

West Whitehaven Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Issues and Options Consultation Report
November 2012



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Issues and Options Consultation Report for Public Comment

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Please make any comments you have on the official Representation Form and send it to:

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1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Planning Context

The West Whitehaven Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is being prepared to guide the protection, enhancement and partial development of an extensive and significant area of coastal landscape between the built up area of Whitehaven and St Bees Head.

The area has been the subject of a number of studies, strategies and management plans developed by a range of different organisations over a number of years. These have included:

- Whitehaven Coast Archaeological Survey, National Trust sponsored research on Whitehaven Coalfield, Cranstone Consultants, June 2007
- Landscape Character Assessment of the South Whitehaven Coast by Friends of the Lake District for National Trust, May 2006
- Whitehaven Coast Project Stage 1 Report, Coastal Fringe Task Group, National Trust, 2006

- Whitehaven Coast Site Risk Assessment, National Trust NW Region, 2006
- Revised Masterplan for Whitehaven Coast, Whitehaven Regeneration, 2007
- Whitehaven Coast Project Workshop Report, 2006
- “A Guide to the Cumbria Historic Landscape Characterisation Programme, Cumbria CC, July 2009” 42. St Bees and 47. West Cumberland Plain
- Summary report for Furness and West Cumbria Local Brownfield Strategy, August 2009, Lambert Smith Hampton for CCC, HACA, ABC, CB, BBC, WLR
- Colourful Coast Initiative (see <http://www.colourfulcoast.org.uk/>)

1.2 Role of the SPD

The SPD will provide guiding principles for the planning and development of the area over the next 15-20 years. The SPD will become one of the material considerations to be taken into account when determining planning applications and will form part of the

Copeland Local Development Framework (LDF). It will elaborate upon but not revise the existing policies in the Borough’s adopted Local Plan and emerging Core Strategy and Development Management Policies document.

The West Whitehaven SPD is referred to in the Core Strategy under the Whitehaven Locality Chapter:

“The “Colourful Coast” Project extends the length of the coast from Whitehaven harbour to St Bees and has provided major improvements to the rights of way network and biodiversity through a partnership between the Land Trust, the National Trust, RSPB, Haig Colliery, Natural England, Cumbria County Council and the Borough Council. Projects have been undertaken to improve access, infrastructure, interpretation and public awareness, all designed to improve visitor enjoyment of the coastal fringe strip between the harbour and the Marchon site, especially in relation to the high quality landscape here and industrial archaeological interest (including the Haig Mining Museum). This whole area has been designated as a Tourism Opportunity Site (ER10) and the approach will be to leave the seaward side

open and to protect the views from the Heritage Coast itself, to create new areas of parkland, and to allow some limited redevelopment on the east side, beginning with the area occupied by former offices and labs. Appropriate uses include those associated with tourism such as visitor interpretation facilities, accommodation and conference space, and a small, high quality business park for offices and craft workshops.

There is a need to coordinate tourism, open space, business development and housing market renewal in a total regeneration package for the whole of West Whitehaven and it is proposed that a development brief will be prepared to guide restoration and new development across the area.”

There is therefore a recognised need for a planning document to provide further detail on the different planning policies which aim to protect the important landscape and built heritage, provide opportunities for improving accessibility and promote the tourism and visitor economy as part of Copeland’s need for economic diversification.

The SPD is timely as the former Marchon chemical works site has recently been

acquired by a private developer for a mixed use scheme which is likely to include land restoration for partial redevelopment together with softer end uses such as open space. Furthermore, the South Whitehaven SPD is being developed to provide a framework for the planning and development of an extensive area of new housing, and improvements to existing estates in the adjoining area of Greenbank to the east of Wilson Pit Road. It is important therefore that the regeneration and development of the two areas are complimentary to one another and that each supports the wider Regeneration Strategy for Whitehaven.

1.3 Location and Extent of West Whitehaven SPD Area

The extent of the West Whitehaven SPD area is shown on Map 1(on p3).

The area extends southwards along the coastal fringe from the landmark Candlestick Chimney in the north to Quarry Bungalows on the edge of St Bees Head in the south. The area is bounded to the west by the Irish Sea and to the east by the Kells and Woodhouse housing estates. The former Cumbrian Coastal Way ran approximately north / south

through the heart of the area, linking the historic Whitehaven harbour to the north west’s only section of Heritage Coast at St Bees Head. Although some permissions have lapsed, a route remains along the coast and this will be superseded by the proposed coastal path currently being negotiated by Natural England under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

The total area covered by the SPD is 163.1 hectares (403.0 acres).

Map 1 West Whitehaven SPD Boundary



1.4 Character and History



The coastal landscape is characterised by extensive views across the sea to Scotland and the Isle of Man and inland to the fells of the western Lake District. There is a distinct quality of openness and relative wildness along the coastal strip today but this belies the area's recent industrial history which included coal mines, coke ovens, alabaster mines, quarries and a major chemical works which was used for the manufacture of detergents, at its peak employing around 2,500 people.

Together the area's assets of varied and extensive industrial archaeology, significant flora and fauna associated with a coastal landscape, close proximity to a historical Georgian town and port and location close to a national long distance footpath combine to

provide significant opportunities for the area's future use and development.

1.5 SPD Development

It is important that the West Whitehaven SPD is developed in close consultation with the many stakeholders which have an active interest in the area.

This Issues and Options report takes into consideration the comments and advice of a range of organisations, representatives of community groups and local councillors from an informal stage of early pre-publication discussions.



Further comments and representations on this Issues and Options document are invited until 5pm on 21st December 2012. The Issues and Options document is accompanied by a Representation Form which is available from

the Copeland Centre reception, public libraries in Copeland, Whitehaven Tourist information Centre, The Beacon Museum or the Council's website (www.copeland.gov.uk) .

It is intended that this document will inform the development of the Draft SPD which will be subject to further consultation in early 2013, before being finalised and adopted as planning policy by the Borough Council in Spring 2013.

Questions

Q1 a. Do you agree with the Introduction and Background to the West Whitehaven SPD?

Q1b. Please provide details of any other information which you think should be included.

2.0 Planning Policy Background

The SPD sits within an overarching planning policy framework of national and local policies.

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework

(NPPF)

The new National Planning Policy Framework was published in March 2012 and replaces the suite of Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes which formerly provided planning guidance at a national level.

The West Whitehaven SPD should have regard to the following paragraphs:

Core Planning Principles

Planning should:

- Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;
- Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from

the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production)

- Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations
- Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable; and
- Take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

Achieving sustainable development includes:

- Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
- Promoting Healthy Communities
- Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Para 114 sets out the need for local authorities to maintain the character of the undeveloped coast, protecting and enhancing its distinctive landscapes, particularly in areas defined as Heritage Coast, and improve public access to and enjoyment of the coast.

Para 153 advises that supplementary planning documents should be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery, and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development.

(Regional Planning Guidance is in the process of being revoked by the Government and it is proposed that it will no longer form part of the LDF, once the Localism Bill is enacted and put into effect in 2012.)

2.2 Cumbria

Cumbria Sub Regional Spatial Strategy 2008-28

Development is encouraged that secures balanced and sustainable urban and rural communities so that there is a flourishing and diverse economy and quality built, natural and historic environments.

Cumbria Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 (LTP3)

Key priorities for Copeland are to support economic development and improve the accessibility of the area.

West Cumbria Economic Blueprint, 2012

Supporting sectors for West Cumbria include:

- Business and Professional Services
- The Visitor Economy
- Arts, Culture and Leisure Service
- Leisure

The Delivery Strategy identifies the need for a Harbour and Coastal Development Programme.

Future Generation, 2010

6.3 Coastal Renaissance

This aims to ensure that all the buildings and building groups which contribute to the distinctive heritage of West Cumbria are preserved and enhanced, along with important areas of open space and industrial architecture.

There is also an aim to clear post industrial decline, ensuring that historic and industrial contaminated land is made safe and suitable for the planned use, recognising that some sites will need restoration in a way which explores the natural habitats which may have evolved there.

Cumbria Community Strategy, 2008

Para 74: Managing, sustaining and where possible enhancing Cumbria's unrivalled natural landscape is central to achievement of much of this strategy. The local landscape quality character and distinctiveness will be protected through careful management to maintain the remoteness and tranquillity of our unique environment.

2.3 Copeland

Copeland Partnership Plan, 2011

Easy access into, out of, and within Copeland and distinctive local landscapes and biodiversity conserved and enhanced.

Priorities are landscape, townscape, seascape and environmental quality.

Copeland Local Plan, June 2006

The SPD will provide more detail for the following policies:

Policy EMP 3 Employment Opportunity Sites

The former Marchon Site, Kells, Whitehaven is identified as an Employment Opportunity Site suitable for a wide range of employment use but may also be suitable for non employment use.

The Council and its regeneration partners are committed to seeking outcomes which improve the environment of the former Marchon site and contribute to sustainable regeneration.

