Clean Energy Park;
- Deployment of New Nuclear Technologies, including the development of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs)
- Opportunities associated with new nuclear power generation at Moorside;
- Opportunities associated with the Industrial Solutions Hub (ISH) in Cleator Moor

10.2.2 The '*Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus*': *Energising the Energy Coast* (August 2020) sets out a new enterprising and dynamic vision for Cumbria to become the Northern 'living lab' for clean energy: decarbonising heat, power and transport, and driving Clean Growth as we head towards Net Zero Carbon. It is the intent that we will be the trailblazer for the UK's decarbonised energy system, building on local and regional strengths to develop and deploy a blend of nuclear new build and advanced nuclear technologies to decarbonise heat, power and fuels. This vision is set out under five themes⁴³:



10.2.3 This vision includes the development of the existing nuclear sector in West Cumbria to deliver the Sellafield mission of being safer, sooner, cheaper, and to build on existing strengths to grow and diversify into new nuclear and non-nuclear markets. The vision is flexible to incorporate deployment of new nuclear technologies that are emerging in the UK.

⁴³ https://www.copeland.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/cumbria_nuclear_prospectus.pdf

10.3 Sellafield

- 10.3.1 The Sellafield site is one of the most complex industrial sites in the world, and is home to over 1,000 buildings. What is now known as the Sellafield site has, over many decades, been host to a number of world-first nuclear developments, many of them led by the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) – the Windscale Piles, Calder Hall, Windscale Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor and the HERO reactor. As set out in the *Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus: Energising the Energy Coast*, we have ambitions to build on this to remain at the forefront of clean energy development.
- 10.3.2 The Sellafield site is a de facto technological testbed on which to develop, deploy and prove cutting edge decommissioning, waste management and remediation technologies. By using digital innovation, technology and big data to assess and masterplan future activities on the site, Sellafield is becoming a test bed for globally significant innovation.
- 10.3.3 Sellafield provides the pull for world first innovation in fields such as remote handling, robotics, bespoke advanced manufacturing and specialised construction to meet the uniquely complex challenges on the site, and has led to the presence of world-leading nuclear and non-nuclear capability in the region, particularly in West Cumbria. The National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL) and the University of Manchester Dalton Facility conduct leading research from locations in West Cumbria and the National College for Nuclear and Energus continue to grow the nuclear skills base for the UK - the best nuclear minds in the world are here.
- 10.3.4 Over time, supply chains in the region have become highly attuned to the needs of Sellafield, with a heavy focus on engineering and technical activities, manufacturing, specialised construction and professional services – mostly transferable and exportable capabilities. The reliance upon Sellafield presents both opportunities and challenges - decommissioning is the current major driver of the economy, supporting 21,000 jobs in the locality, but will not be so in the same way or to the same extent in the future.
- 10.3.5 The shifting focus of the Sellafield mission, away from active operations towards decommissioning and long-term waste management and disposal in a post-reprocessing environment presents both a threat and an opportunity for Copeland. Without intervention, this would trigger a gradual economic decline as the Sellafield mission is delivered. But the changing relationship between Sellafield and its supply chain is an opportunity to rethink and reshape a more resilient, future-facing economic model to:
1. Facilitate the export and cross-transfer of capabilities gained at Sellafield into both nuclear and non-nuclear sectors, in order to diversify the economy, and
 2. Empower supply chain organisations to capture the full benefits of Sellafield experience in other markets.
- 10.3.6 Partners including the NDA, Sellafield Ltd and the Council, with support from Cumbria LEP, are already taking action to intervene and these interventions will

start to build the foundations for future economic growth. This is expanded upon in the following sections.

10.4 Moorside

- 10.4.1 The Moorside site located north of Sellafield is identified in the National Policy Statement for Nuclear Power Generation (EN-6) 2011 as a potential location for a new nuclear power station. The NPS is expected to be updated during 2024.
- 10.4.2 The detailed proposals at Moorside are still to be defined but two previous proposals (now withdrawn) were made, for up to 3.8 GW and 3GW of new electricity generating capacity. Any proposal for a new nuclear power station is likely to require significant infrastructure works, including railway improvements along the Cumbrian Coast Line, marine loading facility, highway improvements and worker accommodation.
- 10.4.3 The Council believes that the Moorside site can play a fundamental role in the delivery of the nation's energy security and Net Zero Carbon target and will bring potentially significant economic benefit to the area, including the generation of significant employment opportunities. Previous proposals have indicated that this could involve an anticipated peak of 6,500 workers during construction, 1,000 permanent staff when operational and additional opportunities during maintenance and outage periods.

10.5 Cumbria Clean Energy Park

- 10.5.1 In order to help achieve the vision of the Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus, a significant investment proposal is being designed around a Cumbria Clean Energy Park, primarily at the Moorside site. If successful the Energy Park could host a large nuclear power station, or a mix of large, small and advanced nuclear. This could result in 3GW+ of large new build plus a further contribution of low carbon power from other technologies on or adjacent to the site. Part of the site could be devoted to testing and deployment of Advanced Nuclear Technologies, to produce heat, steam, hydrogen or other low carbon synthetic fuels.

10.6 Industrial Solutions Hub

- 10.6.1 The Industrial Solutions Hub (ISH), a flagship initiative by Sellafield and its business partners, seeks to address the challenge that current ability to commercialise Sellafield experience is constrained and opportunities for wider economic growth and diversification are being missed. In line with the NDA Local Social and Economic Impact Strategy and Copeland Vision 2040, the ISH will leverage the economic potential of the Sellafield supply chain through a cluster approach to growing and diversifying the West Cumbrian economy. It will provide a new enterprise campus and innovation hub (the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter), facilitating the creation of a networked cluster of public, private and academic organisations growing, diversifying and exporting products and services from Cumbria into new nuclear and non-nuclear markets.

10.6.2 The ISH concept will maximise the existing and new economic activity in West Cumbria, in a way that facilitates:

- Spillovers and collaboration between industry, supply chain, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), academia and public sector organisations, opening up new opportunities
- Wider societal outcomes such as town centre regeneration, removal of barriers to local job creation, and increasing skills levels and aspirations
- Effective delivery of new nuclear and clean energy missions
- More effective, safer, quicker, better value delivery of the Sellafield mission

10.7 New Nuclear Technologies

10.7.1 While new nuclear development is subject to the agreement of a financing model for nuclear new build and to the implementation of a UK policy framework for Advanced Nuclear Technologies, this Plan supports the deployment of any of the following new nuclear technologies in Copeland in accordance with the criteria set out in the nuclear policies below. This includes the following:

Table 9: New Nuclear Technologies:

Technology	Description	Potential Deployment Location
Small Modular Reactors (SMR)	SMRs are smaller-scale versions of proven reactor technologies, such as light water reactors. Government support for the UK SMR project suggests that this will be the first to market in the UK, and Copeland is identified as the location for the first of a kind deployment. Copeland is also well-placed as the location of one of the manufacturing and assembly hubs, expected to create up to 2,000 supply chain jobs during manufacture and operations.	Fellside, adjacent to Sellafield Other sites TBC subject to National Siting Policy
Advanced Modular Reactors (AMR)	AMRs are advanced reactor technologies that use new or novel fuels, coolants or other systems. Six technology types are under investigation by the UK's AMR programme, with potential for deployment in Copeland, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Temperature Reactors for hydrogen and process heat generation • Fast reactors for disposition of nuclear materials (i.e. "plutonium burners"). 	Sites TBC subject to National Siting Policy
Medical Research Reactor	A high power neutron source/particle accelerator at Sellafield would create a new capability and export opportunity for the UK, producing radioisotopes for medical treatments. There are synergies in advanced materials research and testing and the physical infrastructure required for this facility and other Advanced Nuclear Technologies.	NNL facilities at Sellafield

Technology	Description	Potential Deployment Location
STEP at Moorside	The Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) will be a project at the international forefront of the clean energy revolution, bringing visibility to the community on a global stage. It is likely that the programme will be consented as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under a Development Consent Order (DCO). The scale of development is likely to be comparable to an operational power station, with associated infrastructure and research and development facilities. The programme will require investment in skills development from apprenticeships to higher level skills.	Moorside (competition ongoing, SoS decision expected late 2022)
Nuclear New Build	Large scale reactor technology could be deployed at Moorside, either as a standalone power station or co-located with small and advanced technologies and renewables as part of a clean energy hub, generating low carbon power, heat and fuels.	Moorside

10.8 Other Supporting Developments

RAICo Labs

10.8.1 Bridging between civil nuclear decommissioning and fusion development, RAICo Labs is a Robotics and AI collaboration between NDA, Sellafield Ltd, National Nuclear Laboratory, UK Atomic Energy Authority and University of Manchester that will increase local partnerships with public authorities, anchor institutions and private sector businesses to engage more with Research and Development and access national and international innovation opportunities. Regional benefits include:

- marketing for the region as a place to test and develop ideas;
- creating more inward investment;
- attracting/retaining talent to/in the region.

10.8.2 RAICo Labs represents an acknowledgement by anchor institutions of the importance of innovation in creating wider societal outcomes, importantly in driving digital social mobility through the creation of high-value, highly-skilled employment and training opportunities for our talented young people.

Nuclear Waste Management

10.8.3 The LLWR at Drigg has been in operation since 1959 and is an important facility that manages and disposes of low-level waste generated throughout the UK..

10.8.4 Copeland is currently host to two Community Partnerships in mid and south Copeland that are working on the siting process for a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF). This is a nationwide search for a willing community and a suitable location

for the safe and secure disposal of higher-activity radioactive waste. The siting of a GDF facility could provide significant economic investment and job creation in Copeland, although if successful, it is likely that this will fall outside of the Local Plan period. The Council will continue to work closely as part of the Community Partnerships to engage with the local community and identify potentially suitable locations for the siting of a GDF facility.

10.9 Supporting development of the nuclear sector

- 10.9.1 Where proposals for large scale nuclear development are Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) they will be considered by the Planning Inspectorate and decided by the Secretary of State. The Council will be consulted on such applications as a 'host authority' under the Planning Act 2008 and our starting position will be as set out in the nuclear policies, where relevant, below.
- 10.9.2 Planning Obligations will be secured when they are reasonable, necessary and directly related to the development.
- 10.9.3 Nuclear sector related development often provides community benefits by assisting the achievement of local economic, social, and environmental strategies and priorities. Such benefits are not a material planning consideration in the determination of applications. It is noted that Sellafield Ltd and the NDA separately support social strategies when discharging obligations under Section 7 of the Energy Act 2004.

Strategic Policy NU1: Supporting Development of the Nuclear Sector



The Council will support and encourage the development of the nuclear sector, including new nuclear missions, within Copeland where the following criteria are met;

- a) Proposals are in accordance with relevant National Policy and Government Guidance;
- b) Proposals, where appropriate, will make a demonstrable positive contribution to the development and deployment of low carbon energy technologies to help deliver a net zero carbon future.

Proposals for new nuclear build and associated infrastructure, including small modular reactors (SMR), advanced modular reactors (AMR) technologies will be assessed against criteria a) and b) above.

Proposals that deliver the Sellafield mission and the NDA's mission will be supported where they meet the criteria in Policy NU4.

In applying this policy the Council will expect the benefits of nuclear sector-related development in Copeland to outweigh the disbenefits, encouraging developers to assist with the achievement of local economic, social and environmental strategies/priorities.

10.10 Nuclear Decommissioning

- 10.10.1 Sellafield is home to a number of nationally significant facilities: the Windscale Pile Reactors, Windscale Advanced Gas-cooled Reactor, Calder Hall Magnox power station, Magnox Reprocessing and Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plants and the UK's highest hazard facilities, the Legacy Ponds and Silos. This nuclear legacy makes Sellafield one of the most complex nuclear decommissioning challenges in the world.
- 10.10.2 Sellafield Ltd is tasked by the NDA on behalf of UK government (BEIS) with safely and securely cleaning up the Sellafield site, in the long-term interests of the organisation, its employees, the local communities and supply chains. This mission includes the following activities:
- carrying out the environmental clean-up of the UK's most complex and hazardous nuclear site, Sellafield
 - decommissioning nuclear facilities
 - receiving, reprocessing and storing used nuclear fuel
 - managing the UK's special nuclear materials
 - delivering capital projects to support the mission, and asset care and maintenance – some of the facilities at Sellafield are more than 70 years old so significant investment is required to ensure that they remain operational and in a safe state prior to decommissioning; and
 - the safe treatment and storage of low level, intermediate level and high-level waste
- 10.10.3 Sellafield is a major developer, and the long-term (100+ years) programme of high hazard and risk reduction, decommissioning, remediation and radioactive waste management will require a number of major new build and demolition projects on the site, supported by a significant programme of procurement activity.
- 10.10.4 Delivery of the Sellafield mission dominates economic activity and employment in Copeland, where Sellafield is the single dominant customer for a developed supply chain, research and skills infrastructure. It is recognised by the NDA, Sellafield Ltd and the Council that there is a mutual desire to maximise value for the community from the taxpayer's investment in Sellafield.
- 10.10.5 Sellafield's changing mission over coming years could present a potential threat to the local economy, which has become highly attuned to the site's needs. However, this change also presents an opportunity to anchor new nuclear activity associated with decommissioning at Sellafield in West Cumbria, in a way that:

- Creates a more diverse and resilient local economy, opening up opportunities to export nuclear and non-nuclear products and services into domestic and international markets
- Attracts and grows new businesses in West Cumbria as part of an effective economic cluster, creating sustainable business and employment opportunities

Strategic Policy NU2: Maximising opportunities from Nuclear Decommissioning



The Council will maximise opportunities resulting from nuclear decommissioning to grow and diversify our economy by supporting proposals that accord with the Development Plan and:

- Strengthen Copeland's position as the Centre of Nuclear Excellence (CoNE) for knowledge and skills utilising Sellafield, the Westlakes Science and Technology Park and the Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter as centres of research and development
- Support the vision for new nuclear development set out in the Copeland Vision 2040 and Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus
- Create new sustainable business and employment opportunities that respond to work force change, providing opportunities to commercialise the world leading skills and processes generated at Sellafield for new markets
- Enable cross sector skills transfer from the nuclear sector to new low-carbon advanced technologies
- Provide opportunities to research, build and demonstrate prototype low-carbon technologies
- Maximise opportunities and encourage investment in training and education at existing facilities, and new facilities.
- Attract national and international investment for industrial and scientific relocation to Copeland
- Create a strong magnet for people attracted to a new exciting sector at the forefront of tackling climate change, and those inspired by technology aiming to protect the environment
- Optimise the relocation of functions and jobs that do not have to be based on the Sellafield site to sustainable locations within Copeland's towns or other suitable locations

10.11 Nuclear Energy Sector Development and Infrastructure

- 10.11.1 It is recognised that there are a broad range of activities related to the nuclear sector, not all of which are directly nuclear development for example activities

such as contractors' accommodation and laydown/storage facilities. Such supporting activities are often required to enable the delivery of major new nuclear projects and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects such as those identified in Table 9 and may also support projects on the Sellafield site. Policy NU3 seeks to enable this as well as other general nuclear development.

- 10.11.2 It should be noted that any development relating solely to the Sellafield site, on- or off-site, will be considered using the criteria in Policy NU4.
- 10.11.3 Pre-application advice should be sought with the Council at an early stage of the proposal's development.

Strategic Policy NU3: General Nuclear Energy and Associated Development and Infrastructure



The Council will support nuclear energy sector projects and associated-infrastructure projects by working with potential developers to identify suitable sites for a range of nuclear related support activities including, supply chain operations, research and development, worker accommodation and other relevant uses. The development of such sites will be supported where the following criteria are met:

- a) The development is sited on a designated employment site or on a suitable site within an identified settlement boundary. Development proposed which is not in these locations should be accompanied by a justification setting out why it is essential for the development to be on that particular site and why employment sites and available sites within settlements are not suitable;
- b) The proposal will minimise potential impacts on Copeland's landscape and natural environment, and the health and amenity of its community and visitors;
- c) The proposal must be located, developed and designed, to minimise any adverse impacts.

Where relevant, proposals should be developed in consultation with the community and other key stakeholders.

10.12 Development at Sellafield

- 10.12.1 Copeland hosts the Sellafield site where a nationally significant decommissioning mission is being delivered in accordance with NDA Strategy 2021 (as required under the Energy Act 2004). The Council recognises the importance of enabling delivery of that mission in order to create a clean and safe environment for future generations, and that this mission is carried out within a robust framework of safety, security and environmental regulatory controls which are placed on the operators of the site by bodies such as the Office for Nuclear Regulation and the Environment Agency. It is recognised that to facilitate decommissioning and safely store the waste arising from these high hazard reduction activities, pending a national decision on geological disposal, significant development of the Sellafield site is required.
- 10.12.2 The Council's approach to dealing with proposals for nuclear development, including those related to decommissioning, site remediation and radioactive material management in Copeland, is to work with operators of the facilities at the Sellafield nuclear licensed site to ensure that, so far as it is possible, development is in line with Government policy, regulatory frameworks and the remit of the Council in its role as a Local Planning Authority.
- 10.12.3 The following policy, NU4, is specific to nuclear development at Sellafield and recognises the uniqueness of the site. The policy aims to support future development at Sellafield and maximise opportunities. The Council will continue to work proactively with Sellafield to accommodate their needs whilst minimising development impacts on local communities and the environment. Sellafield Ltd is encouraged to engage with the community and key stakeholders at the earliest stage when developing their proposals.
- 10.12.4 This policy does not apply to proposals for radioactive waste which are covered by policies in the Cumbria Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2015-2030.
- 10.12.5 Policy NU4 relates to development both inside and outside of the defined Sellafield site boundary as identified on the Proposals Map.
- 10.12.6 The unique considerations of the Sellafield mission, regarding safety, security, and other regulatory requirements, entail that certain policies (such as landscaping) may not be appropriate for all developments within the site. However, the development plan will be the starting point when determining a planning application.

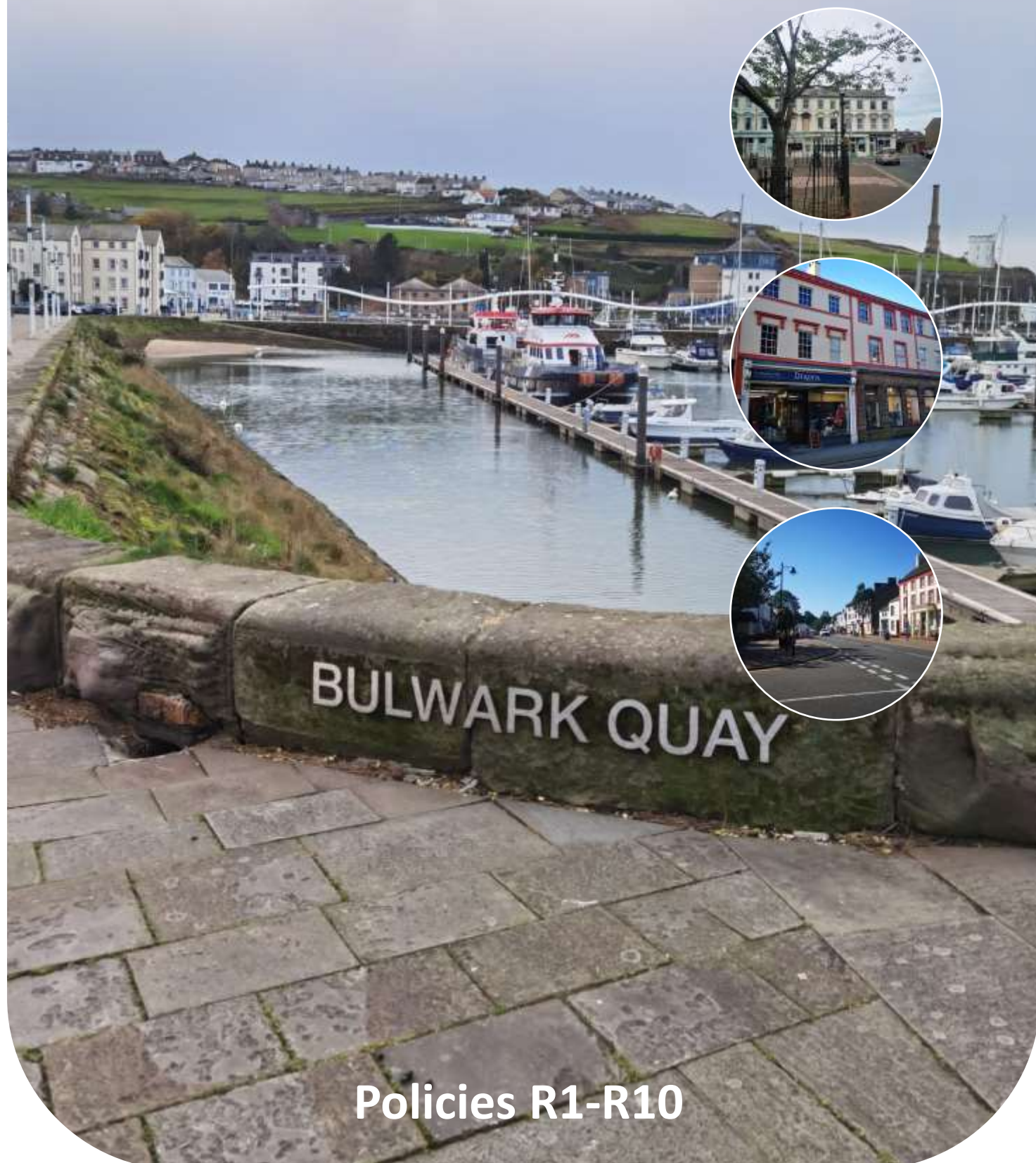
Policy NU4: Nuclear and Associated Development at Sellafield



The Council's approach to dealing with proposals for nuclear development including those related to decommissioning, site remediation and radioactive material management in Copeland is to work with operators of the facilities at the Sellafield licensed nuclear site to ensure that:

- a) Nuclear development (other than monitoring, maintenance and investigatory work necessarily done off-site) and any associated development and enabling works requiring planning permission shall be sited within the existing Sellafield site boundary unless Criterion b) applies.
- b) Where any development is proposed outside the Sellafield site it shall be sited on a designated employment site or on suitable sites within an identified settlement boundary in accordance with the principles set out in Policies DS1 and DS2. Development proposed outside the Sellafield site and not within these locations should be accompanied by a justification setting out why it is essential for development to be on that particular site and why employment sites or available sites within Sellafield and settlements are not suitable.
- c) Proposals for any new development include long term management plans setting out how operations will be co-ordinated to minimise any harmful effects and mitigate or compensate for physical environmental impacts.
- d) Proposals include provision for necessary infrastructure to support the new development.
- e) Proposals include measures to adequately mitigate any adverse effects of the proposed development, and enhancement of the site where possible.

11 Retail and Leisure



Policies R1-R10

11.1 Retail and Leisure Headlines



Strengths

Range of existing retail and leisure opportunities across Copeland's towns

Existing attractive historic environment and public realm across the four towns

Existing funding opportunities, including the Towns Deals in Millom and Cleator Moor

The 'Shop Local' campaign, designed to help support local businesses

Shopfront Design Guide SPD to support high quality shopfronts and public realm



Challenges

Higher than average retail vacancy rates in the three Key Service Centres, which can in turn result in shops becoming neglected and derelict

Higher than average concentration of non-retail provision in town centres, including a high proportion of hot food takeaways

Challenges relating to Town Centre connectivity, for example, through poor pedestrian links between Whitehaven Town Centre, the Railway Station and the Harbour

There have been negative impacts on High Streets nationally, including the impact of Covid-19, Brexit and an increase in online shopping



Opportunities

Potential for additional funding bids to deliver improvements to Copeland's Towns, including the Borderlands Fund in Egremont and the 'Building Back Better' funding opportunities

Opportunities to diversify Copeland's leisure offering through the provision of unique and modern leisure experiences

Opportunities to bring derelict buildings back into use to improve the retail and leisure offer

11.2 Retail and Leisure in Copeland

- 11.2.1 The retail and leisure offer within Copeland is primarily built around the Principal Town of Whitehaven and the three Key Service Centres of Cleator Moor and Egremont to the north and Millom to the south. Below the Key Service Centres are a range of Local Service Centres and Sustainable Villages that offer retail, leisure and service provisions to support the daily needs of local communities.
- 11.2.2 Copeland's towns have the potential to deliver high quality town centres that meet the needs of the community, encourage more people into our centres, promote economic growth and improve health and wellbeing. It is acknowledged that in order to achieve this, some aspects of Copeland's centres are in need of the following:
- regeneration
 - improved connectivity (digital and active travel routes)
 - diversification of uses to create quality leisure and shopping experiences
 - new and improved flexible built and public open spaces
 - new and improved opportunities for overnight stays and living accommodation

Opportunities and Challenges

- 11.2.3 There have been a number of recent changes to national planning policy that have the potential to affect planning for retail and leisure. Recent Government relaxations to Permitted Development Rights acknowledge the importance of planning for diverse Town Centres. These changes are important as they can contribute to delivering improvements and opportunities in town centres, helping to improve their vitality and viability.
- 11.2.4 In addition, amendments to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 made on 22nd July 2020, came into force in England on 1st September 2020. This was with the aim of supporting high street revival and allowing greater flexibility to change uses within town centres without the need for express planning permission. Moving forward, we see the Government reforms to the planning system as an opportunity for us to review what use classes should be supported and are appropriate in rebooting our town centres.
- 11.2.5 Improvements to town centres also relate closely to the Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda. This is designed to address economic disparities across the UK, with a white paper published in February 2022. This aims to develop opportunities for improvement in 'left behind' areas, helping to support jobs and economic growth, addressing the impact of the pandemic.
- 11.2.6 On a local level, in 2018 the Council produced Spatial Frameworks for Whitehaven (draft - not yet adopted) and the three Key Service Centres. These provide a comprehensive vision for the future development of the four towns.

Developments which help to achieve the ambitions within these documents will be supported by the Council.

- 11.2.7 The Council is working to secure funding for Copeland to help provide town centre improvements. In June 2021, Cleator Moor was offered £22.5 million of investment through the Government's Towns Fund. Subsequently, in July 2021 a bid for £20.6 million was approved for Millom. This funding will be instrumental in encouraging future economic growth in the two towns and contributing towards the Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda⁴⁴. The Millom and Cleator Moor Town Deal Boards have both produced a Town Investment Plan which set out local priorities for investment and help to provide focus for where the Towns Fund money will be spent.
- 11.2.8 Despite there being a number of strong opportunities for town centres and retail in Copeland, there are also a number of challenges that need to be overcome. In recent years, towns across the country have seen decline, boarded up shopfronts and, in some cases, the liquidation of household retail names. These impacts are a result of several factors, including uncertainties surrounding Brexit, changing consumer behaviour patterns and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 11.2.9 The full economic impact of the Covid-19 lockdowns remains uncertain. It is however widely accepted that wholesale change is needed to reboot our towns and make them once again vibrant and successful. This will be achieved through a number of interventions, including the Government's Levelling Up agenda, successful funding bids and local community and stakeholder buy in and commitment to deliver the local solutions needed. A Covid-19 Supplement of the Grimsey Review for town centres, titled 'Build Back Better' was published in 2020. The report, written by retail expert Bill Grimsey, sets out what he considers needs to be done for town centres and high streets to thrive post Covid-19 and rediscover their community purpose⁴⁵

11.3 Copeland Retail Study

- 11.3.1 The Council commissioned the joint West Cumbria Retail and Leisure Study with the former Allerdale Borough Council in early 2020. Since the findings of this study, a number of national changes have occurred as outlined at the start of this chapter. This resulted in the Council commissioning a review of the study for Copeland in Spring 2021.
- 11.3.2 The Retail Study is an important piece of evidence to inform the retail policies within the Local Plan and contribute towards making improvements within Copeland's town centres. The study provides town centre health checks and identifies the future need for town centre development, including the requirement for convenience and comparison goods and leisure provision.

⁴⁴ Further details about the Millom and Cleator Moor Towns Deal Bids, and the projects proposed through this, can be seen at: <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/towns-fund-millom> and <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/towns-fund-cleator-moor> respectively.

⁴⁵ [Grimsey-Covid-19-Supplement-June-2020.pdf \(vanishinghighstreet.com\)](#)

11.3.3 A number of key findings arose from the 2020 Retail Study and subsequent update. These are as follows⁴⁶:

- It is estimated that between **1,700 and 2,000sqm** of additional convenience floorspace will be required across Copeland up to 2038.
- Findings of the Study conclude that there is not an additional requirement for comparison goods floorspace, and there is potential for an oversupply by the end of the plan period. However, opportunities have been identified for the reconfiguration of comparison floorspace to meet future demand, for example, by providing larger sized units with parking for the collection of large goods.
- In terms of leisure, findings of the Study suggest that Copeland could support the addition of 5.8 cinema screens and a 5 lane ten pin bowling venue by 2038. It also emphasises the demand for unique and diverse local experiences and identifies that flexible sites may be appropriate in the future, allowing for activities such as crazy golf, games rooms and escape rooms.

11.3.4 Local Plan policies support a flexible approach to new retail, leisure and town centre development that can adapt to rapid change and support the vitality of the town centre. Policy R1 sets out the strategic approach towards such development in town centres and villages set out in the Retail Hierarchy (Policy R2) and provides the overarching criteria in supporting the vitality and viability of the centres.

Strategic Policy R1: Vitality and Viability of Town Centres and Villages within the Hierarchy



The Council will seek to enhance the vitality and viability of town centres and villages identified in the settlement hierarchy by working with partners and applicants to:

- Support a network of healthy, vibrant and resilient town centres, comprised of a diverse range of retail, residential, leisure and other main town centre uses, that can effectively respond to change
- Support regeneration projects, refurbishment of buildings and public realm improvements within the retail hierarchy
- Ensure the needs for retail and other main town centre uses are met in full. Ensuring that, taking account of commitments as of 1st April 2021, sufficient provision has been made to meet the forecast convenience retail capacity within Copeland up to 2039

⁴⁶ To find out more about the Retail Study and the health check findings for each of Copeland's four towns, please visit: <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/copeland-local-plan-2021-2038-evidence-base>

- Ensure that proposals for new development are consistent in terms of scale and function with the size and role of the centre
- Support the development of stores for the sale of comparison goods and town centre leisure development within identified opportunity sites where the impact threshold and sequential test is met
- Encourage new national retailers to relocate to Copeland's towns, and support and enhance the independent offer
- Broaden the offer of Copeland's town centres to increase footfall, and encourage extended lengths of stay, for both the daytime and evening economy
- Support proposals for improved digital connectivity and transport improvements in and around the town centre boundaries
- Support proposals for new and improved public realm, including public open space, landscaping and other outdoor community areas

The extents of town centre boundaries are defined at Appendix B.

11.4 Hierarchy of Centres

- 11.4.1 The NPPF, paragraph 86, requires Local Plans to define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability. The development strategy set out in Policy DS1 directs the main focus of development to the most sustainable locations within Copeland.
- 11.4.2 As Copeland's Principal Town, Whitehaven provides the main hub of retail, leisure and service uses within Plan area. Findings of the 2020 Retail Study health check identify Whitehaven as a '*vital and viable centre that meets resident's day to day needs, with a strong choice of convenience stores.*' The three Key Service Centres of Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom provide convenience and comparison shopping, and a range of other services to serve the settlement and surrounding communities.
- 11.4.3 Paragraph 84 of the NPPF supports a prosperous rural economy. As a largely rural area, we understand the importance of supporting the sustainability of our rural communities and in respect to retail and leisure uses, supporting the creation and retention of accessible services and facilities to meet the needs of local residents.
- 11.4.4 Policy R2 sets out the role and function including the type of retail, residential⁴⁷, leisure and main town centre development that is appropriate in each tier of the settlement hierarchy, in line with Policy DS1.

⁴⁷ N.B – residential development requirements are set out in the Housing Chapter. For town centre development this is generally directed at first floor accommodation above retail units and apartment blocks. In terms of apartments, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has identified a need for purpose built extra care housing, student and keyworker accommodation that would benefit from a town centre location.

Strategic Policy R2: Hierarchy of Town Centres

The Council will support retail, residential, leisure and other main town centre development where it is appropriate to its role, function and position within the settlement hierarchy as set out in the following table:

Designation	Role and Function
Principal Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal focus of new and enhanced retail , neighbourhood facilities and other main town centre uses (as defined in the NPPF) in Copeland
Key Service Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convenience and comparison shopping, and a range of other services to serve the settlement and surrounding communities
Local Service Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principally concerned with the sale of food and other convenience goods, and the provision of services to serve the settlement in which they are located or clustered with
Sustainable Rural Villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small scale retail and services appropriate to villages that will support and strengthen local community viability. The emphasis will be the retention of existing provision
Rural Villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small scale retail and services appropriate to villages, that will support and strengthen local community viability. The emphasis will be the retention of existing provision

N.B. The town centre boundaries for the four main towns of Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom can be viewed at Appendix B

11.5 Whitehaven Town Centre

- 11.5.1 Whitehaven is the main focus for retail and leisure growth in Copeland. Whitehaven offers a unique experience to its residents and visitors; with a variety of attractions including the harbour and marina, Georgian architecture, historic buildings and Conservation Areas, visitor attractions including The Beacon Museum, the Rum Story, a cinema and bingo hall and a range of independent and national retailers, cafes, bars and bistros.
- 11.5.2 Findings of the 2020 Whitehaven Health Check (WHC), conclude that current vacancy rates are in line with national averages. The town has fewer national

retailers than many towns including the neighbouring town of Workington, and offers a good choice of convenience and independent stores and businesses.

11.5.3 A number of opportunities have been identified through the Whitehaven Health Check within the 2020 Retail Study, including:

- Building on the transient workers trade
- Building on and improving the quality of the leisure offer
- Improving pedestrian movements and safety in the centre
- Building on the town's independent businesses offer to provide a destination which meets the needs of local residents, transient workers and tourists
- Building on Whitehaven's coastal location, tourist offer and regeneration of the Georgian architecture

11.5.4 Local Plan policies support a flexible approach for new development opportunities for the town centre, making it a destination for people to visit and enjoy.

11.5.5 Policy R3 sets out the requirements for development in and on the edge of the Whitehaven Town Centre Boundary.

Strategic Policy R3: Whitehaven Town Centre



Development that supports the role of Whitehaven Town Centre as the Principal Town will be encouraged and supported where it:

- Appropriately reflects the Whitehaven Town Centre boundary and Primary Shopping Area in line with the approach set out in Policy R6⁴⁸
- Accords with the Whitehaven Town Centre and Harbourside Supplementary Planning Document or any document that supersedes it;
- Encourages evening and night time uses that contribute to the vibrancy, inclusiveness and economic vitality of the centre;
- Provides commercial office space in Whitehaven;
- Builds upon the leisure offer to maximise the location of Whitehaven as a destination within the Lake District Coastal Area;
- Provides improvements to public realm, shop front aesthetics, linkages and signage;
- Improves the historic attributes where appropriate;

⁴⁸ The extents of the Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area is defined at Appendix B

- Improves pedestrian movement, connectivity and safety throughout the town centre and in particular from King Street to the harbour areas;
- Provides retail, leisure and main town centre frontage along the harbour;
- Provides improved and new public green space and landscaping;
- Enhances the gateway sites and approaches into the town centre;
- Diversifies the range of residential accommodation in the town centre, including the re-use of vacant floors over shops;
- Maintains high standards of design that conserves and enhances elements contributing to the significance of Whitehaven Town Centre and High Street Conservation Area, including principles set out within the Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan;
- Strengthens the historic attributes of the town centre;
- Incorporates the strategic redevelopment schemes set out in the Whitehaven Masterplan

Development on Opportunity and regeneration sites will be encouraged where proposals meet the requirements of the sequential test and impact threshold.

11.6 Key Service Centres

- 11.6.1 The three Key Service Centres of Egremont, Cleator Moor and Millom offer the next level of provision below the Principal Town of Whitehaven. Findings of the Key Service Centre masterplans and visions identify that all centres need support to help diversify their offer and become sustainable centres which attract a higher number of visits from residents and tourists.
- 11.6.2 The following paragraphs give information surrounding the context of each of the Key Service Centres. Table 10 then outlines the key strengths, challenges and opportunities faced by the Key Service Centres, which has been informed by the 2020 Retail Study and 2021 update, as well as spatial frameworks and Town Deal funding bid documents.

Cleator Moor

- 11.6.3 Cleator Moor is closely located to Ennerdale Water (which is a dark skies area) and offers a small range of independent stores, public houses and takeaways and a recently built medical centre. It has a town square, with a range of historic buildings, of particular note is the former Town Hall and Carnegie Library. Most of the town centre falls within a Conservation Area, surrounded by open spaces and woodland.
- 11.6.4 The Cleator Moor Spatial Framework (2018) includes a number of cross cutting initiatives which can contribute towards improving the town centre experience. One of these is an "Experience Cleator Moor" initiative that seeks to improve the quality and range of services in the town, facilitating opportunities to improve the visitor attractions and existing sport and leisure provision and activating outdoor

spaces, particularly in the north east of the town linked to Copeland Bowls and Sports Centre and King George's Field pitches.

- 11.6.5 Cleator Moor has recently been offered investment of £22.5 million as part of the Government's Towns Deal Fund. This will provide financial opportunities for improvements to the town that will encourage increased footfall and new business startups. It also includes opportunities directed at low carbon, and a changed economy for the whole town with better connections and use of spaces. The projects being funded by the Town Deal Fund are supported by the Town Improvement Plan (TIP) (2021), which highlights the strengths of Cleator Moor and ambitions for the future. We will support development that contributes towards the delivery of projects outlined in the TIP and spatial framework.

Egremont

- 11.6.6 Egremont, dating back to medieval times, is home to the ruins of the Norman Egremont Castle and its surrounding grounds, which is a key landmark in the town. It has a distinctive historic layout based on a medieval street pattern with a large number of buildings from the Georgian period and earlier. The retail and leisure offer includes a regular market, and a range of local stores, public houses and a library.
- 11.6.7 The Egremont Spatial Framework (2018) includes an "Experience Egremont" initiative and identifies opportunities to improve existing sports and leisure provision in the town filling identified gaps (e.g. Gillfoot Park, football, bowls and public play areas). It also aims to improve the quality and range of hotel accommodation, provide market, event and exhibition space and seek opportunities to facilitate new visitor and leisure attractions.
- 11.6.8 Egremont is a priority town in Copeland for the Borderlands Places programme and has been allocated £2.6 million funding. A Town Plan is currently being developed which will identify opportunities and projects where the investment will be best spent. This could help diversify the economic base of the town, resulting in resilience and sustainability.

