



*Proud of our past. Energised for our future.*



# Copeland Local Plan 2017-2035

Preferred Options Draft

September 2020



## Preferred Options consultation document for public comment

This consultation document is available for comment until **15<sup>th</sup> November 2020**.

To view and download an electronic copy of this *Copeland Local Plan 2017-2035: Preferred Options Draft* please visit the Copeland Borough Council website: [www.copeland.gov.uk](http://www.copeland.gov.uk). The document can also be viewed at all libraries in the Borough and the Copeland Borough Council offices as the buildings opening hours and procedures allow.

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**Please see separate Preferred Options Appendices Document for the following:**

Appendix A: Preferred Settlement Boundaries and Housing Sites (Maps)

Appendix B: Key Regeneration Sites (Maps)

Appendix C: Suggested Local Green Spaces (List)

Appendix D: Provision of open spaces by settlement and typology (List)

Appendix E: Proposed Employment Allocations (Maps)

Appendix F: Additional Employment Sites under Consideration (List)

Appendix G: Opportunity Areas (List)

Appendix H: Suitable Areas for Wind Energy (Map)

Appendix I: Town Centre and Primary Shopping Area Boundaries (Maps)

Appendix J: Transport Assessment and Travel Plan criteria

# List of Abbreviations

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<b>AA</b>	Appropriate Assessment
<b>CBC</b>	Copeland Borough Council
<b>CCC</b>	Cumbria County Council
<b>CIL</b>	Community Infrastructure Levy
<b>CIEEM</b>	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
<b>CIRIA</b>	Construction Industry Research and Information Association
<b>CLCA</b>	Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment
<b>CLEP</b>	Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership
<b>CoNE</b>	Centre of Nuclear Excellence
<b>DCO</b>	Development Consent Order
<b>DfT</b>	Department for Transport
<b>DPH</b>	Dwellings per Hectare
<b>EDNA</b>	Employment Development Needs Assessment
<b>ELAS</b>	Employment Land Availability Study
<b>EqIA</b>	Equalities Impact Assessment
<b>FHSF</b>	Future High Streets Fund
<b>HeIA</b>	Heritage Impact Assessment
<b>HIA</b>	Health Impact Assessment
<b>HMO</b>	Houses in Multiple Occupancy
<b>HRA</b>	Habitats Regulations Assessment
<b>ISH</b>	Industrial Solutions Hub
<b>IDP</b>	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
<b>IEMA</b>	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
<b>LDO</b>	Local Development Order
<b>LEZ</b>	Local Enterprise Zone
<b>LIS</b>	Local Industrial Strategy
<b>LDNP</b>	Lake District National Park
<b>NPPF</b>	National Planning Policy Framework
<b>NPPG</b>	National Planning Policy Guidance

<b>NSIP</b>	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
<b>PDL</b>	Previously Developed Land
<b>SA</b>	Sustainability Appraisal
<b>SAC</b>	Special Areas of Conservation
<b>SAM</b>	Scheduled Ancient Monument
<b>SEA</b>	Strategic Environmental Assessment
<b>SHLAA</b>	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
<b>SHMA</b>	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
<b>SLCA</b>	Settlement Landscape Character Assessment
<b>SMP</b>	Shoreline Management Plan
<b>SPA</b>	Special Protection Areas
<b>SSSI</b>	Site of Special Scientific Interest
<b>SuDS</b>	Sustainable Drainage Systems

# Introduction

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## 1 Context

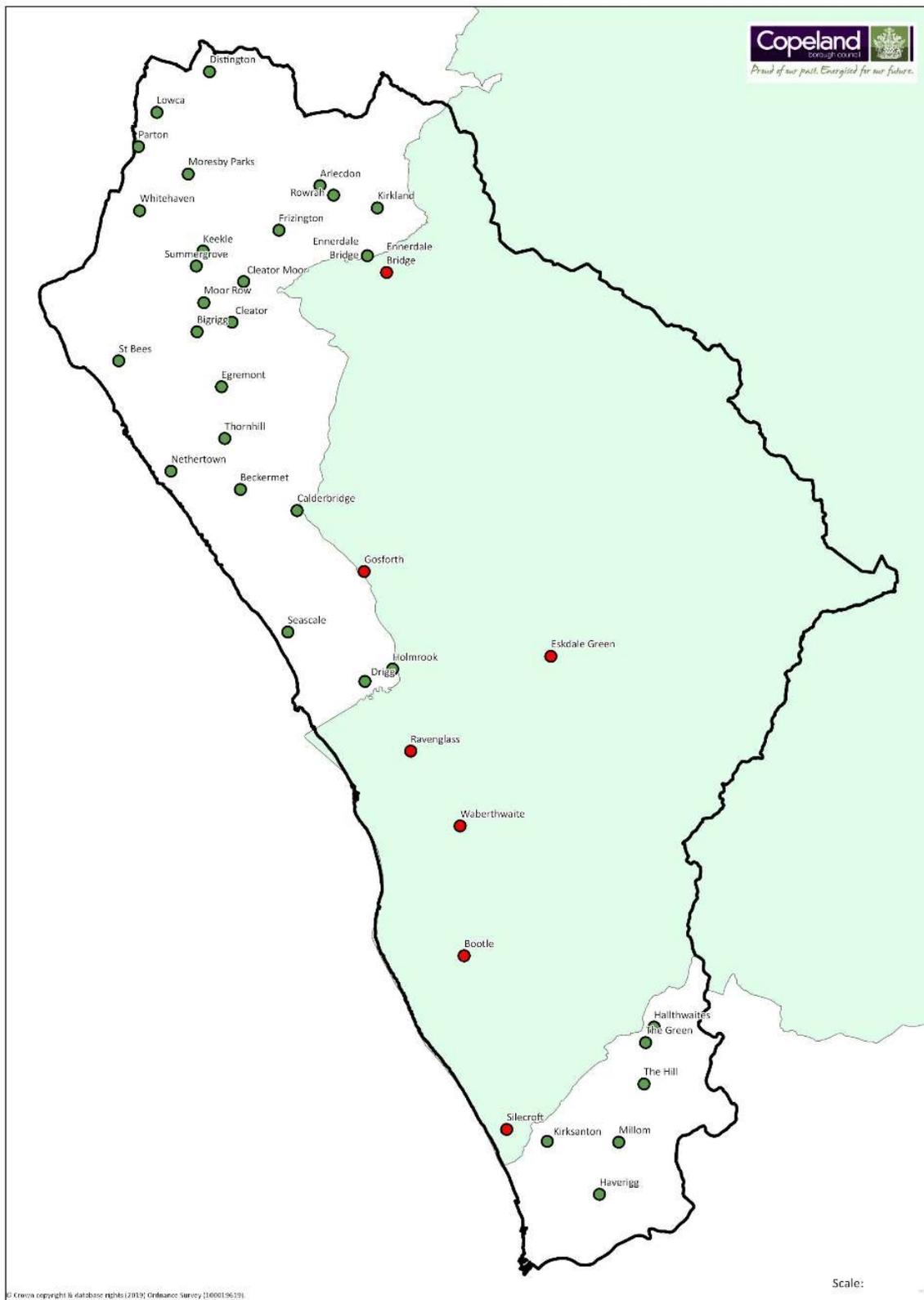
- 1.1.1 Copeland is Open for Business. With our beautiful beaches, stunning natural landscapes, clean air and vibrant communities, Copeland has a lot to offer. Our Borough is the most affordable and one of the most attractive places to live and work in the UK, with one of the highest average salaries in Cumbria, supported by a thriving nuclear sector, and low average house prices<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.1.2 The Local Plan will help us share this message and will sit alongside and support the Copeland Corporate Strategy 2020-2024, Copeland Vision and Prospectus 2020<sup>2</sup> and Copeland Housing Strategy 2018-2023. It will be a key driver for change over the period 2017-2035, identifying opportunities to enhance the Borough's strengths, address the Borough's weaknesses and ensure that Copeland is a place where people and business can thrive.
- 1.1.3 This is the Preferred Options Draft of the Local Plan which sets out the Council's preferred 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 below.
- 1.1.4 Development within the National Park boundary is addressed in the Lake District National Park Local Plan Review, further details of which can be found at the following link: <https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-review>.