Policy TSM 2: Tourism Opportunity Sites

Whitehaven Coastal Fringe linking Whitehaven harbour with Haig Pit and the St Bees Heritage Coast (TOS3). Proposals for large scale tourist development, particularly those which provide recreational opportunities for the local population will be permitted in this area so long as they accord with the principles of sustainable design and do not compromise the qualities and character of the undeveloped coast or public access thereto.

The SPD will also be supplementary to the following policies:

Policy ENV 2: Nature Conservation Sites of National Importance

Policy ENV 3: Nature Conservation Sites of Local Importance

Policy ENV 4: Protection of Landscape Features and Habitats

Policy ENV 8: Views from and to the Heritage Coast

Policy ENV 13: Access to the Countryside

Policy ENV 14: Development in the Coastal Zone

Policy 15: Undeveloped Coast

Policy ENV 17: Derelict Land

Policy ENV 18: Contaminated Land

Policy ENV 23: Safeguarding Zone

Policy ENV 35: Development Affecting a Scheduled Monument

Policy ENV 36: Development Affecting Sites of Local Archaeological or Historic Importance

Policy ENV 37: Site of Potential Archaeological Importance

Policy TSP 5: Cycleways, Footpaths and Bridleways

Copeland Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, Pre-Submission Document 2012

The SPD will provide more detail for the following policies:

Policy ER5 – Improving the Quality of Employment Space

Policy ER6 – Location of Employment

Policy ER10 – Renaissance through Tourism

Policy ER11 – Developing Enterprise and Skills

Policy SS5 – Provision and Access to Open Space and Green Infrastructure

Policy T1 – Improving Accessibility and Transport

Policy ENV2 – Coastal Management

Policy ENV3 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Policy ENV4 – Heritage Assets

Policy ENV5 – Protecting and Enhancing the Borough's Landscapes

Policy ENV6 – Access to the Countryside

Whitehaven Locality chapter

Policy DM25 – Protecting Nature Conservation Sites, Habitats and Protected Species

Policy DM26 Landscaping

Policy DM27 – Built Heritage and Archaeology

3.0 Vision and Objectives

3.1 Vision

The Vision for West Whitehaven is:

By 2026, West Whitehaven will be celebrated as a special and unique place, where the industrial heritage, local wildlife, stunning coastal landscapes, and sweeping views are protected, managed and enhanced for the enjoyment of visitors and residents alike. The area will be a visitor destination in its own right, providing an attractive link between Whitehaven Harbour and St Bees Head. New development will be sustainable and sympathetically designed to sit comfortably within the coastal landscape and will provide long term employment opportunities linked to the Energy Coast. All routes and interpretation facilities will be designed and managed to ensure maximum accessibility for everyone.

Questions

Q2a. Do you agree with the Vision for the SPD?

Q2b. Is there anything else you think you should be included in the Vision?

3.2 Objectives of the SPD

- To provide an overarching planning framework for the protection, enhancement and development of West Whitehaven.
- To ensure a co-ordinated approach to the area's regeneration and renewal, taking account of its location on the coastal fringe linking the Heritage Coast to Whitehaven Harbour.
- To compliment and support the planning frameworks provided by the South Whitehaven and Whitehaven Town Centre and Harbourside SPDs.
- To ensure that all new development meets high standards in terms of design quality and sustainability, relates well to existing landscapes, enhances the public realm and reinforces the distinctive qualities of the landscape character areas.
- To provide an environment which supports and encourages use by pedestrians, cyclists, the disabled and wheelchair users.
- To improve links through the area and support connectivity between West Whitehaven and the Heritage Coast, town centre and harbour and local residential communities.
- To identify priority zones for investment and development that will help strengthen and support the area's wider role for tourism, recreation and leisure uses.
- To guide the improvement of visitor facilities and realise the potential of the area as a Tourism Opportunity Site, focussing on industrial heritage and the natural environment.
- To support and progress the aims and objectives of the Colourful Coast initiative.
- To capitalise on opportunities linked to Britain's Energy Coast.

Questions

Q3a. Do you agree with the Objectives for the SPD?

Q3b. Is there anything else you think should be included?



4.0 West Whitehaven's Built and Natural Heritage

4.1 Historical Development

West Whitehaven has a complex and extensive history of agricultural and industrial activity which has left a legacy of ground contamination, mine shafts and scars in the landscape, as well as a number of buildings and structures of historical and archaeological interest.

4.1.1 Agriculture



The West Whitehaven SPD area can be considered to be an agricultural landscape into which industrialisation has progressively intruded. By the mid-18th century industry was the economically dominant land use, but in terms of physical extent agriculture remained dominant well into the 20th century.

Much of the land was arable, with only limited amounts of pasture. Today most of the fields are arable or pasture and the majority of field boundaries consist of “stone hedges” with varying degrees of scrub and living hedge on their tops. This style of construction is often referred to as “Cornish” and is most prominent in Cornwall and Devon, but it is widespread in Irish Sea coastal areas.

4.1.2 Haig Colliery



The first shafts of the coal mine at Haig Colliery were sunk in 1912. There were two main shafts, each over 1,000 ft (340m) deep, and referred to as Haig No's 4 and 5. The shaft numbering at Haig started at 4 because the company had other shafts nearer to Whitehaven harbour and at other pits. Four separate explosions over the period 1922–1931 at Haig Pit killed 83 people.

Haig was the last pit to operate in Whitehaven and was eventually closed in 1986 following the discovery of a major fault. Today much of the site is occupied by Haig Colliery Mining Museum. The winding house and headgear have been undergoing restoration since 1994 by a group of local volunteers and there are plans for a new purpose built visitor centre and café on the site. The winding house building contains two unique Bever-Dorling steam winding engines and the building and its contents are a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Other buildings associated with the colliery were demolished at the end of the 1980s to form the Haig Enterprise Park.

4.1.3 Saltom Pit



Saltom Pit coal mine was sunk in 1729 and was the first pit in England to include mine shafts which went beneath the sea. The mine

workings were constructed around 6m above sea level, on land below the cliffs near to Haig Colliery. The shafts descended to a depth of 456 ft (138m). Coal excavated from Saltom Pit was raised by horse gin to the surface, and then transported by tram through a tunnel to Ravenhill Pit for lifting to the cliff top. Saltom Pit was used as a central pumping station, draining many of the other local mines via a drift driven in the 1790s, and this use continued long after it had ceased to work coal.

The Saltom Pit salt pans were built in 1734-5 with seawater pumped by one of the colliery Newcomen engines. The salt pans were still working in 1760 but had closed by the 1780s when one of the pan houses was converted into a foundry to supply wagon wheels, furnace bars and other cast iron goods to the collieries.

Saltom Pit was closed in 1848, and today it is the best known surviving example of an 18th century colliery layout.

4.1.4 Sandwith Anhydrite Mine

The Sandwith Anhydrite Mine was opened in 1955 to supply anhydrite to the Marchon

chemical works. The use of anhydrite rock for producing sulphuric acid was stimulated by the search for alternative supplies of sulphur when imports from America were curtailed during the Korean War. Marchon made a decision in the late 1940s to manufacture on site as many of the raw materials needed for the production of detergents and other cleaning agents as possible. The essential detergent raw material STPP (sodium tripolyphosphate) needed phosphoric acid for its production, which was in turn derived from attacking phosphorus rock with sulphuric acid.

The manufacturing process involved heating the anhydrite in a kiln to produce sulphur trioxide gas and cement clinker. Sulphuric acid production increased from 100,000 tons per annum to 350,000 tons in 1968, with the same quantity of cement, 165,000 tons of phosphoric acid and 170,000 tons of STPP.

The Sandwith Anhydrite mine was closed in the mid-1970s.

4.1.5 Marchon Site



Formerly the site of the Ladysmith Works and Coke Ovens, chemical manufacturing was undertaken on the site from the First World War until operations ceased in 2001. The long and varied industrial history of the site included coal and gypsum mining, coal tar distillation, fire lighter manufacture, sulphuric acid production and surfactant and phosphate manufacture. The buildings have since been demolished leaving extensive areas of hard standing, several landfill sites and associated monitoring stations.

The operational site extended across 54 hectares (133 acres) and at its peak the works employed 2,500 employees. The Marchon Company and associated Whitehaven works were variously taken over by Albright & Wilson (1955), Tenneco (1978), Rhodia,

(1999), and Huntsman, (2001) but the site continues to be known locally as “The Marchon Site”.



Marchon site C1970s

Photograph by kind permission of The Beacon Museum

Marchon Products Ltd was set up in London in 1939, but moved to Whitehaven in 1940 due to the destruction of its original premises in the Blitz. Marchon initially took over the disused tar works at Ladysmith. The colliery had closed but the power station and washery remained in Colliery Company use, serving and treating coal from Haig. With the end of the war, the works was expanded by relocating industrial buildings from munitions

works at Drigg and Sellafeld. It was still producing firelighters, detergent intermediates and a limited range of fat-related chemicals. In 1948 the company decided to expand and to concentrate on detergents, and new purpose built buildings were added to the works, which now occupied an expanding area north of the access road from High Road to Ladysmith Pit, and east of the railway lines.