Millom

- 11.6.9 The town of Millom is in close proximity to the Hodbarrow Nature Reserve and Port Haverigg Watersports and Wake Park. It has a strong Victorian character, housing a distinctive clock tower building and features Millom Castle on its outskirts. St George's Church forms a dramatic landmark, with Millom Park creating a significant green area in the heart of the town. The retail and leisure offer includes Millom Heritage and Arts Centre, Beggars Theatre, Millom Palladium, a range of local stores, public houses, library and a national chain convenience store that is a key anchor for the town.
- 11.6.10 The Millom Spatial Framework (2018) includes an "Experience Millom" initiative which involves the promotion of the town's coastal environment for water sports and related activities including investment in facilities and events. The southern fringe of the town is identified as an opportunity to create a distinctive leisure, recreation or tourism development facilitating adventure sports. The framework

also emphasises the aim to develop programmes to facilitate reuse and renovation of vacant and dilapidated buildings for community use and local enterprise.

- 11.6.11 Millom and Haverigg, have recently been offered investment of £20.6 million as part of the Government's Towns Deal Fund. This will provide financial opportunities for improvements to the town including public realm and regeneration of buildings. It also includes opportunities directed at low carbon, and a changed economy for the town with better connections and use of spaces. The projects being funded by the Town Deal Fund are supported by the Town Improvement Plan (TIP) (2021), which highlights the strengths of Millom and Haverigg and ambitions for the future. We will support development that contributes towards the delivery of projects outlined in the TIP and spatial framework.

Table 10: Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities within the Key Service Centres

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
Cleator Moor		
Strong civic quarter and Phoenix Enterprise Quarter, which supports local businesses	Vacancy rate of 30%, triple the national average.	There is an opportunity to build upon the Market Square to diversify and strengthen the offer
A number of attractive historic buildings	Lack of a town centre convenience anchor store	Opportunities to further build on the demonstrable community spirit in the town
Strong level of parking to support retail offer	Potential for competition, both with the out of town anchor store, and with Whitehaven as a nearby large and diverse centre	Higher than average vacancy rate provides opportunities for short term leases for new and local retailers, including 'pop up shops'
		Renovation and reuse of vacant buildings to improve the quality of the high street
Egremont		
The Market Hall, library and outdoor market all contribute to increasing footfall in the town	Vacancy rates at the time of survey of 24%, more than double the national average.	Opportunity to improve connections between Egremont Castle and the town centre
Strong national multiple anchor.	Number of derelict buildings requiring repair, which results in challenges for the overall public realm.	Opportunity to build upon the independent and community retail offer within the town centre.
Several positive aspects of public realm, including fenced		Higher than average vacancy rate provides

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
areas, benches and trees lining Main Street		opportunities for short term leases for new and local retailers, including 'pop up shops'
		Renovation and reuse of vacant buildings to improve the quality of the high street
Millom		
A strong anchor store and a good overall convenience offer to attract footfall into the centre	At the time of survey vacancy rates were at 19.2%, almost double national average.	Improvements to public realm; regeneration of key historic buildings and the location presents opportunities for tourist visitors.
The community uses such as the library, pavilion and theatre, and the recreation centre build upon the community spirit of the town.	Poor connections between the station and the town centre	Opportunities to improve active travel links, including cycle links between Millom and Duddon Bridge
Central location of Millom railway station	Isolated location of Millom could result in increased online spending and decreased town centre footfall	Millom Iron Line project (outlined in the Millom and Haverigg TIP).

Strategic Policy R4: The Key Service Centres



Development that supports the roles of Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom as the Key Service Centres, strengthens and diversifies their offer and improves vitality and viability will be encouraged, particularly where it:

- Is located within the town centre boundaries of the Key Service Centres (Appendix B);
- Builds upon and addresses the strengths, opportunities and challenges associated with each town, as set out in Table 10;
- Provides convenience and comparison shopping, or range of other services, including leisure provision to serve the settlement and surrounding communities;

- d) Encourages evening and night time uses that contribute to the vibrancy, inclusiveness and economic vitality of the centres;
- e) Diversifies the range of residential accommodation in the Key Service Centres, including the reuse of vacant floors over shops;
- f) Strengthens and diversifies the towns offer;
- g) Provides improvements to public realm and signage, including through the provision of public greenspace and landscaping where appropriate;
- h) Provides enhanced connectivity and town centre coherence, including providing active travel links to public transport hubs;
- i) Provides or enhances car parking provision where appropriate;
- j) Promotes the reuse of brownfield land;
- k) Results in the repair and renovation of derelict and historic buildings, particularly where they form part of a gateway into the town centre;
- l) Protects and enhance the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas within town centres designated for their special architectural or historic interest.

11.7 Local Service Centres, Sustainable Villages and Rural Villages

- 11.7.1 Retail areas beyond Key Service Centre level provide for small scale shopping and some local services. The Council encourages the longevity of community services and provision necessary to foster sustainable communities.
- 11.7.2 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF recognises that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found in areas outside of the settlement hierarchy, i.e. in the open countryside. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have unacceptable impact on local roads and takes any opportunities available to make a location more sustainable, for example through improvements to public transport provision to better connect locations to Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres. Development in the open countryside must be 150sqm or less, a figure suggested by the consultants who produced the 2020 Retail Study and 2021 update. This figure is considered to be an adequate size for a modest farm shop or small office development, for example.
- 11.7.3 Retail, leisure⁴⁹, and service development should be directed to the most sustainable locations. Policy R5 sets out the criteria to support and encourage provisions such as village shops, post offices and public houses and sets out the criteria that will be considered for applicants that propose a change of use resulting in a loss of such provision. It also outlines the limited circumstances

⁴⁹ The Retail Study identifies that leisure includes the following facilities: cinemas, ten pin bowling alleys, bingo halls, gyms, food and drink services and competitive socialising' concepts, which include bowling, crazy golf, table tennis, darts, axe-throwing and other similar niche pursuits.

where retail and leisure development (both new build and conversions requiring planning permission) may be appropriate in an open countryside location.

Policy R5: Retail and service provision in rural areas



Local Service Centres, Sustainable Villages and Rural Villages

Development will be encouraged where it provides small scale retail and service provision that will support and strengthen sustainability and local community viability and is appropriate in scale to its location. Strong emphasis will be placed on the retention of existing provision.

Open Countryside

Small scale farm diversification and retail and leisure schemes of 150sqm or less located in out of centre locations will be considered where:

- a) The development respects the character of its setting and the countryside
- b) The development would not lead to unacceptable harm to biodiversity assets or heritage assets.
- c) It can be robustly justified that there is need for an open countryside location.

Loss of retail and services in rural settlements

The loss of existing village shops, post offices and public houses through new development requiring planning permission will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Council, that:

- a) Its continued use as a village shop, post office or public house is no longer feasible, having had regard to appropriate marketing (over twelve months and at a price which reflects its use, condition and local market values), the demand for the use of the site or premises, its usability and the identification of a potential future occupier. Applicants must demonstrate that full consideration has been given to any opportunities available to retain the existing use as part of a shared/combined service in order to improve viability; or
- b) Sufficient alternative provision is, or will be as part of the proposal, made elsewhere which is equally accessible and of the same quality or better than the facility being lost.

11.8 Whitehaven Town Centre – Primary Shopping Area

- 11.8.1 The NPPF, paragraph 86b, requires Local Plans to define the extent of town centres and Primary Shopping Areas (PSA) and make clear the range of uses permitted.
- 11.8.2 Annex 2 of the NPPF identifies a PSA as the ‘*Defined area where retail development is concentrated.*’ Conclusions of the Retail Study recommend that a Primary Shopping Area is identified in Whitehaven Town Centre to include; King Street, Chapel Street, Church Street, Lowther Street, Addison Street and New Street (see Appendix B).
- 11.8.3 The Retail Study and subsequent update do not recommend that Local Plan policy imposes a threshold over the proportion of non-retail uses within the PSA, so that a level of flexibility is allowed whilst ensuring that the PSA continues to reflect the areas main function as Whitehaven’s predominant retail centre.
- 11.8.4 Policy R6 supports a flexible approach to uses within Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area to promote the vitality and viability of the town and to encourage residents and visitors to identify with Whitehaven as a destination centre where people not only come to shop, but also to spend quality time on a regular basis.

Policy R6: Whitehaven Town Centre Primary Shopping Area



Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area is the focus for retail use in Copeland⁵⁰. To support and promote the vitality and viability of the centre, proposals for other main town uses (i.e. non E (a)) will be supported within the defined primary shopping area where:

- a) The proposal complements the retail function and makes a positive contribution to the vitality, viability and diversity of the town centre, in terms of maintaining well designed active, continuous frontages, appropriate signage and hours of opening; and
- b) The proposal would not give rise either alone or cumulatively, to a detrimental effect on the character and amenity of the Primary Shopping Area, or cause an unacceptable harm to the amenity of town centre residents; and
- c) Ground floor proposals for Hot Food Takeaways will not lead to more than two such uses adjoining each other.

⁵⁰ Its boundaries are shown at Appendix B.

11.9 Sequential Test

- 11.9.1 The NPPF, paragraph 87, states that ‘Local Planning Authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses⁵¹ which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan.’
- 11.9.2 The sequential test requires applicants to satisfactorily demonstrate that the use cannot be located in a town centre. If this is not possible, then edge of centre sites may be considered next. Edge of centre for retail purposes as defined in the NPPF glossary is *“a location that is well connected to, and up to 300 metres from the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange”*.
- 11.9.3 The Local Plan (Appendix C) identifies a range of Opportunity Sites within the Plan area that are in need of regeneration. Further information regarding Opportunity Areas can be found in Policy E6 and its supporting text. Such sites should be given consideration when carrying out the sequential test. The Retail Study has also identified two broad Opportunity Areas outside but adjoining Whitehaven Town Centre where there are opportunities for regeneration and where a mixture of uses would be supported.
- 11.9.4 The sequential test will also apply where the proposal is for a conversion or removal of goods condition to ensure that any impact to existing businesses within the defined centres is fully assessed. This criteria has been tested in the West Cumbria 2020 Retail Study and the 2021 update.
- 11.9.5 When carrying out the sequential test, applicants must demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale.
- 11.9.6 Policies E3 (Westlakes Science and Technology Park) and E4 (Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter) both allow for some small scale town centre uses where these are ancillary in nature and support the primary uses of the site. This could include restaurant/canteen facilities etc. Such uses could also be required at the Sellafield site and Clean Energy Park in the future to support their operations and reduce the need to travel. Such facilities may be permitted without requiring a sequential test to be submitted.

⁵¹ See Glossary for definition

Policy R7: Sequential Test



Where an application is for a main town centre use which is neither in a town centre nor in accordance with the Development Plan, applicants must submit details to demonstrate that they have carried out a sequential test to the satisfaction of the Council in accordance with national policy. Locations within a town centre must be considered first, followed by edge of centre sites and only if no suitable sites are available will an out-of-town location be supported.

The defined centre for retail purposes is taken to be the defined Primary Shopping Area and for all other main town centre uses, the defined Town Centre Boundary. As such, for retail purposes, edge of centre locations are those well connected to, and up to 300 metres from the Primary Shopping Area. For all other main town centre uses, edge of centre locations are those well connected to, and up to 300 metres from the Town Centre Boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside of the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange.

The sequential approach should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development.

In the exceptional cases where new retail development will be supported in out of town locations, where the sequential test has been satisfied, the development must:

- Avoid or mitigate against harm to the natural environment, including biodiversity assets
- Consider and respect the existing landscape and built environment
- Ensure that the highway network is capable of supporting additional traffic linked to the use

This policy does not apply to small scale rural development such as offices although it can be applied to proposals to create new unrestricted retail floorspace through conversion or the removal of restrictive goods conditions.

11.10 Retail and Leisure Impact Assessments

- 11.10.1 The NPPF, paragraph 90, states that when assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, Local Planning Authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold.

- 11.10.2 Copeland has not previously set a local threshold and relied on the NPPF default threshold of 2,500sqm. However, findings of the 2020 Retail Study and 2021 update recommend that a local threshold is set to avoid inappropriate out of centre development. The threshold also applies to proposals for a conversion or removal of goods condition, as well as proposals for new and extension to retail and leisure development including mezzanine floors.
- 11.10.3 The locally set impact threshold(s) will enable the Council to assess the potential harmful effect on the overall vitality and viability of a defined centre. Any assessment required will be proportionate, in accordance with Policy R8 and should set out the potential trade diversion impact assumptions.

Policy R8: Retail and Leisure Impact Assessments



An Impact Assessment must be submitted where retail or leisure development is proposed outside of a defined centre and the proposed floorspace is equal to or above the following levels. This applies to new retail and leisure developments, those creating retail or leisure mezzanine floorspace and proposals that seek to vary of restrictive conditions.

Retail Development:

- Within 800m of Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area – 500 sqm (gross)
- Within 800m of the respective Key Service Centre town centre boundary – 300 sqm (gross)
- Within 800m of Local Service Centres – 200 sqm (gross)
- In all other locations including Sustainable Rural Villages, Rural Villages – 150 sqm (gross)

Leisure Development:

- Within 800m of Whitehaven Town Centre – 500 sqm (gross)
- Within 800m of the respective Key Service Centre town centre boundary – 300 sqm (gross)
- In all other locations including Local Service Centres, Sustainable Rural Villages, Rural Villages – 150 sqm (gross)

For retail uses on the edge of Whitehaven, the defined centre will be the Primary Shopping Area. In all other areas, and for all other main town centre uses, the defined centre will be the closest town centre boundary.

The Assessment must be proportionate and appropriate to the scale and type of retail or leisure floorspace proposed. The Assessment should accord with national planning

policy and the scope should be agreed between the applicant and Council prior to submission where possible.

11.11 Non-Retail Development in Towns

- 11.11.1 The Council recognises the changing dynamics of town centres, and the need to provide flexibility in its approach, to the change of use and development of non-retail uses to ensure the future vitality of centres. Policy R9 should be applied to non-retail development in all town centres with the exclusion of Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area. Town centre boundaries are shown in Appendix B.

Policy R9: Non-Retail Development in Town Centres



Proposals for non-retail development in defined town centres (outside of Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area) will be encouraged where they widen its community, social, leisure, entertainment, food and drink, arts, tourism, business/office offer where they accord with the Development Plan and:

- a) The proposal complements the retail function and makes a positive contribution to the vitality, viability and diversity of the town centres in terms of maintaining active continuous well-designed frontages, appropriate signage and hours of opening;
- b) The proposal would not give rise, either alone or cumulatively, to a detrimental effect on the character and amenity of the town centres; and
- c) The proposal would not harm the amenity of town centre residents.

11.12 Hot Food Takeaways

- 11.12.1 Healthy lifestyles and clean and tidy towns are supported by the Council. Policy R10 sets out the detailed criteria that will be used to assess proposals for hot food takeaways in Copeland. For proposals within the Primary Shopping Area please also see Policy R6.

Policy R10: Hot Food Takeaways



To protect public health and safety interests, local and residential amenity highways safety, and support the economic and social vitality and viability of Copeland's communities, hot food takeaways will be permitted where:

- a) The proposal would not give rise to unacceptable environmental effects (related to matters including odour, fumes, filtration, noise and waste) which cannot be overcome; and
- b) The amenity of neighbouring uses and the character and appearance of the environment is not adversely affected; and
- c) It does not negatively affect the road safety in the local area.

Where external works are required that are necessary to the function of the takeaway including ventilation, cooling and filtration systems details should be submitted with the proposal and will be assessed and determined as part of the planning application.

Appropriate conditions may be attached to planning permission to secure any other necessary mitigation measures having regard to surrounding uses including accessibility and proximity to sensitive uses including schools, character of the area and potential nuisance disturbances to residential areas, other uses and public health and safety interests. Planning conditions may also include restrictions on the opening hours of new premises.

12 Tourism



Policies T1-T3

12.1 Tourism Headlines



Strengths

Two thirds of Copeland is situated within the Lake District National Park and English Lake District World Heritage Site, the most visited park in the UK

Copeland is home to England's highest mountain, Scafell Pike, and England's deepest lake, Wastwater

Copeland is home to six of the 10 best rated beaches in Cumbria

St Bees and Whitehaven is the only designated Heritage Coast between Wales and Scotland

Number of high quality recreational routes along the Lake District Coast and England Coast Path, as well as links to the LDNP

Location for part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site



Challenges

There are challenges associated with encouraging visitors to experience the non Lake District part of Copeland

Challenging connectivity can reduce visitor footfall, for example, through the limited connectivity between Millom and Whitehaven

Balancing tourism growth whilst protecting the environment

Balancing the demand for second homes/holiday lets and the provision of homes for local communities



Opportunities

Opportunities for tourism development along the coast, including a new Coastal Activity centre in Whitehaven

Opportunities proposed through the Town Deal Funding bids, for example, the Ironline Project in the south of Copeland

Opportunities for improved active travel and recreational routes, including the LCWIP and Hadrian's Wall project

Opportunities for a coastal community forest

12.2 Copeland's Tourism Offer

- 12.2.1 Since 2010, tourism has been the fastest growing sector in the UK in terms of employment⁵². Britain is forecast to have a tourism industry worth over £257 billion by 2025, providing approximately 10% of the UK GDP. This is anticipated to support almost 3.8 million jobs, which is approximately 11% of the total jobs.
- 12.2.2 The visitor economy is an important aspect of Copeland's economy. Copeland Vision 2040 has identified around 3.6 million visitors per year to Copeland, an increase of 20% over the past five years, and 47 million annual visitors to the Lake District as a whole. It is estimated that direct visitor economy spend supports approximately 8% of Cumbria's GVA. The visitor economy is however far from evenly spread across Cumbria, with roughly half of all tourism spend occurring in the LDNP (CLEP). It is important that opportunities are provided to maximise the potential of Copeland's tourism industry outside of the Lake District National Park.
- 12.2.3 A Cumbrian Visitor Survey '*2018 Report for Cumbrian Tourism*' was published in October 2018, which compares data with figures from 2009. Key findings for Copeland include:
- An increase of 5.3% in tourism days
 - An increase of 4.6% in tourist numbers
 - An increase of 5.1% in associated tourism revenue
 - Day visitor numbers increased by 4.6%, with the total day visitor spend increasing by 7.4%
 - Total revenue of Copeland's tourism industry was a total of £175.9m, an increase of 32.4% since 2009
- 12.2.4 The Local Plan area has a number of key gateways and hubs that are focal points for tourism in Copeland.

Tourism Gateways

- 12.2.5 Tourist gateways are defined as the key entry points into Copeland. They are places or settlements through which tourists first visit on their way to a tourism experience/attraction or tourism region/destination. Tourism gateways may not offer significant attractions themselves, but attract a significant level of tourist traffic.
- 12.2.6 It is important to improve the safety, accessibility and attractiveness of these gateways to further encourage visitors into Copeland. These are as follows:
- Ennerdale Bridge
 - Coastal Path
 - Heritage Coast
 - A595 (including Duddon Bridge) – southern entrance to Lake District Coast

⁵² <https://www.visitbritain.org/visitor-economy-facts>

- A595 – northern entrance to Lake District Coast
- A595 – Gosforth junction
- Points where C2C route (and other national routes) enter Copeland
- Rail stations

Tourism Hubs

12.2.7 Tourism hubs are areas that attract a significant number of tourists and residents. These are some of the Copeland's most attractive locations, where we wish to diversify the visitor economy further. Development of these hubs will be carefully managed to avoid harm to the natural environment. Examples of hubs are as follows:

- Hodbarrow Nature Reserve
- Egremont Castle
- Whitehaven Harbour and the surrounding area, including the Candlestick Chimney and Beacon Museum
- St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast
- St Bees Beach
- Seascale Beach
- Haverigg Beach
- Whitehaven Town Centre

12.3 Opportunities and Challenges

12.3.1 The Council is working on a number of projects and initiatives that aim to strengthen the tourism offer in Copeland. One key opportunity is raising Copeland's profile as the Lake District Coast, which aims to provide an exciting, alternative experience to the National Park. This is anticipated to help encourage more people to visit and stay in the part of Copeland outside of the National Park.

12.3.2 The new branding of the 'Lake District Coast' will provide opportunities for new and improved leisure and tourism provision and entice visitors to the National Park to also visit Copeland thus improving the local economy. The brand of tourism in West Cumbria is built around five unique selling points:



- 12.3.3 Existing and new markets are being targeted to develop a year round tourism product unique to the Lake District Coast that meets demand, ensures a high quality environment and invests in people and business networks. The Local Plan seeks to assist in meeting the Council's objectives.
- 12.3.4 There is a great deal of potential for further development of Copeland's tourism offer, both in terms of the holiday market and business tourism.
- 12.3.5 Copeland has a strong business tourism market with many contractors staying in the area during the week and returning home at the weekend. There is the potential to boost this further through the provision of conference facilities and improvements to the evening economy. A high-quality hotel within the centre of Whitehaven would also help support the sector and would increase the number of longer stays⁵³.
- 12.3.6 A number of tourism opportunities are currently being developed, including:
- Copeland Coastal Communities Fund Programme, (£1.6m secured through Government funding and Sellafield) targeted at growth of the visitor economy through developing Cumbria's Hidden Coast offer by setting up a Coastal Art Trail, a Coastal Challenge Route and a visitor hub complete with café at Silecroft beach (in the LDNP).
 - £399,000 Tourism Sector Development Programme, a summary of the programme includes: to strengthen the tourism offer along Lake District Coast, valleys and towns and increase employment and skills development in the tourism sector.
 - The Edge, a £3.6million coastal activities centre, received planning approval in 2019 is expected to open in 2024. This will offer accommodation, cycle storage facilities and flexible activity spaces; it is set to become a spectacular western starting point for the world famous C2C cycle route, which is used by an average 12,000 cyclists each year.

⁵³ Day visits have dominated the tourism sector in the past.

- A £300 million investment project at North Shore Harbour that will boost the local economy, further regenerate the harbourside and encourage higher levels of tourism in and around Whitehaven. Work has already begun on the regeneration of North Shore, with the recent transformation of the derelict former Bus Station into a flexible office space with a modern bar/restaurant on the ground floor.
- Improvements to active and sustainable travel, which can help to boost tourism numbers. More details of these schemes can be seen in the Connectivity chapter.
- The Iron Line project in Millom, identified in the Town Improvement Plan, that will help raise the areas profile and provide improved walking and cycling opportunities that make the most of the area's heritage and natural assets.
- Heritage based projects, such as the Millom Heritage Triangle project based around prominent Grade 1 Listed buildings (Millom Castle and Holy Trinity Church)

12.3.7 Improving the tourism and leisure offer will help provide new opportunities for our communities by providing employment opportunities and leisure facilities for residents, encouraging our younger residents to stay living in Copeland.

12.4 Tourism Development

12.4.1 National planning policy places significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity. It supports sustainable rural tourism that benefits business in rural areas, communities, visitors and which respects the character of the countryside.

12.4.2 The Council will work positively and proactively with the Lake District National Park Authority, Cumbria Tourism, National Trust, Forestry England and other tourism organisations and developers in marketing, co-ordinating and managing the development of Copeland's offer and to maximise the 'Lake District Coast' brand.

12.4.3 The Local Plan seeks to direct new tourism development to the most sustainable locations in Copeland. The Development Strategy and Policy T1 sets out the hierarchy for sustainable development for both visitor attractions and accommodation.

12.4.4 In respect of overnight and longer stay visitor accommodation new build development should be directed to the towns and Local Service Centres. The development of overnight and long stay visitor accommodation below the Local Service Centre tier should be restricted to the diversification and change of use of existing buildings. A more flexible approach may be taken for temporary accommodation including caravan and campsites, (Policy T3) that have less impact on the local environment and character of an area.

12.4.5 The Council will monitor the number of holiday homes/lets in Copeland as there are concerns that large concentrations within rural villages can reduce

community cohesion and increase property values to the detriment of local residents. Unfortunately, this issue cannot be addressed through local planning policy at present.

- 12.4.6 Proposals outside of sustainable settlements that require existing place bound assets, such as water based or forest activities or are for a change or diversification of existing use, will be considered where they provide valuable economic, social and health benefits and improve the tourism and lifestyle offer. Proposals will be assessed against their impact on the environment and local communities.

Strategic Policy T1: Tourism Development



The Local Plan will support the creation, enhancement and expansion of tourist attractions, new build visitor accommodation and infrastructure in locations consistent with the settlement hierarchy.

All tourism development must be of an appropriate scale, located where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact, and where it does not result in unacceptable harm to environmental assets (including landscapes, heritage assets and biodiversity) or the character of the area.

Proposals for tourism development outside of defined settlements will be supported where:

- The proposal is for a specific activity or function that requires such a location; or
- The proposal enhances Copeland's existing place bound assets; or
- The proposal is for the change of use, or diversification of an existing building, to provide overnight or longer stay visitor accommodation; or
- The proposal is for a farm diversification scheme in a rural area that will provide or enhance tourist provision.

- 12.4.7 Copeland has a stretch of coastline that runs along its western edge with views out towards the Irish Sea and Scotland. Much of it is an area of natural beauty, home to wildlife and includes the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast. Criteria for the undeveloped coast is set out in Policy-N8 in the Natural Environment chapter. Certain types of development that enhance Copeland's tourism offer may be acceptable along the developed coastline such as those set out in Policy T2. When determining the acceptability of proposals consideration

will be given to the Cumbria Coastal Strategy 2020 (or any document that replaces it).

Policy T2: Tourism Development along the Developed Coast



Opportunities for tourist development in close proximity to the coastline (with the exception of areas designated as undeveloped coast) of an appropriate type and scale will be supported in principle where the proposal:

- a) Provides improved accessibility to the coastal walkways and cycle routes; or
- b) Improves the quality and range of holiday accommodation including overnight tourist provision; or
- c) Creates or enhances gateways and/or hubs; or
- d) Enhances the offer for both onshore and offshore visitors at Whitehaven Harbour including provision for the docking of cruise ships; or
- e) Provides opportunities to enhance the tourism offer in South Copeland.

In all circumstances development should be of an appropriate scale located where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact, and where it does not result in unacceptable harm to environmental assets including landscapes, heritage assets, and biodiversity. All development should ensure local landscape character is maintained and avoid detrimental impacts on setting of Heritage Coast.

12.5 Caravans and Camping Sites for Short-Term Letting

- 12.5.1 Policy T3 sets out a detailed approach for assessing proposals for the provision and enhancement of caravan and camping sites. The development of caravan and camping sites has potential to enhance Copeland's overnight and longer stay tourism offer. Policy T3 provides the relevant development management principles. In the interests of sustainability, such development should be located within or adjacent to a settlement or be connected to an existing rural business within the open countryside.

Policy T3: Caravans and Camping Sites for short term letting



Proposals for new static, touring caravan, and camping sites will be supported for short term (28 day) holiday letting where:

- a) The site is sustainably located within or adjacent to a settlement identified within the Settlement Hierarchy; or
- b) Where the proposal is to support the diversification of agricultural or other land-based rural businesses and public houses or drinking establishments, and it is demonstrated that the development will make an ongoing contribution to sustain the long-term future of the business that is diversifying.

Proposals for intensifications within, or extensions to existing caravan or camping sites for short term holiday letting will be supported where the proposed development area is located on, or immediately adjacent to existing sites.

Proposals for both new sites and intensifications within and extensions to existing sites, shall:

- i. Be of a scale and design appropriate to the locality;
- ii. Not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon landscape character or result in unacceptable visual harm;
- iii. Not result in unacceptable harm to heritage or biodiversity assets;
- iv. Be effectively screened by existing landform, trees or planting where possible and appropriate; and,
- v. Not give rise to unacceptable impacts on the highway network or highway safety.

Proposals for year-round use of caravan and camping sites as short term lets will only be supported where they will not materially affect the character, appearance and amenity of the locality.

Planning conditions will be utilised to restrict the use of the accommodation to short term holiday letting and prevent occupation as a primary or main residence.

13 Housing



Policies H1-H21

13.1 Housing: Headlines



Strengths

In 2018 Copeland was named the 2nd happiest place to live in Britain by an Office of National Statistics wellbeing survey.

Copeland is one of the most affordable districts to live in the country – with low house prices and the 6th highest average wages in UK

Rents in Copeland for all property sizes are below the national and regional average

Strong, resilient and welcoming communities

Existing community projects such as the Well Whitehaven project



Challenges

Predominantly rural with over 65% of residents living within our four towns

Some affordability issues within Rural Whitehaven area

High proportion of ageing stock in Copeland's urban areas

Relatively high proportion of empty homes, particularly within the four towns

Need to ensure growth on the edges of settlements does not hinder regeneration aims



Opportunities

Opportunity to direct an appropriate scale of additional development to more rural villages than at present to support communities

Opportunity to provide a good range of attractive housing allocations and sites to meet need, increase choice and support economic growth

Opportunity to use developer contributions towards bringing empty properties into use as affordable housing

Opportunities to attract contractors who currently stay in Copeland during the week but live elsewhere to relocate here

13.2 Meeting Copeland's Housing Needs

- 13.2.1 Copeland is a self-contained housing market; however there are significant differences between different parts of Plan area in terms of its housing offer.
- 13.2.2 Copeland has a population of 68,041 people (Cumbria Observatory, 2020). It contains four towns, Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Whitehaven; Whitehaven, with a population of 25,098 (Cumbria Observatory, 2020), is the principal town. The population has been falling and ageing with the percentage of over 65s increasing by 24% between 2006 and 2016. The Local Plan has a key role to play in reversing the trend of population loss, particularly the out-migration of younger residents.
- 13.2.3 Approximately 35% of Copeland's residents live in rural areas. It is therefore important to recognise their needs, as well as those of residents who live within our towns.

13.3 Improving the Housing Offer

- 13.3.1 Ensuring Copeland has a range of attractive, high-quality housing to suit a variety of changing needs is essential to provide choice, attract new residents to the area and ensure our most vulnerable residents have access to the specialist housing they need to enable them to live healthy, happy lives.
- 13.3.2 Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership's 2020 Annual Report⁵⁴ recognises the role housing can play in supporting economic growth and preventing workforce decline, highlighting the importance of delivering "*the right product, in the right place at the right time.*" The single most important reason for people moving into Copeland in the past five years has been to take up employment in Plan area⁵⁵.
- 13.3.3 The Council's Housing Needs Study (HNS), produced in 2020, states that estate agents in the area identify a buoyant housing market and a strong and growing lettings market that benefits from a relatively "transient" element of the local population based around Sellafield and hospital workers.
- 13.3.4 This is supported by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2021 that identifies, through discussions with key employers in Copeland, that a lack of suitable housing is impacting upon the recruitment and retention of workforce.
- 13.3.5 Interest from developers has been growing; this presents a real opportunity to improve the housing offer. Policy H1 below sets out how the Council will work with developers, other partners and stakeholders, to do this over the Plan period.

⁵⁴ <https://councilportal.cumbria.gov.uk/documents/s113205/Annex%20C%20-20LEP%20Overview%20Annual%20Report%20Final.pdf>

⁵⁵ Based upon the housing needs survey carried out as part of the Housing Needs Assessment.

Strategic Policy H1: Improving the Housing Offer



The Council will work with stakeholders, partners and communities to make Copeland a more attractive place to build homes and live by:

- a) Allocating a range of deliverable and attractive housing sites to meet local needs and aspirations and ensuring they are built at a high standard, whilst protecting the amenity of existing residents;
- b) Supporting the renewal and improvement of Copeland's existing housing stock and finding innovative ways to bring empty properties back into beneficial use;
- c) Supporting proposals which aid the regeneration of the wider residential environment;
- d) Approving housing development on appropriate windfall sites within the settlement boundaries where it accords with the Development Plan; and
- e) Ensuring a consistent supply of deliverable housing sites is identified through an annual Five-Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement.

13.4 The Housing Requirement

- 13.4.1 One of the key aims of the Government is to significantly boost the supply of housing across the UK and the Council will work with the development industry in order to help achieve this.
- 13.4.2 Under national policy, Local Planning Authorities are required to identify their housing needs over the full plan period through their Local Plans. They are also required to identify sufficient deliverable and developable sites to meet such needs.
- 13.4.3 The Council is also required to demonstrate a rolling five year supply of deliverable housing sites in order to meet the identified needs. If they are unable to do so Local Plan policies relating to the supply of housing will be rendered out of date leading to pressure to allow developments in less sustainable locations.

Standard Methodology for Calculating Housing Need

- 13.4.4 The Government has produced a standard methodology⁵⁶ for calculating housing need⁵⁷ at a Local Authority level. The NPPF states that planning authorities should follow this methodology “*unless circumstances warrant an alternative approach*”.
- 13.4.5 The standard methodology uses 2014 based ONS household projections over a period of 10 years and applies an adjustment for affordability where the affordability ratio (earnings to house prices) is above 4⁵⁸. Using 2021 as a starting point, the standard methodology identifies a housing need for only 8 dwellings per year in Copeland⁵⁹. It must be noted however that these projections are based upon past trends and don’t take into consideration policy interventions.
- 13.4.6 Planning Policy Guidance: Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (PPG) states that a Local Plan is considered sound where it meets this minimum need figure. It also states that the Government will support aspirational councils who wish to set their housing requirements higher than the standard methodology figure in the following circumstances:
- Where they have growth strategies for the area that are likely to be deliverable, for example where funding is in place to promote and facilitate additional growth (e.g. Housing Deals);
 - Where there are strategic infrastructure improvements planned that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or
 - If they are an authority agreeing to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a statement of common ground

Previous Delivery

- 13.4.7 The PPG notes that
- “There may, occasionally, also be situations where previous levels of housing delivery in an area, or previous assessments of need (such as a recently produced Strategic Housing Market Assessment) are significantly greater than the outcome from the standard method. Authorities will need to take this into account when considering whether it is appropriate to plan for a higher level of need than the standard model suggests.”*
- 13.4.8 In terms of previous levels of housing delivery, this has been judged against the housing requirement in the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy contained a requirement for a minimum of 230 dwellings per year to be delivered over the first five years of the Plan period with an uplift to provide an additional 30% on

⁵⁶

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728247/How_is_a_minimum_annual_local_housing_need_figure_calculated_using_the_standard_method.pdf

⁵⁷ The Government recently consulted on Changes to the Current Planning System document which introduces a new methodology for calculating housing need. The introduction of any new methodology will be after the Plan is adopted and cannot be referenced here.

⁵⁸ The ratio for Copeland identified in the SHMA 2021 is 2.62 therefore no adjustment is required.

⁵⁹ Based on the 2014-based household projections for England which predicts 30934 households in Copeland 2031 and 30850 households in 2021, equating to 84 additional households over the ten year period or 8.4 per year.

top of the basic requirement, equating to 300 dwellings per annum in the latter 10 years. This was to support the construction and operation of a new nuclear power station at Moorside base on job creation estimates at the time.

- 13.4.9 Table 11 below shows how many net additional dwellings have been delivered annually between 2010 and 2022 against this requirement. The highest number of dwellings delivered in a single year was 158 (in 2011/12), the least 98 (2020/21) and on average 134 new dwellings were added to the overall supply each year. The number of net additional dwellings increased between 2018/19 and 2019/20, it then fell in 2020/21 due to a large number of demolitions (58) on a single site and rose again the following year.
- 13.4.10 The number of dwellings delivered between 2010 and 2022 has never met the housing requirement identified in the Core Strategy. This could be for a number of reasons; the target may have been too high, the Core Strategy may not have allocated sufficient attractive and developable sites or the economy may not have been able to support the delivery of additional houses.
- 13.4.11 The average number of homes delivered is however significantly greater than the standard methodology need figure and is similar to, but slightly below, to the proposed housing requirement, identified in the SHMA, of 146 dwellings per annum. This suggests that the requirement is deliverable and by planning for 200 dwellings per annum, the Council is being aspirational and the Plan is positively prepared.

Table 11: Previous Housing Delivery

Year	Net additional dwellings	Previous Core Strategy Target	Shortfall
2010/11	143	230	87
2011/12	158	230	72
2012/13	120	230	110
2013/14	133	230	97
2014/15	135	230	95
2015/16	127	230	103
2016/17	154	230	76
2017/18	132	230	98
2018/19	110	300	190
2019/20	150	300	150
2020/21	98 ⁶⁰	300	202
2021/22	144	300	156
Average	134	-	-

⁶⁰ This figure has been affected by the number of demolitions linked to a single housing renewal site - 58.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment

- 13.4.12 A SHMA was produced in 2019 to support the Local Plan Preferred Options Draft. The SHMA 2019 used an alternative methodology to the standard one for calculating housing need and analysed a range of different scenarios based upon demographic trends and employment projections. It recommended that 140 dwellings per annum be delivered across the Plan period 2017-2035 to meet housing needs, but stated that 200 dwellings per annum should be planned for to provide choice and support economic growth.
- 13.4.13 A SHMA Update was produced in 2021 to take into account more up-to-date economic projections from the Employment Development Needs Assessment (EDNA). This covers the slightly different Local Plan period 2021-2038 and uses a slightly different methodology for identifying need.
- 13.4.14 Table 12 shows the level of housing need that would be required under the four main scenarios considered in the SHMA 2021. All use the 2014 sub-national population projections as a starting point. The document recommends that a slightly higher requirement of 146 dwellings is taken forward through the Plan and that the growth figure of 200 dwellings per annum continues to be used (rounded up from the 191 growth-scenario midpoint).