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<sup>1</sup> Compared to Cumbria and national averages

<sup>2</sup> Which once complete will replace the Copeland Growth Strategy 2016-2020

Figure 1: Copeland and Lake District National Park Planning Boundaries<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> The map shows only the settlements identified as Rural Service Centres and Villages in the Lake District National Park Local Plan Review and those identified within the Settlement Hierarchy in this Local Plan.

1.1.5 The following diagram contains extracts from the Council’s key strategic documents listed in paragraph 1.1.3 above which the Local Plan will help deliver.

**Copeland Vision and Prospectus for Growth 2020**

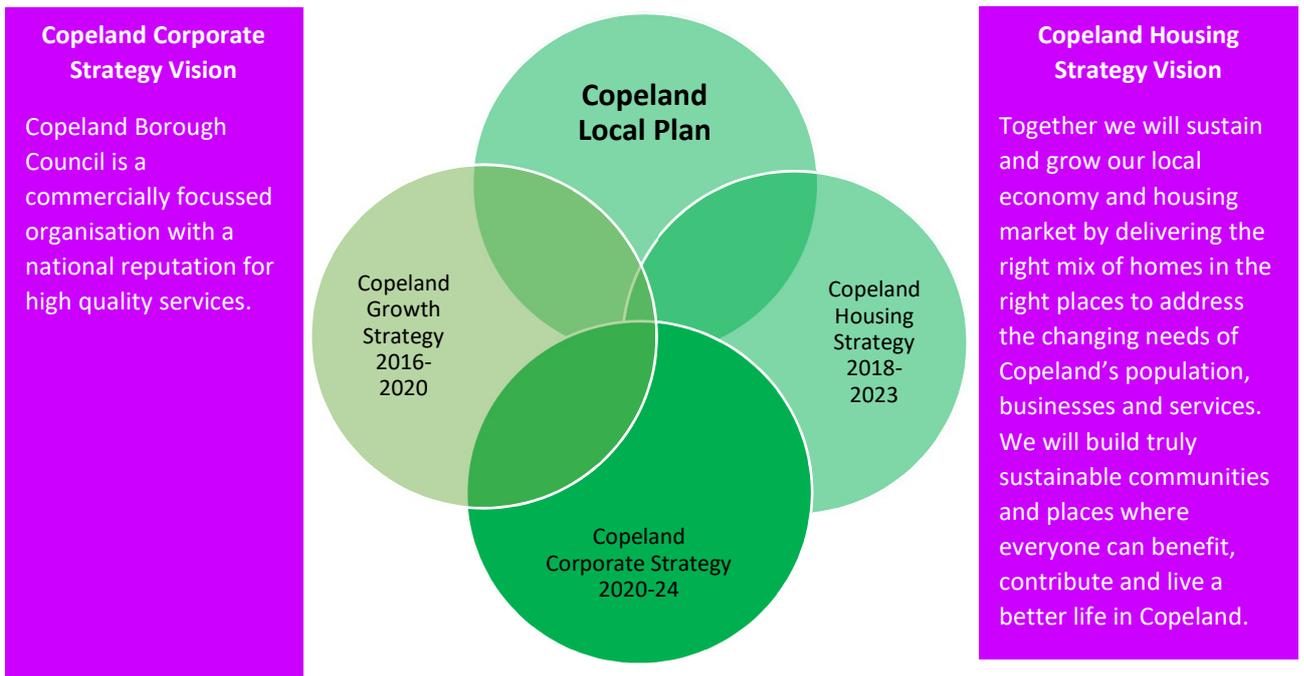
**Clean Growth:** We will become an exemplar for clean growth by leading the first wave of investment and innovation in new zero-carbon energy technologies, through a coherent approach to renewables and achieving the full energy potential of our natural resources.

**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.



- 1.1.6 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.
- 1.1.7 Covid-19 has reminded us of the importance of our public open spaces<sup>4</sup> to health and well-being and the importance of digital connectivity to allow flexible working 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.

## 2 Using the Preferred Options Draft

- 2.1.1 The Copeland Local Plan contains strategic policies (highlighted 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 our Borough special and unique, such as our natural spaces and heritage assets, recognising that they are important for the health and well-being of our residents as well as attracting visitors to our area.
- 2.1.2 The Local Plan also contains a number of development management policies (highlighted 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.
- 2.1.3 The Preferred Options Draft of the Local Plan is divided into the following sections:
- **Spatial Portrait:** This identifies the Borough's key assets and future opportunities in a visual form
  - **Vision and Objectives:** This sets out what the Local Plan aims to achieve
  - **Development Strategy:** This sets out the Local Plan Strategic priorities and identifies where development will take place across the Borough (settlement hierarchy)
  - **Obligations and 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, clean 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 facilities
  - **Copeland's Places:** This contains strategic and development management policies relating to the Borough's natural and built environment

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<sup>4</sup> 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>

- **Copeland’s Connectivity:** This contains strategic and development management policies relating to physical and digital connectivity

2.1.4 The next draft, the Publication Draft, will also contain a chapter relating to monitoring, which will set out how the success of the policies will be assessed.

2.1.5 We will also produce a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to support the Local Plan and provide further guidance for developers. A full list of SPDs is set out in the Local Development Scheme.

## 2.2 Moving from the Core Strategy

2.2.1 Following its adoption, anticipated in early 2022, the Local Plan will become part of the Borough’s Development Plan, replacing the current *Copeland Local Plan 2013- 2028 Core Strategy and Development Management Policies*, (the Core Strategy), which was adopted in December 2013 and Saved Policies.

2.2.2 Planning decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policies within this new Local Plan will gain weight in decision making as it progresses through the various draft stages, depending on the level of objection the policy receives.

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

- Updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019
- The Council’s new Housing Strategy 2018-2023
- The new Copeland Vision and Prospectus for Growth 2020
- The Council’s Corporate Plan 2016-2020
- Cumbria Local Industrial Strategy 2019<sup>5</sup>
- Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan (The Four Pronged Attack) 2014-2024
- Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus: Five Proposals for Our Nuclear Future 2020

And other significant changes including:

- The pausing of the new nuclear facility project at Moorside
- The change in Sellafield’s ‘missions’ and the opportunities this provides
- The preparation of bids for Future High Street Funding (Whitehaven), 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 the Borough
- Brexit
- The development of proposals for a new Enterprise Campus and Clean Energy Park in Copeland

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<sup>5</sup> Produced by Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership

2.2.4 The Government is currently consulting on significant changes to the planning system and the proposals are set out in the following consultation documents:

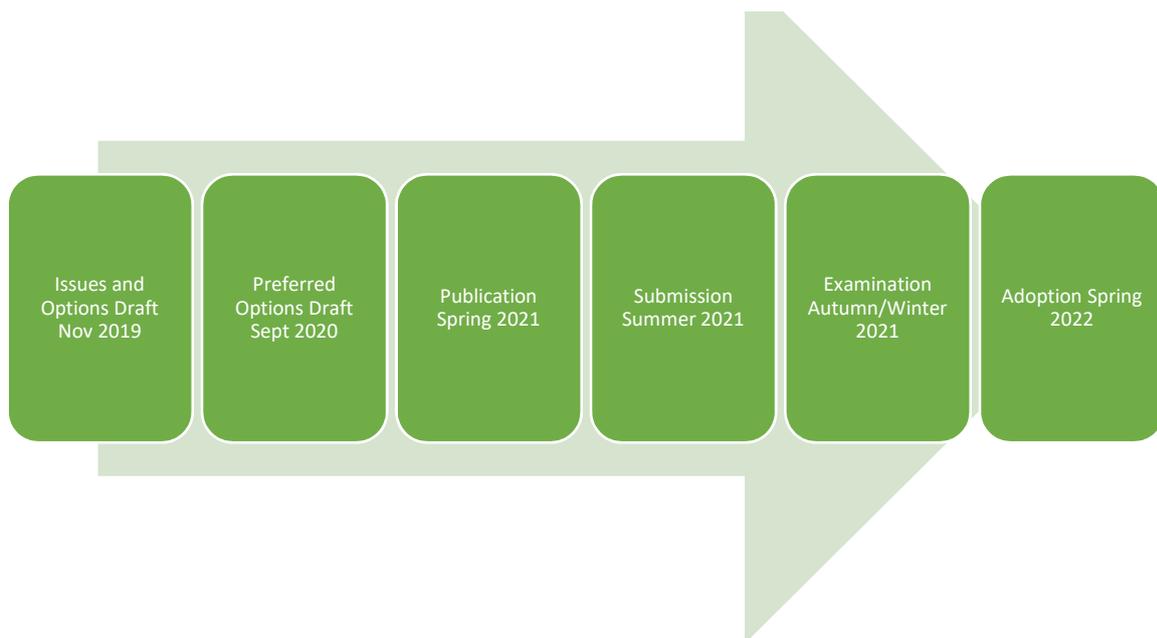
- Changes to the Current Planning System  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system>
- Planning for the Future White Paper  
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>)

2.2.5 Given the scale of changes proposed and the timing of the release of the documents we are unable to give full consideration to the proposals through this document. The proposals will however be fully reviewed and considered prior to the production of the Local Plan Publication Draft.