The starting point for the manufacture of organophosphate detergents was sodium tripolyphosphate. This was produced by reacting phosphoric acid with caustic soda or soda ash (sodium carbonate). Phosphoric acid was produced by reacting imported phosphate rock from Morocco with sulphuric acid. The sulphuric acid was produced on site initially using elemental sulphur but later due to world shortages using anhydrite or gypsum (calcium sulphate), and producing cement as well as sulphuric acid. The anhydrite was mixed with shale or marl, and roasted in a kiln to produce sulphur trioxide gas and cement clinker. The impetus for this development was the realisation that quite fortuitously the works lay adjacent to the major anhydrite / gypsum resources of the Permian beds

beneath Sandwith; these were therefore exploited by the sinking of the Sandwith Anhydrite Mine from within the site.

The sulphuric and phosphoric acid plant was built south of Ladysmith Road, and west of High Road. Construction started in 1952, with works coming on stream in 1955. Further kilns and acid and phosphate plant were added over the following decade, together with an increased range of organic-chemical plant. From 1973 to 1976 the anhydrite kilns were progressively replaced by three new sulphur burners as the economics of the anhydrite process for sulphuric acid production were becoming less favourable.

The organic side of Marchon's production was diverse in raw materials, processes and products. However the core of the business was the production of fatty alcohols by high pressure hydrogenation of vegetable fatty acids; the first major plant to undertake this was opened in 1954. Much of the fatty alcohol production was reacted with sodium tripolyphosphate to produce detergents, shampoos, and other toiletries.

Employment at the site increased from 39 in 1944 to 2,300 in 1978, before the site went into rapid decline through the 1990s. It was a major contributor to the Whitehaven and West Cumberland economic and social landscape from the 1950s to the 1990s.

Discharges of effluent from the plant into the Irish Sea are likely to have occurred from the time of the site's rapid development in the 1950s to 1960s. By 1989 there was local and national concern about discharges, both surfactants (detergent related chemicals, producing foam slicks on the sea) and of heavy metals arsenic, cadmium, lead, uranium and zinc (from impurities in the phosphate rock). Radioactive uranium discharge aroused particular concern. In 1991-2 the company abandoned the production of acid on site, importing phosphoric acid from Morocco and treating it in a new plant on site to remove heavy metal contamination. This was reacted with lime and burnt in a rotary kiln, converting it into a rock like material which was tipped in a landfill site occupying the south end of the site (between Townhead and the Wilson Pit junction). The redundant phosphate rock store was converted into a covered waste water lagoon in which surfactants were

broken down by bacterial action, resolving the other major effluent problem.

The phosphates plant closed in 2002, and demolition of all disused plant began. The works finally closed in June 2005. By autumn 2006 much of the site had been reduced to ground level, consisting largely of concrete yard, road and floor surfaces, with the site bounded by the perimeter fence.



4.1.6 Barrowmouth Alabaster / Gypsum Mine, above Saltom Bay

The first record of an alabaster quarry in this area dates from 1682 in correspondence from the Lowther estate. By 1739 alabaster stone and freestone were being quarried at "Barrowmouth". In its earlier years the mine was probably worked for alabaster (monumental stone), but by the 1850s it was likely that gypsum (for plaster production) replaced alabaster production. At some stage an alabaster mill was built between Barrowmouth Farm and Croft Pit, adjacent to the head of the Croft Incline.

By 1896 the mill had wagon way connections from the mine and to the Croft Incline, with a kiln beside the line from the mine. The mine was closed in 1908.

Map 2 Ordnance Survey Map of West
Whitehaven Area 1861



4.1.7 Birkham's, Aikbank, Ravenhill, and Barrowmouth Quarries

The first records of stone quarrying in this area date from 1687-8 when “grindstones” from St Bees cliffs were exported. The initial reliance on boat transport meant that the quarries were in the coastal cliffs but by 1784 road transport was increasing and cart tracks replaced packhorse trails. In 1899 a wagon way was driven through the quarries (see Map 3 p16).

St Bees Sandstone escarpment saw the development of numerous small quarries along the sea cliffs to the west, probably exporting stone mainly by sea, and with land access predominantly from Sandwith and St Bees, to larger quarries along the escarpment above the Baurgh, exporting stone by road and wagon way and increasingly accessed from Whitehaven and using the colliery transport system.

Almost all the quarries were worked for “freestone” or “dimension stone”; natural stone or rock that has been selected and fabricated to specific sizes or shapes.

In addition to the St Bees sandstone, the carboniferous Whitehaven Sandstone was also extensively quarried, notably at Tom Hurd Rock (from 1687 to around 1700) and at Ravenhill Quarry on the cliff top north of Saltom Pit and was used in the construction of West Pier.

There is also evidence of small scale limestone quarrying at two quarries later covered by the Ladysmith Washery Tip and the Marchon site.

4.2 Archaeology and Heritage Significance

4.2.1 The Howgill Ridge Plateau

The cliffs at the northern end of the West Whitehaven SPD area are unstable with active erosion and land slipping.

It is possible that substantial below ground remains of the Wellington Pit engine house and pithead may survive beneath the landscaped bank from Candlestick Chimney down to the South Beach area, just outside the SPD boundary.

Tom Hurd Rock also lies just outside the SPD boundary but it is worth noting. The area behind the Rock comprising the modern

forshore is formed of reclaimed ground, the reclamation spreading progressively westwards from the 17th to the 20th centuries. Beneath this infill, the former sea inlet forms a potential area of survival for the remains of ships and artefacts from the wrecks for which Tom Hurd was notorious.

The surviving buildings and their internal machinery at Haig Pit are a Scheduled Ancient Monument and are of great importance to colliery archaeology nationally and locally.



Map 3 Ordnance Survey Map of West
Whitehaven Area 1899



Saltom Pit is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument; dating from the 18th century it is considered to be of outstanding importance. It was the first undersea coal-mine in England, and is the best known surviving example of an 18th century colliery layout. Saltom Pit was closed in 1848 and the surviving structures include evidence of the 18th century shaft, horse gin circle, seawall, stable, 1820s vertical-winder engine house, boiler house and chimney, cottages, cart roads and retaining walls. Ravenhill Pit was sunk in the 1730s but was never a colliery in its own right, serving only to wind up coal from Saltom Pit.



The Croft Incline is an important example of 19th century colliery transport and remains the primary access route through the area. The wagon way was used for early experiments with steam locomotion in the 1810s and also

carried pre-1830s water pipes from Gameriggs to the north end of Howgill Colliery.

The fields between the Croft Incline and the cliff are a fine example of early 19th century Lonsdale layout. The area offers the potential to research whether there is evidence of Mesolithic occupation as at nearby St Bees Head. In the south east corner a crop mark shows a rectilinear structure / feature which may have been a substantial Roman building.

4.2.2 Barrowmouth

The Barrowmouth area is tucked in beneath the sandstone cliffs above St Bees and extends north along the coast to the edge of enclosed fields on the Howgill Ridge. The area forms a very distinctive micro-landscape, probably unique in northwest England. As well as its archaeological importance, it is within a SSSI and Geological Conservation Site.



The Barrowmouth gypsum / alabaster mine is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and is one of the best field monuments of gypsum mining in England. The presence of alabaster here was known by 1682 and there is documentary evidence of mining and quarrying from 1739 to 1907. The area is only accessible by a single path. The upper part follows the original path / packhorse track access, but the lower part uses the late 19th century Incline. To the east of the mine, substantial remains survive of the late 19th century Incline and engine house, the waggon way sidings, and an earlier packhorse and cart track. The terrace beneath the workings was occupied by a cluster of buildings, possibly a fishing hamlet.

In 1697 the St Bees fishermen were using Barrowmouth in preference to St Bees bay, despite the lack of either a safe landing place or a “house for fishermen” (probably a shelter and store for nets and other equipment, rather than a dwelling). Herring were plentiful at this time. A proposal for a fishing harbour by extending the “race”, a strip of sand and gravel with a rocky foreshore on each side, was documented in the 1690s although it is not certain whether it was built.

In the 1850s the area was developed by an eccentric local family the Hamiltons, as pleasure grounds. Paths, ponds, a mock harbour, lake and grounds adorned with alabaster statues were constructed and “Port Hamilton” became a popular picnic spot, with the “Castle” serving teas. The area is now inaccessible due to land slipping and dense undergrowth.