Table 12: Housing Requirement Scenarios

Total housing need associated with economic forecasts including communal establishment allowance (per annum)						
	Housing need	Additional communal population	Additional dwellings (at 1.8)	Total need	Need in the National Park	Need in Copeland (LPA)
Baseline-CE	65	12	7	71	10	61
Baseline-Experian	149	12	7	156	10	146
Growth scenario-midpoint	194	13	7	201	10	191
Growth scenario	281	14	8	288	10	278

Source: Figure 1 Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2021

- 13.4.15 As can be seen from the table above, the SHMA 2021 also identifies a higher figure of 278 dwellings per annum. This is the amount of housing that would be required if *all* of the additional jobs linked to all of the aspirational, strategic economic developments identified in the EDNA came forward within the plan period. This is highly unlikely to happen, particularly before the Local Plan is reviewed, as a number of the projects are dependent upon Government funding and/or Government decisions. This figure has therefore been discounted as it is not considered to be realistic or deliverable (particularly when compared to past trends). Planning for such a figure may also lead to the flooding of the market

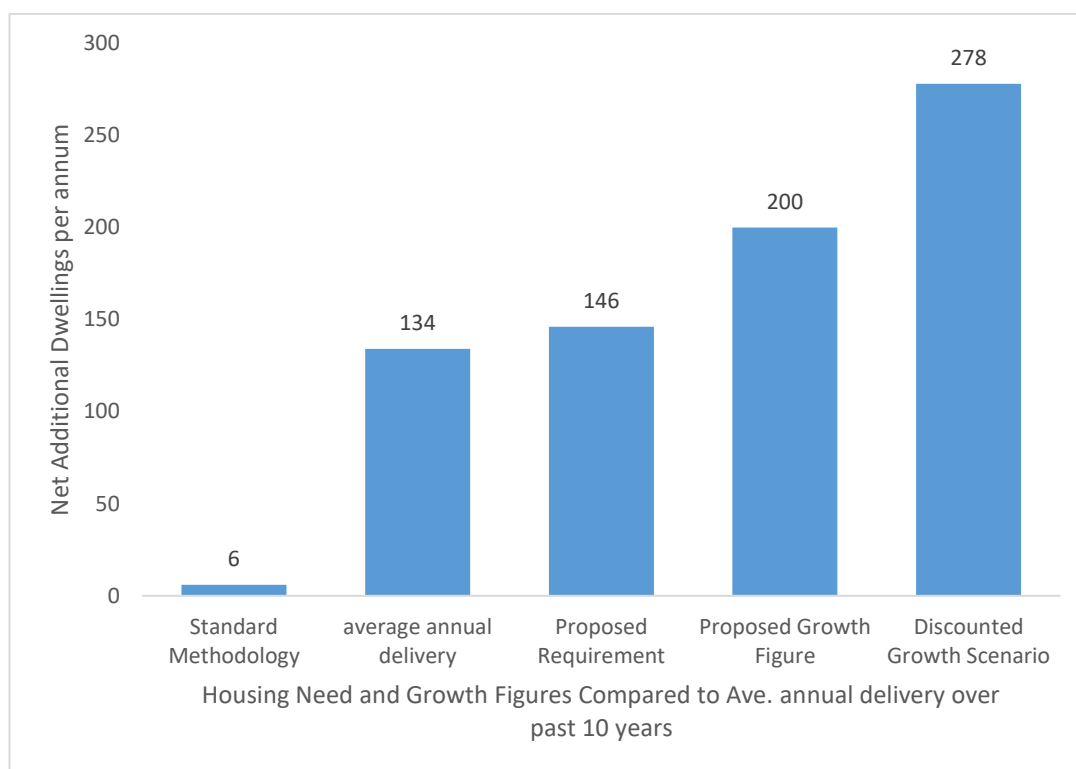
during the early stages of the plan period to the detriment of the development strategy.

Housing Needs and Aspirations Summary

- 13.4.16 The housing need figure produced using the standard methodology does not provide a true reflection of housing need in Copeland. It is significantly lower than the number of homes that have been delivered on average over the past 10 years, and in each individual year. If this figure was taken forward as a housing requirement in the Local Plan would lead to further population loss and economic decline as there would be insufficient resident population to support anticipated jobs growth, or even the existing number of jobs.
- 13.4.17 A housing requirement this low would also be contrary to the Council's Growth Strategy, Housing Strategy, Corporate Strategy and the NPPF which requires Local Authorities to be aspirational. Responses received to the Local Plan Issues and Options and Preferred Options consultations also indicated that the development industry would not support a housing requirement based upon this figure.
- 13.4.18 In terms of the alternative options, the SHMA recommends a housing requirement of 146 dwellings per annum and supports a growth figure of 200 dwellings per annum. Any additional housing over and above the 200 figure is unlikely to be required over the plan period and could only be justified if all of the additional aspirational projects identified in the Employment Development Needs Assessment, some of which are listed in Table 9 of this Plan, came forward which the SHMA notes "*is unlikely to happen during the plan period.*"
- 13.4.19 The figures considered are all shown in Figure 7 below where they can be seen against the average number of net additional dwellings over the previous 10 years.

It is vital that we enable the right amount and type of housing in Copeland in order to reverse the trend of population decline and ensure that we have a sufficiently sized workforce to support local businesses and create further opportunities for education and training for our residents. This in turn will help create economic growth and reduce deprivation levels in Copeland.

Figure 7: Housing Figures Compared



- 13.4.20 The figure of 146 dwellings per annum is therefore considered to be the most appropriate representation of housing need and will be used when calculating the rolling five year housing land supply. It should be noted that the housing requirement is not a ceiling and additional development over and above this requirement will be supported where it accords with the Local Plan. In order to be aspirational and provide choice and flexibility in the housing market sufficient land is identified within this Plan to provide 200 dwellings per year on average over the Plan period. This will also support any additional jobs above the economic baseline. This is through a combination of allocated sites, sites with extant planning permission, housing completions since the start of the Plan period and future windfalls⁶¹ as identified in the Housing Trajectory (Appendix E).

Strategic Policy H2: Housing Requirement



⁶¹ A definition of Windfall site is included in the Local Plan Glossary

The housing requirement is for a minimum of 2,628 net additional dwellings (an average of 146 dwellings per annum) to be provided between 2021 and 2039. This figure will be used when calculating the five-year supply of deliverable housing sites in the Plan area.

In order to plan positively and support employment growth over the Plan period, the Plan identifies a range of attractive allocated housing sites, which when combined with future windfall development, previous completions and extant permissions, would allow for a minimum of 3,600 dwellings (an average of 200 dwellings per annum) over the Plan period.

Housing delivery will be monitored closely and where development is not coming forward as anticipated, interventions will be sought as set out in Policy H3.

13.5 Housing Delivery

- 13.5.1 It is important that housing delivery is monitored regularly to ensure sites are coming forward as anticipated and housing needs are met. Appendix E contains a housing trajectory which demonstrates how much housing is anticipated to come forward on allocated sites, sites with planning permission and windfall sites over the plan period using the 1st April 2021 as a base date.
- 13.5.2 The Council will review its five year housing land supply position annually as well as reviewing the location and type of housing coming forward through the Annual Monitoring Report.
- 13.5.3 Policy H3 below identifies measures that will be put in place if monitoring shows that housing is not being delivered as expected, to ensure that any delays do not hinder the delivery of the Local Plan as a whole. The measures set out in the Policy below align with those identified in national planning policy.

Strategic Policy H3: Housing Delivery



Housing delivery against the trajectory will be monitored closely and where development is not coming forward as anticipated, the following interventions will be sought.

- 1) If delivery is not progressing on an individual housing allocation as set out in the trajectory the Council will engage with the developer to identify the reasons for this and potential solutions.

- 2) If delivery falls below 95% of the Housing Delivery Test figure then an Action Plan will be produced in collaboration with the development industry.
- 3) At the end of any monitoring year, if evidence shows that the number of net additional dwellings has exceeded targets for the Sustainable Rural Village and Rural Village tiers identified in Policy H4 and this is likely to put the overall Development Strategy at risk the Council will consider carrying out a full/partial Local Plan Review.
- 4) At the end of any monitoring year following the Local Plan's adoption, if the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites, plus the required buffer, the tilted balance will be engaged in accordance with the NPPF (or any document which replaces it).

13.6 Distribution of Housing

- 13.6.1 New housing development can help regenerate our towns, support rural services and help maintain communities. It is important that new housing development is directed to the parts of Copeland where people need and want to live, taking into account sustainability objectives.
- 13.6.2 The Development Strategy chapter identifies the proposed settlement hierarchy. It divides Copeland's four towns and 24 of its villages (or village clusters) into five distinct tiers, with the most sustainable settlements located at the top.
- 13.6.3 When determining how much housing development should be directed to each tier, consideration was given to the number and type of services they contained and their links with neighbouring settlements in terms of pedestrian routes and public transport provision. Further information regarding this process can be found in the Development Strategy Topic Paper Update 2022.
- 13.6.4 Policy H4 sets out how many dwellings will be sought within each tier of the hierarchy in order to meet the baseline housing requirement of 2,628 dwellings across Copeland over the Plan period. It also sets out how many dwellings will be required in each tier in order to support the more aspirational growth target of 3,600 dwellings.
- 13.6.5 The majority of housing needed to meet the baseline requirement and the growth figure is directed to Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom (70% combined), with the remaining 30% divided between Local Service Centres, Sustainable Rural Villages and Rural Villages.
- 13.6.6 The amount of development directed to Whitehaven (40%) is smaller than that identified within the Core Strategy (45%). Whilst Whitehaven remains the Principal Town, the 5% has been spread over the villages in the lower tiers of the hierarchy to support the strategy which aims to direct more growth to the rural villages than under the Core Strategy. It should be noted however that this is only a minimum target for Whitehaven and additional development over and above

the 40% will be supported where it accords with the Development Plan. Given the size and structure of Whitehaven (which includes a number of opportunity sites) there is more scope for windfall development within its boundary than the other settlements within Copeland which may result in the 40% target being exceeded.

Strategic Policy H4: Distribution of Housing



The distribution of housing in the Plan area will be broadly in line with the settlement hierarchy set out below. Additional housing will be supported within settlement boundaries of the towns, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres where it accords with the Development Plan.

Hierarchy Tier	Settlements	Proportion/amount of requirement by tier 2,628	Proportion/amount including additional growth 3,600
Principal Town	Whitehaven	40% 1,052 dwellings	40% 1,440 dwellings minimum
Key Service Centres	Cleator Moor	30%	30%
	Egremont	789 dwellings	1,080 dwellings minimum
	Millom		
Local Service Centres	Arlecdon & Rowrah	17% 447 dwellings	17% 612 dwellings minimum
	Cleator		
	Distington & Common End		
	Frizington & Rheda		
	Haverigg		
	Seascale		
	St Bees		
	Thornhill		
Sustainable Rural Villages	Beckermest	10% 263 dwellings	10% 360 dwellings
	Bigrigg		
	Drigg		
	Ennerdale Bridge		
	Holmrook		

	Moresby Parks		
	Moor Row		
	Lowca		
	Parton		
Rural Villages	Calderbridge	3% 79 dwellings	3% 108 dwellings
	Hallthwaites		
	Keekle		
	Kirkland		
	Kirksanton		
	Summergrove		
	The Green		

13.7 Housing Allocations

- 13.7.1 It is important that a variety of attractive and deliverable housing sites are allocated in the Local Plan to encourage developers and new residents to Copeland, meet existing residents' housing needs and aspirations and reverse the trend of population decline. Whilst the number of new homes delivered in Copeland has consistently fallen below the housing requirement in the Core Strategy, there is increasing developer interest in Copeland and the proposed housing requirement identified in the SHMA Update 2021 is considered to be achievable.
- 13.7.2 The Council has identified a range and choice of sites across Copeland to meet the housing requirement over the plan period. These will be discussed further in the following paragraphs.
- 13.7.3 The Strategic Housing Land Availability (SHLAA) has identified a range of smaller deliverable and developable housing sites. The latest SHLAA document⁶² was produced in 2022.
- 13.7.4 Deliverable sites are those which are available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and where development is achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. Developable sites are those that are in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

⁶² <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/copeland-local-plan-2021-2038-evidence-base>

- 13.7.5 When determining which of the deliverable and developable sites should be allocated for housing, consideration was given to constraints identified through evidence documents and site visits. Specialist advice from key stakeholders including the Highways Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority and United Utilities was also given. Further details regarding the site allocation selection process can be found in the Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy Update 2021.
- 13.7.6 Where there has been a choice of potential sites within a settlement, those that are the least constrained and have developer interest have been brought forward as allocations. The reasons for discounting alternative sites is set out in the Discounted Sites Document. Discounted sites can be considered when the Local Plan is being reviewed if the allocations have not come forward as anticipated.
- 13.7.7 There are also a number of sites with extant permission that will contribute to the housing supply. Such sites are automatically considered to be deliverable unless evidence shows otherwise. The full list of sites that will be delivered across the Plan period can be found in Appendix E (Housing Trajectory). The Council is required to demonstrate that 10% of its requirement will be met by sites no larger than one hectare⁶³; the trajectory shows that this has been achieved.
- 13.7.8 There are a number of settlements with no proposed allocations. This is because potential sites have not been put forward for assessment or, where they have, there are uncertainties about their deliverability. In some cases, the settlement already has sufficient sites with planning permission to meet identified needs and/or the settlement boundary has been revised to allow development to take place on windfall sites in the future.
- 13.7.9 The housing allocations are listed in Policy H5 below and further details, including maps showing their location are included in Appendix F (Housing Allocation Site Profiles). The Housing Allocation Site Profiles provide general information about each site and identifies known constraints. Developers must give full consideration to the Profiles when developing their proposals and demonstrate this in any planning application. Applicants are encouraged to seek further advice from the Council and any appropriate statutory consultees where required. Developers are also strongly encouraged to consider whether a project-level HRA will be required in line with paragraph 15.6.4. For sites above four hectares we will produce a list of development principles that will help guide developers masterplan for the site.
- 13.7.10 An indicative yield is also shown in Policy H5. This is an estimation of how many dwellings are likely to be delivered based upon an assumed density of 25dph of the gross site area to help ensure that the Local Plan's growth aspirations are met. The densities used to calculate indicative yield will not necessarily be the density which is best suited to the site – this will be determined at planning application stage taking into account issues such as viability, the requirement for open space, utilities and infrastructure and the character of the area.

⁶³ See paragraph 69 of the NPPF

- 13.7.11 Sites HWH2 and HDI2 are identified, in full or part, as being Local Green Spaces under Policy N13. Further details regarding the reasoning for these designations can be found in the Council's Open Space Assessment document. Policy N13 allows for development on such sites in particular circumstances and the proposed housing allocations provide an opportunity to improve the open space or replace it with better quality provision elsewhere within the settlement. The site profiles document in Appendix F requires at least 50% of HDI2 to be retained for this purpose.
- 13.7.12 Developers should take into account the Council's Heritage Impact Assessment (HeIA) that supports the Local Plan. This document identifies where there may be harm caused to nearby heritage assets through development and proposes mitigation measures. Where there is likely harm identified, developers will be required to build upon this document with a detailed site specific HeIA in accordance with BE1.

Strategic Policy H5: Housing Allocations



The following sites are allocated for housing over the Plan period 2021-2039. The yields identified are indicative only and alternative yields will be accepted where appropriate.

Settlement	Site Ref (SHLAA reference is shown in brackets)	Address	Indicative Yield (dwellings – based on 25dph unless otherwise stated) ⁶⁴
Towns			
Whitehaven	HWH1 (WE032 & WE001)	Land at West Cumberland Hospital and Homewood Road	46
	HWH2 (WH011a)	Red Lonning and Harras Moor*	370
	HWH3 (WS013)	Land at Edgehill Park Phase 4*	109
	HWH4 (WW018/WW022)	Land south and west of St Mary's School	60
	HWH5 (WW014)	Former Marchon Site North*	532
Cleator Moor	HCM1 (CM028 & CM038)	Land at Jacktrees Road	127

⁶⁴ Relates to figures based on planning application discussions

	HCM2 (CM082a)	Land north of Dent Road	119
	HCM3 (CM008b)	Former Ehenside School	40
	HCM4 (CM025a)	Land at Mill Hill*	65
Egremont	HEG1 (EG014, EG036 & EG050)	Land north of Ashlea Road	108
	HEG2 (EG008, EG025 & EG032)	Land at Gulley Flatts	170
	HEG3 (EG007)	Land to south of Daleview Gardens	141
Millom	HMI1 (MI001)	Land west of Grammerscroft	107
	HMI2 (MI022 & MI026)	Moor Farm	195
Local Service Centres			
Arlecdon & Rowrah	HAR01 (AR009 & AR020)	Land East of Arlecdon Road	37
Distington	HDI1 (DI013a)	Land south of Prospect Works	30
	HDI2 (DI033)	Land south west of Rectory Place	30
St Bees	HSB1 (SB001)	Land adjacent Abbots Court	40
	HSB3 (SB018 Part SB028)	Land adjacent Fairladies	30
Seascale	HSE2 (SE024)	Fairways Extension	22
	HSE3 (SE006)	Town End Farm East	32
Thornhill	HTH1 (TO002a)	Land to south of Thornhill	20
Sustainable Rural Villages			
Beckermest	HBE1 (BE003 & BE023)	Land north of Crofthouse Farm	46
	HBE2 (BE006)	Land adjacent to Mill Fields	27
Bigrigg	HBI1 (BI001)	Land north of Springfield Gardens	65
	HBI2 (BI002a)	Land west of Jubilee Gardens	35
Drigg	HDH2 (DH012)	Wray Head, Station Road	22
Holmrook	HDH3 (DH007/a)	Hill Farm, Holmrook	20
Moor Row	HMR1 (MO009)	Land to north of Social Club	19
	HMR2 (MO006a)	Land to south of Scalegill Road	41
Lowca	HLO1 (LO004)	Solway Road	22
Rural Villages			
Summergrove	HSU1 (MO028)	Land to South West of Summergrove	80

13.8 Broad Locations

- 13.8.1 The SHLAA has also identified a number of potential Broad Locations, which go beyond individual sites and are large areas of land on the edges of settlements where potential long-term growth (10 years plus) could be considered. These are identified on the Proposals Map. Such Broad Locations will only be considered at the Local Plan Review stage if there are insufficient specific deliverable or developable sites to meet the identified need. At this time, if required, a full consultation will take place and constraints will be identified to ensure the more appropriate location is taken forward. Most are linked to a growth corridor on the edge of Whitehaven that would be created by the construction of the Whitehaven Relief Road. Further information regarding Broad Locations can be found in section 4.2.

13.9 New Housing Development

- 13.9.1 The aim of Policy H6 below is to minimise any detrimental impacts of new housing development upon existing communities and to ensure development is built to a high standard, creating places where people will want to live and stay that have positive impacts upon health and wellbeing.
- 13.9.2 This policy applies to both windfall development and development on allocated sites. This policy should not be viewed in isolation and proposals will also need to comply with other policies within the Local Plan.
- 13.9.3 Developers should take opportunities to tie their developments into, and support, wider regeneration aspirations, for example by creating safe access routes between new and existing developments and providing open spaces and facilities that the wider area can enjoy where appropriate.
- 13.9.4 Developers are also encouraged to create efficient housing that goes beyond the minimum energy efficiency standards set out within the Building Regulations where possible to reduce the impact of new developments on climate change and be more affordable to run.
- 13.9.5 The Council offers a pre-application advice service and welcomes developers to discuss housing schemes with them before applications are submitted. Developers should also take the opportunity to discuss proposals with Town and Parish Councils at the earliest stage so that any potential issues can be identified and overcome.
- 13.9.6 The Proposals Map identifies sites with extant planning permission at the base date of 1st April 2022. As development has been accepted through the application process, the principle of housing development will be supported at a future date should planning permission lapse (subject to the usual planning considerations) unless material considerations, such as a change to national policy, indicate otherwise.

Policy H6: New Housing Development



Proposals for housing development on allocated and windfall sites will be supported in principle providing that the following criteria are met:

- a) The design, layout, scale and appearance of the development is appropriate to the locality.
- b) Development proposals clearly demonstrate that consideration has been given to surrounding natural, cultural and historical assets and local landscape character (including the impact upon the setting of the Lake District National Park and the Heritage Coast and its setting where appropriate);
- c) An acceptable level of amenity is provided for future residents and maintained for existing neighbouring residents in terms of sunlighting and daylighting;
- d) Privacy is protected through distance or good design;
- e) The development will have no unacceptable overbearing impact upon neighbouring residents due to its scale, height and/or proximity;
- f) The layout promotes active travel, linking new development with existing footpaths and cycleways, where possible;
- g) Adequate external amenity space is provided, including for the storage of waste and recycling bins in a location which does not harm the street scene, where possible;
- h) Adequate space for parking is provided, with preference given to parking spaces behind the building line to reduce street clutter, where possible; and
- i) The proposal does not constitute inappropriate development of a residential garden which would harm the character of the area.

13.10 Housing Density and Mix

Density

- 13.10.1 The term density refers to the number of dwellings per hectare (dph). If densities are too low it can result in an inefficient use of land and where development is too spread out this can result in residents becoming isolated within their own communities. On the other hand, if densities are too high this can result in development cramming which can harm the character and appearance of an area and have a negative effect on health and wellbeing.
- 13.10.2 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support developments that make effective use of land, taking the factors below into account:

- the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
 - local market conditions and viability;
 - the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
 - the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
 - the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
- 13.10.3 Applying policies that are too prescriptive can make it difficult for a developer to meet specific identified housing needs, e.g. if density requirements are too high, this could prevent bungalow developments from coming forward as these tend to have a larger footprint than other house types. Such policies can also hinder regeneration attempts as developers may limit the amount of space provided for public use or landscaping in order to meet the requirement.
- 13.10.4 As Copeland has a sufficient supply of housing sites, the Council is not required to include minimum density standards within the Plan⁶⁵ and feels that the most appropriate approach is to allow developers to determine the most appropriate density for the site, taking into account the issues referred to above.

Housing Mix

- 13.10.5 It is important that any new housing built within Copeland is of the type, size and tenure that our communities need. The CLEP 2020 Annual Report identifies that a better and greater variety of housing is one of the keys to attracting people into Cumbria.
- 13.10.6 The proportion of housing by type varies across the Plan area. The part of Copeland within the National Park has a large proportion of detached homes (51%) whereas Millom has the largest proportion of terraces and flats. Generally, homes in the rural areas are larger than those in the more urban areas, the average number of bedrooms is 2.78 in Whitehaven compared to 3.14 in the parts of Copeland in the National Park (HNS 2020).
- 13.10.7 The SHMA 2021⁶⁶ identifies the housing mix that is likely to be required over the plan period, taking into account the fact that the number of households with dependent children is projected to increase and the population is projected to age.
- 13.10.8 The SHMA 2021 Update advises that the focus for new market housing over the plan period should be 2-3 bed properties. This is supported by the Housing Need Study (HNS). Care, however needs to be taken to ensure that an influx of new 3

⁶⁵ See paragraph 125 of the NPPF

⁶⁶ Chapter 9

bedroomed properties does not result in an increase in the number of empty 3 bedroomed homes, of which there are already a large proportion.

Table 13: Housing Needs by Bedrooms

	1-bedroom	2-bedrooms	3-bedrooms	4+- bedrooms
Market	5%	35%	40%	20%
Affordable home ownership	15%	45%	35%	5%
Affordable housing (rented)	30%	40%	25%	5%

Source: SHMA Update 2021, page 118

- 13.10.9 The SHMA 2021 and HNS also identify a need for more specialised types of housing such as executive homes and key worker and student accommodation. The HNS notes that *“there is a case for continuing to invest in high-end, larger, market homes to appeal to both the highly paid sector mainly involved in the Sellafield supply chain and as a suitable offer for those the authority wants to attract as part of its strategy to develop new high value technical and innovative industries.”*
- 13.10.10 The Council’s HNS notes that key worker and student accommodation needs to be purpose built, high quality and furnished, although at present some of that identified need is being met through Houses in Multiple Occupation, which are discussed further in and Policy H13.
- 13.10.11 There are opportunities to address this gap in the housing market by seeking funding to enable the development of modern, SMART⁶⁷ residential developments to meet the needs of young professionals and post-graduate students. Such accommodation could include access to communal leisure and workspace. The importance of space where people can work from home has been highlighted by the Covid-19 situation and the Council encourages developers to include “touchdown points” within new housing developments to support homeworking where possible.
- 13.10.12 The Council will update the SHMA and Housing Needs Study at least every five years to ensure the evidence underpinning the following policy remains up to date. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Council accept any alternative evidence of need submitted as part of a planning application.

⁶⁷ See glossary for definition

Policy H7: Housing Density and Mix



Developments should make the most effective use of land and reuse previously developed land where possible. When determining appropriate densities development proposals should clearly demonstrate that consideration has been given to the shape and size of the site, the requirement for public open space and landscaping, whether the density would help achieve appropriate housing mix and help regeneration aims, the character of the surrounding area and the setting of the site.

Applicants must also demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Council, how their proposals meet local housing needs and aspirations identified in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Housing Needs Assessment in terms of house type, size and tenure. Alternative more up-to-date evidence will be considered where a developer demonstrates to the Council's satisfaction that the SHMA and Housing Needs Assessment is out of date in full or in part.

13.11 Affordable Housing

- 13.11.1 The Council has made a commitment, through the Housing Strategy, to ensure that the housing needs of all of its residents are met by offering a balanced housing market and ensuring that any new growth benefits existing communities. One way of doing this is to require developers to provide affordable housing.
- 13.11.2 Affordable housing is that which is for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the open market. A full definition is contained within the Local Plan Glossary. The NPPF requires councils to make sufficient provision for affordable housing and this is reflected in Policy H8 which identifies how this will be delivered in Copeland.
- 13.11.3 Whilst Copeland was considered to be the most affordable district in England in 2021⁶⁸, the 2019 and 2021 SHMA documents identify a need for additional affordable housing. Affordability is calculated by dividing house prices by gross annual earnings. House prices, rent and land values are generally low in Copeland whilst average incomes are relatively high. There is however an issue locally regarding access to capital and this limits resident's ability to provide a deposit. The Housing Strategy acknowledges that incomes outside the Sellafield environment are low and recent welfare reforms are also likely to have had an impact upon people being able to afford larger homes.

⁶⁸ In 2019 the average price paid for properties was estimated to be 2.8 times average annual earnings (Source ONS)

13.11.4 The SHMA 2021, paragraph 31, states that:

“Analysis does suggest that there are many households in Copeland who are being excluded from the owner-occupied sector (as evidenced by reductions in owners with a mortgage and increases in the size of the private rented sector). This suggests that a key issue in Copeland is about access to capital (e.g. for deposits, stamp duty, legal costs) as well as potentially mortgage restrictions (e.g. where employment is temporary) rather than simply the cost of housing to buy.”

13.11.5 A significant amount of Copeland’s affordable and low-cost housing stock is also of the wrong configuration (e.g. with the main bathrooms off a bedroom), may be in poor condition and/or may not contain many of the features which attract people to modern housing developments such as gardens and parking space.

13.11.6 The Housing Needs Study (HNS) supports the above findings. It acknowledges that whilst average earnings in Copeland are the 6th highest in the UK, 21% of people who responded to the housing needs survey earned £18,000 or less per annum.

13.11.7 The HNS notes that:

“We modelled affordability based on an assumption that a household should not have to pay more than 33% gross income on a mortgage. We found that 46% of newly forming households could not afford an average priced dwelling without spending more than this proportion and nearly a third could not afford a lower quartile home (a home priced in the cheapest quarter of this scale). The cheapest area, Cleator Moor, saw these figures drop to 25% and 15% respectively and in the most expensive area, Whitehaven Rural, they rose to 50% and 35% respectively”

Affordable Housing Provision

13.11.8 The SHMA 2021 states that over the plan period there is a net deficit of up to 99 affordable homes (14 of these are within the National Park area) per annum across the whole of Copeland.

13.11.9 It should be stressed that 99 affordable homes is not an affordable housing target; the amount of affordable housing delivered is limited to the amount that can viably be provided. The evidence does however suggest that affordable housing delivery should be maximised where possible and Policy H8 sets out how this will be achieved.

Table 14: Estimated Affordable Housing Need (including area in LDNP)

Estimated Need for Social/Affordable Rented Housing by sub-area (per annum)						
	Current need (annualised)	Newly forming households	Existing households falling into need	Total Gross Need	Relet Supply	Net Need
Whitehaven	9	82	44	135	106	30
Cleator Moor	3	21	15	38	34	4
Egremont	3	28	15	46	33	13
Whitehaven Rural	5	47	18	70	45	25
National Park	2	14	2	19	5	14
Millom	3	22	9	35	22	13
TOTAL	26	215	103	344	245	99

Source: Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2021 Figure 5.16 (N.B. totals might not add up due to rounding)

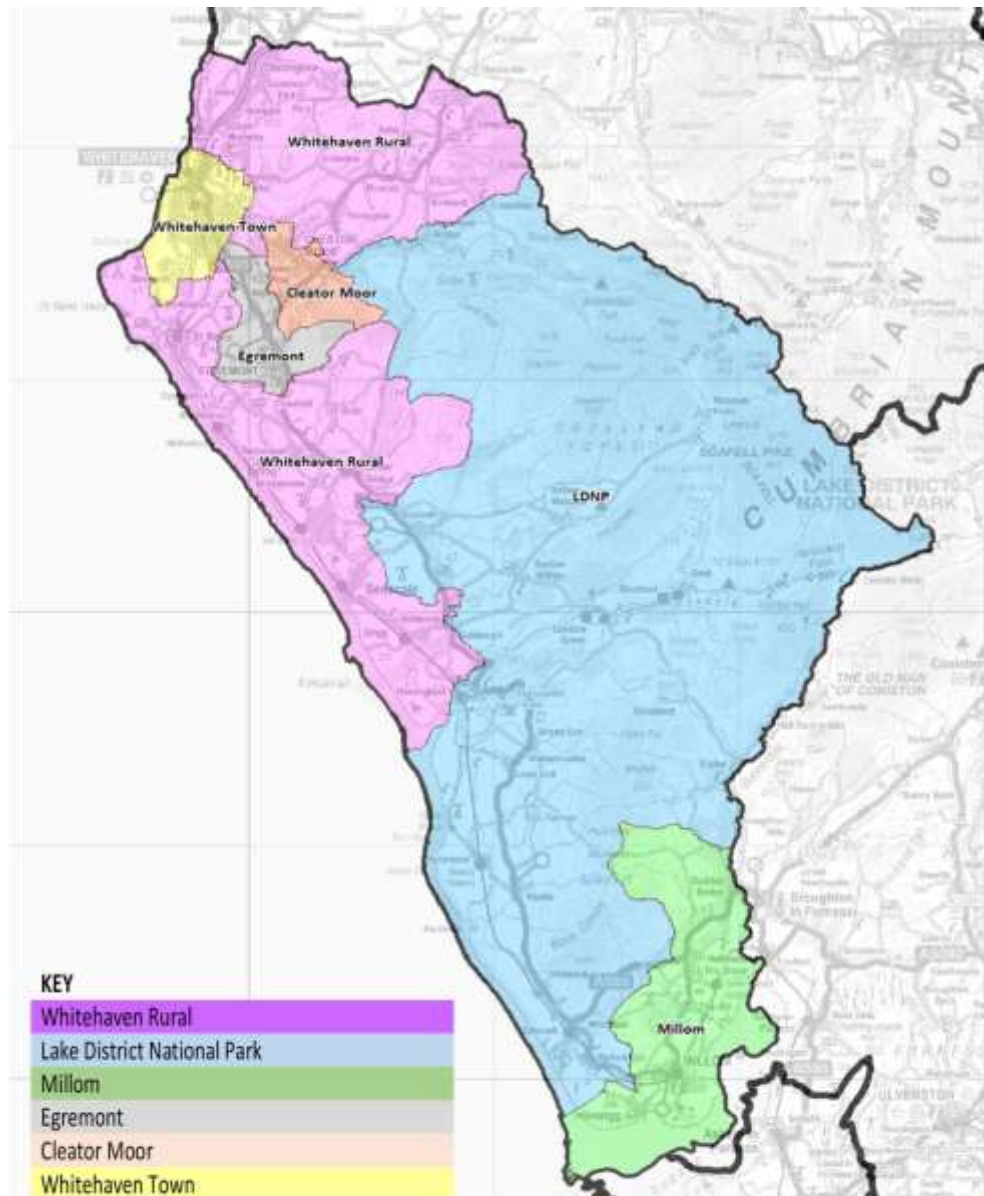
13.11.10 The NPPF, paragraph 65, requires at least 10% of homes within major developments (over 10 units) to made available for affordable home ownership as part of the overall affordable housing contribution from the site “*unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups*”. There are additional exemptions noted, including where the site or proposed development:

- provides solely for build to rent homes;
- provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose built accommodation for the elderly, disabled or students etc);
- is proposed to be developed by people who wish to build or commission their own homes; or
- is exclusively for affordable housing, an entry level exception site or a rural exception site.

13.11.11 It should be noted that the self-build exemption only applies to affordable home ownership. In a recent hearing decision (ref APP/X3540/W/21/3276418) the Inspector noted that paragraph 65 of the NPPF only applied to affordable home ownership rather than affordable housing contributions overall. The decision stated that if it had been intended to apply a complete exemption from the requirement to provide affordable housing for self and custom-build housing, this exemption would have been listed in paragraph 64 of the Framework. The Council will therefore expect contributions in lieu of affordable housing on self-build or custom build sites.

- 13.11.12 The NPPF also allows the use of a smaller threshold in designated rural areas such as Copeland⁶⁹. The Council's Housing Needs Study identifies that housing in the Whitehaven Rural sub-area shown on Figure 8 below (which contains Arlecdon, Rowrah, Beckermeth, Bigrigg, Calderbridge, Distington, Drigg, Holmrook, Frizington, Kirkland, Ennerdale Bridge, Howgate, Lowca, Moresby Parks, Parton, Seascale, St Bees and Thornhill) is the most expensive in Copeland and identifies this area as a priority for affordable housing development.

Figure 8: Housing Needs Study Sub-Areas



⁶⁹ National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas designated as 'rural' under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985.

- 13.11.13 Given the above, Policy H8 sets a requirement for 10% affordable homes to be provided on sites of 10 units or more in accordance with the NPPF, unless the site is located within the Whitehaven Rural area where the threshold is 5 units.
- 13.11.14 Whilst Whitehaven Town is also identified in the Housing Needs Study as a priority for affordable housing, reducing the threshold from 10 units to five in this sub-area is likely to be unviable and could result in even less affordable housing coming forward than if the threshold was set at 10 units.
- 13.11.15 If a site comes forward as two or more separate schemes/phases, of which one or more falls below the appropriate threshold, the Council will seek an appropriate level of affordable housing on each part to match in total the provision that would have been required on the site as a whole.

Viability

- 13.11.16 It is acknowledged that policies that require the provision of affordable housing can impact upon the viability of developments. The NPPF therefore requires Local Planning Authorities to take into account the impact of such policies at an early stage when developing their Local Plans, reducing the need for viability assessments to be submitted at planning application stage.
- 13.11.17 Paragraph 58 of the NPPF states *“Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force.”*
- 13.11.18 The impacts of Policy H8, and other policies that require developer contributions, have been tested through a Stage 2 Viability Assessment⁷⁰. The Assessment has been developed through engagement with the development industry.
- 13.11.19 The Local Plan Viability Assessment has identified that viability is likely to be a constraint to delivery on a number of allocated housing sites; in some cases this can be remedied by using an alternative housing mix. Viability may also be an issue on future windfall sites. Given this, Policy H8 allows for the provision of lower levels of affordable housing, off-site provision or contributions in lieu where applicants robustly demonstrate that providing 10% affordable housing on site would render the development unviable.
- 13.11.20 Where 10% affordable housing is not being provided on site, a site specific viability study must be submitted which clearly shows that provision would render the site unviable. The viability assessment submitted should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardising

⁷⁰ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/copeland-local-plan-2021-2038-evidence-base>

inputs, and should be made publicly available. Developers will also be required to demonstrate that the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities in accordance with the NPPF. Any such viability assessment will be independently reviewed by the Council at the developer's expense.

- 13.11.21 Where a lower proportion of affordable housing is agreed on viability grounds larger or multi-phased development will be subject to a further viability review at an agreed point during construction to determine whether the viability of the scheme has improved, and if viability improves an increased proportion of affordable housing will be required to make the development policy compliant. Further guidance on the early and late-stage review will be provided in the forthcoming "Affordable Housing and Viability SPD".
- 13.11.22 In order to maximise affordable housing provision in Copeland, the Council seek a higher proportion of affordable housing on developments in areas with identified where the Local Plan Viability Assessment, or a site specific viability assessment, shows that there is sufficient financial headroom. The exact level of provision will be agreed through discussion with the applicant taking into consideration the requirement for other forms of infrastructure. For this reason, Policy H8 requires the provision of "at least" 10% where possible.

Empty Homes

- 13.11.23 There are over 1,000 empty homes in Copeland, over 800 of which are long-term empty⁷¹. The Council has aspirations to reduce the number of empty homes and this is highlighted in theme 2 of the Housing Strategy, "Housing for Place". The Strategy makes a commitment to:
- *"Refresh and deliver the Empty Homes Policy 2016-2018 and set a new two-year action plan (2019-2021) to target future work to strategically align with the four town spatial frameworks and levels of housing needed"* and
 - *"Identify and secure inward investment, Government grants and contributions to provide capital funding to address empty homes"*
- 13.11.24 At a national level, there are no restrictions limiting the number of developer contributions for affordable homes that can be pooled together. This potentially provides an opportunity to use contributions towards projects which improves the condition of empty properties, bringing them back into use as affordable housing. Such projects have the following benefits:
- Reduces the number of empty homes in a settlement, improves the street-scene and therefore has positive effects on residents' health and wellbeing;
 - Increases the number of affordable houses in a settlement;
 - Improving and converting existing stock potentially has less of an environment impact than building new homes

⁷¹ Copeland Housing Strategy

- Providing a contribution has less implications on development viability than providing affordable homes on site

13.11.25 It is recognised however that it may not always be possible to adapt some of the existing stock to meet modern needs.

13.11.26 The Council has produced a Housing Technical Paper that identifies potential options for collecting and spending s106 money to help bring empty properties back into use as affordable housing where this cannot be provided on site. Any contribution in lieu of on-site affordable housing should be spent in the same settlement as the development to ensure that particular community benefits where possible⁷².

13.11.27 Whilst the priority remains for affordable housing to be provided on-site, in line with national planning policy, Policy H8 allows for off-site provision of affordable housing or an appropriate contribution in lieu, as a commuted sum, where this can be robustly justified and where the approach contributes to creating mixed and balanced communities.