### 2.3 Timetable for Local Plan Production

2.3.1 The timetable for taking the Local Plan forward towards adoption can be viewed below.

Figure 2: Local Plan Timetable



2.3.2 The current Preferred Options draft allows us to share the policies and proposals that we consider to be the most effective and deliverable in order to achieve our objectives and gain feedback to inform the production of the Publication Draft. The Publication Draft is produced under Regulation 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and will be the first, formal draft that the Council consider to be sound and ready for submission to the Secretary of State.

### 3 Evidence and Supporting Documents

#### 3.1 The Issues and Options Draft

3.1.1 The Council produced the first draft of the new Local Plan, the Issues and Options Draft, in November 2019. The Draft identified key issues facing the Borough, informed by evidence base documents and an Integrated Assessment Scoping Report, and set out a number of alternative options for addressing them based around the following themes.

Table 1: Issues and Options Topics Covered

Development Strategy	Housing	Economy & Employment	Nuclear
Built Environment	Natural Environment	Healthy Communities	Tourism
Contributions	Climate & Coastal Change	Infrastructure	Transport
Heritage	Design	Retail & Leisure	Communications

3.1.2 The Council carried out an 8 week consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options Draft between November 2019 and January 2020.

3.1.3 The purpose of this Issues and Options consultation was to seek views on the different options and approaches identified in the Draft and invite alternative proposals to ensure that all reasonable approaches had been considered and evaluated to determine the best way forward for the development and prosperity of the Borough.

3.1.4 The Issues and Options Draft was made available on the Council’s website and within council offices and local libraries. The consultation was advertised in the local press and on social media and the Council contacted everyone whose details are currently held on the Strategic Planning consultation database directly by email or letter.

3.1.5 Respondents were asked to complete a Response Form to enable easier collation and consideration of comments submitted. During the 8 week period 43 responses were received. These have been compiled into an Issues and Options Consultation Response Document which is available on the Council’s website and have informed the current draft of the Local Plan which sets out the Council’s preferred options for development.

#### 3.2 Local Plan Evidence Base

3.2.1 In preparing the new Local Plan, a number of evidence base reports are necessary. These cover a range of social, economic and environmental considerations. The following reports have either been prepared, or will be prepared as the Plan develops, to inform the emerging policies and allocations and ensure it is sound. Any documents which are ongoing will be finalised prior to the production of the Local Plan Publication Draft and are identified with an asterisk below.

3.2.2 Documents currently available can be found at the following link:  
<https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/planning-policy-introduction>

Table 2: Local Plan Evidence Base

Copeland Vision and Prospectus	Masterplan Spatial Frameworks for Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom
Annual Monitoring Report	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Infrastructure Delivery Plan*	Strategic Housing Market and Objectively Assessed Needs Assessment
Interim Economic Needs Assessment	Local Housing Needs Study
Full Economic Development Needs Assessment *	Development Strategy Topic Paper
Employment Land Study*	Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment*
Stage 1 Economic Viability Assessment	Transport Modelling*
Stage 2 Economic Viability Assessment*	Local Green Space Document*
West Cumbria Retail, Leisure and Town centre Study	Transport Improvements Study
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Wind Energy Technical Document
Open Space Assessment	Heritage Impact Assessment
Settlement Landscape Character Assessment	Integrated Assessment (incorporating Health Impact Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal)
Green Infrastructure Strategy	Habitats Regulations Assessment
Sports and Physical Activity Strategy inc. Playing Pitch Strategy, Indoor Facilities Study and Play Strategy*	Equalities Impact Assessment*
Village Services Survey	Housing Technical Paper*
Housing Allocation Profiles*	Employment Sites and Opportunity Areas

### 3.3 Sustainability Appraisal

- 3.3.1 The Local Plan Preferred Options Draft has been informed by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA).
- 3.3.2 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.
- 3.3.3 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.
- 3.3.4 The SA is an iterative process of assessment and revision which ensures the robustness of the Plan. A final Sustainability Appraisal Report will be produced to accompany the Publication Draft of the Local Plan.

#### Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Update 2019

- 3.3.5 An SA Scoping Report was produced in January 2018 and was updated in November 2019 to reflect the production of the Issues and Options Draft and take into account feedback from statutory consultees. A copy of the document is available on the Council's website: <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/attachments/integrated-assessment-scoping-report>
- 3.3.6 The Scoping Report identified the key social, environmental and economic issues facing the Borough through a review of the latest data and relevant documents from European legislation to local strategies.

3.3.7 The Scoping Report introduced a number of locally specific Sustainability Objectives which emerging policies would be assessed against. These are:

- To conserve and enhance biodiversity in Copeland
- To protect and enhance places, landscapes and buildings of historic, cultural and archaeological value
- To maintain and enhance the water quality of Copeland's inland and coastal water and coasts and to sustainably manage water resources
- To promote adaptation to climate change
- To reduce flood risk in Copeland from surface water, rivers, estuaries and sea level change
- Increase energy efficiency in the built environment, and promote the use of energy from renewable sources
- To protect and improve land quality in Copeland
- To improve air quality in Copeland
- To minimise waste production and increase re-use, recycling and recovery rates
- To improve access to services and facilities in Copeland
- To improve physical and mental health and well-being of people and reduce health inequalities in Copeland
- To improve education, skills and qualifications in the Borough
- To support a strong, diverse, vibrant and sustainable local economy to foster inclusive local economic growth
- Support the sustainable development of the sustainable leisure and tourism industry
- To improve access to a range of good quality housing that meets the needs of the Copeland community
- To maintain, enhance and develop a diversity of retail services in the Borough
- To enhance and develop sustainable transport networks in Copeland

#### Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report

3.3.8 Each of the policies and proposals in the Issues and Options Draft, as well as any alternative reasonable options that have been identified or put forward since its production, have been assessed against the sustainability objectives above. The Interim SA Report identifies the positive and negative effects of each and also identifies any opportunities to maximise any beneficial impacts, for example through the rewording of the policy.

3.3.9 The findings of the initial SA assessment of the Issues and Options document were taken into account when producing the Local Plan Preferred Options Draft. The policies and proposals within this draft have also been subject to SA assessment and again the results are shown in the Interim SA Report.

### 3.4 Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

3.4.1 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 Natura 2000 Sites<sup>6</sup>.

3.4.2 David Archer Associates have carried out a HRA of the policies and proposals in this draft of the Local Plan. The first stage of the process, the Screening stage, has identified that significant effects are likely and therefore an Appropriate Assessment (AA) that considers

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<sup>6</sup> European habitats and species

the scale of the effects in more detail and proposes mitigation to overcome the effects has been produced.

3.4.3 The results of the HRA have been taken into account when considering which sites to take forward as draft allocations, and those which are likely to have significant effects on the Natura 2000 network have been avoided where possible.

3.4.4 It has been more difficult to avoid likely effects caused by draft policies as these are required to help achieve our objectives, it is therefore important that the mitigation measures identified in the HRA AA document are taken forward and a further Appropriate Assessment is carried out at planning application stage where necessary.

### 3.5 Equalities Impact Assessment

3.5.1 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 Characteristics<sup>7</sup>. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be produced alongside the Local Plan Publication Draft 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.

## 4 Duty to Co-operate

4.1.1 The Council has a duty to engage with neighbouring authorities and infrastructure providers on issues that cross administrative boundaries. We will continue to work with our colleagues in neighbouring districts to ensure that the proposals in our Local Plan avoid harm to, and where possible support, their objectives. The Local Plan Publication Draft will be accompanied by Statements of Common ground which will demonstrate that there has been effective cooperation to suitably address cross boundary issues.