4.2.3 Marchon Site

The area to the north of the Barrowmouth Mine, including the Ladysmith / Marchon tip and various colliery tipping and Marchon waste disposal features, form a “landscape of disposal” and are of industrial heritage interest. Below ground the remains of the Barrowmouth Alabaster Works, Croft / Ladysmith Pit and Croft Incline engine house may survive.



The site above ground is likely to be of little archaeological interest, as it was landscaped during the construction of the works with concrete and tarmac floor and yard surfaces.

4.2.4 South West Area

This area forms part of the historic farming landscape of Sandwith township, with stone hedge field boundaries of various dates, showing progressive enclosures. There is a major concentration of Mesolithic flint scatters nearby on St Bees Head. The cliff top area and the scarp crest east to the edge of the Marchon site, have excellent views to the north and although no sites are known, this would be a logical location for Roman forts or signal stations either from the Solway frontier or from late Roman coastal defences. The main visible archaeological features are a strip of freestone (St Bees Sandstone) quarrying along the cliff top to Aikbank Quarry. Most of the quarries are well preserved with evidence of working methods on the rock faces, internal features within the quarry floors and access features. The North West's only section of Heritage Coast, St Bees Head, lies just to the south of the West Whitehaven SPD area, with the boundaries of the SPD and Heritage Coast almost touching at Quarry Bungalows.

4.3 Natural Environment

The St Bees Head SSSI extends from an area just south of Saltom Pit along the coastal strip to the west of the cliff edge foot path (see Map 4 p19). Much of St Bees Head is managed by the RSPB as a reserve and sea birds in the area include fulmars, guillemots, razorbill, cormorants, puffin, shag, herring gull and kittiwake. This is the only breeding place in England for Black Guillemots. Lower down interesting flora species include sea pink, scurvygrass, sea campion, sea spleenwort, rock samphire and sea lavender and near the cliff top bloody cranesbill, wood vetch, and orpine and soft shield-fern can be found. Dyer's greenweed, western gorse, heather and bracken grow along the cliff top. Birkhams Quarry, just to the south of the SPD area is a Regionally Important Geological / Geomorphological Site (RIGS).

Questions

Q4a. Do you agree with the main points covered in Chapter 4, West Whitehaven's Built and Natural Heritage?

Q4b. Is there anything else you think should be added?

Map 4 Extent of St Bees Head SSSI,
West Whitehaven



5.0 Landscape Character Areas



A thorough understanding and appreciation of the landscape character of the West Whitehaven SPD area is considered essential for the development of an appropriate and effective planning framework. The Borough Council is in the process of preparing a background document to the SPD which will consider the landscape significance and proposed protected views in more detail. This document will be published for information alongside the West Whitehaven Draft SPD in early 2013.

5.1 Cumbria Historic Landscape Characterisation Programme

The landscape character of the area is broadly described in Cumbria County Council's landscape characterisation programme. West Whitehaven lies across the boundary of two defined character areas; namely 42 St Bees, and 47 West Cumberland Plain.

42 St Bees

This character area is distinguished from neighbouring character areas by a comparative lack of modern and industrial influenced development. It is topographically distinct from neighbouring character areas by

being an area of rolling low coastal hills. The settlement pattern is a mix of nucleated and discrete settlements. All the nucleated settlements pre-date 1770 whilst the discrete settlements are often situated within areas of planned enclosure and exactly half date from after 1770. This indicates that in the St Bees area, enclosure of the open wastes from the late 18th century onwards led to the development of new settlements. Some of the nucleated settlements exhibit clear evidence of medieval planning, especially at St Bees. The field pattern is a mix of former common arable field, ancient enclosures and planned enclosure. In each case the boundary is usually formed by a hedgerow. There is very little woodland, and the few woods are either small blocks of plantation or tiny patches of ancient woodland.

Legacy: A mixed pattern of modern and older settlements with a clear association between discrete settlement forms and 19th century enclosure, strong legibility of landscape elements of medieval origin.

Landscape designation and status: St Bees is a Heritage Coast.

47 West Cumberland Plain

The West Cumberland Plain stretches from the Solway Firth in the north to Egremont in the south. It is generally low lying and coastal in nature, with generally low, eroding cliffs forming the seaward edge. Its dominant character is urban and industrial. Whitehaven is a post medieval planned town with a long industrial and maritime history although 71% of the settlement post dates 1900. These developments have largely obscured the planned, medieval, nucleated settlement character that predominated until the 19th century.

The field pattern has been much disrupted by modern developments. These include land restoration, for which the modern field pattern bears very little relationship to the historic pattern. In Copeland District there are relatively few former common arable fields, and the fieldscape is dominated by ancient enclosures. These distinctions, however, are subsumed under the general urban and industrial character of the area. There is hardly any woodland, apart from large areas of ancient woodland in gill locations.

Legacy: A largely modern landscape with many 20th and 21st century industrial forms including windfarms, moderate survival of 19th century industrial features, weak legibility of landscape elements of medieval origin.

5.2 Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit - Part 1 Landscape Character Guidance, 2011

Type 4 Coastal Sandstone

The coastal edge extending from Whitehaven to St Bees Head is defined as Sub Type 4 Coastal Sandstone.

Key Characteristics

- Coastal sandstone cliffs
- Sandstone rolling hills and plateaus
- Large open fields
- Prominent hedge banks bound pastoral fields
- Small woodland blocks along valley sides
- Exposed coastal edge moving to intimate and enclosed farmland inland.

Type 5 Lowland - Subtype 5d Urban Fringe

Location

This landscape subtype is found around the edges of Whitehaven.

Key Characteristics

- Long term urban influences on agricultural land
- Recreation, large scale buildings and industrial estates are common
- Wooded valleys, restored woodland and some semi urbanised woodland provide interest

5.3 Landscape Character Assessment of the South Whitehaven Coast, National Trust

West Whitehaven also has been the subject of extensive and detailed study by the Friends of the Lake District on behalf of the National Trust.

The area is described as the only significant cliff coastline between Scotland and North Wales. It has a highly significant cultural and natural heritage, and provides an integral link between Whitehaven and St Bees Head.