Tenure

13.11.28 The NPPF promotes affordable home ownership over rental options, however it does acknowledge that this could prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups. Consideration has therefore been given to whether requiring all affordable housing to be available for home ownership, rather than rental, would have detrimental impacts upon Copeland.

13.11.29 Page 96 of the SHMA 2021 notes that:

“When looking at the need for affordable home ownership (AHO) products, the analysis also suggests a need across Copeland, albeit (at 33 dwellings per annum) the need is lower than for rented housing. In interpreting this figure, it should however be noted that there could be additional supply from resales of market homes (below a lower quartile price) which arguably would mean there is a more limited need for AHO.

Analysis does suggest that there are many households in Copeland who are being excluded from the owner-occupied sector (as evidenced by reductions in owners with a mortgage and increases in the size of the private rented sector). This suggests that a key issue in Copeland is about access to capital (e.g. for deposits, stamp duty, legal costs) as well as potentially mortgage restrictions (e.g. where employment is temporary) rather than simply the cost of housing to buy.

The study also considers different types of AHO (notably First Homes and shared ownership) as each could have a role to play. In Copeland, where house values are low and new build prices look to be substantially higher it may be difficult to make forms of AHO genuinely affordable and therefore AHO products might be viewed

⁷² Development must also still meet the three tests set out in the NPPF para 57

as helping to diversify the market rather than directly meeting an affordable need.”

13.11.30 This is supported by the Housing Needs Study which states:

“The development of a range of different types of affordable accommodation is indicated, primarily affordable rented, as suggested by the SHMA, but also forms of discounted, sub-market ownership that avoids the need to raise a deposit. Shared ownership was not considered appropriate because of low house prices – the issue is the deposit.”

13.11.31 In May 2021 a new PPG⁷³ was published relating to First Homes. This sets out that:

“First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of ‘affordable housing’ for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:

- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;*
- b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria (see below);*
- c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,*
- d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).*

First Homes are the government’s preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.”

13.11.32 The First Homes PPG also provides detail on qualifying criteria (i.e. what makes something a First Home) and also a range of issues such as eligibility criteria.

Example Affordable Housing Breakdown:

200 dwellings approved. 10% Affordable = 20 units, of which:

- 5 First Homes
- 3 Discounted market sales housing, starter homes or other affordable home ownership routes
- 12 Affordable or Social Rented

⁷³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>

- 13.11.33 Policy H8 strikes a balance between providing affordable home ownership options (as required by the NPPF) and meeting the local demand for affordable rental properties. It is acknowledged that demand for intermediate housing (such as shared ownership) can vary with market conditions and as a result there may be occasions where an increased proportion of social rented housing will be acceptable. The Policy also accords with the First Homes PPG by requiring a proportion of affordable housing to be First Homes.

Strategic Policy H8: Affordable Housing



On sites of 10 units or more (or of 0.5ha or more in size), or on sites of five units or more within the Whitehaven Rural sub-area⁷⁴, at least 10% of the homes provided should be affordable as defined in the NPPF 2021 (or any document that replaces it) unless:

- 1) this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area as identified in the Housing Needs Study; or
- 2) The development falls into an exemption category listed in the NPPF (or any document superseding it)

Where the proposal involves the re-use or redevelopment of vacant buildings, a proportionate reduction in the affordable home contribution, equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of existing buildings, will be supported.

The following tenure split should be applied to developments that provide affordable housing:

- 25% First Homes
- 15% discounted market sales housing, starter homes or other affordable home ownership routes⁷⁵
- 60% affordable or social rented.

A financial contribution may be accepted in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision, to secure the equivalent provision off-site where this is justified and helps create mixed and balanced communities. Where the number of empty homes within the settlement is above the national average, this contribution may be used to improve the standard of

⁷⁴ As identified in the Housing Needs Study 2020

⁷⁵ As defined in the NPPF Glossary. In terms of the exemption relating to people who wish to build or commission their own homes, this is only applicable to affordable home ownership routes

empty properties within that settlement and bring them back into use as affordable housing.

A lower proportion of affordable housing or an alternative tenure split will only be accepted in particular circumstances. In such cases developers must demonstrate, to the Council's satisfaction, why the current site specific circumstances mean that meeting the requirements of this policy would render the development unviable. This should be in the form of a clear, bespoke viability assessment.

Sites of 10 or more residential units that provide less than the policy compliant 10% affordable housing contribution are required to submit a detailed viability assessment and large, multi-phased developments will be subject to early and late review mechanisms to ensure that affordable housing contributions are increased if viability improves over time. If the late stage viability review indicates that the development is capable of delivering more affordable housing than at the time planning permission was granted, payment in lieu of on-site provision may be accepted.

13.12 Gypsy and Traveller Sites

- 13.12.1 The Council has a responsibility to meet the housing needs of all its residents including those who identify as Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing and Planning Act 2016. We also have a duty under the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015⁷⁶ to ensure a rolling five-year supply of deliverable sites for travellers.
- 13.12.2 A Cumbria wide Gypsy and Traveller Study was published in 2022 that identified a need for 12 Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the Plan area to accommodate a Copeland resident currently living in bricks and mortar housing and their extended family.
- 13.12.3 A Call for Sites was carried out in 2021, however no sites were put forward for consideration as accommodation for the Gypsy and Traveller community. The Council therefore reviewed its own land assets against the criteria in Policy H10 below, and identified two potentially suitable sites in Whitehaven. These two sites were subject to 6 week public consultation and also assessed via Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessments as well as other technical assessments such as ecology and site access. Following this process the Council agreed to allocate *Site GTW5: Land at Sneckyeat, Whitehaven* for Gypsy and Traveller use.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457420/Final_planning_and_travellers_policy.pdf



- 13.12.4 Before development can commence on the site, planning permission will need to be sought, alongside a Construction Environmental Management Plan and a Drainage Strategy. The landowner will also have to identify a suitable replacement area of open space to meet the requirements of Policy N12.

Strategic Policy H9: Allocated Site for Gypsies and Travellers



The following site is allocated for 12 pitches for gypsy and traveller mobile homes:

Site GTW5: Land at Sneakyat, Whitehaven

The site must be retained for this purpose and the site must be designed in accordance with criteria b-g of Policy H10 below.

- 13.12.5 Should a need for any additional or short term/transit pitches arise following the Plan's adoption, applications will be dealt with in accordance with Policy H10 below.

Policy H10: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Sites



Planning applications for the development of new or extension of existing Gypsy and Traveller sites will be supported where they accord with the Development Plan and meets the following criteria:

- a) There is a demonstrated need;
- b) The site would not lead to the unacceptable loss, or significant adverse impact upon landscape character and value, heritage assets and their settings, nature conservation or biodiversity sites;
- c) The site is well related to an existing sustainable settlement, with safe and convenient access to the main highway network, and a range of basic and everyday community services and facilities including education, health, shopping facilities and transport provision;
- d) The site would offer a suitable level of residential amenity to any proposed occupiers, and will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents;
- e) The site is capable of being designed to ensure that appropriate landscaping and planting would provide and maintain visual amenity in perpetuity;
- f) Pitch size, type and parking provision are designed in accordance with national guidance; and
- g) The site can be adequately drained.

13.13 Community-led and Self and Custom Housing

- 13.13.1 Community-led housing projects, whether within the National Park boundary or outside it, provide local occupancy housing in perpetuity and can be homes to rent or buy. The options for community-led housing schemes are wide-ranging and include:

- community-owned housing
- cooperative and tenant controlled housing
- individual self-build or projects managed by providers on behalf of community groups.

- 13.13.2 Self and custom build housing helps increase housing supply and also gives people the opportunity to build a home which meets their needs whilst learning new skills and trades. Definitions of self and custom build can be found in the Local Plan Glossary.
- 13.13.3 The former Copeland Council was allocated £251,000 in 2017 funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government to co-deliver the project as an area where the high number of second-home ownership is affecting housing supply in local communities. This funding has helped deliver successful schemes across Copeland, including a recent scheme in Ulpha (within the LDNP planning area).
- 13.13.4 The Council is a partner in the Cumbria and Lancaster Community-Led Housing Hub⁷⁷.
- 13.13.5 Copeland has a strong history of self-build and the Housing Strategy identifies that there is a growing demand for self and custom build housing in Copeland. One of the delivery priorities identified in the Strategy is *“To grow the supply of housing to suit the needs of professionals and entrepreneurs seeking to remain in or move into the area”* and the promotion of self and custom build housing is recognised as a way of helping deliver this priority.
- 13.13.6 The Council keeps a register⁷⁸ of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in Copeland for their own self and custom build housing (market or affordable). At present there are 20 people on the register but it is accepted that there may be additional people are interested in self-build projects who haven’t registered. There are also a number of sites currently with planning permission that are providing self-build plots.

Policy H11: Community-led, Self-build and custom build housing



Community-led housing schemes will be supported, particularly those which help bring empty homes back into beneficial use. Applicants must demonstrate how their proposal meets the housing needs identified within the Council’s SHMA and Housing Needs Study.

Self and custom build housing will be supported where the development accords with the Development Plan and make a positive contribution to the street-scene. A design code will be required for all developments over five units.

⁷⁷ <http://www.clhhub.org.uk/>

⁷⁸ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/self-build-and-custom-housebuild-register>.

13.14 Specialist and Older Persons housing

- 13.14.1 The SHMA 2021 identifies that Copeland has an ageing population. In 2019, 22.7% of our population was aged over 65, compared to 18.4% across England as a whole.
- 13.14.2 The Housing Needs Study also identifies that a large section of Copeland has a disability or long-term illness that limits their day to day activities, with 22% of respondents to the Housing Needs Survey stating that this was the case for at least one household member and 12% of respondents indicating that they would be interested in extra care housing.
- 13.14.3 The Council supports Copeland's most vulnerable residents through working with partners to increase the provision of specialist and older persons housing and providing disabled facilities grants which help people adapt their homes to allow them to live independently. The Housing Strategy states that we will *"work with developers, statutory bodies and third sector partners to increase the supply of specialist housing with support for groups with a specific and unmet need"*. The Local Plan has a role to play in supporting that priority, in ensuring that any specialist housing is directed to the most appropriate locations.
- 13.14.4 The NPPF defines older people as *"People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs."*
- 13.14.5 The provision of extra care housing is one means of helping to meet the needs of vulnerable groups, including the elderly. This is self-contained accommodation that allows people to live independently (or in couples where required) in a supportive environment. Increasing the numbers of people living in extra care housing frees up market and social housing and reduces the need for other types of care home.
- 13.14.6 There are currently two Extra Care housing developments within Copeland which provide 61 units between them. The first is Duddon Mews in Millom (14 units) developed by Home Group, the second is Monkway Court in Whitehaven (47 units) operated by Anchor Trust.
- 13.14.7 Cumbria County Council prepared an Extra Care Housing and Supported Living Strategy, which is for the period of 2015-2025. The aim of the strategy is to develop Extra Care housing and Supported Living accommodation across Cumbria. The County Council also operated a grant funding programme⁷⁹ for potential providers looking to bring forward proposals for extra care/supported living schemes.

⁷⁹ <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/healthsocialcare/ech/developmentprogramme/grants/default.asp>

- 13.14.8 Within Copeland, it is predicted that there will be demand for 350 extra care units by 2025 resulting in a shortfall of 289 units once the existing schemes are taken into account. Policy H12 supports the provision of residential establishments, including extra care housing, and will ensure that these are located in the right places to meet identified needs and enable residents to access key services and play an active part in community life.
- 13.14.9 The Housing Needs Study identifies that there is also a need for purpose built, high quality student and key worker accommodation. At present there are no purpose-built student housing schemes in Copeland.

Policy H12: Residential Establishments, including Specialist, older persons housing and purpose-built student and key-worker accommodation



The Council will work collaboratively with providers and partners to identify sites which may be suitable for specialist or older persons housing, including sheltered accommodation, extra care housing, residential nursing care accommodation and purpose-built keyworker and student accommodation, taking into account housing needs evidence including the latest SHMA and Housing Needs Study.

Developments should be well-designed (including providing adequate space for mobility scooters where appropriate) and well-integrated within the wider community with safe access to services and public transport.

Developments should also accord with the criteria in Policy H6 and should not result in any unacceptable harm to the amenity of neighbours in terms of noise and disturbance.

13.15 Conversion and Subdivision of Properties

- 13.15.1 The conversion and sub-division of larger properties, including residential and commercial properties such as former offices, is often a useful way to create additional accommodation to meet housing needs, including smaller properties such as self-contained flats or HMOs. The demand for such properties is likely to grow as Copeland's economy grows, particularly where there is an influx of temporary workers.
- 13.15.2 Policy H13 below relates to the conversion and sub-division of buildings to create residential accommodation. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the amenity of future residents of the building and neighbouring residents is protected.

- 13.15.3 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) with between three and six occupants fall into a C4 Use Class and do not, at present, require planning permission. Larger HMOs with seven or more occupants and comprising of two or more households do require planning permission and are classed as Sui Generis uses. HMOs are different from self-contained flats as occupiers share basic amenities such as kitchen and bathroom facilities. Certain HMOs, including those which are exempt from planning permission, will require a licence which can be obtained from the Council's housing department and will need to meet Housing Health and Safety Rating System standards, Fire and Building Regulations.
- 13.15.4 HMOs provide an important source of housing, which is often available cheaply, however the conversion of residential properties to HMOs can lead to problems for neighbouring residents, for example where there is insufficient parking and refuse storage. The increase in occupiers and comings and goings can also have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of neighbours, however this can often be minimised through the careful planning of internal layouts and access arrangements.
- 13.15.5 As well as considering the impact upon neighbours, it is also important to consider the amenity, health and wellbeing of future residents of the HMO. Therefore, Policy H13 ensures that satisfactory access to sunlight and daylight, sufficient internal space, privacy and outlook is provided.
- 13.15.6 Whilst evidence suggests that such measures are not currently needed in Copeland, a number of councils have Article 4 directives in place which remove permitted development rights relating to changes of use from C3 (dwelling houses) to C4 (small HMOs), meaning that anyone who wants to convert their property into a small HMO would require planning permission. This enables councils to control the number of HMOs in a particular area and ensure any detrimental impacts are minimised. If the demand for short term accommodation increases in Plan area consideration should be given to the provision of an Article 4 Directive in those areas most affected.
- 13.15.7 Each HMO application will be assessed in relation to the specific case. When assessing whether an area has an overconcentration of HMOs or whether a particular application would create such a situation, the Council may give consideration to the following criteria:
- The availability of relevant amenity provisions and infrastructure;
 - The proportion of extant HMOs in the area;
 - The extent to which the HMO may harm social sustainability and community cohesion;
 - Whether the location is suitably connected to employment and educational destinations associated with the HMO occupants.

Policy H13: Conversion and sub-division of buildings to residential uses including large HMOs



The subdivision of existing properties within Copeland's settlement boundaries, including those which create Houses in Multiple Occupancy, will be supported providing the following criteria are met:

- a) The development does not result in unacceptable levels of harm to residential amenity (noise and disturbance) for occupiers of the converted property and/or those occupying neighbouring properties;
- b) Future residents have adequate levels of natural lighting and privacy;
- c) The development does not have an adverse impact upon the privacy of neighbouring residents through direct overlooking;
- d) Off street parking is provided or sufficient parking is available within close proximity of the site;
- e) Adequate external amenity space is provided, including for waste and recycling bin storage without harming the visual amenity of the area where possible;
- f) Cycle space is provided, where possible;
- g) Safe access is available from both the front and rear of the property, where possible; and
- h) The development does not result in an over-concentration of HMOs, taking into account the cumulative impacts of HMOs and subdivided properties within the vicinity of the site.

Consideration will also be given to the loss of the original property and whether this supports the Housing Strategy informed by the Council's SHMA and Housing Needs Study.

13.16 Domestic Extensions and Alterations

- 13.16.1 Extensions and alterations to existing properties can be a useful way of meeting changing household needs, for example through the creation of an annex to provide accommodation for dependent relatives. They can however cause detrimental impacts upon both the street scene and residential amenity where they are poorly designed or where an extension would result in the loss of an off street parking space. Policy H14 seeks to ensure that any proposals for domestic extensions or alterations meet detailed requirements relating to design and amenity. Further information regarding the evidence that would be needed to support applications for rural workers dwellings can be found in the Housing

Technical Paper. National Planning Practice Guidance states that the following considerations could be taken into account when determining such applications.

- 13.16.2 Where proposals for “granny” annexes are considered acceptable, applicants must demonstrate a suitable access between the annexe and the main house and also the provision of a shared facility with the main house for example a bathroom or kitchen. The occupancy of annexes will be controlled through the use of a suitably worded planning condition to ensure that they are not used as a self-contained residential unit.

Policy H14: Domestic Extensions and Alterations



Proposals for house extensions and alterations or additional buildings within the curtilage of existing properties will be permitted provided that:

- a) The scale, design and materials of the proposed development would not adversely alter the character or appearance of the existing building, street scene or wider surrounding area;
- b) The extension or outbuilding would be subservient to the dwelling and would retain an adequate provision of outdoor amenity space to serve the property
- c) The extension or outbuilding would not materially harm the amenity of the occupiers of the parent property or adjacent dwellings through loss of natural light, overlooking, privacy, potential noise nuisance or the overbearing nature of the proposal, and;
- d) The operational car parking needs of the property would continue to be met as a result of the proposal.

13.17 New Housing in the Open Countryside

- 13.17.1 Copeland is defined as a designated rural area under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985 and over 35% of our residents live outside of Copeland’s towns. Access to good quality housing is important to support rural services and ensure the sustainability of rural settlements. It also helps families to stay within the same communities which helps avoid social isolation.
- 13.17.2 Whilst the NPPF, paragraph 79, supports rural development, it states that the development of isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless the following circumstances apply:

- There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- The development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- The development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- The development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or
- The design is of exceptional quality

13.17.3 Rural Exception sites are *“Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the Local Planning Authority’s discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.”*⁸⁰

13.17.4 Homes will be supported on such sites where there is a proven unmet local need for affordable housing as evidenced, for example, by the Housing Needs Study. If this document is silent, or agreed to be out-of-date, the Council may consider bespoke evidence provided by the developer. Where such development is supported, applicants will be expected to sign a Section 106 agreement to ensure houses remain affordable and available for those with a local connection in perpetuity.

13.17.5 “Local connection” is defined in the Housing Technical Paper that supports the Local Plan.

Policy H15: Rural Exception Sites



Housing development beyond settlement boundaries will be permitted on rural exception sites, these are small sites adjacent to an existing settlement where it is demonstrated that affordable housing is required to meet local needs.

⁸⁰ NPPF Glossary definition

Applicants must demonstrate that the development is viable and housing will be retained in local, affordable use in perpetuity. An element of market housing will be accepted to support the development of local, affordable housing where:

- a) There are excessive development costs due to site constraints; and
- b) It is demonstrated that the additional revenue created by the development of open market housing is essential to enable the delivery of affordable housing on the site; and
- c) The majority of the homes are affordable and the amount of open market housing is the minimum required to achieve site viability; and

The development must meet an identified housing need supported by robust evidence, and be well designed and appropriate in terms of size and scale for its location. The development must not result in unacceptable harm impact on the character of the area, the surrounding landscape, heritage assets or biodiversity.

13.17.6 The Council supports rural enterprise and recognises that there will be a small number of cases where it essential for one or more people engaged in a rural enterprise to live at, or very close to, the site of their work. This is to ensure workers are on hand day and night to allow for the proper functioning of the business. For example, in case animals or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice; or to deal quickly with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products, for example, by frost damage or the failure of automatic systems.

13.17.7 Policy H16 supports the erection of agricultural, forestry or other essential rural workers dwellings, where certain criteria are met. Further information regarding the evidence that would be needed to support applications for rural workers dwellings can be found in the Housing Technical Paper. National Planning Practice Guidance states that the following considerations could be taken into account when determining such applications:

- Evidence of the necessity for a rural worker to live at, or in close proximity to, their place of work to ensure the effective operation of an agricultural, forestry or similar land-based rural enterprise (for instance, where farm animals or agricultural processes require on-site attention 24-hours a day and where otherwise there would be a risk to human or animal health or from crime, or to deal quickly with emergencies that could cause serious loss of crops or products);
- The degree to which there is confidence that the enterprise will remain viable for the foreseeable future;
- Whether the provision of an additional dwelling on-site is essential for the continued viability of a farming business through the farm succession process;

- Whether the need could be met through improvements to existing accommodation on the site, providing such improvements are appropriate taking into account their scale, appearance and the local context; and
- In the case of new enterprises, whether it is appropriate to consider granting permission for a temporary dwelling for a trial period.

Consideration will also be given to the number of workers needed taking into account the scale and nature of enterprise, to ensure the size of dwelling being applied for is appropriate.

13.17.8 Where such dwellings are approved, occupancy will be retained for this purpose through the use of a planning condition.

13.17.9 Should there be an identified need for a rural worker to live in temporary accommodation on a site within the open countryside (e.g. to manage a newly established enterprise) this will be considered where it complies with Policy H21.

Policy H16: Essential Dwellings for Rural Workers



Housing will be permitted within the open countryside where it can be demonstrated that the dwelling is essential to allow a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work.

The development will only be permitted where:

- a) there is a clearly established existing functional need;
- b) the need relates to a full-time worker, or one who is primarily employed in a rural business and does not relate to a part-time requirement;
- c) the unit and the rural business concerned have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound, and have a clear prospect of remaining so; and
- d) the functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the site, for example because it is occupied by a retired farm worker who previously worked on the site, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned

13.18 Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use in the open countryside

13.18.1 Agricultural buildings are currently permitted to change to residential use (C3 use class) together with some building operations reasonably necessary to facilitate the conversion, subject to the following criteria and Prior Approval being granted:

- No more than five separate dwelling houses can be developed under this Class
- Subject to this limit of five dwelling houses, up to three can be 'larger dwelling houses'. (A larger single dwelling house is one with a floor space of more than 100m²). No more than 465m² of floor space can change use to 'larger dwelling houses' under this class and no more than 465m² of residential floor space is allowed in larger dwelling houses
- Within the overall limit of five dwelling houses, up to five can be 'smaller dwelling houses'. (Smaller dwelling houses each have a floor space of no more than 100m²)
- Development is **not** permitted if the floor space of any dwelling house developed under Class Q having a use falling within Class C3 (dwelling houses) exceeds 465 m².

13.18.2 Policy H17 is relevant to conversions that require planning permission outside of identified settlement boundaries and aims to strike a balance between supporting the rural economy whilst protecting the intrinsic character and beauty of the open countryside. For this reason, the Council will remove permitted development rights through the use of planning conditions where extensions or residential paraphernalia such as sheds and outbuildings which would cause harm to the character of the open countryside or heritage assets.

13.18.3 It should be noted that a European Protected Species License may be required where there is evidence of protected species, for example roosting bats. Consideration should also be given to whether the site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area and whether the conversion could sterilise the areas of mineral resource.

Policy H17: Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use



The conversion and re-use of buildings in the open countryside for housing outside of settlement boundaries will be supported where:

- a) The building is redundant or disused, is of a traditional design which contributes to the character of the area;

- b) The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for significant extension, alteration or reconstruction;
- c) The development conserves the essential character of the buildings and enhances the immediate surroundings;
- d) Safe road access is in place or can be created without damaging the rural character of the surrounding area;
- e) The proposed curtilage area is appropriate in scale to the character of the building and will not result in adverse visual impacts or adverse harm to the landscape character; and
- f) Appropriate protected species surveys (bat, owl etc) have been carried out and details of proposed mitigation to deal with any harm identified have been agreed with the Council
- g) The proposal would not have an adverse effect on the historic environment or the landscape

When granting permission under this policy the Council will remove permitted development rights where necessary to protect the character of the building and landscape.

Proposals must also accord with the criteria listed in Policy H13.

13.19 Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside

- 13.19.1 Whilst the NPPF sets out a presumption against isolated homes in the open countryside, replacement dwellings are an exception and can provide a useful source of rural housing, allowing residents to stay within their communities and making efficient use of land. Inappropriate design can however have a negative impact upon the character of the area, particularly when the scale of the new dwelling is not proportionate to the size of the plot.
- 13.19.2 It is important that the scale and size of the new building matches the building that it replaces as uncontrolled extensions can also result in the loss of smaller housing within the rural areas and can therefore make it more difficult for first time buyers, or those needing smaller homes, to move into such locations.

Policy H18: Replacement Dwellings outside Settlement Boundaries



The erection of a replacement dwelling outside of identified settlement boundaries will be permitted where:

- a) the replacement dwelling is to be sited on, or directly adjacent to the footprint of the existing dwelling⁸¹ to be replaced, unless there are clear and demonstrable reasons why an alternative siting or footprint will deliver a more appropriate scheme; and;
- b) the replacement dwelling (including any curtilage development) should be no larger in scale, size or massing than the existing dwelling to be replaced and its design must be appropriate to the location, will enhance its immediate setting and will not result in unacceptable impacts on landscape character or unacceptable visual harm; and
- c) appropriate access and adequate vehicle parking can be achieved; and

Where necessary, appropriate planning conditions will be imposed to require the demolition of the existing dwelling and to remove permitted development rights to control the impacts of any replacement dwelling and curtilage development.

Where it is likely that protected species are present, appropriate surveys must be submitted as part of any planning application prior to the demolition of the existing building, the contents of which must be agreed with the Council.

13.20 Beach Bungalows

- 13.20.1 Copeland contains a number of beach bungalows which are focussed around an area of coastline between St Bees and Braystones. These bungalows are of varying quality and structural soundness, are at risk from coastal erosion and tidal flooding and are poorly connected to services within nearby settlements.
- 13.20.2 Given their open countryside location and their vulnerability to flooding and climate change proposals for rebuilding the bungalows as larger or more permanent structures will not be supported.

Policy H19: Beach Bungalows



The alteration or replacement of an existing Beach Bungalow will be permitted where:

- a) the existing bungalow to be replaced has an existing lawful use; and
- b) any replacement bungalow is sited on the footprint of the existing Beach Bungalow to be replaced; and

⁸¹ Existing dwelling refers to the main dwelling and excludes any out-buildings.

- c) the altered or replaced bungalow is not larger in scale and massing than the existing dwelling to be replaced; and,
- d) the design of the altered or replacement bungalow is appropriate to the location and will enhance the immediate setting.

The erection of new Beach Bungalows and proposals for the change of use to permanent dwellings or holiday letting accommodation will not be permitted.

13.21 Removal of Occupancy Conditions

- 13.21.1 Occupancy conditions are useful to ensure affordable housing, or housing that may otherwise be unacceptable such as rural workers dwellings, are retained for the intended purpose. There may be cases however where applicants seek to remove such conditions to allow the release of housing onto the general market. In such cases, applicants are expected to demonstrate that there is no longer a need for the housing to be retained for that purpose. As part of this process, applicants will need to submit evidence to demonstrate that the property has been marketed for a reasonable period of time at a reasonable price.
- 13.21.2 Where the removal of a condition limiting occupancy to a rural worker is supported, the Council may require the dwelling to meet local needs, rather than permitting it to be placed straight on the open market. This is particularly important in the Whitehaven Rural sub-area identified in the Housing Needs Study which is the least affordable part of the Plan area where local residents may have difficulty accessing market housing due to costs.
- 13.21.3 The PPG outlines that *“There may be exceptional occasions where development that would not normally be permitted may be justified on planning grounds because of who would benefit from the permission. For example, conditions limiting benefits to a particular class of people, such as new residential accommodation in the open countryside for agricultural or forestry workers, may be justified on the grounds that an applicant has successfully demonstrated an exceptional need.”*
- 13.21.4 As such, the requirement for occupancy conditions is dependent on the continued presence of a demonstrable need. The Council will consider the removal of occupancy conditions should such a need to be superseded. Where it can be demonstrated that the property has been:
 - marketed for a reasonable amount of time
 - for a reasonable price
 - and this has gone through the cascade of geographies.
- 13.21.5 A Technical Note has been produced which outlines a ‘local connection’ and the different geographies to be used for marketing to meet the cascade approach.

Policy H20: Removal of occupancy conditions



The removal of a planning condition restricting the occupancy of a dwelling in the open countryside will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the long term need for the dwelling has ceased and there is no evidence of a continuing need for housing for the particular group to which the occupancy condition relates. Where the removal of such conditions is accepted, a local occupancy condition will be attached to ensure the dwelling is made available for those with a local connection.

Proposals to remove local occupancy conditions will only be permitted where an independent market assessment has been submitted following unsuccessful attempts to sell the property at a realistic price over the previous 12 months.

13.22 Residential Caravans

- 13.22.1 Policy H21 is relevant to those proposals for caravans that require planning permission in order to ensure that negative impacts are minimised.
- 13.22.2 A caravan is a use of land and not a structure and therefore it is the use that requires planning permission under certain circumstances. For instance, a caravan sited within the curtilage of a property and used as a playroom or space ancillary to the main house is unlikely to be seen as a material change of use however if the caravan is occupied for stand-alone residential purposes then this is likely to require permission.
- 13.22.3 Where a caravan is to be sited in close proximity to a designated nature site, consideration must be given to impacts from recreational disturbance.

Policy H21: Residential Caravans



Proposals for new residential caravans (with the exception of Gypsy & Traveller caravans) will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and on a temporary basis, where need can be fully demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council and where:

- a) the siting of the caravan will not result in unacceptable harm upon the landscape, heritage assets, biodiversity or cause visual harm;
- b) the siting of the caravan will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the amenity of neighbours through a loss of privacy or sunlighting;
- c) the siting of the caravan does not give rise to unacceptable impacts upon the highway network or highway safety; and
- d) the caravan is located within a settlement identified in Policy DS1, unless it will accommodate a rural worker who is required to live at or near their place of work.

Where caravans are permitted, they should be well screened by existing landscaping where possible.

14 Health, Sport & Culture



Policies SC1-SC5

14.1 Health, Sport and Culture Headlines



Strengths

- Strong sporting heritage with variety of sports clubs
- Range of sports facilities including Whitehaven Campus, Whitehaven leisure centre with a gym, Copeland Pool and Copeland Sports Stadium with running track.
- Range of local halls available for sporting use
- Higher levels of volunteering in sports than the national average
- Variety of cultural facilities across Copeland, including art galleries, theatres etc
- Rural nature of Copeland and natural environment provides space for informal recreation
- Westlakes Academy rated Outstanding
- West Cumberland Hospital redevelopment



Challenges

- Lower life expectancies than the national average for males and females
- Ageing population
- Pockets of deprivation
- 10% most deprived Plan area nationally in terms of health and disability deprivation (IMD)
- Higher levels of inactivity than the national average
- Higher levels of obesity than the national average
- Sporting facilities not evenly dispersed through Copeland
- Geography and lack of public transport in south makes access a problem



Opportunities

- Built Facilities Study, Playing Pitch Strategy and Play Strategy recommend actions to increase participation and activity rates
- Potential for creation of Sports Hubs in Whitehaven
- Town Deal Funding allocated for new and improved sports, leisure and culture facilities in Cleator Moor and Millom
- Opportunities to improve active travel through new developments
- Opportunities to expand water sports, walking and cycling routes further
- Opportunities to expand use of local centres, halls etc. for community use

14.2 Health and Wellbeing

- 14.2.1 Copeland faces a number of health and wellbeing challenges, which have been magnified by the Covid-19 pandemic. The issues are summarised on the previous page and in the Headline Statistics for Sport and Physical Activity document⁸² produced by Active Cumbria in association with Sport England.
- 14.2.2 Copeland has lower life expectancies at birth than the national average: for men life expectancy is 78.2 years compared to the national average of 79.6 years and for women 81.5 years compared to the national average of 83.1 years (ONS 2018). 21.3% of residents consider that their day to day activities are limited by a health problem (ONS Census 2011)
- 14.2.3 Physical inactivity contributes to 1 in 6 deaths in the UK⁸³. The Active Lives survey 2020 shows that 23.4% of people aged over 16 in Copeland are inactive, with the level of inactivity increasing with age. Inactivity can also lead to obesity. 73.1% of adults in Copeland are overweight or obese compared to 62% in England (PHE Public Health Profiles 2017/18).
- 14.2.4 Planning has a key role to play in addressing those challenges. It is important that the Council enables well-designed developments, such as housing and health and educational facilities, to meet the changing needs of our communities and that we protect the open spaces and natural environment that are used for recreation. Well-designed developments include those that create opportunities for active travel, reduce opportunities for crime, provide open spaces that are accessible for all and mitigate impacts of climate change.
- 14.2.5 The Local Plan contains a number of planning policies that have been developed to improve health and wellbeing in Copeland, including the overarching Design Policy within the Development Standards chapter, policies that protect or provide new open spaces and policies that aim to minimise air and water pollution. The Council has also produced a Health Impact Assessment and an Equalities Impact Assessment to support the Local Plan which identifies the impacts of the policies within it on health and inequality.
- 14.2.6 The following policy sets out a number of actions the Council will take to improve health and wellbeing in Copeland.

⁸² https://www.activecumbria.org/files/3515/9317/7819/0_AC_Headline_Statistics_Infographics_Copeland_Jun20_v3.pdf

⁸³

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523460/Working_Together_to_Promote_Active_Travel_A_briefing_for_local_authorities.pdf

Strategic Policy SC1: Health and Wellbeing



The Council will promote health and wellbeing in Copeland by supporting new development that:

- Delivers high quality, safe developments;
- Enhances our natural environment, through improved air and water quality;
- Promotes active travel;
- Protects or delivers green infrastructure, open spaces, sports, cultural and community facilities or seek developer contributions for such facilities;
- Supports access to open spaces and the countryside;
- Improves health, social and cultural wellbeing;
- Creates spaces for food growing;
- Opens up educational facilities for community use and securing such use through Community Use Agreements⁸⁴ where appropriate;
- Creates mixed communities through new or improved developments that are located in areas with access to key services to reduce social isolation and create community resilience;
- Implements the policies within the Local Plan to help deliver high quality, safe developments and enhance our natural environment, improving air and water quality;
- Implements the policies within the Local Plan that promote active travel and protect or deliver new open spaces, sports, cultural and community facilities;
- Implements policies within the Local Plan that support access to open spaces and the countryside;
- Supports local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing;
- Supports local communities to create spaces for food growing; and
- Supports and enables people to live within their communities for longer via adaptations and specialist housing.

The Council will seek developer contributions where appropriate towards new or improved sports, recreational, and community facilities taking account needs identified within its Sports and Playing Pitch Strategies and other relevant documents.

14.3 Sports and Leisure

- 14.3.1 Copeland has a strong sporting heritage which the Council wishes to continue to support and develop, recognising the socio-economic benefits sport and leisure

⁸⁴ <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport/community-use-agreements>

can bring, as well as the benefits to our residents' health and wellbeing. In addition to this the Council encourages communities to volunteer to support sports and physical activity as this helps prevent social isolation⁸⁵ and builds community resilience.

14.4 Indoor Sports Facilities in Copeland

- 14.4.1 Indoor Sports facilities are identified in the Built Facilities Study⁸⁶ (BFS), produced in 2020.
- 14.4.2 Copeland contains a number of sporting facilities which are owned by the Council and managed by Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL), including Copeland Pool and Whitehaven Leisure Centre. The recently opened Campus Whitehaven also provides a modern sports and physical activity facility for Copeland.
- 14.4.3 The BFS identifies a need for the following:
- additional local leisure small swimming pool (15m x 8m) provision by 2035;
 - retaining existing levels of community accessible (including pay and play) sports halls, swimming pools, and fitness stations as a minimum; and
 - consideration of enhanced dedicated gymnastics facilities
- 14.4.4 It also acknowledges the important role of community centres/halls and other informal places that are well suited for sports hall activities. Such local spaces allow access to those elderly residents, those who do not have access to a car, have young children or have a disability. The Local Plan will protect such spaces from redevelopment where appropriate.
- 14.4.5 The Council was recently allocated Town Deal funding, a large proportion of which is being spent providing or improving sports facilities in Copeland. Town Improvement Plans have been produced for Cleator Moor and Millom/Haverigg these identify the following potential projects:
- The redevelopment of the existing Cleator Moor Centre and the development of modern, multi-functional centre including an indoor sports hall, flexible studio space, gym and café as well as wider health and wellbeing provision and targeted youth activity. This project sits under the TIP's Healthy Town theme.
 - The provision of a new, leisure size, swimming pool in Millom as part of the Activating Community Health project.

⁸⁵ In 2020, 14.4% of people in Copeland had volunteered to support sport and physical activity at least twice in the past year, compared to 13.4% in England (Active Lives Survey 2020).

⁸⁶ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/copeland-local-plan-2021-2038-evidence-base>

14.5 Outdoor Sports Facilities in Copeland

- 14.5.1 Copeland also benefits from a number of outdoor sports facilities including a running track, multi-use games areas and a range of grass and 3G playing pitches.

Playing Fields

- 14.5.2 Playing pitches are identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy Update produced in 2022⁸⁷.
- 14.5.3 The initial PPS was produced in the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, and therefore didn't give a full representation of pitch provision and the need for pitches in Copeland, as consultants were unable to visit and assess summer sport pitches. These were then considered in a PPS Update in 2022, which also reviewed the winter sport provision to ensure the latest evidence is available to base decision making on.
- 14.5.4 The PPS Action Plan identifies supply and demand data for football, rugby union and hockey. It makes a number of recommendations, seven general recommendations, six for football, five for rugby union and seven for hockey. These will be updated as part of the PPS Update. These recommendations should be considered fully when decision making.

Children's Play Areas

- 14.5.5 Outdoor children's play areas are considered and assessed through the Council's Play Strategy⁸⁸. Such spaces contribute significantly to children's health and wellbeing, particularly when the child does not participate in more organised sports.
- 14.5.6 Table 15, taken from the Play Strategy, identifies provision in Copeland. As can be seen this is well below the Fields in Trust (FIT) recommended standards for equipped/designated play areas of 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population and of 0.30 hectares per 1,000 population for other outdoor provision (i.e. MUGAs and skate parks). The Play Strategy does however recommend that a lower standard is used given the rural nature of Copeland, its low population density and the fact that it offers greater opportunities for informal play in natural settings. The proposed benchmark for children and young person's provision in Copeland is therefore set at 0.15 ha/1,000. Provision at present falls below this threshold in all three sub-areas in Copeland.