4.1.2 As approximately two thirds of the Borough lies within the Lake District National Park it is important that our Local Plan supports the Lake District National Park Local Plan Review, particularly as the boundary between the two planning authority areas crosses, or comes close to, a number of our settlements. Whilst 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.

## 5 The Approach to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

5.1.1 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.

5.1.2 The Government's National Policy Statement currently identifies two NSIP developments within or affecting the Borough, however both are on hold at present<sup>8</sup>. These are:

- A new nuclear power station at Moorside, close to the Sellafield site

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<sup>7</sup> See Glossary for definition

<sup>8</sup> This provides opportunities to consider alternative and/or additional uses at the site, including the creation of a Clean Energy Park

- Upgrading and increasing the capacity of National Grid power lines, for which a firm route has not yet been selected
- 5.1.3 There are also opportunities for other potential NSIPs which are discussed further in the Economy chapter.
- 5.1.4 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.
- 5.1.5 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.
- 5.1.6 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. Any such development will be considered against the Development Plan and the National Policy Statement.
- 5.1.7 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.

# Vision & Objectives

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## 6 Developing the Vision and Objectives

- 6.1.1 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 2035 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 the Borough.
- 6.1.2 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.

## 7 Vision for Copeland

By 2035, Copeland will be a place with a prosperous, diverse economy that capitalises on our strengths and facilitates growth, including the opportunities presented by the ‘new normal’ and the digital revolution, our thriving nuclear and clean energy sectors, and our target for net zero 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, cultural heritage and biodiversity. We will create inclusive, resilient communities, where everyone has access to high quality housing, transport, education and employment opportunities, improving their quality of life, health and happiness.

## 8 Strategic Objectives

- 8.1.1 In order to meet the Vision, the Local Plan must achieve the following objectives, these are grouped according to the chapters in the Plan.
- 8.1.2 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 the Borough'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 the Boroughs key towns, including the specialist knowledge based employment cluster at Westlakes Science and Technology Park.

### **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 by 2037 target 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 promoting assets such as Whitehaven's historic harbour and Georgian Gem Town. 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 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 the Borough where it is suitable for their role and function. Direct 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.

#### **Population Growth**

Increase the Borough's population by reducing out-migration, 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 the Borough's many nationally and internationally designated sites, ensuring that habitats are extended, connected by effective wildlife corridors and that lost habitats are restored in ways that secure biodiversity net gain and defend against ecological collapse.

#### **Landscapes and Built Heritage**

Conserve and enhance all landscapes and built heritage within the Borough, attaching great weight to improving the setting of the Lake District National Park and the St Bees Head Heritage Coast, in addition to the many 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 mineral and soil) resources in the Borough 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**

Encourage development that enables 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, and the M6 via both the A66 and A590.

# Spatial Portrait

## 9 Defining Copeland

9.1.1 The purpose of the Spatial Portrait is to describe Copeland and identify our assets and the main challenges we are likely to face over the plan period. The spatial portrait also identifies the key strategic opportunities available to improve the Borough for our communities

9.1.2 Further detail is then contained within the relevant chapters.



## 10 Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

### 10.1 Copeland's Economy

- 10.1.1 Copeland is at the forefront of the UK's nuclear and clean energy sectors and recognised as the Centre of Nuclear Excellence. It is home to the Sellafield complex, which sustains 55% of Copeland's economy and 55% of all jobs (Nuclear position statement) and will provide employment opportunities beyond the plan period as the company's mission continues to change from reprocessing to the interim management and storage of nuclear waste and the environmental remediation of the site.
- 10.1.2 Copeland also contains the Low Level Waste Repository at Drigg, the National Nuclear Laboratory, the headquarters of Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and the University of Manchester Dalton facility<sup>9</sup>.
- 10.1.3 Copeland has been identified by the Government as the location for a potential new nuclear new build site at Moorside<sup>10</sup>. This site, along with others, could also provide opportunities to create a Clean Energy Park within the Borough. The skills and learning already existing in Copeland are readily transferrable into other areas of clean energy developments to confirm the Borough's prominent position on Britain's (Clean) Energy Coast.
- 10.1.4 Planning permission has also recently been granted for a new metallurgic coal mine at the former Marchon site in the Whitehaven area which will create 500 direct jobs (80% of which will be available to local people) and 200 support roles.
- 10.1.5 The retail, leisure and tourism sectors are also important to Copeland. Visitors enjoy our attractive market towns and attractions (which include a number of scheduled ancient monuments, the Beggar's Theatre in Millom, the Rosehill Theatre at Moresby and the Beacon Museum in Whitehaven).
- 10.1.6 There are proposals to enhance our visitor offer further through the creation of a Coastal Activity Centre (The Edge) and a Velotel in Whitehaven which takes advantage of Copeland's unique location on England's Coastal Path and the Coast 2 Coast (C2C) cycle path. There is potential to enhance our retail, leisure and tourism offer further and develop the Lake District Coast brand, this is discussed in more detail in the economy chapter.

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<sup>9</sup> a state of the art research facility that delivers dedicated skills development programmes focussing on the nuclear sector

<sup>10</sup> Whilst the Moorside project, as proposed by NuGeneration Ltd has stalled the site continues to be identified by the Government and is attracting interest from other potential developers.

### Strengths

- Highly skilled workforce
- Reputation as a world leader in nuclear and clean energy industries
- 6th highest average salaries in the UK
- Higher average salaries than elsewhere in the County
- High quality landscapes and heritage assets, its coastal location and proximity to the Lake District National Park
- Number of local venues
- Location on the Coast 2 Coast routes

### Challenges

- The effects of Covid-19 and online shopping on the retail, leisure and tourism sector
- Ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is in place to support economic growth
- Reversing population decline to enable businesses to meet their workforce needs
- Ensuring economic diversification to reduce the reliance upon Sellafield
- Potential impacts of Brexit

### Opportunities

- Creation of an Enterprise Campus and Innovation hub to build on our existing strengths in the nuclear and clean energy sector to create a specialist cluster
- Expansion of Whitehaven town centre to allow for larger footprint developments
- Creation of a new, modern employment site on the Eastern fringe of Whitehaven
- Development of North Shore Innovation Zone, Whitehaven
- Creation of a Clean Energy Park
- Creation of a "Digital Grid" in Whitehaven town centre
- Creation of flexible workspaces
- Creation of new arcades and hubs in Whitehaven Town Centre

Figure 3: Economic Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland North