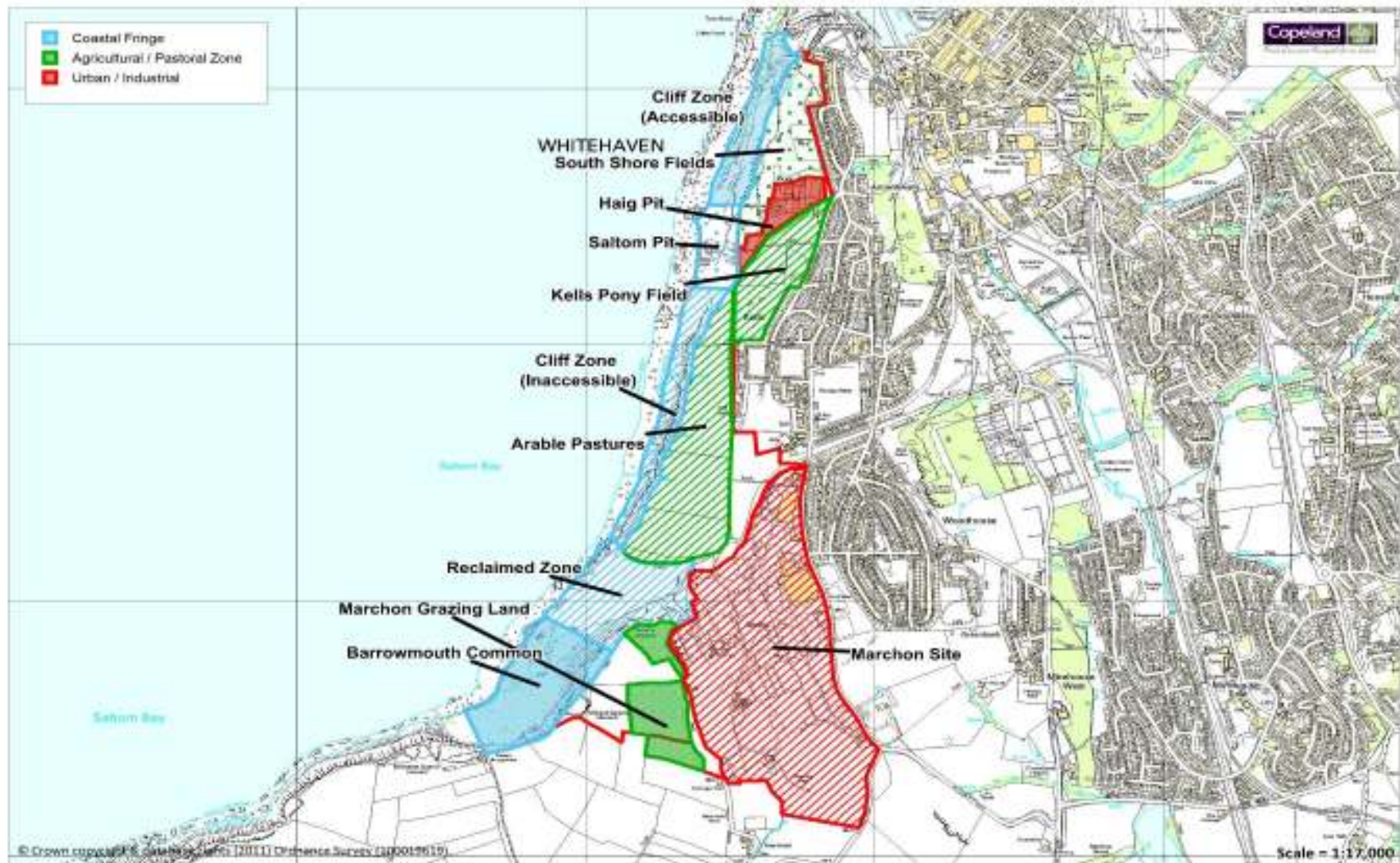
5.3.1 Key Characteristics

- Large scale landscape, becoming more open and exposed near the coast
- Landscape complexity varies between managed texture of the pasture and neglected low hedges, to the vast angular scale of the cliffs
- A landscape made up of precipitous open coastline, urban fringe areas, undulating pasture, large rectangular fields, stunted trees, quarrying, wire fences and hedge banks
- Constantly changing views from the wide open vistas across the sea to

Scotland and the Isle of Man, contrasting with the High Lakeland fells to the east, and the urban and industrial settlements to the north.

- Strong industrial history associated with coal mining, chemical works and small scale quarrying, within living memory being a major area of employment.
- Limited scrub woodland cover
- Three Scheduled Ancient Monuments – Haig and Saltom Pits, Barrowmouth Gypsum mines
- Physical evidence of industrial heritage throughout, with coal mining occurring from the 1600s to 1986
- Cumbria Coastal Way runs up the coastal strip as well as a short section of the Coast to Coast walk
- Notable for its nearness to and influence of the sea

Map 5 Landscape Types and Character Areas



5.3.2 Landscape Types (see Map 6 p23)

Coastal Fringe



A stretch of largely undeveloped and inspirational coastline with the potential for enhancement. Superb views in all direction – framed by the Irish Sea, Lakeland hills, historic Whitehaven and St Bees Heritage Coast.

The Coastal Fringe includes the following Character Areas:

A Barrowmouth Common - One of the largest expanses of coastal heath on the Cumbrian Coast, of regional significance. A remote, wild and contrasting area extending from the steep cliffs down to the sea shore. Undulating, largely dominated by scrub, bracken and stunted trees.



B Reclaimed Zone - A locally important area for informal recreation. A degraded landscape reflecting the re-workings of a former washings tip, and the use of the area for motorbike scrambling. An area in contrast with the adjacent wild areas, with a more urban feel.



C Cliff Zone (Inaccessible) - Significant for its landscape. A narrow strip of steep vertical sandstone cliffs, giving a wild and windy feel, with open views across the sea, and the noise of the waves on the pebble shore. Restricted access.



D Saltom Pit - An outstanding historic / cultural site of national significance. A coastal zone, sloping down to the shore. Evocative historic building of Saltom Pit nestling at the base of the cliff. Some degradation due to natural land slippage and erosion (and highly vulnerable to change) and tipping. Highly vulnerable to the impacts of coastal erosion and slippage.



E Cliff Zone (Accessible) - Locally significant in terms of use. A relatively wild and windy strip, marking the zone between the urban fringe to the north and the remote coast to the south. Well used but spoilt by fences and signage.

Agricultural / Pastoral Zone

An intermediate zone, between the coastal strip and the urban fringe, characterised by undulating improved grassland, and extensive views over the sea and to the Lake District Mountains.



A Marchon Grazing Land

Locally significant for access and extensive views. This area represents an urban fringe with fields where agriculture is marginal, there is some pony grazing, and the more open

landscapes associated with St Bees Heritage coast landscape of coastal character 1.

B Arable Pastures - Locally significant for access and extensive, open views. Large, rectangular, gently sloping grassland and arable field, dividing the rugged sea and cliffs from the housing estates to the east.

C Kells Pony Fields - A zone east of the trackway towards the housing urban fringe, characterised by rough grassland, with a rather degraded and scruffy feeling. Locally significant as part of the urban fringe area.



D South Shore Fields - Locally significant for informal access. Cliff, plateau grassland, mown grass giving an urbanised feeling, well used by the public.

Urban / Industrial Zone

A zone running parallel to the coast, characterised by a strong historic mining and industrial workings, which are now mainly redundant. Urban fringe with a mix of housing styles and detractors eg fencing, overhead wires

Includes the following Character Areas:

A Haig Pit - Significant for its history. The remaining Haig pit machinery is iconic and evocative of the history of this site, standing proud on a flat cliff top location, but one that is currently degraded.



B Marchon Site - Locally significant in terms of its past role as an employer. A degraded former industrial / chemical site surrounded by intrusive security fencing and lighting, giving a feel of derelict urban fringe. An important site in the history of Whitehaven. Huge opportunities to re-connect the coast and urban fringe, and provide new community facilities and involvement.



Questions

Q5a. Do you agree with the main points covered in Chapter 5 which summarise the landscape characteristics of West Whitehaven?

Q5b. Is there anything else you think should be added, bearing in mind that a more detailed background document on landscape character is being prepared by the Borough Council?

6.0 Key Opportunities, Constraints and Development Options

6.1 Opportunities

The West Whitehaven SPD area clearly presents a significant range of opportunities for land restoration, enhancement and some redevelopment, based on the area's many assets summarised as follows:

- Coastal, cliff top location with near distant views to red sandstone cliffs, St Bees Head and Candlestick Chimney, and far distant views across the Irish Sea to Scotland, the Isle of Man and inland to the Western Lake District Fells. In the evenings West Whitehaven benefits from often spectacular sunsets over the Irish Sea. Overall the Coastal Fringe has a distinct quality of "openness" which itself can be seen as an asset.
- Close proximity to Whitehaven town centre, a celebrated early Georgian town and port. Whitehaven has significant potential to develop further as a tourist destination due to its historic buildings set within a

traditional street pattern, independent shops, local museums and attractive historic harbour and marina.

- The neighbouring South Whitehaven SPD area which is likely to include new development of around 600-800 new houses, new or improved local education facilities, open spaces, and environmental improvements to existing estates at Woodhouse and Greenbank.
- Good pedestrian accessibility due to paths running through the area, linking Whitehaven Harbour to St Bees through the north west's only section of Heritage Coast. Recently improvements to accessibility have been carried out under the banner of the Colourful Coast initiative. The Wainwright Coast to Coast route from St Bees to Robin Hoods Bay also follows the path to St Bees Head. West Whitehaven is also included in the next phase of consultation and development of the new national England Coast Path. Non pedestrian /

vehicular accessibility could be enhanced through local junction / highway improvements.

- The area has significant potential for the enhancement of local biodiversity, and particularly wildlife associated with cliff and coastal landscapes. Part of the area is a SSSI and St Bees Head directly to the south is managed by the RSPB for its colonies of breeding sea birds and rare flora.
- Industrial Heritage. The West Whitehaven area is of major industrial heritage interest. It includes the remains of some of Whitehaven's earliest recorded coal mines together with the town's last working mine at Haig. The Haig Mining Museum is located within the boundary of the SPD area and there are plans for a new visitors centre promoting the wider industrial heritage of the coastal area. The area's concentration of former mining, quarrying and chemical processes within a relatively small defined area, together with its extensive network of packhorse trails

and mineral railway routes offer an extraordinary opportunity for further archaeological research and the development of interpretation and education opportunities.

- West Whitehaven is situated at the heart of Britain's Energy Coast. This offers significant potential for the development of engineering research and development and production activities linked to nuclear opportunities, as well as the development of other non-nuclear low carbon and renewable technologies. The area already includes a small industrial / commercial estate - Haig Enterprise Park - but the Energy Coast may offer further opportunities for appropriately scaled development.

Questions

Q6a. Do you agree with the identified Opportunities for West Whitehaven?

Q6b. Is there anything else you would like to add?

6.2 Constraints

Many of the above identified opportunities could also be seen as constraints on the potential development and mix of land uses considered appropriate for West Whitehaven.

- The biodiversity interest and industrial heritage of the area are protected from inappropriate development by local and national planning policies and a raft of statutory designations. The high level of protection will impact both on development proposals located within the areas of biodiversity, landscape and built heritage interest, and development proposals for sites nearby. Development could adversely affect neighbouring habitats which provide a supporting role for species, and impact on views to and from the heritage and landscape assets and the setting of these assets.
- The Core Strategy promotes the need to protect the intrinsic qualities of St Bees Heritage Coast in terms of development proposals within or

affecting views. In general the thrust of local planning policies protects the character of openness in the Whitehaven Coastal Fringe, whilst supporting the area's role as a potential visitor destination.