⁸⁷ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/copeland-local-plan-2021-2038-evidence-base>

⁸⁸ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/copeland-local-plan-2021-2038-evidence-base>

Table 15: Provision for Children and Young People

Sub-area	Provision for children and young people			
	Number of sites	Total area (ha)	Current population	Current provision (ha per 1,000 population)
North	35	2.56	54,175	0.05
Central	13	0.96	7,771	0.12
South	3	0.48	7,403	0.06
Copeland	51	4.00	69,348	0.06

Source: Copeland Play Strategy 2021

Opportunities for Active Travel

- 14.5.7 24.1% of adults in Copeland do not walk for 10 minutes at least once a month compared to 21.7% in England (DoT Walking and Cycling Statistics, 2017/18). Increasing walking and cycling is one of the effective and cheap ways to increase physical activity.
- 14.5.8 Copeland benefits from its location on the C2C, Hadrian's Wall and Reivers national cycle routes and contains an extensive cycle network on former railway lines. It is also located on England's Coastal Path and the Council is proactively working with partners to complete and improve the stretches of the Path route within Copeland.
- 14.5.9 In recent years external funding has been secured to enhance opportunities for physical activity in Copeland. Funded projects include Connecting Cumbria's Hidden Coast project; a recreational "challenge" route largely following England's Coastal Path from Whitehaven to Millom, 1.4km of new cycle path, 1.8km of new or improved footpaths and links to the Wheels for All Hub.
- 14.5.10 There are also proposals to increase opportunities for active travel though identified in the Town Improvement Plans for both Cleator Moor and Millom.
- 14.5.11 Applicants should seek opportunities for active travel when developing their proposals. This is considered further in the Connectivity Chapter.

14.6 Provision of new, and protection of existing, sport and leisure facilities

- 14.6.1 The NPPF, paragraph 93 states:

"To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies should;

a) 'Plan positively for the provision and use of community facilities'

b) 'Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.'

e) 'Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.'"

- 14.6.2 The importance of providing new and protecting existing facilities is also reiterated through the PPS, Play Strategy and Built Facilities Study. The Local Plan guards against the loss of valued facilities and only allows their replacement with other uses in a limited number of circumstances as set out in Policy SC2 and SC5 below.
- 14.6.3 Policy SC2 recognises the importance of basing decisions on the most up-to-date evidence available. Such evidence includes the latest Playing Pitch Strategy, Open Space Assessment, Built Facilities Study and Play Strategy.
- 14.6.4 Playing pitches are dealt with separately in Policy SC3 as they are governed by specific national guidance⁸⁹.

Funding

- 14.6.5 Local Plan Policies DS3, SC2 and SC3, requires developers to make contributions towards additional open spaces and facilities.
- 14.6.6 Developer contributions towards new and improved indoor sports and recreation facilities can be informed through use of the Sport England planning tools. The Sports Facility Calculator (SFC) can help to estimate the amount of demand for key community sports facilities that is created by a given population and covers swimming pools, sports halls, Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) and indoor bowls centres. The SFC helps with quantifying the demand side of the facility provision equation. It helps to answer questions such as, "*How much additional demand for swimming will the population of a new development area generate, and what would the cost be to meet this new demand at today's values?*". Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can also be used to estimate demand that may be generated for the use of playing pitches by a new population.
- 14.6.7 Sport England also produces a suite of guidance documents on the design and cost of sports facilities⁹⁰ that may be helpful to developers. The cost guidance is updated quarterly.
- 14.6.8 Funding for new or improved facilities can also be sought from other sources such as Government funding (Town Deal fund, Levelling Up fund, Sport England funding etc.) and local funding (Copeland Community Fund, Active Cumbria funding etc.), subject to the development meeting the necessary criteria.
- 14.6.9 The Council will seek to secure these contributions in the most realistic and reasonable manner which most effectively ensures sufficient provision of sports facilities within Copeland. As such, in the majority of cases, developer contributions will be sought for off-site provision. This is often the most effective means of securing the strategic requirements of SC2. There may be cases where a

⁸⁹ <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport>

⁹⁰ <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning>

development is large enough to justify on-site provision, however it is unlikely that many developments will be of a sufficient size in Copeland.

Policy SC2: Sports and Leisure Facilities (excluding playing pitches)



New Facilities

The Council will support proposals, in principle, for new sports and leisure facilities that help residents sustain and lead healthy lives and meet needs identified in the most up to date evidence.

The Council will expect major developments to provide a financial contribution towards new or improved sports and leisure provision where the Built Facilities Study and/or other evidence identifies that existing local provision does not have the capacity to absorb the additional demand generated by the development. The level of contribution required will be calculated using Sport England's Sports Facilities Calculator in discussion with Sport England where appropriate.

New indoor facilities should be accessible to all, should be located according to the Settlement Hierarchy unless the proposal is for a specific activity or function that requires a location that cannot be accommodated within a defined settlement, and must be informed by the Council's Built Facilities Study.

Development must:

- Prioritise brownfield sites where possible
- Be accessible by sustainable and active transport modes where possible
- Be of a scale that is appropriate to its surroundings
- Ensure that adequate parking (including safe cycle storage) is provided
- Ensure that the development does not cause unacceptable harm on residential amenity
- Ensure that biodiversity conservation interests would not be harmed as a result of the development

Existing Facilities

The Council will seek to protect and enhance existing sport and leisure facilities. Proposals resulting in the loss of a sports or leisure facility will only be permitted where this is fully justified to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority and supported by the most up to date evidence.

Applicants must demonstrate that:

- a) The development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use; or
- b) An assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the existing facility is surplus to requirements; or
- c) The facility would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, with equivalent or better access and management arrangements within a suitable location.

- 14.6.10 The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (“the 2015 Order”) defines a playing field as ‘the whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch’. This definition is also provided within the glossary to the Government’s National Planning Policy Framework. The definition refers to the whole of a site and therefore does not just cover land which is currently laid out as pitches. Even where wider sports facilities fall outside the definition of a playing field, they are afforded protection through the planning system under the provisions of paragraph 99 of the NPPF.
- 14.6.11 The 2015 Order defines a playing pitch as ‘a delineated area which, together with any run-off area, is of 0.2 hectares or more, and which is used for association football, American football, rugby, cricket, hockey, lacrosse, rounders, baseball, softball, Australian football, Gaelic football, shinty, hurling, polo or cycle polo.’
- 14.6.12 Policy SC3 aims to protect and where possible enhance pitch provision in Copeland. Where appropriate, this will include through developer contributions. The Council will seek to secure these contributions in the most realistic and reasonable manner which most effectively ensures sufficient provision of playing pitches. This will be informed through the Playing Pitch Calculator, which may recommend on-site provision for larger scale developments. However, the Council is aware that the PPS identifies that single pitch sites are often unpopular with teams, due to the difficulty of servicing with ancillary facilities. As such, on-site provision would only be pursued if it would provide an optimal solution, such as the provision of two or more pitches, parking, and toilet/changing facilities.

Policy SC3: Playing Fields and Pitches



The Council will expect major developments to provide a financial contribution towards new or improved playing fields, pitches, and ancillary facilities where the Playing Pitch

Strategy identifies that existing local provision does not have the capacity to absorb the additional demand generated by the development. The level of contribution required will be calculated using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator in discussion with Sport England.

Contributions should include provision for maintenance of the pitch/facility over a 30 year period.

Proposals affecting playing fields will only be permitted where one of the following criteria are met unless one of the exceptions listed below applies:

- a) The proposal affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch; or
- b) The proposal does not reduce the size of any playing pitch; or
- c) The proposal does not result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas); or
- d) The proposal does not reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality; or
- e) The proposal does not result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or
- f) The proposal does not prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.

Exceptions

- i. The applicant has carried out a robust, up-to-date assessment of need and it is clear from this that the playing fields affected are surplus to requirements; or
- ii. The Council's Sports Strategy identifies the playing fields as being surplus to requirements; or
- iii. The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of the development, by a new area of playing field:
 - of equivalent or better quality, and
 - of equivalent or greater quantity, and
 - in a suitable location, and
 - subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements; or
- iv. The development proposes an alternative indoor or outdoor sports facility to meet a strategic need as set out in the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Facilities Study, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field; or
- v. The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.

- 14.6.13 New development, particularly housing, can have a prejudicial impact upon existing sports facilities. Where this is not identified and addressed in advance this can lead to statutory nuisance complaints from new residents and the placing of unreasonable restrictions on sports clubs (i.e. limitations on usage times, limits on lighting etc.). Applicants should consider neighbouring sporting facilities at the earliest stages and identify appropriate mitigation to prevent any potential issues from occurring.
- 14.6.14 Where a proposed housing allocation is adjacent to an existing sports facility this is identified in Appendix F.
- 14.6.15 Mitigation could be in the form of acoustic screening, the addition of ball strike zones or other safety margins, consideration of existing lighting at sports grounds and how this may affect future residents and designing housing schemes to avoid glare into habitable room windows etc. The most appropriate measures will depend upon the specifics of the development, however mitigation should be deliverable and enforceable in accordance with the NPPF.

Policy SC4: Impact of new development on sporting facilities (including playing fields and playing pitches)



New development must not prejudice the use of existing sports facilities, including pitches, within the vicinity of the development site. Potential impacts such as ball strike, noise and disturbance, impacts upon parking and access must be considered at an early stage when drawing up proposals to avoid or minimise complaints from future occupiers of the new development.

Where potential harm is identified, mitigation measures must be agreed with the Council and Sport England. This may be in the form of acoustic fencing, landscaped bunds, ball strike zones etc. and the exact measures will be dependent upon the specific development.

Where ball strike zones are required opportunities should be taken to create multi-purpose spaces where appropriate which can act as spaces for biodiversity, drainage areas etc.

14.7 Community and Cultural Facilities

- 14.7.1 Copeland contains a wealth of local community facilities, such as community halls, libraries, village halls and places of worship. These are particularly important in our rural areas as they reduce the need to travel and reduce social isolation.
- 14.7.2 Copeland also offers a large number of cultural facilities, such as the Millom Palladium, Gaiety Cinema and Florence Arts Centre, that benefit residents and visitors alike. Such facilities, along with Copeland's many heritage assets⁹¹, help create and maintain civic pride and improve wellbeing.
- 14.7.3 The Council maintains an Assets of Community Value list. These are assets that are nominated by community groups and parish councils. An asset can be listed if it furthers the community's social wellbeing or social interests and is likely to do so in the future. The Council's list currently contains three Assets of Community Value in Copeland, two of which are within the Local Plan area.
- 14.7.4 Should an owner wish to sell a property on the list, they first have to formally notify the Council. A six-week period will then commence in which a community interest group can request to be treated as a potential bidder. If such a request is made a six-month moratorium is then placed on the sale which gives the group time to make a bid⁹².
- 14.7.5 Whilst our aim is to protect and retain these important spaces, it is accepted that some are lost because they are no longer viable and there is no community interest to take them forward. Policy SC5 protects such facilities in Copeland but is flexible enough to allow for changes of uses in certain circumstances. The Policy does not relate to village shops, post offices or public houses in rural locations as these are considered in the Retail chapter.
- 14.7.6 Policy SC5 requires evidence that a building has been marketed over a period of 12 months regardless of whether it is on the Assets of Community Value list or not. This is based on good practice elsewhere and gives the community sufficient time to register a property on the list should they wish to do so once it becomes available before the six month moratorium commences.

Policy SC5: Community and Cultural Facilities



New Community and Cultural Facilities

⁹¹ Historic England provides information on the role the historic environment plays on wellbeing.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/current/social-and-economic-research/wellbeing/>

⁹² This does not confer a right of first refusal to the community interest group

Proposals for new community facilities (Community Halls, Village Halls, libraries and halls related to places of worship, arts centres, theatres and cinemas) will be supported in principle. Development must:

- Be located within a settlement identified in the hierarchy unless the proposal is for a specific activity or function that requires a location that cannot be accommodated within a settlement
- Prioritise brownfield sites where possible
- Be accessible by sustainable transport modes where possible
- Be of a scale that is appropriate to its surroundings
- Ensure that adequate parking (including safe cycle storage) is provided
- Ensure that the development does not cause unacceptable harm on residential amenity
- Ensure that biodiversity conservation interests would not be harmed as a result

Loss of Existing Community and Cultural Facilities

The loss of existing community facilities through change of use or new development requiring planning permission will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Council, that:

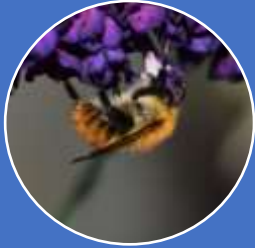
- a) Its continued use as a community or cultural facility is no longer feasible, having had regard to appropriate marketing that has been undertaken. Evidence should be provided to show that the premises/site has been marketed over a 12-month period through recognised agents and online platforms appropriate to the nature of the facility at a price which reflects its use, condition and local market values, the demand for the use of the site or premises, and its usability. Applicants must demonstrate that full consideration has been given any opportunities available to retain the existing use as part of a shared/combined service in order to improve viability. Applicants must also identify the proposed future occupier of the site to avoid speculative applications; or
- b) There is sufficient provision of such facilities in the area; or
- c) That sufficient alternative provision has been, or will be made elsewhere which is equally accessible and of the same quality or better than the facility being lost; or
- d) The loss or change of use of existing facilities is part of a wider public service estate reorganisation, for example to enable healthcare needs to be met.

15 Natural Environment



Policies: N1-N15

15.1 Natural Environment Headlines



Strengths

Clear air and dark skies

Lake District National Park World Heritage Site

The only area of designated Heritage Coast in the North West of England

High quality natural environment which contains a number of sites designated for their biodiversity importance and "Excellent" rated beaches

Wealth of open spaces within settlements including a number of highly valued Local Green Spaces

47km of coastline, 27km of which is designated as an Inshore Marine Conservation Zone



Challenges

Impacts of climate change, particularly on coastal environments

Need to further improve the biological quality of rivers and ecological standard of estuaries and coasts in Copeland

Need to improve the condition of several SSSIs

Balancing increased development and tourism with the need to protect landscapes and biodiversity



Opportunities

Opportunity to extend the Heritage Coast

Opportunities to create a strategic Copeland Forest

Opportunities to improve and expand local nature recovery networks

Opportunities to provide biodiversity net gain through new development

Opportunities to protect open spaces through Green Wedge, Protected Open Space and Local Green Space policies

Opportunities to create Community Growing Spaces

Opportunities to improve access to and interpretation of our natural environment

15.2 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Defining Biodiversity

15.2.1 Biodiversity is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as “*the variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.*” It supports life on earth and provides multiple benefits including the following (list not exhaustive):

- Regulates water, carbon and nutrient cycles
- Improves air quality
- Keeps the environment in state of balance
- Provides resources for consumption e.g. wood, biofuels
- Helps support economic sectors such as farming, forestry, crafts etc.
- Leisure and tourism resource
- Reduces anti-social behaviour
- Improves mental and physical health and wellbeing
- Cultural/spiritual attachments to natural environment
- Reduces flooding
- Important for soil health and production
- Provision of food, water, and air to breathe
- Open air classroom for learning about and monitoring the environment

15.3 International, National and Regional Designations

European Designations

15.3.1 Copeland contains a number of sites that are designated at European level for their biodiversity importance many of which extend beyond Copeland boundaries. These are:

- Ramsar sites are internationally protected wetland areas.
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats.
- Special Protection Areas (SPA) provide increased protection for rare and vulnerable birds and for regularly occurring migratory species.

15.3.2 SAC and SPA sites were previously referred to as Natura 2000 sites under European legislation that no longer applies post-Brexit. They are now known as National Site Network (NSN) sites under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

15.3.3 NSN and Ramsar site designations are identified on the Proposals Map and are listed in Appendix G. It should be noted that functionally linked land, that is functionally connected to an NSN or Ramsar site but is outside its boundaries has the same status as the designations listed below. Supporting habitats outside of the designated site boundary (and sometimes a considerable distance away) may be used by SPA populations or some individuals of the population for some or all

of the time. These supporting habitats can play an essential role in maintaining SPA bird populations, and proposals affecting them may therefore have the potential to affect the SPA.

- 15.3.4 The Council has carried out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the draft and final policies and site allocations in the Local Plan and this has considered their effects (singularly and cumulatively) on the NSN and Ramsar network.
- 15.3.5 The HRA Screening Report identifies that a number of policies and allocations may have a likely significant effect on the NSN and Ramsar Network. The HRA Appropriate Assessment considers that all likely significant effects can be mitigated.

National and Local Designations

- 15.3.6 Copeland contains a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) listed in Appendix G and identified on the Proposals Map. These are England's most important wildlife and geological sites which support many rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features. Natural England regularly monitors the condition of SSSIs and the latest data is shown below.
- 15.3.7 A number of our SSSIs are in unfavourable condition⁹³ for a variety of reasons and the Council will support landowners where possible to ensure necessary management measures are put in place to enable recovery.
- 15.3.8 Copeland also contains two national nature reserves, Hallsenna Moor and High Leys, as well as a locally designated nature reserve at Millom Ironworks.

County Wildlife Sites

- 15.3.9 Copeland contains a number of locally important County Wildlife Sites which are designated as part of the Cumbria Wildlife Trust's Wildlife Sites Project. These are listed in Appendix G. The sites are considered to be of local importance for biodiversity, although they do not have statutory designation.

Protected Species

- 15.3.10 The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan 2001 identifies protected species within Copeland, many of which may be found on sites which are not protected habitats. These Priority species are those identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action. The Council has a duty under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 to conserve biodiversity when exercising its functions. The Action Plan contains 39 Species and Habitat Action Plans covering over 700 individual actions designed to conserve and/or enhance a range of threatened species and habitats of both local and national importance.
- 15.3.11 Where there is evidence to suspect the presence of protected species planning applications should be accompanied by an appropriate up-to-date survey, carried out at the correct time of year, assessing their presence. If present, the proposal

⁹³ Where a site is not currently meeting its conservation objectives

must be sensitive to, and make provision for, the species' needs. Ecology reports should be undertaken by suitably qualified persons.

15.4 Geodiversity

- 15.4.1 Geodiversity is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms, along with the natural processes that shape them.
- 15.4.2 Copeland has a varied geology and a number of Sites of Scientific Interest that are designated specifically for their geological features. These are listed in Appendix G and are shown on the Proposals Map.
- 15.4.3 There are also a number of Local Geological Sites (formerly known as Regionally Important Geological Sites). These sites can also be seen on the Proposals Map.

15.5 Impacts of Development on Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- 15.5.1 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on Local Authorities to conserve biodiversity. The new Environment Act updates the NERC Act to require both the conservation *and enhancement* of biodiversity.
- 15.5.2 Development can result in a direct loss of habitats and disturbance to species but can also have indirect effects through pollution (including noise and light pollution), disturbance through human activity and accelerating the effects of climate change. The impacts of development should therefore be considered early in the design process.
- 15.5.3 Local Plan Policy N1 contains a mitigation hierarchy which supports the conservation of biodiversity and geodiversity. This follows guidance within paragraph 180 of the NPPF. It requires that harm is **avoided** where possible, for example by developing less sensitive sites, limiting construction hours or noise levels, scheduling works around breeding seasons, amending layout or reducing lighting to avoid disturbance.
- 15.5.4 Where harm cannot be avoided, appropriate **mitigation** measures must be proposed to remove or reduce the impact, for example by creating replacement habitat elsewhere on the site or restoring or enhancing habitat in another location. Where mitigation is required in the form of species translocation, the Council will work with partners to identify suitable sites.
- 15.5.5 In the exceptional cases, where mitigation is not appropriate or where residual impacts remain following mitigation, **compensation** will be accepted as a last resort. Compensation is usually carried out off site and will be secured through planning conditions or S106 agreements. It will only be accepted where independent expert advice demonstrates that there will be a high chance of success.
- 15.5.6 In accordance with paragraph 180 of the NPPF, if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an

alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission will be refused.

15.6 Impacts of Development upon National Site Network Sites

- 15.6.1 Developers are also required to carry out a HRA Screening assessment when they are preparing proposals that may have a negative impact upon the integrity of former Natura 2000 Sites. The HRA must take into account any likely significant effects on such sites within Copeland and within a 20km radius of Plan area as well as those that are hydrologically linked to the Development Plan area.
- 15.6.2 The Screening Report should be submitted alongside the planning application. Where the report identifies that adverse effects on former Natura 2000 Sites are likely, it should be followed by an Appropriate Assessment where appropriate.
- 15.6.3 Development that would cause harm to a former Natura 2000 site will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, given the importance of such sites. Where compensation is proposed (as a last resort), the European Habitats and Wild Birds Directive requires that all necessary compensatory measures are taken to ensure the overall coherence of the network of European Sites as a whole is protected.
- 15.6.4 The allocations within the Local Plan have been subject to a Plan level HRA and where appropriate AA. The HRA identifies a number of sites where a project level HRA will be required and recommends where this should be informed by technical documents such as a Construction Environmental Management Plan or Drainage Strategy to take into account the effects on particular protected sites and species. Appendix H summarises the HRA recommendations with regards to such sites and developers bringing forward allocated sites should follow the advice contained within the table.

15.7 Construction Environmental Management Plans

- 15.7.1 Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMP) are a means for developers to assess and monitor the impacts of development on the environment. They also allow for consideration of impacts such as noise, light disturbance etc. on residential amenity. Such a document *must* be submitted in the following cases, however all developers are encouraged to provide site specific procedures and measures to monitor and control environmental impacts throughout the construction phase of development.
- Any development requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or Screening Opinion under Schedules 1 and 2 of the Land Planning and Development (Environmental Impact Assessment) Ordinance 2007
 - Significant industrial facilities
 - Larger residential and commercial development projects (e.g. housing development of 20+ units of accommodation, office development of more than 1000sqm)

- Any other project deemed by the Council to present an environmental risk warranting CEMP

15.8 Opportunities for Biodiversity Enhancement

- 15.8.1 As well as considering the impacts of development opportunities to improve biodiversity and geodiversity should also be sought. Space for biodiversity is often easy to provide, for example through the provision of wildflower verges, hedgerow boundaries, green walls and roofs, swift and swallow bricks, bat access tiles for roofs and tree planting. Sustainable drainage systems, when designed correctly, can also become havens for wildlife.
- 15.8.2 In terms of geodiversity, development can provide an opportunity to better understand geodiversity features, for example by providing public access and interpretation boards.
- 15.8.3 The Council has committed to producing a Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document, either alone or in combination with neighbouring planning authorities, to provide further guidance on how habitats and species can be protected and enhanced through development. This could provide further guidance on how to incorporate biodiversity in developments.
- 15.8.4 In the meantime, the Council will produce a Biodiversity Technical Paper to inform any future SPD. This document provides guidance for developers on the implementation of the following policies. It will also identify where an allocation falls within or adjacent to a designated site for nature.
- 15.8.5 Policy N1 sets out the approach that will be taken to development to ensure it conserves and enhances biodiversity and geodiversity.

Strategic Policy N1: Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity



The Council is committed to conserving Copeland's biodiversity and geodiversity including protected species and habitats.

Potential harmful impacts of any development upon biodiversity and geodiversity must be identified and considered at the earliest stage

Proposals must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Council, that the following mitigation hierarchy must have been undertaken:

Avoidance – Biodiversity and geodiversity must be considered when drafting up proposals and any potential harmful effects on biodiversity and geodiversity must be identified along with appropriate measures that will be taken to avoid these effects.

Mitigation – Where harmful effects cannot be avoided, they must be appropriately mitigated in order to overcome or reduce negative impacts.

Compensation – Where mitigation is not possible or viable or in cases where residual harm would remain following mitigation, harmful effects should be compensated for. Where this is in the form of compensatory habitat an area of equivalent or greater biodiversity value should be provided. Compensation is a last resort and will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

Where harm remains to a National Site Network, Ramsar site, or functionally linked land, or Site of Special Scientific Interest, development will only be approved where it can be demonstrated that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In such cases, compensatory measures must ensure the overall coherence of the network of European or National Sites as a whole is protected.

Planning permission will be refused for any development if significant harm cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan should be submitted where appropriate and sustainable construction methods must be used where possible.

Development proposals where the principal objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests will be supported in principle.

15.9 Local Nature Recovery Networks

- 15.9.1 Local Nature Recovery Networks are discussed in the Environment Act and are priority areas within the county identified within a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. They are strategic areas of habitat that extend beyond Local Authority boundaries. The area covered by a Local Nature Recovery Network has yet to be determined by the Government but it is anticipated that they will be of a county scale. Each network will have its own Strategy which will include a statement that identifies priority areas within the network for recovery and enhancement, and a local habitat map. The Statement will include the following:
- a description of the area and its biodiversity
 - a description of the opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity
 - biodiversity priorities for recovering or enhancing habitats and species (taking into account the contribution that recovering or enhancing biodiversity can also make to other environmental benefits e.g. reducing flood risk)
 - proposals as to potential measures relating to the above priorities
- 15.9.2 When identifying and designating Local Nature Recovery Networks, consideration should also be given to the additional benefits spaces can offer such as reducing flood risk and the positive impacts such spaces can have on health and wellbeing.

- 15.9.3 The Council will work with neighbouring authorities to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The Strategy will identify a Local Nature Recovery Network for Cumbria. This will build upon the positive work carried out by Cumbrian authorities during the LNRS pilot scheme⁹⁴.
- 15.9.4 The Pilot LNRS has been informed by Natural England's National Habitat Network Maps⁹⁵. These identify Existing Habitats and Network Expansion and Enhancement Zones. The LNRS Map should be considered by developers at the earliest stage when determining the best location for off-site biodiversity net gain (see Policy N3). Focus should be on those areas identified for habitat management, enhancement, restoration, and creation.

Strategic Policy N2: Local Nature Recovery Networks



The Council will support the identification, implementation, protection and enhancement of Local Nature Recovery Networks that provide important linkages for wildlife within Copeland and beyond.

Development which protects or enhances Local Nature Recovery Networks will be supported in principle.

15.10 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 15.10.1 Biodiversity net gain ensures developments deliver more and/or better quality biodiversity than exists at present. Developers must assess what the site currently offers in terms of biodiversity, show how any existing nature features will be retained/improved and what new nature features will be provided.
- 15.10.2 In 2018 the Government consulted on proposals to introduce a mandatory biodiversity net gain policy. Following consultation the government announced that it would mandate net gains for biodiversity in the draft Environment Bill, which has since become the Environment Act after receiving Royal Assent in 2021. Under the Act developers are required to demonstrate how they will achieve a minimum net gain of 10% biodiversity using the Defra Biodiversity Metric model. Defra's 4.0 metric system calculates net gain by assigning a numerical value to each habitat, expressed as "biodiversity units". Emphasis will be on the habitat's distinctiveness (is it of low, medium or high wildlife value), condition (is it a good example of its type) and extent (size).

⁹⁴ <https://cumbrialnrs.org.uk/cumbria-pilot>

⁹⁵ https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/Habitat%20Network%20Mapping%20Guidance.pdf

- 15.10.3 The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) in partnership with CIRIA and IEMA, have produced a useful document, *Biodiversity Net Gain – Good Practice Principles for Development*, to help guide developers looking to provide net gains.
- 15.10.4 Any enhancements required will be set out in a planning obligation and must be maintained for at least 30 years as set out in the Environment Act. All net gains will be recorded on a public biodiversity gain site register which will include details of the work required and who is responsible for carrying it out.
- 15.10.5 Policy N3 proposes a hierarchical approach to providing net gain as set out below, this is to ensure those communities which host the development receive and benefit from the net gain in biodiversity where possible:
1. On site provision;
 2. Off site provision (in an area identified as a Local Nature Recovery Network)
 3. Off-site provision (e.g. through a local habitat creation project); or
 4. Developer may purchase biodiversity units/credits where options 1 and 2 are not available. Investment will be directed to nationally strategic habitats where there are no local habitat creation projects available.
- 15.10.6 As stated above, the Council will work with neighbouring authorities to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The Strategy will identify a Local Nature Recovery Network for Cumbria. This will build upon the positive work carried out by Cumbrian authorities during the LNRS pilot scheme. In the absence of a final, approved Strategy, developers should give consideration to the Pilot LNRS and the Cumbria Habitat Basemap⁹⁶ and Habitat Network Maps, developed as part of the Pilot project.
- 15.10.7 The Council strongly encourages developers seek opportunities to exceed the minimum 10% requirement to help increase levels of biodiversity in Copeland and reverse the trend of biodiversity loss across the UK⁹⁷.

Biodiversity Credits

- 15.10.8 Further details regarding option 4 will be provided once government guidance and legislation has been published to support the Environment Act. The Government previously stated in their Environment Bill consultation document that *“Projects for investment will be selected on the basis of their additionality, their long-term environmental benefits and their contribution to strategic ecological networks. Investment will be made transparently and a public record of government habitat creation projects maintained for transparency and audit purposes.”*

⁹⁶ The basemap and network maps, produced by the Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre and Cumbria Local Nature Partnership, will form the ecological framework of the Cumbria Nature Recovery Network. The Nature Recovery Strategy will provide the strategy underpinning the NRN

⁹⁷ Analysis from the Natural History Museum reveals that the UK is one of the most biodiversity depleted countries in the world with only 53% of its biodiversity remaining. <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/our-science/data/biodiversity-indicators.html>

Exceptions

- 15.10.9 The Environment Act states that a condition must be added to every planning permission requiring a biodiversity gain plan to be submitted and agreed by the Council. The plan should set out how the 10% net gain will be achieved. There are a small number of developments where this is not required as listed in Paragraph 17 of The Act.

Calculating Net Gain

- 15.10.10 In order to ensure consistency, and to aid monitoring, when calculating biodiversity net gain, applicants must use the Government's Biodiversity Metric taking into consideration the habitat's distinctiveness, condition and extent. Full details must be submitted to the Council when an application is submitted or earlier.
- 15.10.11 A simplified Small Sites net gain metric is available. This can be used on the following sites:
- residential developments where the number of dwellings to be provided is between one and nine inclusive on a site having an area of less than one hectare;
 - residential developments where the number of dwellings to be provided is not know the site area is less than 0.5 hectares;
 - for all other development types where the site area is less than 0.5 hectares or less than 5,000sqm.

In order to use the small sites metric net gain must be provided on site and there must be no priority habitats present within the development area (excluding hedgerows and arable margins).

- 15.10.12 It is acknowledged that there is potential for intentional damage of application sites in order to lower their biodiversity value and make it easier to achieve a net gain. The Environment Act sets the baseline as the time of application, but if this baseline has been intentionally lowered, the baseline date is to be 30th January 2020 in order to prevent intentional damage to sites to lower their biodiversity value. The following policy takes this even further and states that previous ecological records will also be taken into account when considering biodiversity value.
- 15.10.13 The Council strongly encourages developers to try and deliver net gain over and above the 10% minimum requirement where possible and believes that this can lead to better, more attractive and resilient developments.
- 15.10.14 The following policies does not apply to 'Irreplaceable habitats' that will be protected from development. These include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework Glossary and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017).

Strategic Policy N3: Biodiversity Net Gain



All development, with the exception of that listed in the Environment Act 2021 and any documents which may supersede it must provide at least 10% biodiversity net gain over and above existing site levels, following the application of the mitigation hierarchy set out in Policy N1 above. This is in addition to any compensatory habitat provided under Policy N1.

Net gain should be delivered on site where possible. Where on-site provision cannot be achieved in full, the remaining provision must be made elsewhere. This should be provided in order of the following preference:

1. Off site in an area identified as a Local Nature Recovery Network in the Plan area;
2. Off site on an alternative suitable site within Cumberland ;
3. Off-site on an alternative suitable site;
4. Through the purchase of off-site biodiversity units on the market;
5. Through the purchase of an appropriate amount of national biodiversity credits.

Sites where net gain is provided (on or off site) must be managed and monitored by the landowner for a minimum period of 30 years. Where appropriate applicants should supply a Habitat Creation Plan and a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP). Monitoring reports detailing the site's condition post-enhancement must be submitted to the Council each year over this period.

Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect or damage to any of the habitats on development sites in order to reduce its biodiversity value the biodiversity pre-development value of the onsite habitat will be calculated as the biodiversity value of the habitat on the date immediately before the degradation took place.

15.11 Marine Conservation

- 15.11.1 A 27km section of coastline, from the Ravenglass Estuary to south Whitehaven was designated as an inshore Marine Conservation Zone in 2013 and updated in May 2019. The extent of the MCZ can be seen in Figure 9. It includes the Drigg Coast SSSI/SAC and St Bees Head SSSI⁹⁸.
- 15.11.2 Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) are areas that protect a range of nationally important, rare or threatened habitats and species. Where the functions of a public authority (including the Council) have the potential to impact on an MCZ the authority has an obligation to carry out its functions "*in a manner that best*

⁹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/marine-conservation-zone-2013-designation-cumbria-coast>

further the conservation objectives of the MCZ).” Where this is not possible, the authority *“is required to proceed in the manner that least hinders the achievement of the MCZs conservation objectives⁹⁹”*.

- 15.11.3 The Local Plan is supported by a Marine Conservation Zone Assessment¹⁰⁰ that considers the impacts of the Local Plan allocations and policies in the MCZ.
- 15.11.4 The Council will consult Natural England at planning application stage where a specific proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the objectives of the MCZ.

Figure 9: Marine Conservation Zone



Source: C/O <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx> Ordnance Survey 100022861

The Marine Plan

- 15.11.5 The North West Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan¹⁰¹ was published in 2021. The Plan covers the north-west inshore area, which extends from Solway Firth border to the River Dee border with Wales and North West offshore area which comprises 2,200 square kilometres of sea.

⁹⁹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/259972/pb14078-mcz-explanatory-note.pdf

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/attachments/marine-conservation-zone-assessment>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-north-west-marine-plans-documents>

15.11.6 The Marine Plan covers:

- the area from mean high water spring tide to 12nm (the inshore North-West marine plan area extends to 12nm and the offshore marine plan area to the maritime borders with Scotland, Wales, and the Isle of Man)
- any area submerged at mean high water spring tide
- the waters of any estuary, river or channel, so far as the tide flows at mean high water spring tide
- waters in any area which is closed (permanently or intermittently) by a lock or other artificial means against the regular action of the tide, but into and from which seawater is caused or permitted to flow (continuously or occasionally)

15.11.7 The Marine Plan identifies areas where particular activities could best take place and contains a number of policies that set out requirements that will be placed on developments within the above areas. Those policies considered to be most relevant to development in the Copeland area relate to water quality, infrastructure, renewables, employment, climate change resilience and adaptation landscape and seascape, marine protected areas (including geodiversity), biodiversity, heritage assets, tourism, and recreation.

15.11.8 The following policy highlights the strategic planning objectives of the North West Marine Plan.

15.11.9 The North West Marine Plan is a material consideration when determining relevant planning applications. It should also be noted that applicants may also require an appropriate licence from the Marine Management Organisation.

Strategic Policy N4: Marine Planning



Where development has potential to harm (directly or indirectly) the marine environment, full consideration will be given to objectives of the Marine Conservation Zone.

Proposals should contribute positively to the following marine planning objectives:

- 1) Achieving a sustainable marine economy;
- 2) Ensuring a strong, healthy, and just, society;
- 3) Living within environmental limits.

15.12 Water Resources

15.12.1 A high quality water environment supports wildlife, provides quality of life benefits, and can support local economies, boosting land and property values,

agriculture, tourism and recreation¹⁰². Where it is not properly planned for, new development can increase pressure on the water environment. Planned development can provide opportunities to protect and enhance the water quality. Pressures on the water environment arise from point sources such as discharges from wastewater treatment, and from diffuse sources such as urban and rural water run-off. Development should ensure there is adequate waste water treatment infrastructure to ensure no deterioration in water quality.

- 15.12.2 The current River Basin Management Plan (the North West River Basin Management Plan) requires the restoration and enhancement of water bodies to prevent deterioration and promote recovery of water bodies. Any development should safeguard these important water resources and protect and improve water quality with an overall aim of getting water bodies to 'good' status as defined by the Water Framework Directive.

Coastal Waters

- 15.12.3 Copeland has four designated Bathing Water beaches at Haverigg, Silecroft, Seascale and St Bees and all comply with the standards outlined in the Bathing Water Directive.
- 15.12.4 Silecroft and St Bees are both classed as excellent water quality, Seascale is Good and Haverigg is Sufficient. Further investment to improve water quality in the Duddon catchment is required to protect Haverigg from the risk of failing future assessment.
- 15.12.5 Copeland has two designated Shellfish Waters on the Duddon estuary and at Ravenglass, and microbial water quality has improved to enable them to achieve the Water Framework Directive requirement for Shellfish Water Protected Areas.