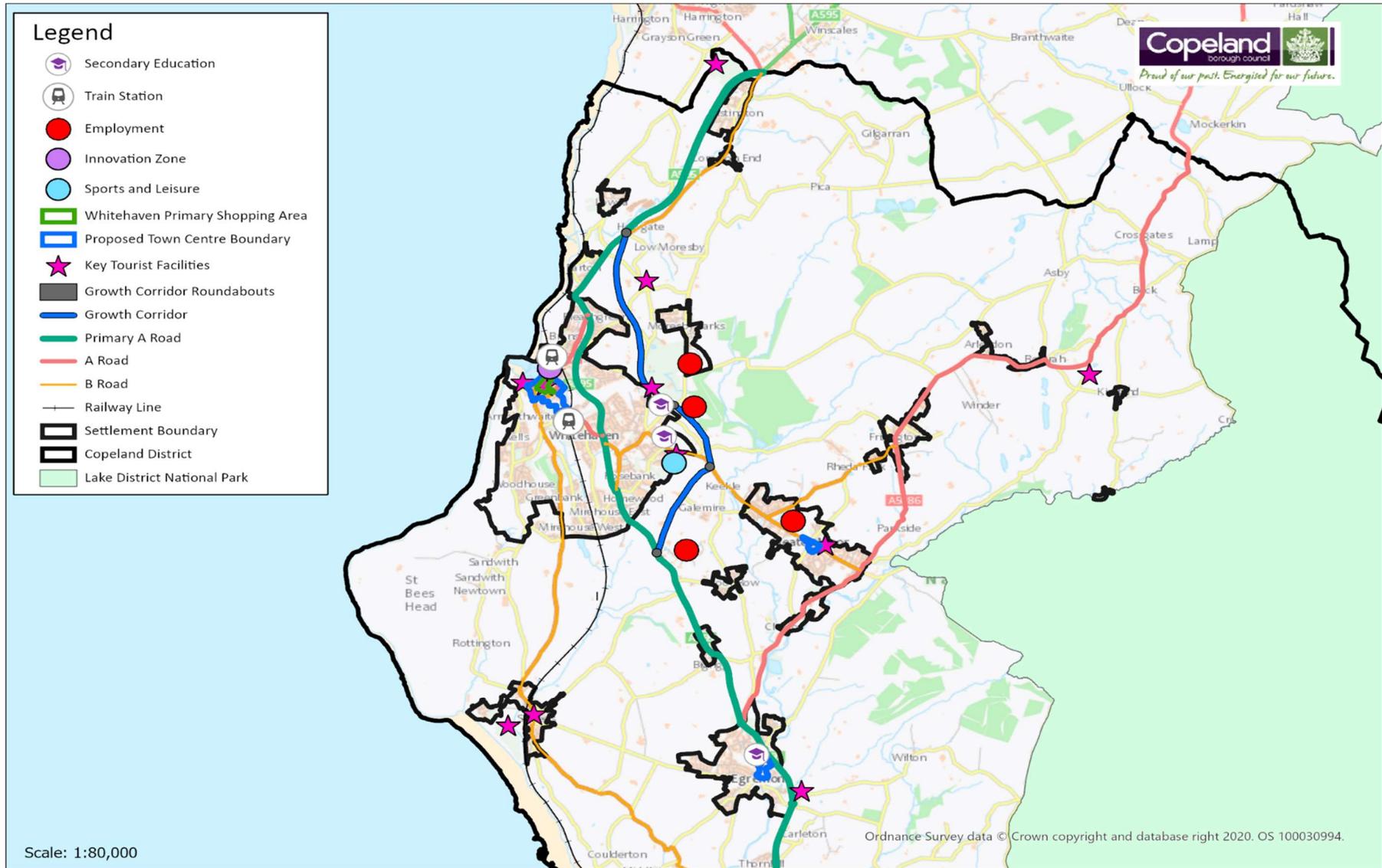


Figure 4: Economic Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland Mid

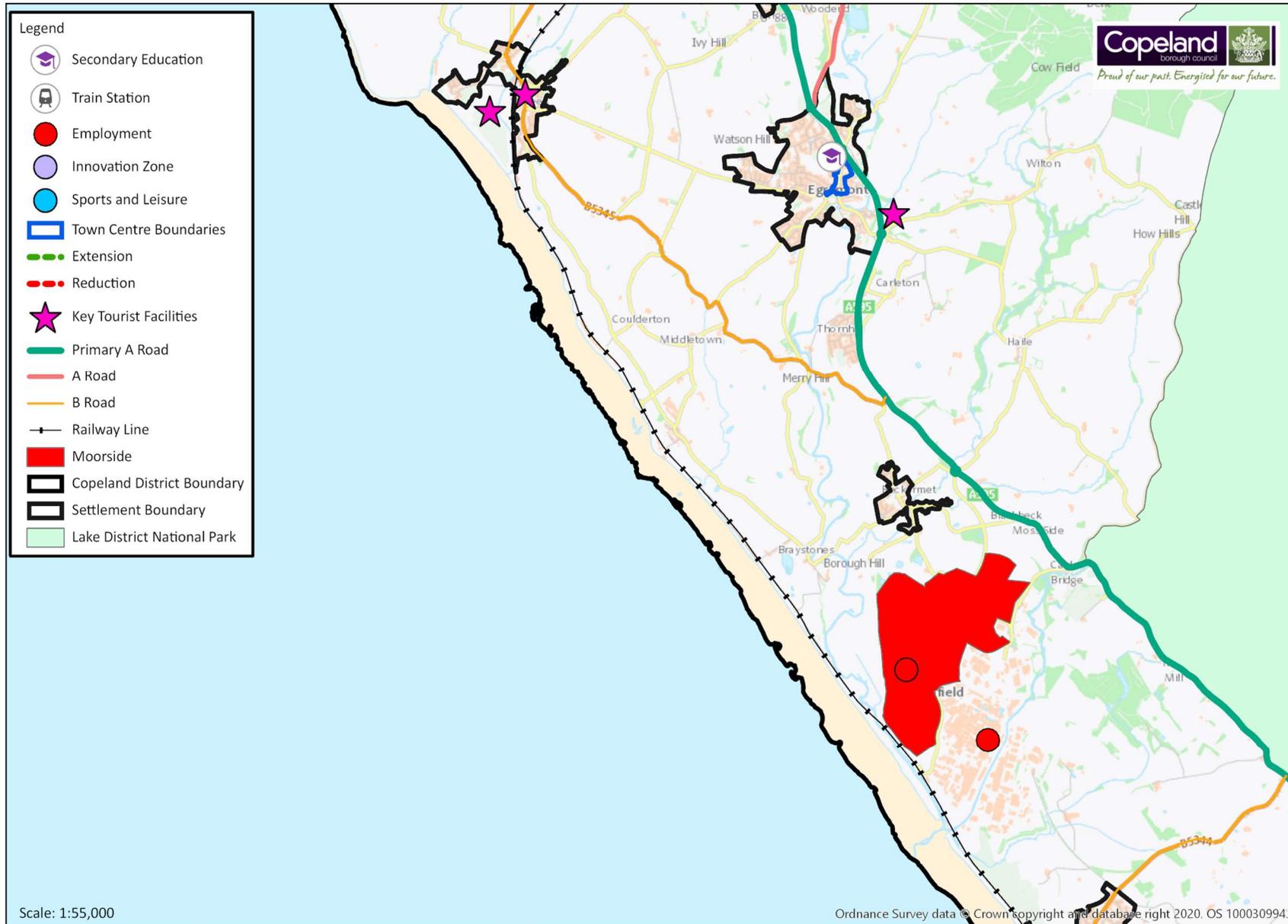
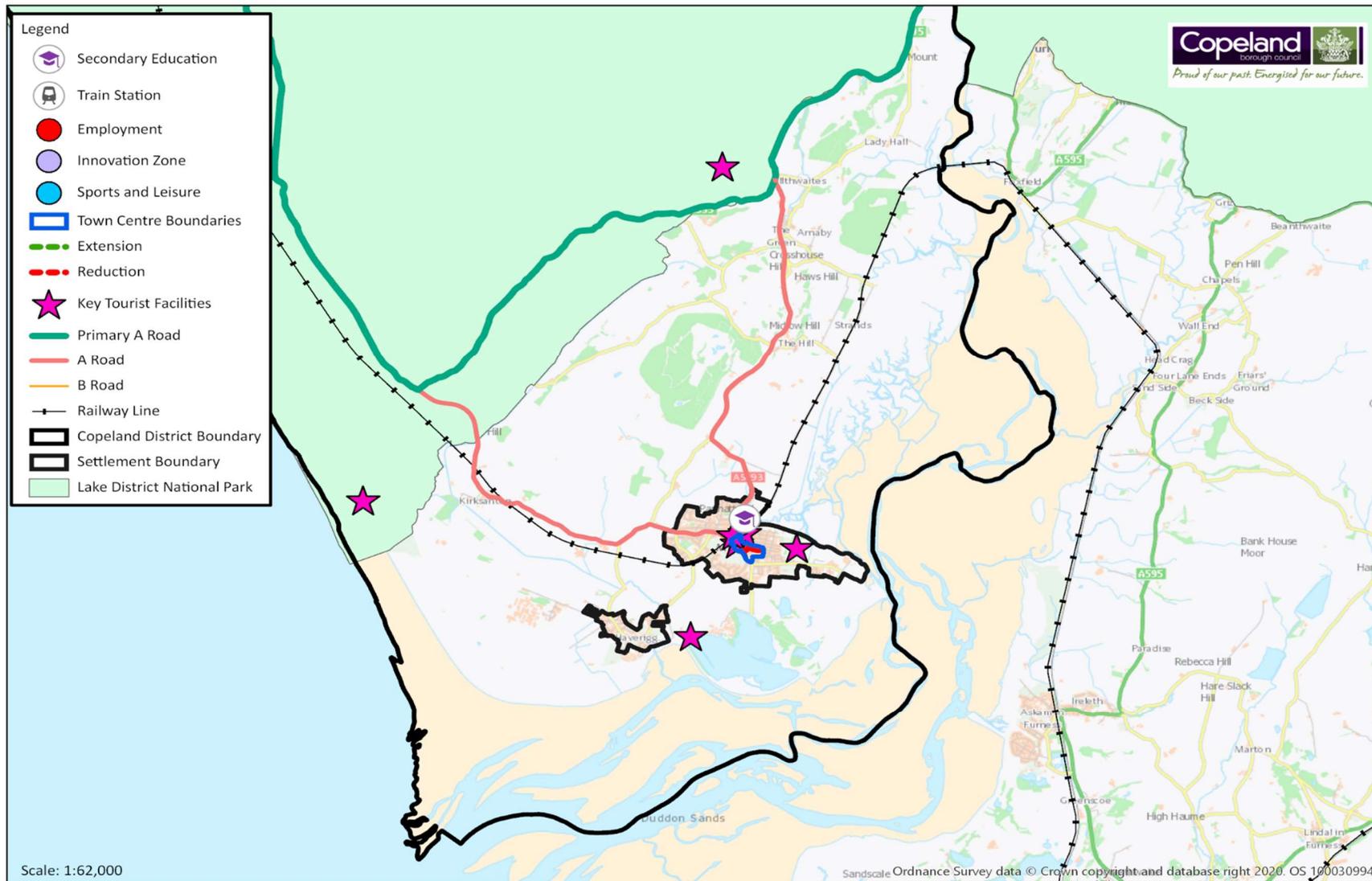