- Former mining and industrial activities have resulted in extensive land contamination, areas of unstable made land and spoil heaps on the foreshore and around cliff edges, and numerous old mine shafts, buildings and structures in poor and deteriorating condition. Some sections of public footpaths have had to be closed in the interests of public safety and there has been at least one recent fatality in the area linked to a landslip.
- The former Marchon site includes two formerly licensed tips which will be closed to public access for the foreseeable future, and extensive below ground contamination resulting from various industrial and chemical processes. The degree and type of contamination will impact on the

viability of different end uses. The concrete platforms currently provide a protective layer on the site but if these are disturbed by building processes for hard end uses, then a higher level of remediation and decontamination will be required than that for soft end uses such as public open space.

- The public perception of the area locally is often poor due to the recent history of the industrial / chemical activities of the Marchon plant. The environmental impacts of the production processes resulted in unpleasant odours, gas clouds, and residue deposits on cars and gardens, as well as ground water contamination leading to foam licks and radioactive deposits in the sea. Visual impacts, noise and lighting pollution affected local residential amenity as did the heavy road traffic generated by the many tanker trips taking raw materials to the site from the harbour. These associations may impact on the value placed on the Coastal Fringe by local residents

today, resulting in a more degraded environment on the urban fringe, and problems of dog fouling and littering. This presents challenges for the “re-imaging” of the area as an attractive, restored environment in the future.

- Non pedestrian accessibility is limited. Whitehaven has a limited capacity train service linking to Carlisle to the north and Lancaster to the south along the Cumbrian Coast. The nearest stations are Whitehaven Bransty (approximately 1 mile away) and Corkickle (approximately ½ mile). The A595 lies 2 ½ miles to the east, providing a link to the M6 at Penrith (approximately an hour’s drive) and south to Barrow in Furness, the South Lakes and the M6 near Kendal. Road links to both the A595 and town centre are an issue, and upgrading may be necessary to improve capacity. However the bus service linking Woodhouse to the town centre is considered reasonable and services are likely to receive further investment as the South Whitehaven area is developed.

- The exposed coastal location and associated climate will have implications for development layout, design and materials.

Questions

Q7a. Do you agree with the identified Constraints for West Whitehaven?

Q7b. Is there anything that should be changed, or anything else you think should be added?

6.3 Development Options

The opportunities and constraints outlined above will shape and inform the range of possible development options for West Whitehaven. The West Whitehaven SPD extends over a wide area and it is likely that a combination of some or all of the following may be appropriate, with different uses targeted to different zones.

6.3.1 Visitor Potential – Industrial Heritage

(see Map 6.1 p31)

There is clearly considerable potential for enhancing the area as a visitor attraction. This would support the emerging role of Whitehaven as a tourist destination in its own right and fits with the aims and objectives of the Colourful Coast initiative and the Copeland Partnership Plan.

There are opportunities for restoring and promoting the area's significant industrial heritage assets, linked to the development of the Haig Mining Museum and the aspirations of the National Trust for the area. The promotion of local industrial heritage assets could consider the more recent uses such as

the Marchon chemical works as well as those dating from the 17th – 19th centuries.

This option would require substantial investment and a long term vision and management plan for the restoration and enhancement of the industrial landscape, together with improvements to access, and visitor facilities including high quality interpretation and education provision.

There have also been suggestions for a new visitor centre in the Whitehaven area providing interpretation and information linked to Sellafield and the Britain's Energy Coast initiative, and it is possible that this could be located in West Whitehaven. Such a facility would complement the industrial heritage of the area by providing up to date information on current and future low carbon technologies.

There would be a need to consider improvements to public footpaths, including the possible restoration of routes down to Saltom Pit and Barrowmouth Bay. However this would require very careful consideration of the safety issues and potential risks in doing so. If the former Marchon site was included, the existing network of concrete roads could

be utilised for as a cycle park, including for BMX bikes etc.

The Industrial Heritage Zone would be concentrated along the Coastal Fringe from Haig Mining Museum in the north, to encompass Saltom Pit and Barrowmouth in the south. There may also be potential to include part or all of the former Marchon site.

**Map 6.1 Visitor Potential –
Industrial Heritage Zone**



6.3.2 Visitor Potential - Wildlife and the Natural Environment

(see Map 6.2 p33)

West Whitehaven already has considerable landscape and biodiversity significance and there are opportunities to enhance this interest further. Part of the area falls within the St Bees Head SSSI, and there may be opportunities to introduce land management regimes on the fringes which complement the SSSI and extend the wildlife interest into the more degraded areas.

The National Trust has also investigated opportunities for developing a new National Nature Reserve on the former Marchon Site, in partnership with the Land Trust. Trials have been undertaken with wildflower planting which indicate potential for the development of a Local or National Nature Reserve. These proposals involve breaking up the concrete

platforms however, and there would need to be careful consideration of any issues relating to contamination and site remediation.

This option would require substantial investment and a long term vision and management plan for the restoration and enhancement of the landscape, together with improvements to access, and visitor facilities including high quality interpretation and education provision.

The principles of landscaping to enhance local biodiversity could also be extended through a series of wildlife corridors to link in with the open spaces and general landscaping in South Whitehaven.

The Wildlife and Natural Environment Zone would be concentrated along the Coastal Fringe but could also extend into the former Marchon site.

It is worth noting that these opportunities for enhancing the industrial heritage and natural environment for visitors would also offer tangible benefits to existing neighbouring communities at Woodhouse and the proposed new development in South Whitehaven.

**Map 6.2 Visitor Potential – Wildlife and
Natural Environment**



6.3.3 Tourism and Leisure

(see Map 6.3 p35)

Planning policies support the development of tourism related facilities in the Whitehaven Coastal Fringe, provided that it accords with the principles of sustainable development and does not compromise the special qualities and character of the surrounding area or public access.

There may be potential for a tourism / leisure type development comprising some or all of the following:

- Golf course
- Adventure Park / BMX / Skate Park

- Hotel and spa
- Fitness suite
- Restaurant

These uses could be linked with or located close to a visitor interpretation / interpretation centre for the Coastal Fringe and St Bees Heritage Coast.

New buildings should be carefully designed to sit comfortably within this exceptional and sensitive landscape, taking account of views and vistas both within the SPD area and to and from West Whitehaven. The development should be low rise and set in landscaped grounds in order to maintain the general sense of openness and cliff coastal character associated with the adjoining Heritage Coast.

A hotel / leisure development could also support the regeneration of the South Whitehaven area, by improving facilities for local communities and may be seen as a positive marketing tool for the proposed new homes, particularly those targeted towards the higher end of the market.

This type of development should be focussed on the former Marchon site, with buildings located to the north on the former office site.

Map 6.3 Tourism and Leisure Zone



6.3.4 Mixed Use Development

(see Map 6.4 p37)

Britain's Energy Coast West Cumbria has published an Economic Blueprint which promotes the area's potential for economic regeneration based on the nuclear decommissioning process, nuclear new build and the potential development of low carbon technologies. The strategy has two linked areas of activity:

- Creating an environment in which businesses and individuals are encouraged to innovate and
- Putting in place measures in the short term to ensure that as much of the substantial investment in nuclear new build and decommissioning is captured by local businesses as possible.

The Britain's Energy Coast Innovation Zone will concentrate on actions related to:

- Applied Research
- Research and Development / Demonstration
- Enterprise

- Business Support
- Skills and Training
- Accessing markets
- Infrastructure
- Sites and Premises.

The Marchon site offers the opportunity for a small scale high end business park mixed with residential development. This type of development would complement facilities already offered at West Lakes Science Park which provides a base for Research and Development activities. A business park at West Whitehaven could provide facilities for incubation units and early stage production and development linked to the nuclear engineering industry and other low carbon technologies.

A small amount of residential development in the area would offer opportunities to increase the economic viability of the business park and would help to support sustainability objectives. A limited amount of new housing in this part of West Whitehaven would assist with linking the area to South Whitehaven, where there are proposals for a new development of high quality housing.

There could be 3 potential options for the location of a mixed use scheme in West Whitehaven:

Option 1 – Concentrate the buildings within a medium to high density environment on the footprint of the former office buildings / laboratories.

Option 2 –Design the business park to be at a lower density, set within a landscaped park and incorporating extensive areas of planting across a larger footprint of the former Marchon site.

Option 3 – A further Option could be to consider the expansion and / or improvement of Haig Enterprise Park.

Recent market testing by developers has indicated that there is little interest in these uses at the current time however, and therefore viability may be an issue.