Onshore Water Bodies

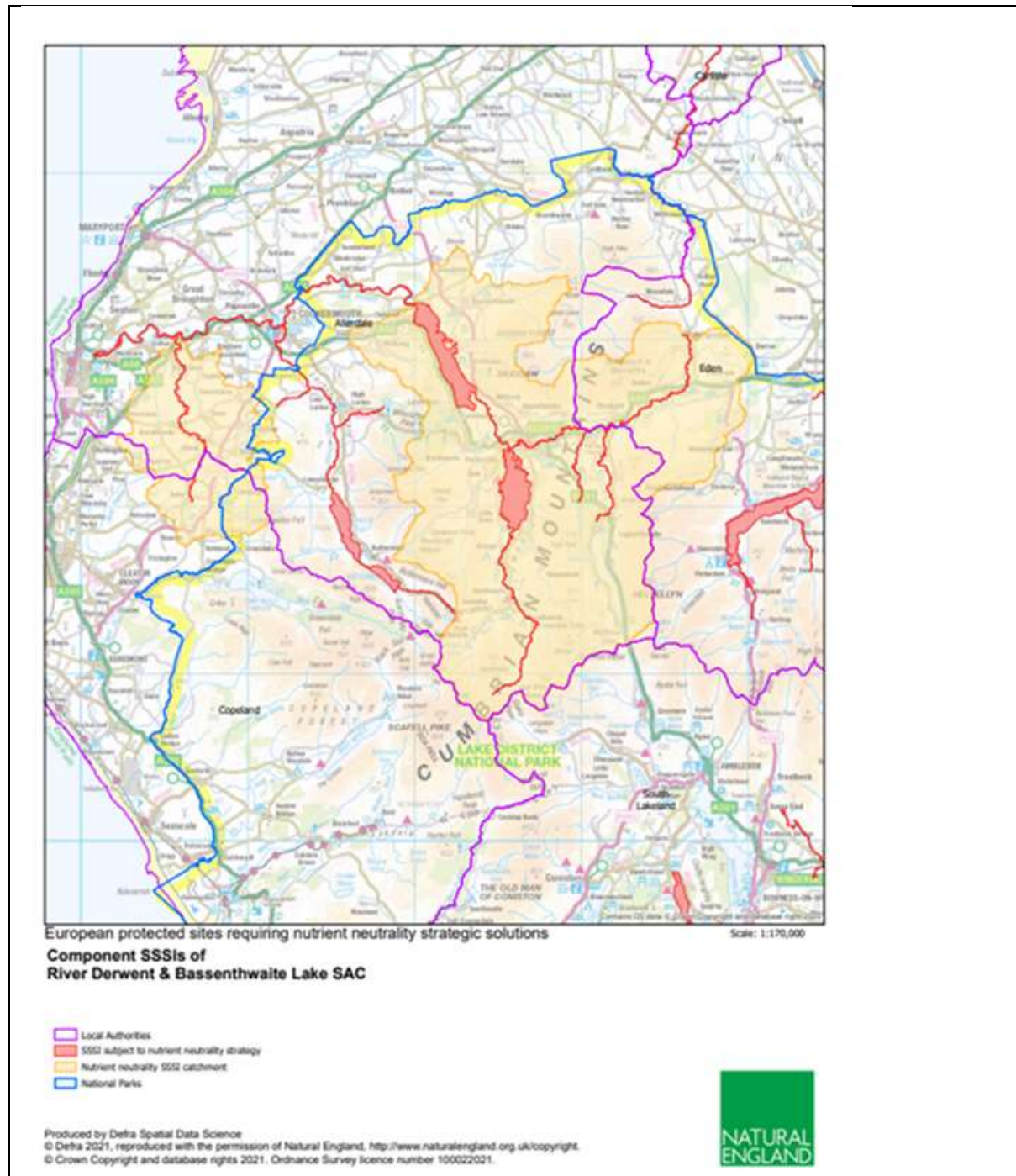
- 15.12.6 There are 30 river waterbodies designated under the Water Framework Directive in the area covered by the Plan. The 2019 classification results showed that, of these 13 are currently achieving 'Good'; 13 are achieving 'Moderate' and four are classified as 'Poor' ecological status/potential.

Nutrient Neutrality

- 15.12.7 Nutrient pollution is harming our water environment, particularly in many of the country's freshwater habitats and estuaries. Pollution comes from a number of sources including waste water from development and certain agricultural practices. It has an adverse effect on biodiversity by increasing the growth of invasive plants which disrupts the natural cycle by reducing the amount of oxygen in the water and therefore water quality.
- 15.12.8 The Derwent and Bassenthwaite Lake SAC is a protected Habitat Site under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations) which supports a number of habitats and species. Part of the SAC catchment area is located within the north of Copeland and covers around 3.6% of the Copeland

¹⁰² Game Angling is popular in Copeland with associations at Cleator Moor (Wath Brow), Egremont, and Millom.

Local Plan area. The Conservation Objectives for the SAC states there is a need to 'restore stable nutrient levels appropriate for lake type' and that 'the natural nutrient regime of the river should be protected, with any anthropogenic enrichment above natural/background concentrations should be limited to levels at which adverse effects on characteristic biodiversity are unlikely'. Nitrogen and phosphorus levels are a particular problem within the catchment area.



- 15.12.9 Guidance was produced by the Government in March 2022 relating to nutrient neutrality. The guidance requires that local planning authorities carefully consider the nutrient impacts of any new plans or projects on Habitat Sites through the

Habitats Regulations process. Where adverse impacts on the integrity of a Habitats Site are identified then mitigation must be considered. Nutrient neutrality is the term used for the desired outcome either prior to or following for such mitigation.

- 15.12.10 Before granting any new planning permissions, the Council¹⁰³ will need to be confident that the development in question does not require nutrient neutrality to be acceptable under the regulations or that nutrient neutrality is secured, as part of the proposal.
- 15.12.11 Developers will therefore be required to submit a Habitats Regulations Assessment which assesses the impact of nutrient pollution caused by particular developments¹⁰⁴ that would potentially generate additional nutrient inputs within the catchment area of the Derwent and Bassenthwaite Lake SAC. The HRA Screening stage will need to identify whether the development will have adverse effects upon the integrity of the Habitat Site through the use of a nutrient budget calculator. If adverse effects are identified an Appropriate Assessment will be required to identify the most appropriate solutions to ensure there are no residual effects following mitigation. This would also apply if additional catchments are identified as being affected by nutrient neutrality in the future.
- 15.12.12 As the issue of nutrient neutrality is new to the Copeland area, at present there are no strategic mitigation solutions in place or readily available and in order to demonstrate nutrient neutrality a number of different solutions may be appropriate. This could include nature-based solutions such as new wetlands, woodlands or riparian buffer strips. Appropriate mitigation needs to be upstream of where the nutrients are discharged and also within the nutrient neutrality catchment. In many cases a combination of both hard and nature-based solutions will be required and these will usually be secured through a Section 106 or unilateral agreement with the developer. We appreciate that it may take time for applicants to secure mitigation, particularly where additional land outside the application site needs to be sourced. Mitigation will however need to be secured and delivered before housing and overnight accommodation can be occupied.
- 15.12.13 The Council has updated its validation list to help developers navigate the process by setting out what information will be required to support a planning application. We will also work with partners and developers to identify the most appropriate solutions.
- 15.12.14 DEFRA have published a policy paper on the subject which can be found here: [Nutrient pollution: reducing the impact on protected sites - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/nutrient-pollution-reducing-the-impact-on-protected-sites)
- 15.12.15 Policy N5 relates to “affected developments”. At present, this means all development that creates overnight accommodation within the catchment area. The Government have stated that nutrient neutrality is only an interim solution and further developments such as industrial developments may also be required

¹⁰³ Taking into consideration advice from Natural England

¹⁰⁴ Those that create additional overnight accommodation such as housing developments etc.

to follow the same procedure in the future. The Policy will therefore also relate to any such development that is referred to within the Government's nutrient neutrality policy.

- 15.12.16 The Environment Agency has defined Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) for groundwater sources, which are often used for public drinking water supply purposes. The prevention of pollution to drinking water supplies is critical. The SPZs signify where there may be a particular risk from activities on or below the land surface. Such activities include construction.
- 15.12.17 There is one Groundwater Source Protection Zone in the Copeland Local Plan area. Where possible, new development sites should be appropriately located away from locations which are identified as sensitive groundwater protection areas especially land within and adjacent to Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1 (SPZ1) which is closest to the water abstraction point and the most sensitive.
- 15.12.18 Where development within a Groundwater Source Protection is unavoidable, development must accord with the latest national guidance on groundwater protection and developers will be expected to submit a risk assessment, masterplan to mitigate any risk to the public water supply and water environment and Construction Environmental Management Plan.
- 15.12.19 The policy also aims to protect watercourses from further decline. Any new discharge into a watercourse (or work with it) may require consent from Cumberland Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority or the Environment Agency depending on whether it is a main river or not.

Policy N5: Protection of Water Resources



New development must seek to protect or improve the quality of surface and groundwater water resources, including designated coastal Bathing Waters and Shellfish Waters downstream. Proposals should follow the hierarchy for wastewater treatment with foul drainage connected to mains sewer wherever possible. New development should not be operational or occupied until such time as adequate waste water infrastructure has been provided.

Where an affected development within the catchment of the Derwent and Bassenthwaite Lake SAC (or any other catchment identified by the Government as being affected by nutrient neutrality in the future) this must not result in adverse impacts on the integrity of the SAC through the creation of nutrient pollution, unless suitable solutions are identified through an Appropriate Assessment to ensure no residual harm remains following mitigation. Mitigation will need to be deliverable, certain and provided in perpetuity.

The possibility of contamination from former uses on any application site and its effects on the water environment and human health needs to be considered and remediated where it is present.

Proposals will be required to support the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, including the objectives for Protected Areas (such as Bathing Waters and Shellfish Waters) as set out in the North West River Basin Management Plan.

New development should ensure there is sufficient water resource available to meet current and future needs, without putting the environment at risk. Wherever possible development should include water efficiency and saving measures.

15.13 Landscape

Landscape Character

- 15.13.1 Copeland contains a diverse range of landscapes, including a large area covered by the Lake District National Park. The Sandford Principle states that “*Where irreconcilable conflicts exist between conservation and public enjoyment in National Parks then conservation interest should take priority.*” The Council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance the setting of the Lake District National Park, it is therefore important that full consideration is given to the impact of development in the Local Plan area on the setting of the National Park.
- 15.13.2 Landscape character is defined as the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape. The Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment (CLCA) Guidance and Toolkit, published in 2011, identifies 13 different broad landscape character types in Copeland, and each has up to four sub-types within it (totalling 20 sub-types). These range from the foothills which fringe the Lakeland fells, to the central lowland which occupies a significant proportion of Copeland outside the National Park, and the coastal margins, which provide an edge along the Irish Sea and Duddon Estuary.
- 15.13.3 The CLCA describes the different character of each landscape type and provides guidance regarding how to retain their distinctiveness.
- 15.13.4 A review of the landscape character types identified within Copeland in the CLCA has been carried out and the findings are included in the Copeland Landscape Character Assessment (Areas outside Settlements) 2021. Of the 20 sub-areas assessed, 12 have been identified as having no or limited change since 2011 and eight have changed and their sensitivity to development has been reassessed.
- 15.13.5 The Council have also published a Settlement Landscape Character Assessment (SLCA) which reviews the assessments in the CLCA to ensure it remains up to date in and around existing settlements. As part of the review process the SLCA also

considered whether there were any sub-areas within the wider landscape areas defined in the county document and a number of additional sub-areas were identified.

- 15.13.6 The SLCA assessed the sensitivity of each sub-area and the capacity of each to accommodate change. It also:
- identifies prominent hillsides and areas of strategic green infrastructure
 - proposes areas of green wedges between settlements to prevent them from merging and to help retain their character
 - identifies where development may provide an opportunity to enhance landscapes, for example by better defining a settlement edge or reinforcing positive landscape characteristics.
- 15.13.7 Developers will be expected to consider the Copeland LCA and SLCA, and where appropriate¹⁰⁵ the Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines document 2018¹⁰⁶ and the Southern Lakeland Peninsulas Landscape Evaluation document¹⁰⁷, when identifying sites for development and developing proposals, giving full consideration to the landscape characteristics and sensitivities. Development on prominent hillsides and within strategic green infrastructure and green wedges should be avoided where possible.
- 15.13.8 Where necessary, development proposals will be required to include landscaping schemes that retain any existing landscape features, reinforce local landscape character and mitigate against any adverse visual impact. Development specific landscape schemes are discussed in the Development Standards chapter.

Strategic Policy N6: Landscape Protection



Copeland's landscapes will be protected and enhanced by:

- a) Supporting proposals which enhance the value of Copeland's landscapes;
- b) Protecting all landscapes from inappropriate change by ensuring that development conserves and enhances the distinctive characteristics of that particular area in a manner commensurate with their statutory status and value;
- c) Ensuring development proposals demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will conserve and where possible enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park and Heritage

¹⁰⁵ For example, due to the scale of landscape types some may extend beyond the LDNP boundary and into the Copeland Local Plan area and/or may affect the setting of the Lake District National Park

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/caringfor/policies/lca>

¹⁰⁷ https://issuu.com/friendsofthelakedistrictpublic/docs/combined_reports_for_submission_v10_83d058a96aaea1?fr=xKA/E9_zU1NQ

Coast where proposals could impact on their setting and views into and from the National Park or Heritage Coast;

- d) Requiring a Landscape Appraisal, and where appropriate a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, to be submitted where development has the potential to impact upon landscape character or a protected landscape. Where harm is identified the development will only be permitted where the benefits of the development outweigh any potential harm and mitigation and compensation measures must be provided.

Proposals will be assessed according to whether the proposed structures and associated landscaping relates well in terms of visual impact, scale, character, amenity value and local distinctiveness and the cumulative impact of developments will be taken into account as part of this assessment.

Development proposals must be informed by the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, Settlement Landscape Character Assessment the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit and where appropriate, the Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment¹⁰⁸ from the earliest stage.

Heritage Coast

15.13.9 The most prominent feature of the undeveloped coast, St Bees Head, is a large outcrop of sandstone which provides building materials in the locality. A 6km stretch of St Bees Head is a nationally defined Heritage Coast, the only one of its kind in the North West England.

15.13.10 The purpose of the Heritage Coast definition is to:

- *"conserve, protect and enhance:*
 - *the natural beauty of the coastline*
 - *their terrestrial, coastal and marine flora and fauna*
 - *their heritage features*
- *encourage and help the public to enjoy, understand and appreciate these areas*
- *maintain and improve the health of inshore waters affecting heritage coasts and their beaches through appropriate environmental management measures*
- *take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry and fishing and the economic and social needs of the small communities on these coast"*¹⁰⁹

15.13.11 St Bees Head provides important bird habitat and hosts a SSSI/RSPB Reserve along the sandstone cliffs. Managing the undeveloped coast for biodiversity remains a Council priority and the opportunity should be taken to produce a

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/caringfor/policies/lca>

¹⁰⁹ Natural England

Management Plan for the area that protects and enhances the Heritage Coast, whilst encouraging residents and visitors to use it for recreation.

- 15.13.12 The NPPF paragraph 178 states that major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate unless it is compatible with its special character. New development outside the Heritage Coast also has the potential to harm its special character, for example by adversely affecting its landscape character, reducing public access or by affecting how people experience the coast or by harming the setting of heritage features along the coast. Such development will be inappropriate and will be not supported. Please note that parts of the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast also has additional designations (e.g. SSSI) under different legislation which should be given consideration.

Strategic Policy N7: St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast



New development within the vicinity of the Heritage Coast must conserve, protect and enhance the Heritage Coast and its setting and take opportunities to encourage the public to enjoy and understand the area by improving public access and interpretation where possible. Developers should demonstrate that they have taken into consideration the features that contribute to the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation.

Inappropriate development includes major development within the Heritage Coast and development that affects its scenic qualities views within or towards/from it.

15.14 The Undeveloped Coast

- 15.14.1 Copeland's undeveloped coast is one of its best assets and is shown on the Proposals Map. It includes a number of Cumbria's best bathing beaches, a significant number of nature conservation and wildlife sites, and high quality landscapes.
- 15.14.2 The SLCA and LCA acknowledges that the undeveloped coast, which includes the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast, is sensitive to change in landscape terms. Given the above, development along the undeveloped coast will be resisted, with the exception of a limited number of particular types. These are listed within Policy N8 below.
- 15.14.3 In exceptional cases, energy developments, particularly those that help the country meet identified targets relating to climate change, will be permitted. In

such cases evidence must be submitted to demonstrate, to the Council's satisfaction, why such a location is required.

Strategic Policy N8: The Undeveloped Coast



The Council will ensure that the landscape character of the undeveloped coast is maintained by conserving the intrinsic qualities, natural beauty and open character of the undeveloped coast from inappropriate development. Inappropriate development includes that which affects views within or towards/from the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast.

The following types of development will however be supported:

- Development which supports the management of the undeveloped coast for biodiversity;
- Development which provides or improves safe access to and interpretation of the undeveloped coast for residents and visitors such as appropriate fencing, signage and interpretation boards;
- Energy generating developments that that require a coastal location along the undeveloped coast, provided that the potential impacts on biodiversity, landscape and heritage assets are carefully assessed against the benefits. Where negative impacts are likely these must be mitigated against and compensated for.

15.15 Green Infrastructure (GI)

- 15.15.1 The NPPF, paragraph 175, states that plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure.
- 15.15.2 Green infrastructure can play an important role in reducing the effects of climate change, providing space for recreation and leisure, providing important habitats and having positive impacts upon people's health and wellbeing.
- 15.15.3 Developers should give early consideration to how new areas of green infrastructure can be incorporated into developments and how existing areas of green infrastructure could be better connected, and green links to the open countryside improved. Developers may be required to support green infrastructure through contributions relevant to their proposal as set out in the Development Standards chapter.

15.15.4 The Council's evidence base documents have identified a number of types of green infrastructure within Copeland as listed below (please note there are also other forms of GI and this list is not exhaustive):

- **Prominent Hillsides:** Open, undeveloped hillsides and open skylines that contribute to the landscape character of Copeland's towns and villages.
- **Strategic Green Infrastructure:** Strong network of GI sites that provide a recreational and wildlife resource as well as being important in providing structure to the landscape setting of the area's towns and villages.
- **Green Wedges:** Areas that help define and strengthen a sense of place in individual settlements and provide separation between settlements and a clear distinction between town and country
- **Local Green Spaces:** Smaller local green spaces of high quality and value that meet the NPPF definition of Local Green Space.
- **Protected Open Spaces:** Green spaces that the Open Space Assessment identifies as being of high quality and value but do not meet the NPPF definition of Local Green Space
- **Playing Fields:** Playing fields that have been identified within the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy and are protected under Policy SC3.
- **Open Countryside:** Rural areas outside defined settlement boundaries
- **Smaller open spaces and private gardens:** Private gardens and smaller open spaces such as grass verges can contribute to the character of an area, have positive impacts upon health and wellbeing, provide space for biodiversity and can help mitigate flooding.

Green Infrastructure

A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

15.15.5 A Green Infrastructure Strategy will shortly be commissioned to pull each of these elements of GI together and provide an overall strategy for their protection and enhancement. Consideration will be given to the relationships between the GI network and Local Nature Recovery Network. The Council will work proactively with partners and the community to maintain and increase the amount of GI provision across Copeland over the Plan period, including within a productive landscape where possible, and development that enhances areas of Green Infrastructure will be supported in principle.

Strategic Policy N9 – Green Infrastructure



A comprehensive, high quality network of green infrastructure will be identified through a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Copeland Local Plan Area. This network will connect our towns and villages to the more rural parts of Copeland and the coastline and will be formed of a variety of GI types including open countryside, green wedges, protected open spaces, local green spaces, playing fields, rivers, ponds, grass verges, woodlands and trees, private gardens, green walls and green roofs.

The amount of green infrastructure on the development site should be maximised and developers should take opportunities to create new connections, expand networks and enhance existing green infrastructure to support the movement of plants and animals. Green infrastructure should be multi-functional where possible and should be considered at the start of the design process.

Green Wedges

- 15.15.6 The SLCA states that *“Much of Copeland is characterised by small, nucleated or linear settlements separated from each other by open countryside. These green wedges perform a number of important functions. They help to define and strengthen a sense of place in individual settlements, providing a clear distinction between town and country. They form a connection between areas of different landscape character, in particular connecting inland hills to the sea.”*
- 15.15.7 The SLCA identifies seven key green wedges across Copeland which are shown on the Proposals Map. Development within a green wedge will be supported only in exceptional circumstances (for example single dwellings), where separation between settlements and the open character of the Wedge is maintained and the characteristics of the Wedge identified in the SLCA are conserved or enhanced. When considering the impact upon the open character of a green wedge, the impact upon views across the green wedge will be considered.

Strategic Policy N10: Green Wedges



The Local Plan Proposals Map identifies Green Wedges within the Plan area.

Development will only be permitted within a Green Wedge in the following circumstances, unless the economic, environmental or social benefits of the proposal significantly and demonstrably outweigh any harm:

- where the open character of the Green Wedge and separation between settlements is maintained; and
- where its functionality and the special characteristics and quality of the landscape are conserved and enhanced.

Open Spaces

- 15.15.8 There are a range of smaller open spaces within Copeland which are important for recreation, health and wellbeing and/or biodiversity. The Local Plan is supported by an Open Space Assessment (OSA) and Open Space Assessment 2021 Addendum that identifies what open space provision exists in the area based on the following typologies.
- 15.15.9 The 2021 Addendum was produced to give consideration to open spaces in Kirksanton as these were not included in the original assessment. This is because at the time of the original assessment, Kirksanton was not being considered as a settlement within the hierarchy. The update identifies that an additional Local Green Space should be included at Kirksanton Village Green.
- 15.15.10 The provision of playing fields and pitches is discussed in the Copeland's Health, Sport and Culture chapter and is considered in the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy, which forms part of the wider Sports and Physical Activity Strategy.

Table 16: Open Space Assessment Typologies

Typology	Primary purpose
Parks and gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.
Natural and semi-natural greenspaces	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.
Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, MUGAs, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.
Allotments	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

Typology	Primary purpose
Cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds	Burial of the dead and quiet contemplation, often linked to wildlife and biodiversity promotion.
Civic space	Provides a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events

- 15.15.11 The OSA assesses the quality and value of open spaces in Copeland, and identifies whether there is a surplus or shortage of open space on a settlement basis, compared to the Copeland average.
- 15.15.12 The OSA identifies where there are shortages identified in the overall provision of open space or in particular typologies by settlement. This will be taken into account when determining whether developer contributions will be required to address any areas of under-provision as set out in the Development Strategy and Development Standards chapters.
- 15.15.13 Major development would be expected to contribute to open spaces in accordance with the policy measures outlined below. If smaller sites cannot provide open spaces on-site, the Council will pursue financial contributions unless it would be unviable to do so.

Strategic Policy N11: Provision of Open Space in New Development



Major developments will be expected to incorporate public open spaces where the development will generate additional needs.

The following levels of open space should be provided on site where possible. Where the development would result in smaller population increases a pro rata amount of open space provided should be apportioned appropriately.

Parks and gardens	Minimum of 0.2 hectares per 1000 population
Amenity Greenspace	Minimum of 1.58 hectares per 1000 population
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	Minimum of 3.09 hectares per 1000 population
Provision for children and young people	Minimum of 0.10 hectares per 1000 population
Allotments	Minimum of 0.36 hectares per 1000 population

Where the Council's Open Space Assessment highlights that there are deficiencies in any of the above typologies in terms of quality or quantity within the specific settlement, the requirements above will be adjusted accordingly.

Developers will be required to provide a financial contribution in lieu of on site open space in the following circumstances:

- Where the Council agrees that open space cannot be provided on site (e.g. because of viability issues or the site is too small to provide a meaningful contribution).
- Where there is no requirement to provide additional open space (e.g. because there will continue to be a surplus of a particular typology in the settlement).

Where there remains a surplus, such contributions may be used to improve existing open spaces within the same settlement with focus on protected but poor quality open spaces identified in the Open Space Assessment.

Any new open space should form an integral part of the development and should be accessible. A management plan will be required by planning condition to demonstrate how the open space will be managed and maintained.

Protected Open Spaces

- 15.15.14 Large strategic scale open spaces, that serve an area greater than a specific settlement e.g. areas of coastline are not taken into account when determining settlement provision as they serve a wider area.
- 15.15.15 Based on the quality and value assessments, the OSA recommends that over 250 open spaces in Copeland's settlements are protected from development where possible; this is almost double the number that were protected within the Core Strategy. The proposed protected spaces are identified on the Council's Proposals Map and on the settlement maps within Appendix B.
- 15.15.16 Policy N12 does not just protect those spaces recommended in the OSA, but also those which may come forward in the future, for example, as part of a new development, where there is evidence that they are of value to the community. Evidence of community value may include evidence of community usage.
- 15.15.17 The Open Space Assessment identifies a number of protected open spaces that are of low quality at present. Where new open spaces cannot be provided as part of new developments, developer contributions could be spent improving these poor quality spaces where there is a shortage in that particular typology within the settlement. The Council will carry out an assessment of low quality protected open spaces identified in the OSA to ascertain whether there is the potential for improvements, taking into account their availability.

Strategic Policy N12: Protected Open Spaces



The Local Plan Proposals Map identifies Protected Open Spaces which are of a high quality and/or value.

Development proposals that enhance Protected Open Spaces will be supported where they accord with the Development Plan.

The loss of such Protected Open Spaces will be resisted unless equivalent replacement provision of the same or better quality is provided within the same settlement.

Proposals to develop other open spaces, including play areas and allotments not identified on the Proposals Map, should also comply with this policy where there is evidence that they are of value to the community.

Local Green Spaces (LGS)

15.15.18 The NPPF allows Local Planning Authorities to apply tighter restrictions on certain areas of open space that are particularly important to local communities, by designating them as Local Green Spaces. Local Green Spaces should be given the same level of protection as Green Belts and are protected under the NPPF regardless of whether the Council can identify a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or not, whereas standard Protected Open Spaces are more vulnerable.

15.15.19 Paragraph 102 of the NPPF states the following:

“The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”*

15.15.20 The OSA 2020 proposes that 113 sites are designated as Local Green Spaces across Copeland, 42 of which are in Whitehaven. These sites are identified on the Proposals Map and in Appendix B. An addendum to the OSA was produced in 2021 that considers open spaces in Kirksanton as these were not included in the original assessment. This is because at the time of the original assessment, Kirksanton was not being considered as a settlement within the hierarchy. The update identifies that an additional Local Green Space should be included at Kirksanton Village Green.

- 15.15.21 The Council has produced a Local Green Spaces Evidence Paper provides further details regarding each proposed LGS to support their designation. This was updated in 2021 to include the village green in Kirksanton discussed above.
- 15.15.22 It should be noted that the 2021 Addendum, and earlier Assessment, recommended a Local Green Space in Distington. This comprises a former housing site that has now been cleared and is being taken forward through the Plan as a housing allocation. The LGS designation on this site recognises the importance of retaining a high level (at least 50%) of the site for open space.
- 15.15.23 A number of Local Green Spaces contain playing pitches. The policy below allows development within the LGS that enhances existing sporting uses, such as new lighting, subject to certain criteria. When considering proposals for development that may affect playing fields consideration should be given to Policies SC3 and SC4.

Strategic Policy N13: Local Green Spaces



The Local Plan Proposals Map identifies important Local Green Spaces. Development will only be permitted within a Local Green Space in the following circumstances, where the open character of the space and its community value is not compromised:

- Proposals which improve access to/from and within the LGS, or
- Proposals which provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation or the enhancement of existing sports use on the site, or
- Proposals which allow a wider range of uses to take place within the LGS, or
- Proposals which enhance landscapes and visual amenity, or
- Proposals which provide/enhance habitats.

Development on sites adjacent to Local Green Spaces should provide an attractive frontage, natural surveillance and strong pedestrian connections to the LGS.

15.16 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

- 15.16.1 Trees, woodland and hedgerows are an important resource, providing habitat and shade, improving the character of the built and natural environment and helping to reduce air and noise pollution and surface water run-off. They are also important features for health and wellbeing, with woodlands providing opportunities for outdoor exercise and social cohesion.

- 15.16.2 Woodland cover across Copeland is 10.4%, this is lower than the national average of 12%. Much of this cover is in the form of large dense green fern plots that are not publicly accessible.
- 15.16.3 Copeland contains a number of ancient woodlands and trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders as shown on the Proposals Map. The Council has ambitions to increase the amount of tree and woodland cover in Copeland and is exploring the opportunities available to create a strategic Copeland Forest, which could form part of a wider Cumbria Coastal Community Forest; Policy CO6 discusses the potential for a community forest further.
- 15.16.4 Whilst the planting of trees is not classed as development requiring planning permission, the Council will support proposals for the creation of new woodlands in principle where they are well connected to established woodlands, landscaped areas or open spaces, are accessible to the public, and comprise a mix of locally native species.
- 15.16.5 The Council also encourages developers to include tree planting as part of their proposals where possible in order to contribute to an increase in cover across Copeland. Hedgerows should be used as boundary treatments where appropriate as they can support an abundance of species and enable species movement unlike solid walls and fences.
- 15.16.6 The NPPF, states in paragraph 180 that *“development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.”* Policy N14 below supports this approach.

Policy N14: Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows



Existing trees and hedgerows which contribute positively to the visual amenity and environmental value of their location will be protected. Developers should incorporate additional native tree planting and hedgerows into new developments where possible and appropriate.

Development proposals which are likely to affect any trees within the Plan area will be required to:

- 1) Include an arboricultural assessment as to whether any of those trees are worthy of retention and protection by means of a Tree Preservation Order
- 2) Submit proposals to replace or relocate any trees that are to be removed with net provision at a minimum ratio of 2:1. Replacement trees should be planted on site and native species should be used where possible. Where this is inappropriate or unviable, off site provision and/or alternative species would be considered.

Any proposed works to trees within Conservation Areas, or those with Tree Protection Orders, will be required to include an arboricultural survey to justify why works are necessary and that the works proposed will, where possible, not adversely affect the amenity value of the area.

New development should not result in the loss of or damage to ancient woodland or veteran or aged trees outside woodland unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a compensation strategy exists. This could include Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and Orders under the Transport and Works Act.

Community Growing Spaces

- 15.16.7 Community growing spaces help foster residents' health and wellbeing, enable social interactions and mitigate against the effects of climate change. Their importance in this respect is recognised in Strategic Policy SC1 (health and wellbeing). They also provide a learning environment where people can learn more about the natural environment and pick up many transferable skills.
- 15.16.8 Policy N15 encourages the creation of community growing spaces such as community growing space at William Morris Avenue, Cleator Moor. The Local Plan also protects existing allotments through Policies N9 and N12 above.
- 15.16.9 Where the site is Council owned the Community Asset Transfer¹¹⁰ process will be followed to allow such spaces to be managed and maintained by Town or Parish Councils or community groups.

Policy N15 – Community Growing Spaces



The Council will support opportunities for the creation of community-led growing spaces (including allotments and urban orchards) on disused council owned sites where such spaces are to be managed and maintained by Town or Parish Councils or community groups where appropriate.

Growing spaces must not have a detrimental impact upon the street scene through inappropriate fencing or paraphernalia and adequate levels of parking should be available in close proximity to the site.

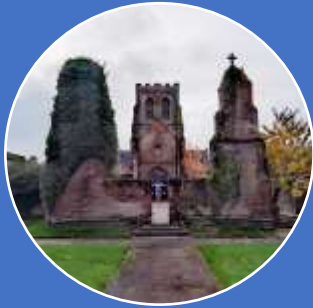
¹¹⁰ Further information regarding the process can be found here: <https://mycommunity.org.uk/files/downloads/Download-Understanding-Community-Asset-Transfer.pdf>

16 Built and Historic Environment



Policies BE1-BE6

16.1 Built and Historic Environment Headlines



Strengths

Two World Heritage Sites, parts of the Lake District National Park and Hadrian's Wall

Wealth of Heritage Assets, including nine Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Whitehaven's attractive, historic mainly Georgian town centre, the first post-Renaissance planned town

Attractive 400 berth marina within walking distance of Whitehaven Town Centre

Historic market towns of Egremont, with its castle dating back to 1192 and Cleator Moor and Millom with their strong mining heritage



Challenges

Four Scheduled Ancient Monuments are on the Heritage at Risk Register

Need to bring empty historic properties back into use to prevent further decay



Opportunities

Opportunities to better reveal heritage assets and capitalise on heritage tourism opportunities

Opportunities for social engagement in developing communities built heritage or craft skills

Production of a Local List of Non-designated heritage assets

16.2 Copeland's Built and Historic Environment

- 16.2.1 Whitehaven was Britain's first post-Renaissance planned town, with its town centre set out in a grid iron pattern. The oldest streets in the planned town are King Street and Chapel Street, which were laid out in the 1640s. The Georgian architecture of the town centre and the maritime architecture of the quay contribute to this unique historic environment. There are also a number of historic wagonways, including one which runs along the coastline on the edge of the town and links to the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast.
- 16.2.2 Egremont was founded with its castle in 1192, and although by the 17th Century the castle had fallen into ruins, the town continued to use a room there as a courthouse until the 18th Century. Egremont is now an attractive market town.
- 16.2.3 Cleator Moor and Millom are former mining towns, with coal mining in Cleator Moor starting in 1788. Development in Millom supported the Hodbarrow iron mine, which was developed in the early 1860s and later became 'the most productive haematite mine in the British Isles'. Mining has now ceased in both towns but the landscape and built character of the towns still contains evidence of their mining history.
- 16.2.4 The built form of Copeland's rural villages is described within the Settlement Landscape Character Assessment. This varies from linear villages built along a main road to more rounded, nucleated villages with a central core. The rural areas also contain many historic farm buildings.
- 16.2.5 Copeland's towns and rural areas provide evidence of Roman and Viking activity and also contain remnants of our industrial heritage relating to the mining of coal and iron ore.

16.3 Heritage Assets

- 16.3.1 The NPPF, paragraph 189, defines heritage assets as ranging from "*sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value*". They are important reminders of our past, provide a sense of character and place and enhance civic pride.
- 16.3.2 Copeland contains a wealth of heritage assets, including the Lake District National Park and World Heritage Site (this lies outside the Plan area but the Plan adjoins it and contains its setting), elements of Hadrian's Wall *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* World Heritage Site, Whitehaven and St Bees Heritage Coast, 483 listed buildings, 120 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) and nine Conservation Areas. Heritage assets are identified on the Proposals Map, with WHSs, the Heritage Coast, Conservation Areas and SAMs also shown in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10: Copeland's Heritage Assets (Excluding Listed Buildings)



- 16.3.3 The NPPF, paragraph 190, states that “*Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment*”. Policy BE1 does this by listing the actions that the Council will take to conserve and enhance Copeland’s historic environment.

16.4 Impacts of Development on Heritage

- 16.4.1 The Council has produced a suite of Heritage Impact Assessments (HeIA) which identify potential harm to heritage assets caused by future development on allocated sites. A number of Conservation Area Appraisals have also been produced. The HeIA, Conservation Area Appraisals and all other heritage evidence documents are available at: <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/local-plan-2021-2038-examination-library>.
- 16.4.2 When assessing constraints on the proposed allocations consideration was also given to the Cumbria Historic Landscape Character Assessments¹¹¹ produced in 2009 and the associated GIS. These identify features of historic interest such as former areas of parliamentary enclosure and those areas featuring some of the county's most ancient farms. Council officers concluded that the proposed allocations were unlikely to cause harm to any such features.

Heritage Statements

- 16.4.3 A Heritage Statement should be submitted alongside any planning application for development that affects a heritage asset or its setting. This should include a clear description of the significance of the asset which is affected, including any contribution made by its setting.
- 16.4.4 The Statement should also include:
- an assessment of how the proposal will impact upon the significance of the asset;
 - full justification to demonstrate why the chosen option is the most appropriate; and
 - details of how any harm will be mitigated, and where appropriate, compensated for.
- 16.4.5 The level of detail included within the Statement should be proportionate to the asset's importance.

Strategic Policy BE1: Heritage Assets



Heritage assets and their setting will be preserved and enhanced by:

- Requiring a Heritage Impact Assessment or Heritage Statement where the proposal would affect a heritage asset

¹¹¹ <https://cumbria.gov.uk/planning-environment/countryside/historic-environment/histlandcharacter.asp>

- Maintaining up-to-date records of the character and significance of Conservation Areas through Conservation Area Appraisals and management plans
- Giving great weight to the conservation of Copeland's designated heritage assets when decision making
- Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to local character and history
- Promoting heritage-led regeneration initiatives in Copeland, particularly within the town centres
- Continuing to identify heritage assets that are "at risk" and work with partners to develop strategies for their protection
- Supporting proposals for the appropriate reuse of vacant historic buildings, recognising that putting buildings into viable uses consistent with their conservation can help sustain and enhance their significance
- Supporting proposals that increase the enhancement, promotion and interpretation of Copeland's architectural and archaeological resources
- Preserving and enhancing the Outstanding Universal Value of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Hadrian's Wall) and English Lake District World Heritage Site including their integrity and authenticity. Proposals that may have an impact on the World Heritage Sites or their setting should accord with the World Heritage Site Management Plan.
- Producing a local list of non-statutory but locally important heritage assets which are of architectural or historic interest or make a significant contribution to the character and/or appearance of the area.
- Strengthening the distinctive character of Copeland's settlements, through the application of high-quality design and architecture that respects this character and enhances the setting of heritage assets.

Particular attention will be paid to the conservation and enhancement of those elements which contribute most to Copeland's distinctive character and sense of place, several of which are listed in paragraphs 16.2.1 to 16.2.5.

16.5 Designated Heritage Assets

World Heritage Sites

- 16.5.1 Development that preserves and where possible enhances, or better reveals, the Outstanding Universal Value of Copeland's two World Heritage Sites (the English Lake District and the Frontiers of the Roman Empire Hadrian's Wall) will be supported in principle.
- 16.5.2 Proposals which are likely to have an effect upon World Heritage Sites should be determined in accordance with Policy BE2 (Designated Heritage Assets).

Listed Buildings

- 16.5.3 When determining applications relating to listed buildings or their setting, the Council has a duty under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and

Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it has. In this context, preservation does not mean keeping it unchanged, but rather keeping the historic interest unharmed.

- 16.5.4 The decision in the Barnwell vs East Northamptonshire DC 2014 case made it clear that in enacting this duty, Local Planning Authorities should give “*considerable importance and weight*” to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings’ when carrying out the planning balancing exercise.
- 16.5.5 Policy BE2 is relevant to proposals affecting listed buildings and their setting and takes into account the duty and guidance within chapter 16 of the NPPF.

Conservation Areas

- 16.5.6 When considering any planning application that affects a Conservation Area, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. Development must be sensitive to its surroundings, and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, with consideration given to the Conservation Area Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, adopted in 2017, and any relevant Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 16.5.7 When identifying harm, consideration should be given to the following factors at the earliest stage:
- the significance of views into and out of the Area and vistas and glimpses within the Area
 - the positioning, grouping and layout of buildings within the Area
 - the prevalent architectural styles and building materials within the Area
 - the size and scale of buildings and plots
 - the level and types of enclosure created by buildings and boundary treatments and the importance of open spaces between buildings
 - existing landscaping (both soft and hard) including trees, walls, surfacing etc.
- 16.5.8 Policy BE2 is relevant to proposals within or affecting the setting of Copeland’s Conservation Areas.
- 16.5.9 Policy BE2 also applies to proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments in accordance with Footnote 68 of the NPPF.

Policy BE2: Designated Heritage Assets



Development should preserve or enhance designated heritage assets (or an archaeological site of national importance) and their setting. The more important the

asset, the greater weight that will be given to its conservation. Proposals that better reveal the significance of heritage assets will be supported in principle.