Figure 5: Economic Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland South



## 10.2 Copeland's Communities

- 10.2.1 Copeland has a population of approximately 68,424<sup>11</sup> residents, 25,116 of which live within our largest town, Whitehaven (Nomis). A high number of contractors associated primarily with Sellafield stay in the Borough during the week and travel home at weekends.
- 10.2.2 The Borough has one of the lowest population densities in Europe, primarily due to its rural nature.
- 10.2.3 The Borough's population has fallen over recently years and is ageing, in 2019, 22.7% of our residents were aged 65 or over.
- 10.2.4 There were 33,690 residential properties in Copeland in 2019 and the median house price was £122,500.<sup>12</sup>
- 10.2.5 There is an uneven distribution of sports and leisure facilities across the Borough with the majority of larger facilities, such as Whitehaven Pool and Whitehaven Leisure Centre being located in the north of the Borough.

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The most affordable places to live in the country</li> <li>•Westlakes Academy - rated outstanding</li> <li>•Recently completed £30m Whitehaven Campus</li> <li>•Whitehaven Academy now run by the successful Cumbria Education Trust who are redeveloping the site to improve facilities</li> <li>•Existing links with national universities</li> <li>•Strong sporting heritage and a number of existing sports and leisure facilities in Whitehaven</li> <li>•West Cumberland Hospital (phase 1 of redevelopment completed 2015, phase 1b now underway)</li> <li>•Welcoming, resilient communities</li> <li>•Existing community projects such as the Well Whitehaven project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ageing population</li> <li>•Affordability is skewed somewhat by people working but not living in the Borough</li> <li>•Pockets of deprivation</li> <li>•Number of empty properties</li> <li>•Rural nature of Borough – difficulties of residents in the south accessing facilities in the north</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Inclusion of additional settlements within the hierarchy to allow appropriately scaled development in some smaller villages to support their sustainability and viability</li> <li>•Development of transformational, key regeneration sites in the towns to improve perceptions and raise aspirations</li> <li>•Creation of new sports and leisure quarter on the fringes of east Whitehaven</li> <li>•Improved sports and leisure facilities in Millom</li> <li>•Opportunities to attract contractors who currently stay in the Borough during the week but live elsewhere to relocate here</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> 2018 mid-year population estimates

<sup>12</sup> Cumbria Observatory

Figure 6: Communities Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland North

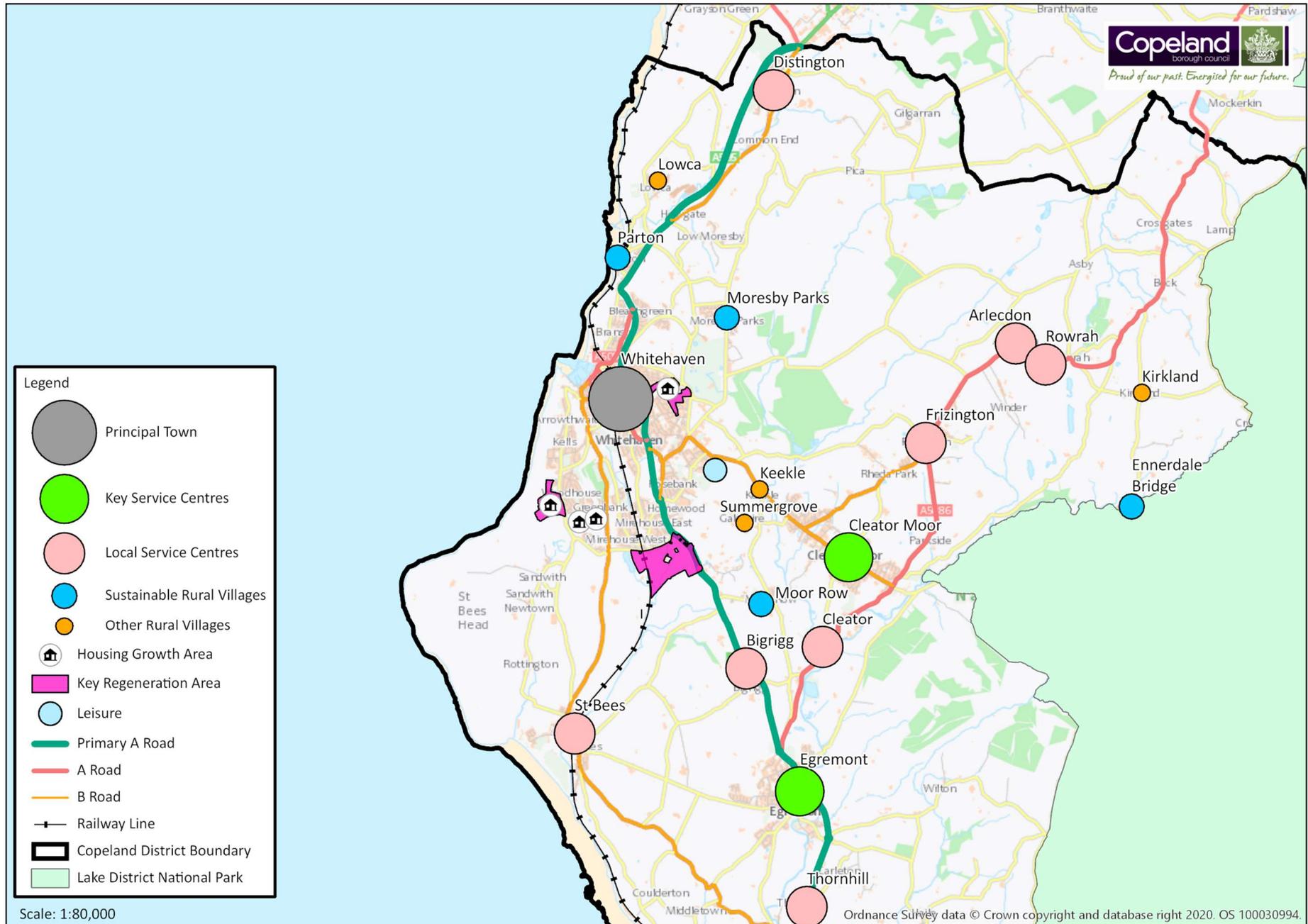
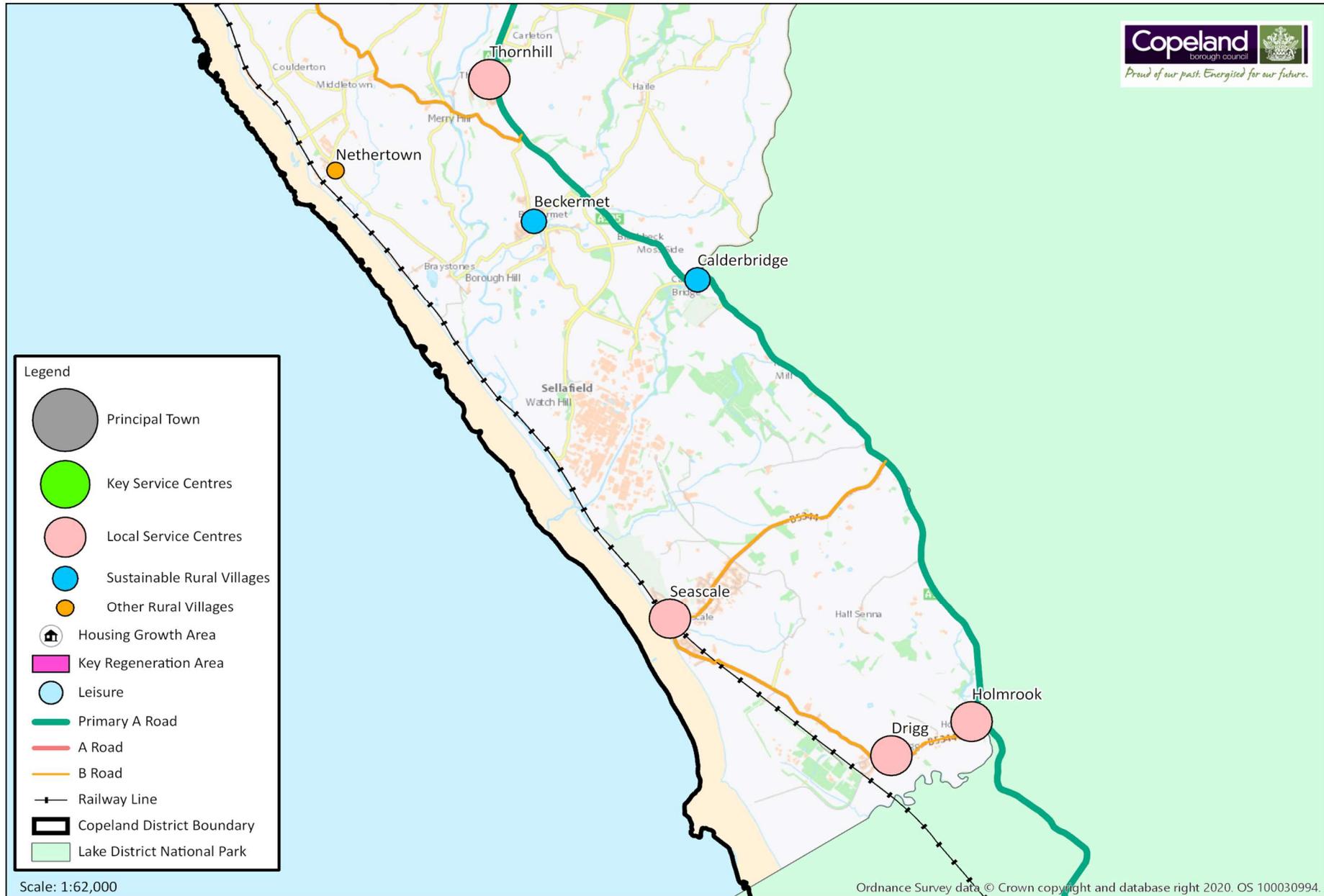