Map 6.4 Mixed Use Development Options



6.3.5 Temporary Worker Accommodation

(see Map 6.5 p39)

The Core Strategy for Copeland identifies a need to find suitable sites for temporary worker accommodation to support the proposed development of the new nuclear power station at Moorside. In identifying sites for worker accommodation the Council will support sites in locations consistent with the Core Strategy, chosen to minimise undesirable impacts and able to be fully restored with uses leaving a beneficial legacy for the Borough. The Whitehaven Locality section of the Core Strategy also advises that temporary contractor accommodation for nuclear new build projects in North Copeland would involve investigating sites in or immediately adjoining Whitehaven. Sites close to railway stations or with good road access and near the town centre or neighbourhood centre would be favoured, particularly where there are obvious “legacy” or after use benefits such as

site restoration as an impetus for a regeneration development site.

West Whitehaven has locational advantages in that it is on the southern side of Whitehaven, with good road access to the Moorside site (subject to junction improvements at the Mirehouse Road / A595 junction). The provision of temporary worker accommodation could provide long term economic benefits in terms of tackling contamination, and securing land restoration for public open space.

However, the provision of temporary worker accommodation could be seen as a potentially conflicting use with the development of new housing, including “executive” style homes across the road in South Whitehaven. There would therefore need to be careful consideration of design and management to protect local residential amenity and there may be better options for this type of accommodation elsewhere in the area.

If developed, temporary worker accommodation should be concentrated on the former Marchon Site.

Map 6.5 Temporary Worker Accommodation



6.3.6 Renewable Energy

The Core Strategy (Policy ENV2) supports energy generating developments 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. However this general support has to be balanced carefully against the need to protect the intrinsic qualities of the St Bees Head Heritage Coast in terms of development proposals within or affecting views from the designation.

The high quality coastal landscape of West Whitehaven is highly sensitive to change. Development proposals for say, wind generation, are likely to have a significant visual impact and are likely to be highly visible from the Heritage Coast and sections of the Coastal Path, as well as from inland due to the local topography and elevated position of the SPD area. There are also likely to be biodiversity considerations linked to the SSSI and colonies of breeding sea birds.

The Cumbria Wind Energy SPD advises that the area has particular sensitivities in relation to the setting of national designations including: *“open prospects between Whitehaven and the St Bees Heritage Coast and integrity of the dramatic sandstone scenery that extends beyond the boundary of this designation as viewed from the northern approaches via the Cumbria Coastal Way”*.

In addition West Whitehaven is in close proximity to existing residential areas at Woodhouse and Kells, and a proposed large scale new housing development in South Whitehaven. Impacts on residential amenity including visual impact, noise and disturbance and shadow flicker would all require careful consideration.

Even if the principle of energy related development was established as acceptable, the location of such development within West Whitehaven is likely to be highly controversial, as a development would have to be sandwiched between a residential area and highly sensitive cliff top area. Development proposals would be required to undertake detailed research and assessment of all these issues before any potential sites could be identified. Therefore it is not considered

appropriate at this stage to include a map suggesting possible areas within West Whitehaven where such development could be sited.

Perhaps it would be more appropriate for the area if the emphasis in the SPD was placed on non-wind related forms of low carbon energy technology which are less likely to have an unacceptably adverse impact on the landscape. It has been suggested for instance that the area has potential for utilising the “hot rocks” beneath the surface in Cumbria for district heating schemes across the road in South Whitehaven.

6.3.7 Local Centre

(see Ma p 6.6 p42)

A new local centre in West Whitehaven would provide a concentration of facilities to serve existing and new communities in Woodhouse and South Whitehaven. Such facilities could include for instance a small convenience store / supermarket, a medical centre, newsagents and other local shops.

The policy emphasis in the Core Strategy is on maintaining and enhancing the viability and vitality of existing centres, rather than seeking

expansion and growth. This reflects the findings of the 2009 Retail Study which did not identify any need for major change to the Borough's retail structure in order to meet future and existing need. It is possible that the additional 600-800 households proposed in South Whitehaven would help to support a small scale centre but further research would be required to establish such a need.

The development could be accommodated on the site of the former office buildings on the Marchon site. However there is more likely to be justification for this to be delivered as part of the South Whitehaven development, perhaps linking into proposals for new or improved education facilities.

Recent market testing by developers has indicated little interest in these uses however, and therefore viability may be an issue at the current time.

Questions

Q8a. Do you agree with the proposed Development Options for West Whitehaven?

Q8b. Please explain your answer.

Q8c. Are there any other Development Options which you think the SPD should consider?

Map 6.6 Local Centre



7.0 Consultation with Stakeholders

Copeland Borough Council is committed to thorough and meaningful public consultation as an integral part of the local planning process. The methods and means by which the Borough Council will consult on planning documents is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement or SCI (see www.copeland.gov.uk).

The content of the Issues and Options report for West Whitehaven has already taken into consideration the feedback from pre publication consultations with stakeholders.

A public drop in event was held at the St Peters Centre in Woodhouse on 20th September 2012 for local residents, community organisations and Borough and County Councillors.

Around 26 people attended the event of which 13 completed comments forms giving feedback on the vision and objectives for West Whitehaven as well as the development opportunities, constraints and possible options.

The Consultation Results are provided in Appendix 1. Key Points raised include :

- General agreement for the Vision and Objectives
- Overall support for uses linked to green space, wildlife and industrial heritage
- A need to provide local jobs
- The need to improve road access and links to the town centre
- Concerns about temporary worker accommodation.

In addition a Stakeholder discussion meeting was held on 21st September local landowners and those with an interest in land within or adjoining the West Whitehaven SPD area. The results of this discussion are also included in Appendix 1. Key Points raised include:

- Concern about the lack of public access to the coastal strip
- Opportunities for nature conservation
- Market testing for business / mixed use has indicated issues around viability
- Hotel / holiday cabin type uses are considered reasonable
- There is a need to promote non wind related renewable energy

technologies under the Energy Coast branding

- Support for a Sellafield Visitors Centre

The comments and discussions that took place at these two events have been considered and have helped to shape the Issues and Options Report.

This document is published for wider consultation and comments are invited for 6 weeks until 5pm Friday 21st December 2012.

The West Whitehaven SPD Issues and Options Report is available on the Council's website and hard copies may be viewed at the Copeland Centre, Whitehaven libraries, the Beacon and the Tourist Information Centre.

A Representation Form is provided, but the Borough Council also welcomes other forms of responses such as letters, emails etc and makes use of other media such as Twitter and Facebook to promote open discussion and debate.

For further information please contact:

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Whitehaven
CA28 7SJ

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8. Conclusions and Way Forward

West Whitehaven is a special place. It boasts a unique concentration of industrial archaeology which is closely linked to the historical development of Whitehaven as a Georgian port and town. It encompasses sweeping landscapes and stunning open views to cliff and coastal scenery, wild seascapes and the fells of the western Lake District. Its biodiversity and wildlife are of national significance. It bridges the space between the North West's only section of Heritage Coast and Whitehaven harbour with its many listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments.

And it lies on the doorstep of a growing local community which will see substantial new housing development over the next few years.

It is essential that the SPD sets out an effective, sustainable and deliverable planning framework for the area's future protection, enhancement and development.

The West Whitehaven SPD will be an important planning document, providing more detail on existing local policies in the Core Strategy and Local Plan, over the next 15-20 years. Once adopted, It will be a material

consideration in the development management process, used in the determination of planning applications for new development .

This is a consultation document and views are sought from all those with an interest in West Whitehaven, particularly local residents, young people, community groups, stakeholder organisations, developers and landowners .

The SPD will be subject to public consultation and sustainability appraisal at two key stages.

1. Issues and Options (current consultation)

Comments on the Issues and Options document are invited until 5pm Friday 21st December 2012.

2. Draft SPD

Following consideration of the responses to the Issues and Options, the Draft SPD will be prepared and published for consultation over 6 weeks in February 2013.

The SPD will then be finalised and adopted by the Borough Council in Spring 2013.