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification. Development that will lead to substantial harm to, or total loss of significance to, a designated heritage asset, will only be accepted where there are substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or where all of the following apply:

- a) all reasonable uses of the site have been fully considered and all reasonable uses of the site are prevented by the nature of the heritage asset; and
- b) no viable use can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) all options for conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership have been explored and the applicant can demonstrate none are possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

Substantial harm to, or loss of:

- Grade II listed buildings, or Grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, Grade I and II* listed buildings, Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional

Where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Where loss of the whole or part of a designated asset is accepted, the developer will be required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred. The following may also be required:

- 1) The undertaking of an appropriate level of survey and making of a public record which may also include an archaeological excavation
- 2) The provision or replacement of comparable quality and design
- 3) The salvage and reuse of special features within the replacement development

Conservation Areas

Proposals that preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, especially those elements which have been identified in a Conservation Area Appraisal as making a positive contribution to its significance will be supported.

Demolition within a Conservation Area will only be permitted where the building does not make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Area.

16.6 Archaeology

- 16.6.1 Archaeological remains are important to help us understand the human past. Caution must be taken where there are potential archaeological remains on site to help ensure they are preserved in the best condition possible.
- 16.6.2 Cumberland Council holds a database containing over 27,000 records of known archaeological sites, finds, landscapes, buildings and other aspects of the historic environment across Cumbria. This is known as the Historic Environment Record¹¹².
- 16.6.3 In accordance with national planning guidance, where an initial assessment indicates that the site on which development is proposed includes or has potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, applicants are required to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- 16.6.4 The NPPF, Footnote 68, states that non-designated archaeological sites can be of equal significance to a Scheduled Monument and where this is the case such sites are subject to the same policies as for a designated heritage asset. In such cases the development must comply with the above Policy BE2 unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Not all sites of archaeological interest will be of national interest however, but this does not mean they are not valuable to our understanding of the past.

Policy BE3: Archaeology



Proposals affecting archaeological sites of less than national importance (or local significance) should preserve those elements which contribute to their significance in line with the importance of the remains. Where there are potential archaeological interests on the site, a desk-based assessment must be submitted alongside the planning application and where this identifies that archaeological interests are likely, a field evaluation will be required.

Development must protect, and should where possible, reveal and allow public interpretation of, any archaeological remains in situ. Where remains cannot be preserved or managed in situ the developer will be required to make suitable provision for excavation and recording before and during development. The findings should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and deposited with the Historic Environment Record.

¹¹² <https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation/historic-environment-service>

16.7 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 16.7.1 Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.
- 16.7.2 The effect of a development on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account at an early stage by the applicant and when determining the application. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's significance. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 16.7.3 Local Authorities and communities are able to produce Local Heritage Lists which identify non-designated heritage assets that *"have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated"*. Historic England have produced a guidance note, Local Heritage Listing Historic England Advice Note 7, for Local Authorities and communities creating local lists.
- 16.7.4 The Council is currently in the process of producing a Local List, alongside other Cumbrian Authorities. In the meantime, non-designated heritage assets will be identified through Conservation Area appraisals and the development management process e.g. following archaeological investigations.

Policy BE4: Non-Designated Heritage Assets



Development should preserve or enhance heritage assets and their setting. Proposals that better reveal the significance of heritage assets will be supported in principle.

Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets or their setting should demonstrate that consideration has been given to the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Where the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset outweighs the benefits of the proposal the development will be resisted.

Where loss of the whole or part of a non-designated asset is accepted, the developer will be required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred. The following may also be required:

- 1) An appropriate level of survey is undertaken and public record made which may also include an archaeological excavation;

- 2) Provision or replacement of comparable quality and design;
- 3) The salvage and reuse of special features within the replacement development

16.8 Shopfronts

- 16.8.1 Shopfronts are a key part of the character of many historic shopping streets and Conservation Areas, but they can be subject to harm through neglect, removal and poor quality alteration. In light of this the Council has prepared a Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that emphasises the importance of these features, maintaining them in good condition, repairing them in sensitive ways, and replacing them appropriately when they have been lost in the past.

Policy BE5: Shopfronts



Well designed and appropriate shopfronts, whether original or reproduction, should be retained wherever practicable and restored when opportunity arises. Shopfronts should relate in scale, proportion, materials and decorative treatment to the façade of the building, Conservation Area and relate well to the upper floors and adjacent buildings and/or shopfronts.

Proposals relating to shopfronts should accord relevant design guidance prepared by the Council, including the Shopfront Design Guide SPD.

16.9 Advertisements

- 16.9.1 The following policy sets out the Council's approach to advertisements both within and outside areas of Special Advertisement Control. The Area of Special Advertisement Control applies to the rural areas within the Plan area and places additional restrictions on the display of adverts. Advertisements should not be placed on (or overhanging) the highway without the explicit approval of the Local Highway Authority.
- 16.9.2 The Area of Special Advertisement Control is where additional restrictions are placed on the display of adverts. The Council is currently considering whether to undertake a review of the Area of Special Advertisement Control.

Policy BE6: Advertisements



Applications for consent to display advertisements will be permitted where the proposal will not have an adverse effect on either amenity or public safety.

Proposals for advertisements and signs will be granted consent where:

- a) they do not result in visual clutter in the local area;
- b) they are of a high quality design that is appropriate to their local context in terms of materials, size, positioning, styling and method of illumination;
- c) when attached to buildings they respect the building's scale, proportions and architectural features; and
- d) they do not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on public safety.

Proposals for advertisements and signs in the Area of Special of Control of Advertisements and those affecting Heritage Assets and their setting will only be granted consent where the following additional criteria are met:

- i. they preserve and enhance the special qualities and character appearance of the rural landscape, including designated landscapes; Conservation Areas; Listed Buildings; other heritage assets and their settings;
- ii. proposals avoid the use of projecting box signs and instead reflect, re-interpret or complement traditional hanging sign styles;
- iii. proposals at development entrances where possible advertise multiple businesses to avoid the proliferation of individual signs and clutter; and,
- iv. where illumination is proposed it is demonstrably necessary and is sensitively designed for its context, generally avoiding internal illumination methods.

Advance directional signs will only be permitted where the additional following criteria are met:

- 1. the need for the sign(s) has been adequately demonstrated, in that the location and nature of the premises is such that they cannot reasonably be located following normal town or village direction signs; and
- 2. the number of signs and their size is limited to the minimum required to adequately serve their directional function.

17 Connectivity



Policies CO1-CO7

17.1 Connectivity Headlines



Strengths

Location on three national cycle routes: C2C, Hadrian's Wall and Reivers route.

Copeland has a seven day rail service along the Cumbrian Coast Line, as well as regular indirect train links to airports at Manchester and Newcastle

A number of pedestrian and cycle links to the Cumbrian Coast Line and Lake District National Park and further afield including the England Coastal Path

Frequent bus services in Northern Copeland

Copeland's levels of superfast broadband are on par with the national average



Challenges

Rural nature and topography of Copeland means that physical connectivity is reduced in some places

Connectivity is limited in southern Copeland, with no access to bus services in Millom and Haverigg

Challenges associated with decarbonising transport, including the provision of appropriate infrastructure to support developments

There are a number of 'pinch points' along the A595

The M6 is located approximately 40 miles from both Whitehaven and Millom



Opportunities

The potential for delivery of an eastern Relief Road in Whitehaven

Reduced reliance on physical infrastructure through new, flexible working patterns

Opportunities to provide 5G and superfast digital connectivity across Copeland

Opportunities for the provision of a 'digital grid' for Whitehaven

Opportunities to decarbonise travel, including the promotion of public and active modes of transport

Several opportunities to improve active travel links, including the Whitehaven LCWIP and Hadrian's Wall cycling and walking corridor

17.2 Connectivity in Copeland

- 17.2.1 Access to goods, services and information, both physically and virtually, is an integral part of everyday life, particularly in relation to the isolated geography of Copeland.
- 17.2.2 In recent years, the demand for innovative solutions to improved connectivity has been on the rise, with improved technology resulting in the digitisation of many services industries and businesses. This has been catalysed further as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, emphasising the need for more flexible and sustainable ways of living and working.
- 17.2.3 This need to provide innovative solutions and adapt to a rising demand for digital communications technology needs to be combined with high quality, accessible transport systems that allow for greater connectivity both within and around Copeland.
- 17.2.4 Transport systems are vital for economic growth, allowing for the efficient movement of goods and services, stimulating business activity and investment and attracting and retaining a talented workforce. Building upon our transport offer will also improve the desirability of Copeland as a tourist destination, helping to sustain our hospitality industry, support leisure facilities and promote our beautiful Lake District Coast location. High levels of accessibility and modal choice are also important in promoting social inclusion, ensuring that everyone has equal access to employment, retail and leisure opportunities. This allows for improvements in physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- 17.2.5 The following policies set out how Copeland will facilitate innovative and aspirational improvements to both digital connectivity and transport infrastructure. These factors are equally important and need to be considered as a whole in order to fulfil our potential and contribute towards future economic growth and social resilience.

17.3 Communications

- 17.3.1 Improved digital connectivity is essential for unlocking and supporting economic growth as well as improving social wellbeing and resilience within Copeland's communities and workforce.
- 17.3.2 Improved digital access also drives economic growth through opportunities for flexible working patterns. There has been a significant increase in the number of people working from home in the last five years, with approximately 5% of the workforce primarily working from home as of December 2019. As a result of Covid-19 restrictions, this figure rose to 49.2% in April 2020 (ONS 2020).
- 17.3.3 It is likely that more people will continue to work from home at least on a part time basis going forward, with improved opportunities for virtual meetings and flexible working patterns becoming an integral part of the working day. This is likely to provide a significant number of benefits, including:

- Reducing the need to travel, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and decreasing the chance of road traffic accidents.
 - Freeing up time in the day, meaning workers have more time to engage in other activities, relax and spend time with families, which all contribute towards mental wellbeing.
 - Opportunities to live away from the workplace, helping to reduce regional imbalances (EDNA 2021).
 - Employers can choose to move away from large centralised premises to a network of smaller, more affordable premises in rural locations. This is likely to encourage people to move away from large cities, potentially in favour of attractive rural/coastal communities such as Copeland, with less concern for physical remoteness.
 - This also allows employers to select the most suitable candidate for a job without being restricted by geographical location
- 17.3.4 The NPPF, paragraph 114, states that: 'Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.
- 17.3.5 The Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (CLEP) has a goal to achieve 100% coverage of superfast broadband across Cumbria by 2024. According to Think Broadband, Copeland had 96.46% coverage of superfast broadband as of May 2019, which is only slightly lower than the English average. The Connecting Cumbria project is a partnership between the Council and broadband providers. They aim to provide as many homes, businesses and visitors with fibre broadband as possible. Connecting Cumbria anticipates that to expand fibre broadband services to the final proportion of Cumbria's population, the project will require additional funding.
- 17.3.6 The provision of BT Full Fibre technology is currently being trialled at new housing developments within Copeland. This sends a superfast broadband connection directly to the home, offering download speeds of up to 900Mbps (BT 2020). In addition to this, several broadband providers are currently undertaking trials to make broadband provision in new homes without the requirement for a landline. This can result in a reduced cost to the individual by removing the need to pay a line rental, contributing to making broadband more accessible to all.
- 17.3.7 Copeland is currently exploring the potential for improved digital delivery across its towns. Opportunities are currently being explored to create a digital grid for Whitehaven where people can access secure and free Wi-Fi to support businesses in the area and encourage visitors. The Egremont Place Plan states that Egremont is well placed to attract investment with its digital connectivity. The Council is working with private sector providers to try and secure funding through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal. If successful, funding will be provided to adapt Egremont town centre to allow for the improvement of telecommunications provision, enabling better connectivity for homeworkers and businesses.

- 17.3.8 The NPPF, paragraph 115 states that: *‘the number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion’.*

‘Local Planning Authorities should not impose a ban on new electronic communications development in certain areas, impose blanket Article 4 directions over a wide area or a wide range of electronic communications development, or insist on minimum distances between new electronic communications development and existing development.’ (Para 116)

‘Applications for electronic communications development (including applications for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO)) should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development (Para 117).

Strategic Policy CO1: Telecommunications and Digital Connectivity



The Council will support the continued provision of infrastructure that extends and improves digital connectivity across all parts of Copeland, particularly where it provides access to 5G and gigabit capable full fibre technology.

New development will be supported where it enables the enhancement of Copeland’s digital infrastructure without harming the existing street scene or amenity; mast sharing should be considered where possible. Adverse impacts on the successful functioning of existing digital infrastructure should be avoided or mitigated where possible.

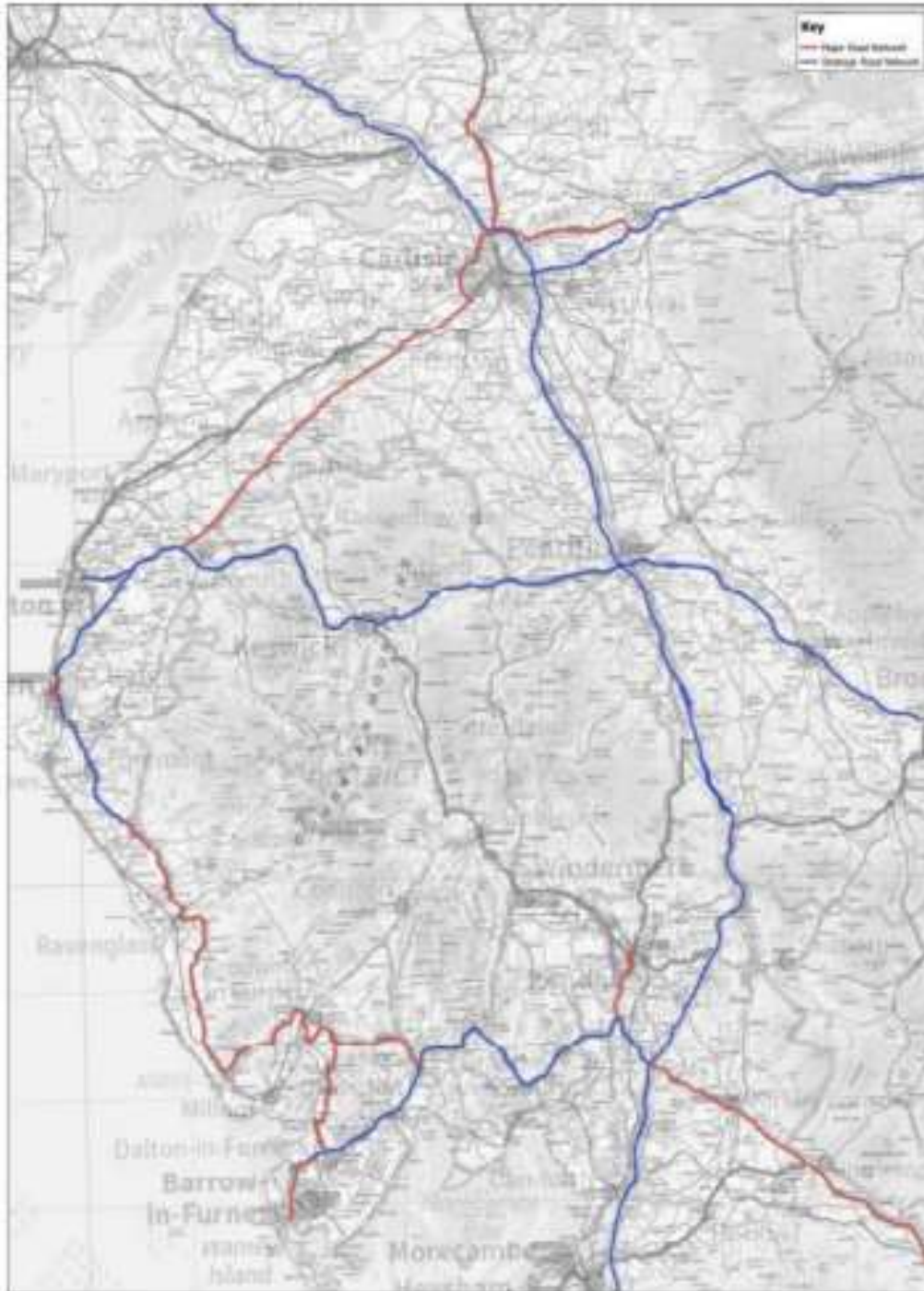
This will be subject to appropriate safeguarding to protect sensitive sites, including those protected for their biodiversity value, important landscapes and heritage assets.

17.4 Transport networks within and around Copeland

- 17.4.1 Providing access to high quality transport systems is a fundamental aspect of development as it improves equality, allowing people to access jobs and services, enjoy leisure opportunities and spend time with friends and family. This also improves the ability for businesses to access suppliers, markets and labour, and for visitors to appreciate what Copeland has to offer. This is particularly important given the rural nature of Copeland.

- 17.4.2 The main highway route through Copeland is the primary A road, the A595, with the M6 being located approximately 40 miles from both Whitehaven and Millom. The existing strategic road network serving Copeland can be seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Major Road Network



- 17.4.3 Discussions have been held around the potential for a new Eastern Relief Road for Whitehaven. While the project is not currently included in National Highway's recently published Road Investment Strategy 2, it remains a priority for the Council. It is anticipated that the road would reduce congestion around the town, provide greater resilience to the strategic road network, support development

projects and a new growth corridor for Whitehaven, and improve connectivity for rest of Copeland. The Council will support any future progression towards the provision of a relief road. Further information surrounding the Whitehaven Relief Road and the benefits it could bring can be found in the Spatial Portrait.

- 17.4.4 The Cumbria Coast Line rail route between Carlisle and Barrow-in-Furness runs the length of Copeland, operating approximately once an hour between 6.30am and 8.50pm (Mon-Sat), with less frequent services on Sundays. This provides access to several smaller settlements along the coast that are otherwise relatively remote, although some of these are by demand only. A journey from Whitehaven to Millom takes approximately 50 minutes by train, from Whitehaven to Carlisle approximately 75 minutes and from Millom to Barrow-in-Furness approximately 35 minutes. The route taken by the Cumbrian Coast Line can be viewed in Figure 12 below:

Figure 12: Railway stops along the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line



C/o Scenic Britain 2020

- 17.4.5 In addition to local services, the West Coast mainline route can be accessed at Carlisle station. Whilst outside of Copeland, this line runs from London Euston to Edinburgh and Glasgow, providing regular, sustainable access to major cities. There are also direct rail links from Carlisle to Newcastle and Leeds. This contributes towards the reduced reliance of private cars for long distance journeys.

- 17.4.6 Bus services are relatively frequent in north Copeland, with existing services providing access to other north Cumbrian settlements, including Carlisle and Workington. The main town in south Copeland, Millom, is connected to Barrow-in-Furness by train. However, the rural location of Copeland means that there is no regular bus route serving the Millom/Haverigg area.

17.5 Planning for transport

- 17.5.1 The NPPF, paragraph 104, states that: *“Transport issues should be considered at the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals”*
- 17.5.2 Many issues relating to transport are regulated outside of the remit of Local Planning and require input from the Department for Transport (DfT). National Highways is responsible for the strategic road network.
- 17.5.3 National Highways Route Strategies and Road Investment Strategies are key documents that set out their plans for the strategic road network (SRN) and determines investment for priority projects is secured.
- 17.5.4 The Council has recently adopted the Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan¹¹³ 2022-2037. The Plan sets out the policy framework for the role of transport and connectivity in supporting sustainable and inclusive growth in Cumbria.
- 17.5.5 The Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (CLEP) is currently focussing on the infrastructure investment required to support growth across the full range of Cumbria’s strategic networks, including rail, road, cycleways and public transport to improve connectivity within and to Cumbria. Work is currently underway to develop a business case to identify and plan improvements to the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line. This is anticipated to increase the frequency and reliability of trains.
- 17.5.6 It is important for the Council to prioritise investment bids to ensure that the most appropriate and effective improvements to the transport network and sustainable public transport are delivered across Copeland. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP 2022) identifies the Council’s priorities for transport, including cycling, walking, and highway improvements.
- 17.5.7 The NPPF, paragraph 105, states that *“significant development should be focussed on locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes”*. The Council have produced a Transport Improvement Study. This makes recommendations on potential public transport, active travel and highways improvements that can be made to help deliver the site allocations. The Council will support proposals where they contribute towards delivering these improvements.
- 17.5.8 In addition to this, National Highways have developed a study to look at the stretch of the A595 between Mirehouse and Egremont, identifying where junction improvements may be required to improve safety and capacity in these areas.

¹¹³ <https://legacy.cumberland.gov.uk/planning-environment/infrastructureplanning/strategicplans.asp>

- 17.5.9 Where appropriate, all transport and access proposals should make provision for those with limited mobility and comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- 17.5.10 A project-level Habitats Regulations Assessment may be required for proposals referred to in Policy CO2 below.

Strategic Policy CO2: Priorities for improving transport networks within Copeland



The Council will support the allocation and safeguarding of land that facilitates transport priorities within Copeland. This includes, but is not restricted to, the following:

- a) Whitehaven Eastern Relief Road
- b) Improvements to the A595
- c) Improvements to the A5086
- d) Improvements to the A5093
- e) Whitehaven Town Centre Enhancements Scheme
- f) Maintaining and improving the stations, infrastructure and services on the Cumbrian Coast Railway.
- g) Improvements to the local and strategic cycle and walking network, including pedestrian links across the Duddon Estuary, to encourage active travel.

Transport priorities will be encouraged where they improve road safety and journey times within Copeland.

Development that is likely to have a detrimental impact on the Highway network will be resisted.

Strategic Policy CO3: Priorities for improving transport links to and from Copeland



The Council will support proposals that improve and enhance external transport links. This will be with the requirement that the environmental and social impacts associated with development are considered and necessary mitigation measures put into place.

In particular, the following improvements will be supported:

- a) Proposals that improve road safety and journey times to and from settlements within Copeland and key regional and national networks, including the M6, A66, A590, A595 and A5093
- b) Proposals to increase the number and frequency of public transport services serving the rest of Cumbria and further, where possible.

Proposals that have the potential to compromise improvements to transport links will be resisted unless the planning benefits clearly outweigh the loss. The applicant would be required to justify this departure from established planning policy at application stage.

17.6 Sustainable Transport

- 17.6.1 Sustainable transport is key to achieving the NPPF's '*Presumption in favour of sustainable development*'. This includes contributing towards a reduction in the number of vehicles on the roads through the provision of safe, accessible and efficient public transport systems and active travel routes.
- 17.6.2 Transport remains one of the largest emitting sectors in the UK, with greenhouse gas emissions from transport making up almost a fifth of the total emissions in 2017 (ONS 2019). This figure follows an upwards trend, contrary to the national trend of reducing emissions overall. A number of national strategies and approaches have been introduced to address the issues of greenhouse gas emissions.
- 17.6.3 In 2017, the Government published the Clean Growth Strategy, which sets out ambitions to "*grow our national income while cutting greenhouse gas emissions*". It is in effect, the overarching ambition to accelerate decarbonisation of the economy and achieve the delivery of the targets identified in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.
- 17.6.4 A key method for reducing emissions and improving sustainability within Copeland is through the promotion of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV), including Electric Vehicles (EVs).
- 17.6.5 A further key method is through improvements to the rail service in Copeland. Network Rail, with support from Cumberland Council and the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, are currently developing an Outline Business Case for the Cumbrian Coast Railway. As well as potentially reducing the number of vehicles on the road, such enhancements to connectivity and capacity can also help address many of the socio-economic challenges facing our communities.
- 17.6.6 Rail and other public transport improvements are identified within the Council's Draft Transport Infrastructure Plan 2022-2037. This is supported by a Bus Service Improvement Plan also produced by the Council that identifies areas with limited or no provision and identifies opportunities for funding. A lack of bus provision is

a particular problem in the south Copeland where residents find it particularly difficult to access facilities and services outside the town centre.

- 17.6.7 Copeland benefits from high levels of air quality and it is important that we protect this. We will continue to support development that provides innovative and sustainable modes of transport and contributes towards the further reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This will be in line with Policy DS9: Protecting Air Quality.

17.7 Active Travel

- 17.7.1 Methods of active travel, including walking and cycling, have the potential to replace a significant number of short car journeys. Promoting these methods of transport can also contribute towards improvements to physical and mental health and wellbeing as well as providing additional opportunities for the visitor economy. Well designed and safe routes are integral to this, ensuring that walking and cycling are attractive modes of transport.
- 17.7.2 In May 2020, the Government released '*Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking*', which sets out plans to revolutionise active travel with a £2 billion investment. As part of this, the Government will be working with Local Authorities across the country to make it easier for people to get around on bikes. This includes measures such as the reallocation of road space for active travel and vouchers to enable cycle repairs (Gov 2020). The scheme also aims to establish a national electrically-assisted bike support programme, including financial incentives to encourage the use of 'e-bikes'. Increased use of e-bikes would be particularly beneficial in Copeland in assisting with active travel in areas of difficult topography. A 2021 review of the 'Gear Change' report suggests that a number of the ambitions outlined have been a success, with cycling in England increasing by 46% in just one year¹¹⁴.
- 17.7.3 On a local scale, the Council is in the process of developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) for towns within Cumbria, with Whitehaven being one of the identified areas for development. LCWIPs provide a long term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks over a ten year period. This develops an evidence base which determines a prioritised programme for future investment, using methodology provided by the Department for Transport. Stakeholder engagement and public consultation has already been carried out for the scheme, with the implementation expected from 2022 onwards dependent on funding. The Council will encourage development where it supports the schemes and outcomes identified in the Whitehaven LCWIP.
- 17.7.4 The Council is committed to supporting the improvement and delivery of safe, accessible active travel routes, and will support development where it enables the delivery of such routes. Examples of initiatives which the Council will support include (but are not limited to) the following:

¹¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gear-change-one-year-on-review>

1. **Whitehaven Hub:** Prioritise and enhance strategic cycle route departures/arrivals including the C2C, Hadrian's Wall¹¹⁵ and Reivers (plus emerging coastal) walking and cycling corridors into the town centre. Enhance some existing street links to the town centre with improved pedestrian and cycle provision so people can walk and cycle into and around the town centre more easily, as well as developing Whitehaven as a hub for cycle accommodation, retail and leisure.
 2. **Village Hubs:** Developing coastal villages as hubs for cycle tourism and creating links to other settlements along the coast and inland to the valleys and fells. This includes schemes such as an improved cycle route from Whitehaven to St Bees, connections between Whitehaven and Ennerdale via Cleator Moor and an extension of Viking way from Gosforth to Wasdale Head.
 3. A foot and cycle crossing over the Irt Estuary
 4. A foot and cycle crossing over the Esk Estuary
 5. The extension of Route 72 NCN, including routes around Millom and Haverigg and links through to Duddon Bridge
 6. The realignment of Route 72 NCN at Sellafield where the route has been washed away.
- 17.7.5 Additionally, in March 2021, Whitehaven was part of a national pilot to trial innovative electric scooter technology. This is to assess the strengths and issues surrounding e-scooter technology. If the pilot scheme is a success, it is anticipated that e-scooters will become a mainstream form of sustainable transport across the UK, offering an innovative active travel alternative to walking or cycling.

17.8 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

- 17.8.1 In terms of assessing impact of large-scale development the NPPF (para 113) states 'All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a Travel Plan, and the application should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.'
- 17.8.2 This ensures that the travel demands arising from new large-scale developments are considered and that measures to promote sustainable and active travel are implemented where possible. Guidance surrounding the thresholds for Transport Assessments and Travel Plans is provided by the Cumbria Design Guide Annex 3. Travel Plans should also accord with Cumberland Council guidance on Travel Plans and the Planning Process in Cumbria: Guidance for Developers (2012)¹¹⁶ and the former County Council's Planning Obligations Policy (2013)¹¹⁷

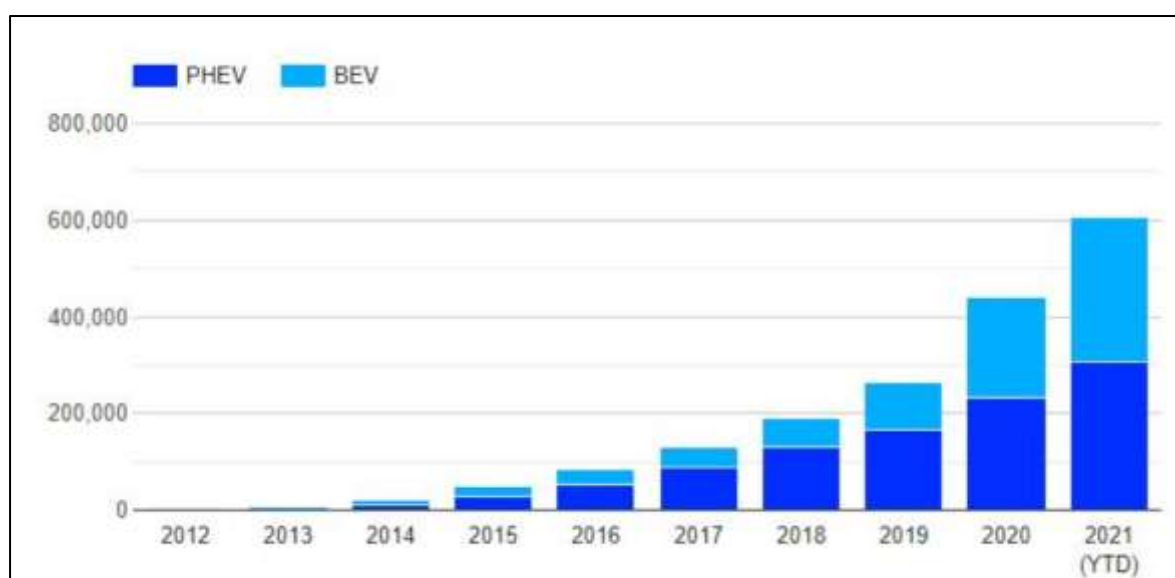
¹¹⁵ This is a project currently being progressed by Cumberland Council and seeks to develop a strategic cycling and walking route to support active travel. The route would primarily follow the existing Hadrian's Cycleway, offering a low traffic multi-user route.

¹¹⁶ <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/Content/Internet/544/5505/4064516465.pdf>

¹¹⁷ <https://cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/538/755/1599/41590142248.PDF>

- 17.8.3 A key method for reducing emissions and improving sustainability within Copeland is through the use of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles, including Electric Vehicles (EVs).
- 17.8.4 In July 2018, the Road to Zero Strategy set an aspiration for “*all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040*”. The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, produced in November 2020, accelerates this to an aspiration to stop the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030, and the sale of hybrid vehicles by 2035, which aligns with the priorities of the Cumbria Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Group¹¹⁸.
- 17.8.5 Figure 13 below shows the cumulative number of Battery Electric Vehicles and Plug in Hybrid Electric Vehicles registered in the UK since 2012. This shows that as of August 2021, there were over 600,000 electric vehicles on UK roads, making up approximately 18% of market share of new registrations for the year to date. Information surrounding publicly available EV charging points in Copeland can be found here: <https://www.zap-map.com/>.

Figure 13: Number of Electric Vehicles UK



- 17.8.6 The Automotive Sector Deal was published in 2018 to build upon the Government’s long standing relationship with the UK automotive sector. This aims to accelerate the transition to zero emission vehicles in order to contribute to the delivery of the UK’s Industrial Strategy. Key initiatives within this include:
- Expenditure of £1 billion to support the up-take of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles so customers can overcome the upfront cost of an electric car;
 - £80 million investment (alongside £15 million from National Highways) to support charging infrastructure deployment;

¹¹⁸ Comprising Cumberland Council, Westmorland and Furness Council, Cumbria LEP, NHS, Cumbria Constabulary and other key stakeholders.

- Introduction of the Automated and Electric Vehicles Act of 2018, which sets out the legislative requirements for electric charging infrastructure, including a requirement for interoperability of systems.
- 17.8.7 In order to achieve the Cumbria target of net zero carbon emissions by 2037, it is vital that development contributes towards the implementation of electric vehicle technology. Therefore, developers must be proactive in ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is provided to achieve this.
- 17.8.8 In September 2021, the Department for Transport announced that Electric Vehicle charging units in all new residential and office developments is anticipated to become mandatory in England. This legalisation came into force in 2022 with Part S of the Building Regulations.

Strategic Policy CO4: Sustainable Travel



Proposals must include safe and direct connections to routes that promote active travel, such as cycling and walking routes where appropriate.

The Council will also support, in principle, developments which encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport, in particular:

- a) Proposals that have safe and direct connections to cycling and walking routes where appropriate and those that provide access to regular public transport services;
- b) Proposals that enable the sustainable movement of freight;
- c) Proposals that make provision for electric vehicles
- d) Proposals for the integration of electric vehicle charging infrastructure into new developments. This will have different requirements dependent on the scale of development.
- e) Proposals that take opportunities available to use disused rail track beds to widen sustainable transport choices, encourage active travel within Copeland and provide spaces for biodiversity.

New development that would prejudice the future use of disused railway lines that are well connected either to settlements, other sustainable travel routes or key tourist facilities within the open countryside for this purpose will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Developments that are likely to generate a large amount of movement will be required to secure an appropriate Travel Plan and be supported by a Transport Assessment in line with the Cumbria Design Guide (or any document that replaces it).

17.9 Transport Hierarchy

- 17.9.1 The transport hierarchy is an important method for promoting sustainable and socially inclusive modes of transport. It is useful in ensuring that the needs of certain groups, including pedestrians, cyclists, disabled and vulnerable people and those with pushchairs, are taken into consideration during the decision making process. This will help to improve equal opportunities as well as promoting a modal shift by making alternative modes of transport more accessible.

Policy CO5: Transport Hierarchy



Where appropriate, new developments should promote the following hierarchy of users (highest priority first):

- a) Pedestrians
- b) Cyclists
- c) Public and community transport users
- d) All other vehicles

Developments should be designed to maximise the use of transport modes towards the top of the hierarchy whilst always ensuring appropriate access for emergency vehicles. The needs of disabled people ought to be considered at all stages of the transport hierarchy, with appropriate provisions made to improve accessibility.

17.10 Countryside Access

- 17.10.1 The Council is keen to explore further opportunities for the provision of countryside assets. This includes the creation of a community forest or similar major countryside resource which could combine some sustainable woodland energy contribution with opportunities for recreation and leisure.
- 17.10.2 Existing public rights of way are protected by law and therefore do not need policy protection. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 introduced a statutory right of access on foot for open air recreation to mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land. Policy CO6 below seeks to help residents and visitors to exercise that right.

- 17.10.3 Opportunities should be taken to connect new developments to wider countryside access routes where possible, for example by creating new pedestrian links and/or providing signage to long distance routes where appropriate. It is also important to maximise equal opportunities to access and interact with the natural environment.
- 17.10.4 Provision should be made to ensure that wheelchair users, families with pushchairs and the visually impaired are able to access Copeland's abundant countryside. Cumberland Council has identified several routes that provide 'access for all'. In Copeland, these routes include Longlands Lake in Cleator and Walkmill Community Woodland at Moresby Parks. We will continue to support the development of routes to provide access for all.

Strategic Policy CO6: Countryside Access



The Council will support improved access to the countryside for residents and visitors, where biodiversity conservation interest would not be harmed as a result, by:

- a) Identifying opportunities to provide or improve access on routes and gateways from settlements and to secure the implementation of improvement measures with key partners and developers
- b) Investigating opportunities for reclaiming contaminated and derelict land for recreation purposes
- c) Identifying potential for the development of a community forest and long distance walks

Proposals should identify opportunities to improve countryside access through their developments, both through improved active travel links and through measures such as enhanced signage. Where appropriate, access should make provision for those with limited mobility.

17.11 Parking Standards

- 17.11.1 Ensuring that adequate parking is available is vital, both within new residential developments and in and around town centres and surrounding key services. This ensures that accessibility is improved whilst reducing the amount of traffic on the roads. It also improves the street scene and pedestrian safety by reducing the number of cars parked on roadsides. In addition, it is vital to provide equal opportunities within parking provision, with accessible spaces being of high priority.

- 17.11.2 A key element of encouraging sustainable transport within Copeland is to facilitate the transfer of people from private vehicles into more sustainable modes. It is therefore important that appropriate park and ride locations, such as the existing scheme that links Sellafield to Cleator Moor, are provided to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads. This is particularly relevant in the context of reducing the number of cars parking at key employment sites and within town centres.
- 17.11.3 Parking standards are currently informed by Appendix 1 of the 2017 Cumbria Design Guide. All development proposals will be required to provide accessible and well-designed parking in line with this, with provision being made for associated infrastructure such as bike shelters and storage wherever possible. It is understood that in exceptional cases such as town centre locations, it is not possible to provide on or off-street parking. These will be looked at on a case-by-case basis and will be supported in principle where suitable alternatives are available, for example, access to high quality public transport provision.
- 17.11.4 A Parking Study for Whitehaven was completed in 2021. This sets out guidance for managing parking within Copeland and for providing appropriate car parking provision for new developments.

Policy CO7: Parking Standards



Proposals for new development will be required to provide adequate parking provision, including cycle parking and accessible parking bays, in accordance with the Cumbria Development Design Guide (or any document that replaces it) where appropriate.

Development will be supported where it accords with the Whitehaven Parking Strategy or any document that supersedes it. Proposals that provide new or improved park and ride facilities for local employment and development sites will be supported where they will provide demonstrable benefits and are situated in appropriate locations.

18 Monitoring



18.1 Monitoring the Local Plan

- 18.1.1 It is important that the impacts of the Local Plan are monitored regularly. This helps to assess the effectiveness of the policies and may indicate where policy changes may be required.
- 18.1.2 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 objectives. Where appropriate, the Local Plan 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. The monitoring criteria should be read alongside the relevant plan policy for a full understanding.
- 18.1.3 Each year the Council will produce an Annual Monitoring Report which contains information on the progress of the implementation of the Local Plan and an assessment of the effectiveness of the policies together with any future Local Development Documents. This monitoring will indicate progress towards targets and show where policies are not working as anticipated. This will help to inform any changes to the Plan.