Figure 7: Communities Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland Mid



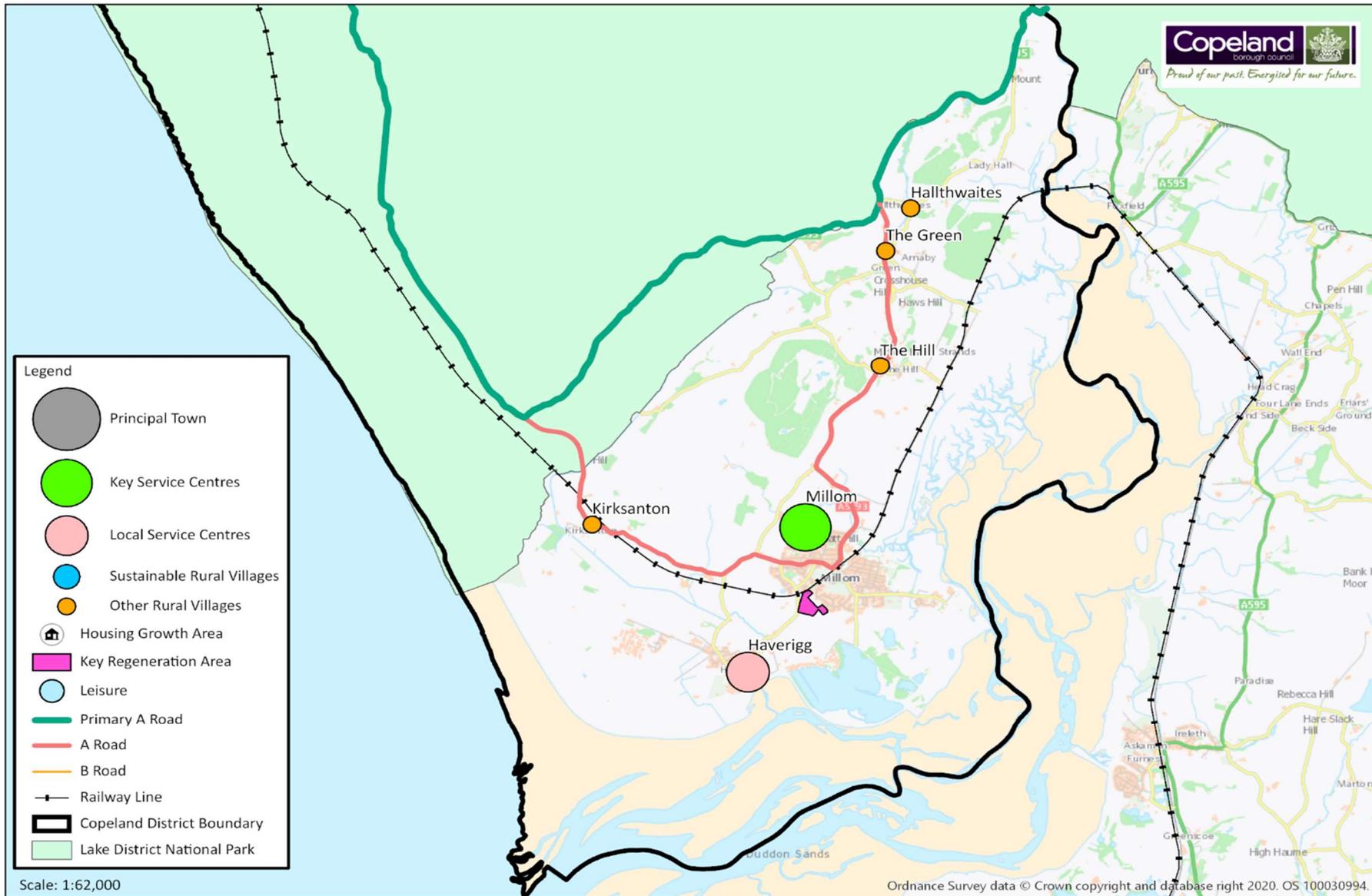


Figure 8: Communities Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland South

## 10.3 Copeland's Places

- 10.3.1 Copeland is located on the west coast of Cumbria and extends over 737km. It is a relatively rural Borough, with two thirds being located within the Lake District National Park (LDNP) World Heritage Site. The Local Plan relates to the area outside the National Park.
- 10.3.2 The Borough contains 4 towns; Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Whitehaven and a number of picturesque rural villages, many of which benefit from unrivalled views across the coast or Lakeland fells further inland.
- 10.3.3 Whitehaven is the principal town, which has a historic working harbour and an attractive 400 berth marina within walking distance of the town centre. The town centre is predominantly Georgian in character and includes a range of heritage assets, including a Conservation Area and numerous listed buildings.
- 10.3.4 Cleator Moor and Egremont are also in the north of Copeland and developed as a result of coal, iron ore and limestone mining in the Borough. Millom lies in the South of Copeland and overlooks the Duddon Estuary.
- 10.3.5 The Borough (excluding the area within the LDNP) has around 47km of coastline, much of which is recognised for its biodiversity value. It also contains the only area of Heritage Coast in the North West of England.
- 10.3.6 In 2018, Copeland was named the 2<sup>nd</sup> happiest place to live in Britain by an ONS well-being survey.