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APPENDIX I

West Whitehaven SPD

Issues and Options Pre-publication Consultation Results

1. Public Drop In Event 20/09/12

Question	Response	Changes to Issues and Options Report
1a Do you agree with the Vision for W Whitehaven?	<p>No - 1 Yes – 7 Don't know – 1</p> <p>Yes - Some of them.</p> <p>Yes - With some reservations</p> <p>Non industrial / energy options only.</p>	No change.
1b Can you suggest anything else that the Vision should include?	<p>Facilities for walking cycling</p> <p>The main focus should be on recreation and heritage creating an appropriate backcloth to the regeneration of South Whitehaven and a visitor attraction</p> <p>Provide something that generates longer term employment and provide an alternative to virtual sole reliance on Sellafield and the Nuclear industry</p> <p>Would prefer to see the site given over to public access / natural wildlife area – am sure this could be done.</p> <p>Velodrome</p> <p>Rethinking suitability as an area with waste recycling facilities –</p>	<p>Changed sentence: “New development will be sustainable and sympathetically designed to site comfortably within the coastal landscape, <u>and will provide long term employment opportunities linked to the Energy Coast.”</u></p> <p>Other suggestions are generally already referred to in the text or included in general principles.</p> <p>The suggestion for a velodrome is not considered to be a realistic option or a suitable development for West Whitehaven.</p>

	<p>not in line with Vision</p> <p>Providing employment for locals</p> <p>There are 3 eyesores that could be put together to solve all. There is contaminated soil near where the Whitehouse used to be. On ex Marchon site there is a lot of rocks, bricks etc. then there is the old Marchon to Corkickle railway (which I have heard no-one wants). It is an eyesore at the bridge next to St Mary's parish hall. I think Storeys could get everything cheaply then build a row of building backs to Ennerdale Terrace (front facing south).</p> <p>Not very keen on temp acc, would prefer the area's unique environment.</p> <p>I think that the Vision should stick with green land / woodland. Golf course with plenty of parks, walkways should be the future.</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Improved access roads, road safety protection for local residents due to increased in / out flow of motor vehicles.</p>	
2a Do you agree with the Objectives for West Whitehaven Plan?	<p>Yes – 7 No – 1 Don't know – 1</p> <p>Doesn't link to the Vision. Where is nuclear development in the Vision?</p> <p>Some of them.</p>	No change.

<p>2b Can you suggest anything else that should be included?</p>	<p>Heritage interpretation is important. * Major stabilisation of the Kells cliffs providing opportunity to link harbour, South Beach and Saltom</p> <p>Areas that are said to be “contaminated”. I would suggest that sampling of leachate be undertaken to determine long term risk and then formulate a longer term strategy.</p> <p>As above (Would prefer to see the site given over to public access / natural wildlife area – am sure this could be done.)</p> <p>Reduce the idea of remoteness</p> <p>Improve road access / links to T. Centre</p>	<p>Changed sentence: “To guide the improvement of visitor facilities and realise the potential of the area as a Tourism Opportunity Site, <u>focussing on industrial heritage and the natural environment.</u>”</p> <p>Other issues are generally covered elsewhere in the text of the document.</p>
<p>3a Do you agree that these are the main Opportunities for West Whitehaven?</p>	<p>Yes – 7 No – 2 Don’t Know –</p> <p>Unrealistic – opportunities for business development. Existing business parks are struggling. Do we need more, in out of way location?</p> <p>Some of them.</p> <p>Non industrial / energy options only.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
<p>3b Can you think of any other Opportunities for the area’s development and regeneration?</p>	<p>Improve road links into the area especially at junctions so that developers can move in without difficulty. Mains gas, electricity and water supplies – are they still available in the proposed area?</p> <p>Area <u>not</u> suitable for temporary worker accommodation – increase in anti social behaviour possible.</p>	<p>Sentence added in “<u>Non-pedestrian / vehicular accessibility could be enhanced through local junction / highway improvements</u>”.</p> <p>Other issues are covered elsewhere in the text of the document.</p>

	Increased access from Town, inclusion in town initiatives. Recognised as part of townscape.	
4a Do you agree that these are the main Constraints for west Whitehaven?	Yes – 5 No – 3 Don't know - 1	No change.
4b Can you think of any other Constraints for the area's development and regeneration?	Perhaps access needs reviewing in association with South Whitehaven SPD Constraints are few and not insurmountable I don't think poor access has been emphasised enough both into town centre and to A595 main road. Other infrastructure – drainage (foul & sw) Poor image can be addressed. Climate? I think greater constraint would be temp acc. Road access. Poor road layout and maintenance.	Sentence inserted " <u>Road links to both the A595 and then town centre are an issue and upgrades may be necessary to improve capacity</u> ". The other issues raised are already covered in the text of the document.
5a Which, if any, of the Development Options would you support?	Industrial heritage, wildlife would be complimentary. Hotel – if access can be improved. NOT temporary housing – it did little for Nethertown! Unless you want to Tow Bar. Light industrial, domestic development, recreational areas, public footpaths, agriculture, paraglider centre Wildlife, natural – adds to attractiveness of Whitehaven as a whole Tourism & Leisure – ambitious. Not a visitor centre. Mixed use – No doesn't make sense	No change. These suggestions are already largely covered in the text.

	<p>Temporary worker – No – infrastructure not suitable – afteruse? Renewable – No.</p> <p>To enhance wildlife and natural environment offer.</p> <p>Industrial heritage based at Haig Pit, visitor centre, bmx/skate park.</p> <p>Haig mining museum. Move enterprise park and create green site round museum.</p> <p>Golf course – walkways etc. We live at Magellan Park on the front and we do not want to lose our view of the sea. We would want to look out and see green land not a hotel which would increase the amount of traffic on the road.</p> <p>Option 2.</p> <p>Industrial heritage, tourism and leisure, nature reserve.</p>	
5b Can you suggest any other Options for development which the Council should consider?	<p>No. Concentrate on recreation. But where is the money coming from?</p> <p>Do not develop housing like Storey Homes where cars are parked on the main road. Force developers to space properties with off road parking.</p> <p>I firmly believe that it's a one-off opportunity to make an asset for the town; the position is open to the elements but the views of the Solway can be amazing.</p> <p>New school development</p>	<p>No change. These issues are already largely covered in the text.</p> <p>A proposal for a new or improved school facility is being considered in the South Whitehaven SPD.</p>

	<p>If 600 houses are being built, local recreation facilities will be needed for families and wrong place for temp acc.</p> <p>Forget a local centre, not a sufficient population.</p>	
Any further comments / thoughts	<p>Do not dither making a decision but get a strategy and stick to it.</p> <p>Sorry I have not completed the form, I would have to spend more time mulling over the options. Very pleased that there are no wind / energy developments, there are too many now. NOT the right place to temporary accommodation either!</p> <p>Really needs the context of the South Whitehaven SPD / Developments</p> <p>PS Whitehouse is a building old residents of Woodhouse will remember!!</p> <p>Reference to access is not just motor access. Access for horses, cycles, walkers is of equal value</p> <p>We would object to any accommodation (temporary) and would not be happy with a hotel on the old Marchon site. This would increase traffic on an already busy road. The residents of the area should be included in any ideas also.</p> <p>Poor location for workers' accommodation. Fully support the Heritage Park option. Haig Enterprise Park needs limiting(?) in / not expanded.</p>	No change.

In addition, further comments were received from a member of the public by telephone after the event. These included the suggestion “to build an ice skating stadium and car parking etc. Could be an attraction for west Cumbria (Cumbria). Lots of room at Marchon. Dancing on ice is a popular programme. Need tourism – need all year attraction (not just Whitehaven Maritime Festival)”. However at the current time the Borough Council would not support the development of an ice rink in West Whitehaven; the suggestion is not considered to be realistic and such large scale leisure development would be better suited to a town centre location.

2. Stakeholder Meeting 21/09/12

Attended by representatives from: Copeland Borough Council (Head of Service Nuclear, Energy and Planning, officers from Planning Policy Team), Story Homes, Home Group, NPL Estates, Land Trust.

Key points:

- The Land Trust is not happy with the lack of access to the coast and recent fencing off to prevent access to Saltom.
- There is an opportunity to create a National or Local Nature Reserve by planting wildflowers and breaking up concrete platforms to create limestone pavements.
- Marchon site – NPL considering greening the site by bringing in organic material but not keen on keeping concrete roads.
- There is a lack of interest from businesses in the idea of a developing local centre, and supermarkets require more housing.
- Land Trust would like to see tourism / leisure uses such as camping, visitor’s centre, bike hire, outdoor activities etc
- NPL would consider a hotel or holiday cabins
- Energy is a thorny issue – the area is not suitable for wind generation due to landscape sensitivity, but Cumbria is a geological hotspot and heat could be brought up from the ground to heat homes.
- The area would be a good location for a new Sellafield Visitors centre.

Responses / Changes to the Issues and Options Consultation Report:

- Following internal officer discussions, the Borough Council remains committed to promoting safe enjoyment of the coastal fringe and considers that the risks to health and safety would be too great if the danger signs and wire fencing were removed around Saltom at the current time. The situation is being closely monitored and management of the area is reviewed regularly.

- Para 6.1.2 Sentence inserted “Trials have been undertaken with wildflower planting which indicate potential for a Local or National Nature Reserve”.
- Paras 6.3.4 and 6.3.7 – Sentences inserted: “Recent market testing by developers has indicated little interest in these uses however, and therefore viability may be an issue at the current time”
- Para 6.3.6 Sentence inserted “Perhaps it would be more appropriate for the area if the emphasis in the West Whitehaven SPD was placed more towards supporting possible non wind related renewable energy technologies which are less likely to have such an impact on the landscape. It has been suggested for instance that the area may have potential for utilising the “hot rocks” located deep beneath the ground of Cumbria for district heating.”
- Other suggestions are generally covered in the text of the document.

APPENDIX II

West Whitehaven Ancient Monuments