Table 17: Monitoring Table

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Development Strategy					
Policy DS1: Settlement Hierarchy	All	To what extent the development is located in accordance with the settlement hierarchy ¹¹⁹	The proportion of applications approved within each tier of the settlement hierarchy per year.	The proportion of development should not deviate from the proportions allocated through Policy H4 across a three-year average.	Review of policy criteria that enable development against settlement hierarchy. Review of decisions by the LPA and also appeal decisions
Policy DS2: Settlement Boundaries	ENV2, ENV4, ENV8, SO1, SO2, ECO1	The extent to which the settlement boundaries are functioning as a tool to guide development growth	Number of applications approved for residential/ employment use outside of settlement boundaries per year	No development should be located outside of settlement boundaries (except in certain cases as outlined in policy)	Review of policy criteria that enable development beyond settlement boundaries. Review of LPA planning decisions and appeal decisions

¹¹⁹ Progress towards Policy DS1 will be outlined in terms of distribution of employment and residential uses as indicated by E2 and H4

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Development Standards					
Policy DS3: Planning Obligations	SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, ECO1	<p>Whether planning obligations are being successfully executed to ensure policy compliance</p> <p>The number and type of planning obligations secured annually as per categories listed in the Policy.</p>	Number and type of planning obligations secured and implemented annually ¹²⁰	All developments should provide relevant policy compliant contributions or be subject to an appropriate viability review mechanism.	<p>Review the Viability Review mechanism.</p> <p>Analysis of Viability Assessments submitted to remove planning obligations.</p> <p>Analysis of types of planning obligations removed.</p> <p>Review housing allocations to ensure viable sites are available and deliverable.</p>
Policy DS4: Design and Development Standards	ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8,	The extent to which all new development meets the high quality design	Number of applications/appeals upheld, or otherwise refused on the grounds of design ¹²¹	All developments should accord to Copeland design standards set out in criteria a-q.	Run a design workshop that outlines Copeland design standard.

¹²⁰ Also monitored through the Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS)

¹²¹ Data will be more closely monitored when the Council produces a Design Guide SPD.

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
	ENV9, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1	standards set out in DS6PU.	% of applications refused on design grounds upheld/overtaken at appeal	100% of cases refused on design grounds to be upheld on appeal	Review DM decision making process Review criteria
Policy DS5: Hard and Soft Landscaping	ENV2	Whether the policy is effective at securing high quality landscaping schemes in new developments Whether the policy is effective at avoiding the loss of ancient hedgerows or woodlands	% of the planning applications where a landscaping scheme is secured on 'major development' per annum. No. of metres/ha of ancient hedgerow/woodland lost as a result of a development per annum.	Ensuring new major development provide high quality landscaping as part of application. Ensure no loss of ancient hedgerow/woodlands	Review DM decision making process Review criteria
Policy DS6: Reducing Flood Risk	ENV3, ENV5	The extent to which development minimises flood risk in Copeland	Number and detail of any residential or employment applications approved within Flood Zone 2 or 3 per annum Number of developments given consent against Environment Agency Flood Risk Advice per annum	To minimise flood risk in Copeland All development should be located outside of areas with Flood Risk Zone 3 unless adequate flood risk and exception tests are carried out and mitigation put into place	Analysis of developments approved. Review decision making process

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Policy DS7: Sustainable Drainage	ENV3, ENV5	The degree to which sustainable drainage systems are incorporated into new major development	No. of SuDS schemes incorporated into approved major developments per annum as a proportion of all schemes.	All relevant schemes should provide SuDs where possible (not all sites will be suitable for SuDs)	Review decision making process
Policy DS8: Soils, Contamination and land stability	ENV7	Opportunities taken to reduce soil degradation and reduce land contamination	Proportion of applications accompanied by a soil resource plan for major development on greenfield sites. Number of implemented planning permissions for major development where a contaminated site has been remediated. Number of ha of contaminated land that has been remediated per annum.	The proportion of contaminated sites ¹²² in Copeland should reduce each year.	Pursue brownfield remediation funding
Policy DS9: Protecting Air Quality	ENV8	Air pollution levels in Copeland	Annual analysis of air quality indicators ¹²³	The air quality of Copeland should improve each year.	Creation of more Air Quality Management Areas.

¹²² At the point of Local Plan adoption.

¹²³ Data collected by Council Environmental Health Team

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			Detail of any Air Quality Management Areas introduced		
Copeland's Economy					
Policy E1: Economic Growth	ECO1	Progress towards achieving a strengthened economic base and encourage economic growth in Copeland	Unemployment rates in Copeland per annum. Educational attainment Working age population Employees in each sector Jobs created Business start-ups/deaths Success within specialist economic areas shown by indicators for Policies E3 and E4.	Reduction in unemployment Increase in educational attainment Increase in working age population Increase in jobs growth	N/A
Policy E2: Location of Employment	ECO1	The extent to which employment development is in line with the settlement hierarchy	Number and Location of B2, B8 and E(g) uses approved per annum in each tier of the settlement hierarchy	No employment developments should be located outside of Employment allocations or Opportunity Sites (except in	Review of cases to determine whether particular policies are facilitating

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
				certain cases as outlined in relevant policies) or outside settlements	unsustainable development. Consider a partial Local Plan review.
Policy E3: Westlakes Science and Technology Park	ECO1	The use class of development proposals on the Westlakes site.	Number and type of approvals granted at Westlakes per annum	Uses to be restricted to E(g) and F1 use classes, except for ancillary uses where deemed appropriate	Review whether the definition of “Ancillary Uses” is too broad.
Policy E4: Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter at Leconfield	ECO1	Progress towards developing the CMIQ site to attract new businesses and investment to Copeland	Number and type of approvals granted at Cleator Moor Innovation Quarter	Uses should be restricted to B2, B8 and E(g), except for ancillary uses where deemed appropriate.	Review whether the definition of “Ancillary Uses” is too broad.
Policy E5: Employment Sites and Allocations	ECO1	Progress on bringing allocated employment sites into use	Number, type and floorspace of approvals granted at identified Employment sites per annum.	To increase the amount of employment land uptake on allocated site To ensure that permissions are in line with the use classes identified for the site	N/A
Policy E6: Opportunity Sites	ECO1	Progress on bringing allocated Opportunity Sites into use	Number, type and floorspace of approvals granted at identified Opportunity Sites per annum	Delivery of at least one Opportunity Site every three years throughout the plan period.	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Policy E7: Safeguarding of Employment Sites	ECO1	Ensuring that employment allocations are being retained for employment uses	Analysis of any approvals granted for non E(g), B2 or B8 uses on employment sites per annum	No proposals should be allowed on employment sites that are not relevant for employment uses.	Consider a partial Local Plan review. Review decision making process
Rural Economy					
Policy RE1: Agricultural Buildings	ECO1	Applications for new agricultural buildings requiring planning permission	Number of approvals/refusals for new agricultural buildings requiring planning approval per annum	Planning approvals to be in accordance with the principles set out RE1.	N/A
Policy RE2: Equestrian Related Development	ECO1, ENV7	Applications for equestrian related development	Number of approvals granted for equestrian related development per annum and their location.	Equestrian related developments should be situated in accordance with the principles of RE2	N/A
Policy RE3: Conversion of rural buildings to commercial or community use	ECO1, ENV9	Applications for the conversion and reuse of rural buildings	Number of approvals/refusals for conversions of rural buildings to commercial or community use outside of settlement boundaries per annum	To ensure that proposals are permitted in accordance with the principles set out in Policy RE3	N/A
Low Carbon and Renewable Energy					
Policy CC1: Large Scale Energy Developments	ENV4, ENV6, ECO1	Progress towards the increased provision of large scale renewable	Number of applications and approvals for large scale	Increased provision of large scale renewable energy	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
(excluding nuclear and wind energy developments)		energy developments to support the Cumbria target of net zero by 2037	energy developments per annum kW/MW of energy produced per annum through CC1 relevant energy developments.	technology across each five-year period.	
Policy CC2: Wind Energy Developments	ENV4, ENV6, ECO1	The number of wind energy developments in Copeland, contributing towards the Cumbria net zero by 2037 target	Number and location of applications and approvals for wind energy developments kW/MW of energy produced per annum	Net Zero by 2037 Developments should be located in areas identified as suitable for wind energy. No. of large scale turbines within the Area Suitable for Wind Energy.	Review Wind Energy Evidence Document.
Nuclear Development					
Policy NU1: Supporting Development of the Nuclear Sector	ENV6, ECO1	Progress surrounding the development of the nuclear sector in Copeland	Analysis of development proposals for nuclear new build and associated infrastructure	N/A	N/A
Policy NU2: Maximising opportunities from Nuclear Decommissioning	ENV6, ECO1	Opportunities surrounding nuclear decommissioning in Copeland.	Employees in each sector (see E1) per annum. Qualitative analysis of progress towards nuclear	Increase the number of Sellafield jobs in Copeland's towns as a result of relocation from the Sellafield site.	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			new build and supply chain development in accordance with the relevant growth scenarios in the EDNA per annum		
Policy NU3: General Nuclear Energy and Associated Development and Infrastructure	ENV6, ECO1	Opportunities for the provision of improved infrastructure to support the nuclear sector	Percentage of nuclear and associated development applications approved within the settlement boundaries/employment sites per annum Percentage of approved applications outside settlement boundaries.	All nuclear energy and associated development infrastructure within employment sites or settlement boundaries	Review decision making process/policy criteria.
Policy NU4: Nuclear and Associated Development at Sellafield	ENV6, ECO1	Progress surrounding development on Sellafield site The number and scale of developments approved outside the Sellafield planning boundary and not within settlements/employment sites per annum, and the	Applications for development within the Sellafield site Percentage of Sellafield development outside Sellafield site Ha of Sellafield development outside Sellafield site.	The maximum amount of development is within Sellafield site or an allocated employment site/settlement boundary. All development outside the planning boundary at Sellafield site has been robustly justified as essential for that location.	Review what has been accepted as justifying essential development outside the planning boundary Possible planning boundary review

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
		accepted justification for this.			
Retail and Leisure					
Policy R1: Vitality and Viability of Town Centres and villages within the Hierarchy	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO4	The health of Copeland's town centres and villages	% of vacancies within town centres Retail floorspace in total/broken down by centres Net increase/loss in retail/town centre floorspace	Less than 15% vacancies rates by 2029 Less than 10% by 2038	N/A
Policy R2: Hierarchy of Town Centres	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO4	The type and scale of development within settlements in accordance with the settlement hierarchy	No. of applications approved for town centre uses – broken down by use per settlement	N/A	N/A
Policy R3: Whitehaven Town Centre	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO4	Development that supports the role of Whitehaven as Copeland's Principal Town	Analysis of main town centre uses approved in Whitehaven Town Centre. Annual analysis of number/% of vacancies	Decrease in Town Centre vacancy rates below the vacancy % outlined by R1 Evidence of developments in the town in line with R3	Review Whitehaven Town Centre boundary

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			<p>Town centre health check monitoring indicators</p> <p>% units within each type of town centre use</p> <p>Qualitative analysis of development supporting the vitality and viability of Whitehaven</p>	Maintain and expand the mix and range of retailer businesses in town centres.	
Policy R4: The Key Service Centres	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO4	Development that supports the role of Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom as Key Service Centres	<p>Analysis of main town centre uses approved in Key Service Centres</p> <p>Number/% of vacancies</p> <p>Qualitative analysis of development supporting the vitality and viability of KSCs</p> <p>See also above indicators for Whitehaven/R1</p>	<p>Decrease in vacancy rates</p> <p>Evidence of developments in the Key Service Centres in line with R4</p> <p>See above for Whitehaven</p>	Review Town Centre boundaries
Policy R5: Retail and service provision in rural areas	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO4	The type of developments being supported in rural locations within Copeland	Analysis of approvals granted for retail or service provision in rural areas by size and location	Decisions to be made in line with policy	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			Analysis of lost retail and services in town centres outlined by village services survey.	Departures from policy - minimum At least retain the number of services within settlements at existing levels	
Policy R6: Whitehaven Town Centre Primary Shopping Area	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO4	The type of developments being supported in Whitehaven Town Centre Primary Shopping Area	Proposals granted permission in Primary Shopping Area in line with R6. Changes in floorspace by use per annum.	All development within the Primary Shopping Area should be for retail use or comply with the exceptions in Policy R6	Review Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area boundary
Policy R7: Sequential Test	ECO1, ECO4	Main town centre uses not located within town centres	Analysis of town centre uses approved outside of defined town centres.	Ensure the town centres remain the focus for new retail development	N/A
Policy R8: Retail and Leisure Impact Assessments	ECO1, ECO4	Applications submitted for retail and leisure use outside of defined centres and above a defined floorspace	Assessment of retail or leisure uses approved outside of defined centres for Whitehaven, Millom, Cleator Moor and Egremont	Impact Assessment must be submitted for proposals over the thresholds set out in R8. Minimise the impact on the vitality and viability of town centres	N/A
Policy R9: Non-Retail Development in Town Centres	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO4	The details of applications which relate to non-retail	Analysis of non-retail uses approved within town centres	To improve the health and vitality of town centres	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
		development in town centres	<p>% of non-retail uses within town centres by use class</p> <p>Vacancies at first floor level</p> <p>Amount of new non-retail floorspace approved at ground floor level</p> <p>Amount of new non-retail floorspace (i.e. residential, offices etc) approved at first floor level</p>	<p>Reduction in vacancies at ground and first floor level</p> <p>Diversity of uses in town centre (so long as add to the viability/diversity)</p>	
Policy R10: Hot Food Takeaways	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO4	The impacts of additional hot food takeaways in Copeland	<p>Annual analysis of hot food takeaways granted permission</p> <p>No. of hot food takeaways approved/refused in each hierarchy of centre per annum</p>	Developments should not give rise to negative amenity issues	N/A
Tourism					
Policy T1: Tourism Development	SOC2, ECO1, ECO2	Progress towards developing Copeland's tourism industry further	Visitor numbers per annum	The number of visitors, tourist sector employees, and	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			Revenue created in tourism sector per annum Number of employees in sector ¹²⁴ Approvals of tourism based planning applications by tier in settlement hierarchy	revenue, should increase over each three-year period. No of approvals for different type of tourism uses: attractions, interpretation/infrastructure, and accommodation.	
Policy T2: Tourism Development along the Developed Coast	SOC2, ECO1, ECO2	Levels of appropriate development to support the developed coast	Analysis of applications for tourism development in close proximity to the coastline	N/A	N/A
Policy T3: Caravan and camping sites for short term letting	ECO1, ECO2	Proposals for new static, tourism caravan and camping sites for short term letting	Details of any proposals for new static, touring caravan and camping sites	N/A	<u>N/A</u>
Housing					
Policy H1: Improving the Housing Offer	ENV9, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	The delivery of homes in the right locations	Number of approvals on allocated sites per annum Number of empty homes brought back into use	Rolling housing land supply in excess of five years	Criteria 1) and 2) in H3 covers the relevant action.

¹²⁴ These indicators are monitored through the annual Copeland STEAM report

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			<p>through s106 contributions per annum</p> <p>Number of homes approved on windfall sites within settlement boundaries per annum</p> <p>Five year land supply position</p>		
Policy H2: Housing Requirement	SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	The extent to which the Copeland housing requirement is being met annually	Net additional approvals and completions of dwellings per annum	Minimum of 146 net additional dwellings per annum, with a 200 growth figure	N/A
Policy H3: Housing delivery	SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	Sets out action to take if the targets in H2PU are not being achieved. ¹²⁵	Housing Delivery Test	Delivery of policy	Consider Local Plan Review
Policy H4: Distribution of Housing	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	The extent to which housing delivery is in line with the settlement hierarchy	Number and percentage of developments completed by settlement tier per annum	The Council will seek to achieve the distribution defined by Policy H4 over a three year average period.	N/A
Policy H5: Housing Allocations	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	Progress towards the delivery of identified housing allocations	Number of dwellings completed on allocated sites.	Allocated sites are developed over the Plan period and broadly in line with the	Criterion 1) of H3 covers the relevant action

¹²⁵ Delivery will be measured against the trajectory as set out in H3

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
				delivery outlined in the housing trajectory	
Policy H6: New Housing Development	ENV1, ENV2, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	The standards of new residential development	The proportion of developments that are refused on H6 grounds per annum.	The Council will seek to achieve the outlined standards within development.	N/A
Policy H7: Housing Density and Mix	ENV7, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	The extent to which new residential development makes an appropriate use of land and that local housing needs are met	Housing densities on completed residential developments per annum The accordance of new housing development with the SHMA informed housing mix.	That appropriate developments accord with a SHMA informed mix.	N/A
Policy H8: Affordable Housing	SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	Whether affordable housing targets on new developments are being met.	Number/% of affordable housing on residential developments per annum	All developments on sites of 10 dwellings or more, or five units or more in the Whitehaven Rural Area, should provide a minimum of 10% affordable housing.	Review whether the Viability Review Mechanism is delivering affordable housing effectively.
Policy H9: Allocated site for Gypsies and Travellers	SOC2, ECO3	Whether the allocated site has been developed for the use of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.	No. of pitches approved per annum (on allocated site) Progress of delivery of allocated site.	Any approval for Gypsy, Traveller, or Travelling Show People development is on the Gypsy & Traveller site allocation.	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Policy H10: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Windfall Sites	SOC1, SOC2, ECO3	Whether windfall sites for this development type accord with the standards in Policy H10	Approval of windfall sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople per annum No. of pitches per annum	N/A	N/A
Policy H11: Community-led, Self-build and Custom Build housing	ECO1, ECO3	The delivery of these housing types in accordance with the policy	Annual analysis of planning approvals for Self and Custom Build housing	Delivery of self/custom build in accordance with policy	N/A
Policy H12: Residential Establishments, including Specialist, older persons housing and purpose built student and key-worker accommodation	SOC1, SOC2, SOC3, ECO1, ECO3	The delivery of additional residential establishments to meet need in Copeland	Annual analysis of planning approvals for Residential Establishments by type (i.e. older persons; student/key worker)	Delivery of development for forms of residential accommodation wherein a need has been identified in the SHMA and any further bespoke evidence	N/A
Policy H13: Conversion and sub-division of buildings to residential uses	SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	The delivery of additional HMOs in the Plan area in line with criteria in Policy H13PU	Annual analysis of planning approvals for the subdivision of existing properties	No particular location accrues an overconcentration of HMOs.	Review whether policy framework is sufficiently able to control HMOs.

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
including large HMOs			The number of subdivisions by location.		
Policy H14: Domestic Extensions and Alterations	ECO3	The standards of new residential alterations and extensions	N/A	No. of applications for residential extensions overturned at appeal	N/A
Policy H15: Rural Exception Sites	SOC2, ECO3	Planning permissions for development on Rural Exception Sites	Analysis of applications for dwellings in the open countryside The number of affordable and open market homes delivered on Rural Exception sites.	No applications approved contrary to the criteria in H15	N/A
Policy H16: Essential Dwellings for Rural Workers	SOC2, ECO3	Planning permissions for development within the open countryside for rural worker accommodation	Analysis of applications for dwellings in the open countryside per annum	No applications approved contrary to the criteria in H16	N/A
Policy H17: Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use	ENV1, ENV2, ENV7, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO3	Conversion of buildings in the open countryside for residential use	Analysis of applications for conversion of rural buildings to residential use per annum	N/A	N/A
Policy H18: Replacement Dwellings outside Settlement Boundaries	ENV7, SOC1, SOC2, ECO3	Applications for replacement dwellings in the open countryside	Analysis of applications for replacement dwellings No. of replacement dwellings approved and refused	N/A	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			outside settlement boundaries each year and their location		
Policy H19: Beach Bungalows	ECO3	Applications for the replacement or alteration of existing beach bungalows	Analysis of applications relating to beach bungalows No. of replacement beach bungalows approved per annum No. of replacement beach bungalows refused per annum and reasons	N/A	Review whether a Coastal Change Management Area is required.
Policy H20: Removal of Occupancy Conditions	ECO3	Applications for the removal of conditions restricting the occupancy of a dwelling in the open countryside	Removal of occupancy conditions in particular locations per annum Applications granted with Local Occupancy Conditions per annum	N/A	N/A
Policy H21: Residential Caravans	ECO3	Applications for new residential caravans (with the exception of sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople).	Number of applications approved/refused in accordance with policy of applications for new residential caravans per annum	N/A	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Health, Sport and Culture					
Policy SC1: Health and Wellbeing	SOC2	The extent to which physical and mental health and wellbeing is being protected and enhanced in Copeland	N/A ¹²⁶	N/A	N/A
Policy SC2: Sports and Leisure Facilities (excluding playing pitches)	SOC1, SOC2,	Proposals for the loss or gain of sporting and leisure facilities	Net gain or loss of sporting and leisure facilities per annum	No overall reduction in sporting provision To increase or improve provision to meet the needs identified in the Built Facilities Study	Review Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
Policy SC3: Playing Fields and Pitches	SOC1, SOC2,	Proposals for the loss or gain of playing fields or pitches	Number of s106 contributions towards playing fields annually Number and location of playing fields gained or lost annually	No overall reduction in playing fields or pitches To increase or improve provision to meet the needs identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy	Review PPS to ensure it is still effective and accurate
Policy SC4: Impact of new development on sporting facilities (including playing	SOC1, SOC2,	The prevention of prejudicial impacts on sporting facilities as a	Details of any proposals granted planning permission contrary to the advice of Sport England per annum	Appropriate mitigation measures should be put into place to reduce prejudicial impact	Review PPS to ensure it is still effective and accurate

¹²⁶ Progress towards achieving SC1 will be shown through achievement of other indicators throughout the plan

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
fields and playing pitches)		result of new residential development			
Policy SC5: Community and Cultural Facilities	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2	Proposals for the gain or loss of community or cultural facilities	Details of any new or lost community or cultural facilities per annum (net loss or gain)	Prevent the loss of community and cultural facilities except in exceptional circumstances in line with SC5	N/A
Natural Environment					
Policy N1: Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity	ENV1-ENV8, SOC2, ECO1	Development on or in close proximity to Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.	No. of any applications in these areas. Details of any applications granted permission contrary to Natural England Advice	Development on such sites should be avoided completely or appropriate mitigation measures put into place in line with the policy	N/A
Policy N2: Local Nature Recovery Networks	ENV1	The provision of any Local Nature Recovery Networks in Copeland	The extent and quality of the LNRS sites. The quantity of off-site BNG spend by location and form. Additional LNRN identified in ha each year Area of LNRN identified for BNG improvements in ha each year	The Council will ensure that off-site BNG spend is appropriately focused on LNRS sites.	Review BNG spend and delivery in Copeland.

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Policy N3: Biodiversity Net Gain	ENV1	The provision of biodiversity net gain on all new development	<p>The total number and type of biodiversity credits spent within the Plan area and outside the Plan area</p> <p>The number of developments achieving Net Gain annually and a note where the 10% target is exceeded</p> <p>A record of on-site and off-site contributions</p>	<p>The Council will secure at least 10% biodiversity net gain from relevant developments in the Plan area.</p> <p>The Council will seek to secure a maximal BNG spend and delivery within Copeland.</p>	Review BNG spend and delivery in the Plan area.
Policy N4: Marine Planning	ENV1, ENV3	Any development with potential to harm the Marine Conservation Zone	Analysis of any applications approved contrary to the Marine Management Organisation	No applications should be approved contrary to MMO advice	Review whether policy accurately reflects MMO policy
Policy N5: Protection of Water Resources	ENV1, ENV3, ENV5	The quality of surface and groundwater resources in Copeland	<p>Annual analysis of quality of surface and groundwater resources¹²⁷</p> <p>Number of approvals within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone</p>	The Council seek to improve water quality annually over a three year average.	N/A

¹²⁷ Recorded through the Environment Agency

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Policy N6: Landscape Protection	ENV2, ENV7	The extent to which Copeland's landscapes are being protected and enhanced	Analysis of applications approved contrary to professional landscape advice The number of applications refused on grounds of N6 and the relevant evidence base.	No applications should be approved against this advice	Review cases of approval against advice
Policy N7: St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast	ENV1, ENV2	The protection and enhancement of the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast	Development granted planning permission in the vicinity of the Heritage Coast by type/per annum	The Council will not allow any development that harms the St Bees and Whitehaven Heritage Coast.	N/A
Policy N8: The Undeveloped Coast	ENV1- ENV8	The extent to which development protects and enhances the landscape character of the undeveloped coast	Any development granted permission along the undeveloped coast by type/per annum	Development must be in line with criteria in N8	Review cases of approval against policy to understand source.
Policy N9: Green Infrastructure	ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV7, SOC2	The extent to which development protects and enhances green infrastructure	No. of hectares of Green Infrastructure delivered through contributions per annum.	Increase in quality and quantity of Green Infrastructure over the Local Plan period across a three year average.	N/A
Policy N10: Green Wedges	ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV7, SOC2	The protection of green wedges from development	Development granted planning permission within	No development should be granted permission in Green Wedges except in exceptional	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			Green Wedges (by type/per annum)	circumstances as outlined in the policy	
Policy N11: Provision of Open Space in New Development	ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV7, SOC2	The provision of Open Space delivered through planning obligations.	Ha of Open Space (by type) delivered through contributions per annum Ha of Open Space (by type) improved from contributions per annum	Increase in quality and quantity of Open Spaces over the Local Plan period across a three year average.	N/A
Policy N12: Protected Open Spaces	ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV7, SOC2	The extent to which Protected Open Spaces are being conserved through the development process	Development granted permission within a Protected Open Space and details of any replacement provision made, where necessary The net loss/addition of Protected Open Space per annum	Any development resulting in the loss of Protected Open Spaces should provide an appropriate replacement	N/A
Policy N13: Local Green Spaces	ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV7, SOC2	The extent to which Local Green Spaces are being conserved through the development process	Development granted permission within a Local Green Space per annum, by type of Green Space	Any development resulting in the loss of Local Green Spaces should be avoided, except in exceptional circumstances as outlined in the policy	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Policy N14: Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows	ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV8	The gain and loss of woodlands, trees and hedgerows in Copeland	Qualitative analysis of delivery of sites contributing towards Community Forests or similar projects Ha of woodland, trees, and hedgerows delivered through contributions per annum.	A net gain in woodlands, trees, and hedgerows, over the three year period	N/A
Policy N15: Community Growing Spaces	SOC2	The provision of additional community growing spaces in Copeland	Qualitative analysis of any community growing spaces in Copeland The hectares of Community Growing Spaces delivered through contributions per annum.	The Council will deliver a net-gain in Community Growing Spaces over the plan period.	N/A
Built and Historic Environment					
Policy BE1: Heritage Assets	ENV2	The conservation and enhancement of heritage assets in Copeland	Number of developments granted permission against Historic England advice per annum	Development contrary to Historic England advice should be avoided	N/A
Policy BE2: Designated Heritage Assets	ENV2	The conservation and enhancement of designated heritage assets in Copeland	Analysis of any developments with potential harm to designated heritage assets	Unacceptable harm should be avoided and/or mitigated in accordance with the	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
			The number of planning permissions/refusals on BE2 grounds per annum.	significance of the heritage asset.	
Policy BE3: Archaeology	ENV2	Proposals affecting archaeological sites of less than national significance (or local significance)	Analysis of what type of developments are anticipated to have potential harm on archaeology Net loss of archaeological sites Monitor use of conditions requiring recording of archaeological remains	Avoid loss of archaeological sites/remains Ensure remains recorded prior to development taking place.	N/A
Policy BE4: Non-Designated Heritage Assets	ENV2	The conservation and enhancement of non-designated heritage assets in Copeland	Number of assets within Local Lists ¹²⁸	Unacceptable harm should be avoided.	N/A
Policy BE5: Shopfronts	ENV2, ECO1, ECO4	The quality of shopfronts in Copeland	No. of applications per annum/those in accordance with policy and the Shopfront Design Guide SPD of proposals relating to shopfronts	Changes and improvements to shopfronts should all be in accordance with the Shopfront Design Guide SPD	N/A

¹²⁸ This will be monitored when a Local List is produced for Copeland

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Policy BE6: Advertisements	ENV2	The provision of advertisements that do not result in harm to amenity or public safety	No. of advertisement consents granted/refused planning permission	Ensure in accordance with policy	N/A
Connectivity					
Policy CO1: Telecommunications and Digital Connectivity	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1	Indication of progress towards improved telecommunications provision	Growth in high-speed telecommunications across Cumbria	Support progress towards achieving 'Connecting Cumbria' aims.	N/A
Policy CO2: Priority for improving Transport networks within Copeland	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO5	Indication of progress towards achieving criteria a-f within the policy	Qualitative information Proposals contributing to highways improvements outlined in the Copeland Transport Improvement Study Monitor s106 obligations Progress against schemes in IDP	The Council will secure the objectives of the Transport Improvement Study. The Council will support the addition of the Whitehaven Relief Road as a RIS3 Scheme and other road improvement schemes.	Review Transport Improvement Study
Policy CO3: Priorities for improving transport links to and from Copeland	SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO5	Analysis of any proposals improving road safety and journey times to and from Copeland.	Qualitative information	Progress to be monitored	N/A

Policy	Sustainability objectives policy helps to achieve	What we want to monitor	Monitoring indicators:	Target/ Objective	Contingency Action
Policy CO4: Sustainable Travel	ENV4, ENV8, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO5	Analysis of a shift towards sustainable transport modes	Delivery of housing and employment allocations ¹²⁹ Progress towards achieving improvements outlined in the Copeland Transport Improvement Study Number and details of any proposals requiring a Travel Plan	Progress to be monitored Travel Plan implementation should be in line with targets in Cumbria Design Guide (or any document that replaces it)	N/A
Policy CO5: Transport Hierarchy	ENV4, ENV8, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO5	Provision of high quality sustainable transport in line with the transport hierarchy	N/A	N/A	N/A
Policy CO6: Countryside Access	ENV1, ENV2, ENV4, ENV8, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO2, ECO5	The extent to which improvements to countryside access in Copeland are being implemented	Additional kilometres of Public Footpaths, Rights of Way, and Public Footpath delivered through contributions.	Progress to be monitored Enhancement and extension to public footpaths, rights of way, and public bridleways.	N/A
Policy CO7: Parking Standards	ENV4, ENV6, ENV8, SOC1, SOC2, ECO1, ECO5	That development meets the standards in the Cumbria Design Guide	No. of developments where the standards are not met and the justification for this	Development meets parking standards	N/A

¹²⁹ Delivery of these sites acts as an indicator towards sustainable travel as they have been deemed accessible locations

GLOSSARY

Affordable Housing: Affordable housing should meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It should also include a provision to ensure that the housing remains affordable for future eligible households.

Ancient Woodland: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS). (NPPF)

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification (NPPF).

Biodiversity Net Gain: Biodiversity net gain requires developers to ensure habitats for wildlife are enhanced and left in a measurably better state than they were pre-development. They must assess the type of habitat and its condition before submitting plans, and then demonstrate how they are improving biodiversity – such as through the creation of green corridors, planting more trees, or forming local nature spaces (DEFRA).

Brownfield Land: Land that has been previously developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition includes the curtilage of the development. The definition is set out in the NPPF.

Built Environment: The man-made buildings and structures that make up the environment where people live and work.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): A CIL charge was introduced by the Planning Act 2008 as a tool for Local Authorities to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of an area. Copeland does not currently have a CIL charging schedule but there may be potential for this in the future.

Community-led housing: Housing projects run by individual community groups to build the types of homes that local people need and want. These are usually developed by a community led organisation or enterprise and aim to solve local problems by working with the local community (My Community)

Edge of Centre: For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances (NPPF).

Exception sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing.

Extra Care Housing: housing developments that comprise self-contained homes with design features and support services to enable people to self-care and continue to live independently. Whilst they are primarily for older people, some may support younger people with disabilities.

First Homes: First Homes¹³⁰ are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of ‘affordable housing’ for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:

- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
- b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria (see below);
- c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
- d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).

Geodiversity: The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms (NPPF).

Greenfield land: Land which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time. This applies to most sites outside of built up area boundaries.

Green Infrastructure: The green spaces in Copeland, new and existing, rural and urban, natural and managed, developed as a network of spaces and linking ‘corridors’. The purpose of green infrastructure is to promote biodiversity as well as supporting the health and quality of life of communities.

Gypsies and Travellers: Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

Habitat: The natural home or environment of a plant or animal.

Habitats Regulations Assessment: An assessment that promotes avoidance of damage to Natura 2000 sites through mitigation and compensatory measures. This is required when development may have an adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

Heritage Asset: 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. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing) (NPPF Glossary).

Heritage Coast: The NPPF defines the heritage coast as ‘*areas of undeveloped coastline which are managed to conserve their natural beauty and, where appropriate, to improve accessibility to visitors*’. The only Heritage Coast in Copeland is St Bees Head and Whitehaven Heritage Coast.

House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO): HMOs requiring planning permission are those with more than six unrelated occupiers. They comprise two or more households and are different from self-contained flats as occupiers share basic amenities such as kitchen and bathroom facilities.

¹³⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes#first-homes-definition-and-eligibility-requirements>

Key Service Centre: Copeland's three Key Service Centres of Millom, Egremont and Cleator Moor offer the next level of provision below the Principal Town of Whitehaven. This includes access to key services and facilities including schools, shops, community halls and places of worship.

Listed building: When buildings are listed they are placed on statutory lists of buildings of 'special architectural or historic interest'. Listing ensures that the architectural and historic interest of the building is carefully considered before any alterations, either outside or inside, are agreed.

Local Service Centre: There are a total of 8 Local Service Centres across Copeland. These are settlements that offer a lower provision than the Key Service Centres within the settlement hierarchy but provide enough services and facilities to meet everyday needs.

Local Geological Site: Formally known as Regionally Important Geological Sites, these are non-statutory sites that have been identified by local geoconservation groups as being of importance.

Long Term Empty Home: A dwelling that has been unoccupied and unfurnished for at least six months.

Main town Centre uses: "Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)" (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The NPPF was first published in March 2012 and provides guidance surrounding the development of planning policy. This replaces the Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG)

National Site Network (NSN) sites: In 2019 the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 were amended to take account of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Amongst the changes, a National Site Network was created within the UK territory comprising the protected sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) already designated under the Nature Directives, and any further sites designated under these Regulations (formerly referred to as Natura 2000 sites). The network does not include Ramsar sites.

Natura 2000 Sites: SACs and SPAs together make up a European network of sites referred to as Natura 2000. Natura 2000 is the centrepiece of EU nature and biodiversity policy.

Open Space: All open spaces of public value, including land and water provisions. These can offer opportunities for recreation, leisure and visual amenity.

Planning obligations and agreements: A legal agreement between a planning authority and a developer, or offered unilaterally by a developer, ensuring that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken (for example for the provision of highways). Sometimes called a "Section 106" agreement.

Primary Shopping Area: An area where retail development and use is concentrated.

Protected Characteristics: These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation as set out in the Equalities Act 2010.

Protected Open Space: Sites within settlement boundaries protected under Policy N12 and conserved through the Open Space Assessment supporting the Local Plan.

Ramsar Site: Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance, designated under the Ramsar Convention.

Renewable energy: Energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, for example from the wind, water flow, tides or the sun.

Retail Impact Assessment: An assessment undertaken for an application for retail use (normally on developments over 2,500 square metres gross floorspace, but they may occasionally be necessary for smaller developments, such as those likely to have a significant impact on smaller centres) on the impact of the proposal on the vitality and viability of existing centres within the catchment area of the proposed development. The assessment includes the likely cumulative effect of recent permissions, developments under construction and completed developments (Planning Portal).

Rural Exception Site: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding (NPPF).

Section 106: The current method taken by the Council to collect planning obligations from developers. This acts as a legal agreement between a planning authority and a developer, ensuring that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken such as the provision of highways.

Self-build and custom build housing: Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act (NPPF).

Settlement Hierarchy: Settlements are categorised in a hierarchy based on the range of services, facilities and employment opportunities in the settlement, access to education and non-car access to higher-order centres. In this context, the settlement hierarchy refers to the Principal Town, Key Service Centre, Local Service Centre, Sustainable Rural Villages, Rural Villages and the Open Countryside (areas outside Settlement Boundaries).

Sequential Approach: A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before the consideration of others. For example, brownfield sites before greenfield sites, or town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites. In terms of employment a sequential approach would favour an employment use over mixed use and mixed use over non-employment uses. (NPPF)

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): A formal conservation designation for an area that is of particular scientific interest due to either rare species of flora and fauna or geological/ physical features that may lie within its boundaries. (Woodland Trust)

Smart Homes: A smart home allows homeowners to control appliances, thermostats, lights, and other devices remotely using a smartphone or tablet through an internet connection. Smart homes can be set up through wireless or hardwired systems. Smart home technology provides homeowners with convenience and cost savings.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC): Areas which have been given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive. They provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity. These now form part of the National Site Network.

Special Protection Area (SPA): Sites classified under the European Community Directive on Wild Birds to protect internationally important bird species. These now form part of the National Site Network.

Sustainable development: Sustainable development is the core principle underpinning contemporary town planning in the UK. At the heart of sustainable development is the ideal of ensuring a better quality of life through development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable transport: Any means of transport that is accessible and efficient whilst having an overall low impact on the environment. This can include walking, cycling, public transport modes and low emission or electric vehicles.

Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS): The term Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) covers the whole range of sustainable approaches to surface water drainage management. SuDS aim to mimic natural drainage processes and remove pollutants from urban run-off at source. SuDS comprise a wide range of techniques, including green roofs, permeable paving, rainwater harvesting, swales, detention basins, ponds and wetlands.

Sustainability Appraisal: This is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors) and required in the Act to be undertaken for all Local Development Documents.

Town centre: The Area defined on the local authority's proposals map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area

Travelling Showpeople: Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.

Viability Review Mechanism: A review of development viability defined with a Section 106 agreement enabling the reassessment of development viability after permission has been granted, at an early, mid or late stage in the development process. These mechanisms address uncertainties in the application stage assessment of viability to enable the maximum level of affordable housing provision over the lifetime of a proposal. The timing of the stages will be set out in the Section 106 Agreement.

Unacceptable Harm: There is no nationally accepted definition of unacceptable harm or unacceptable adverse impacts in planning. Whether harm or adverse impacts are unacceptable is therefore a matter for the decision maker taking all material planning considerations into account. Unacceptable harm/adverse impacts are considered to be those which are more than minor and which cannot be mitigated through planning conditions or planning obligations. In some exceptional circumstances, unacceptable harm can be compensated for. Where this is the case this will be set out in the relevant planning policy.

Windfall sites: Sites not specifically identified within the development plan.

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