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stunning coastline and distinctive landscapes comprising of clean beaches (shingle and sand dunes), peaceful seaside resorts, high fells, deep lakes and heritage assets.</li> <li>• High quality living environment with clean air and a significant amount of green, open spaces, many of which are designated at international level for their biodiversity importance.</li> <li>• Dark Skies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balancing development and recreational needs with environmental needs</li> <li>• Addressing the potential risks posed by climate change, particularly given our coastal location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of new Green Wedges between settlements and Local Green Spaces within them to benefit the health and well-being of our communities and increase biodiversity</li> <li>• Potential extension of the St Bees Heritage Coast to enhance our visitor offer</li> <li>• Better promotion, access and interpretation of environmental assets to promote the visitor economy</li> </ul>

Figure 9: Places Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland North

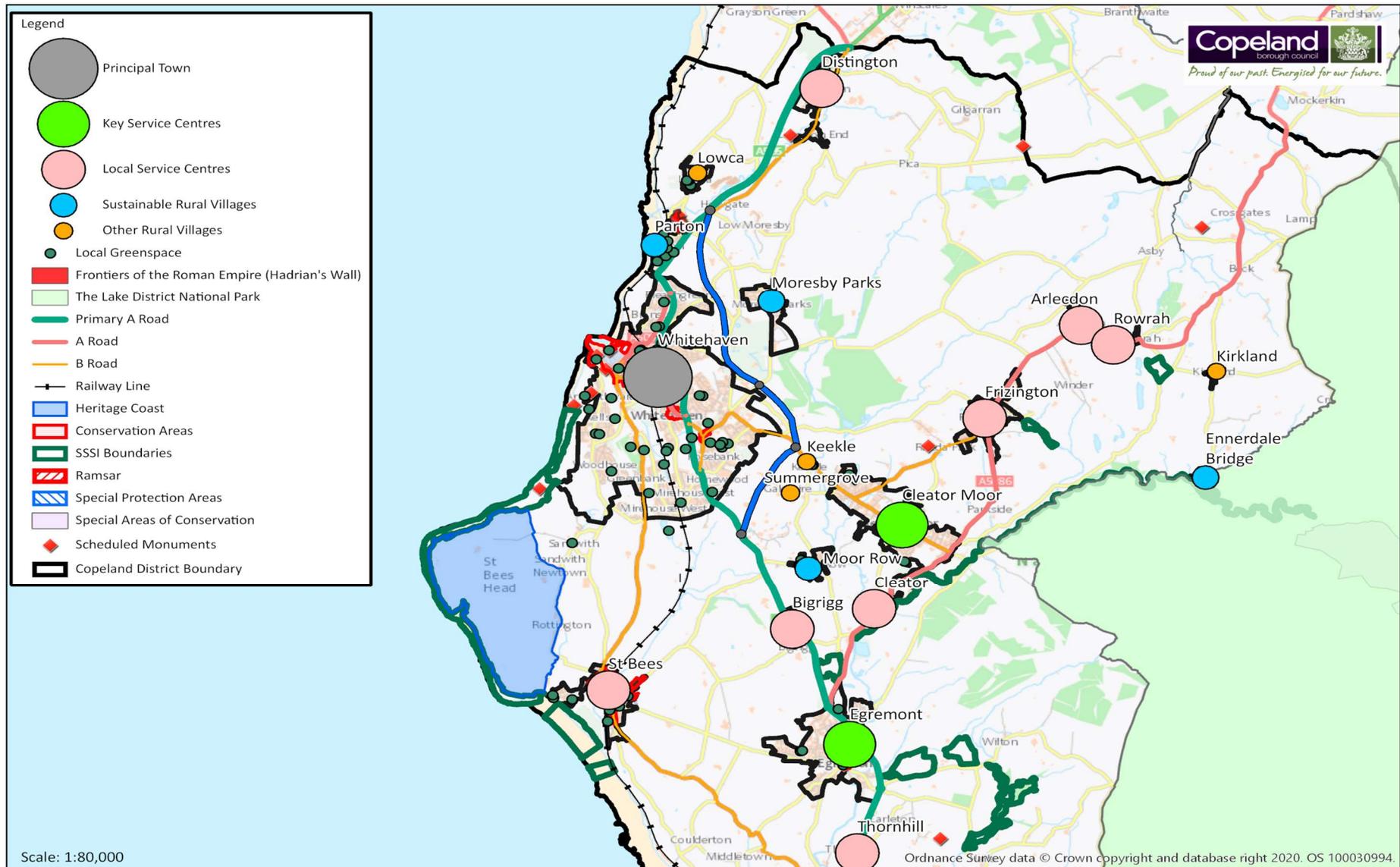


Figure 10: Places Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland Mid

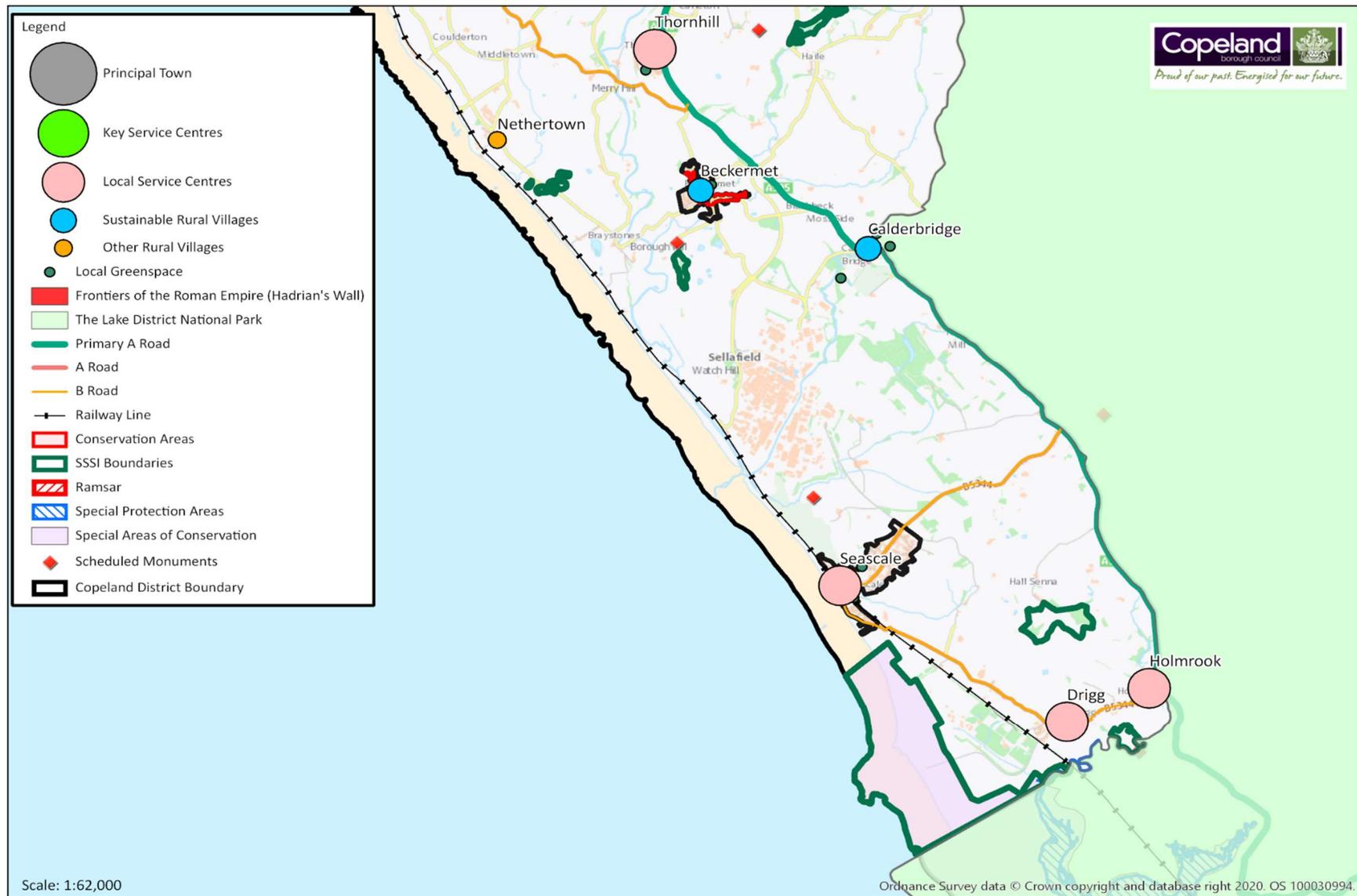
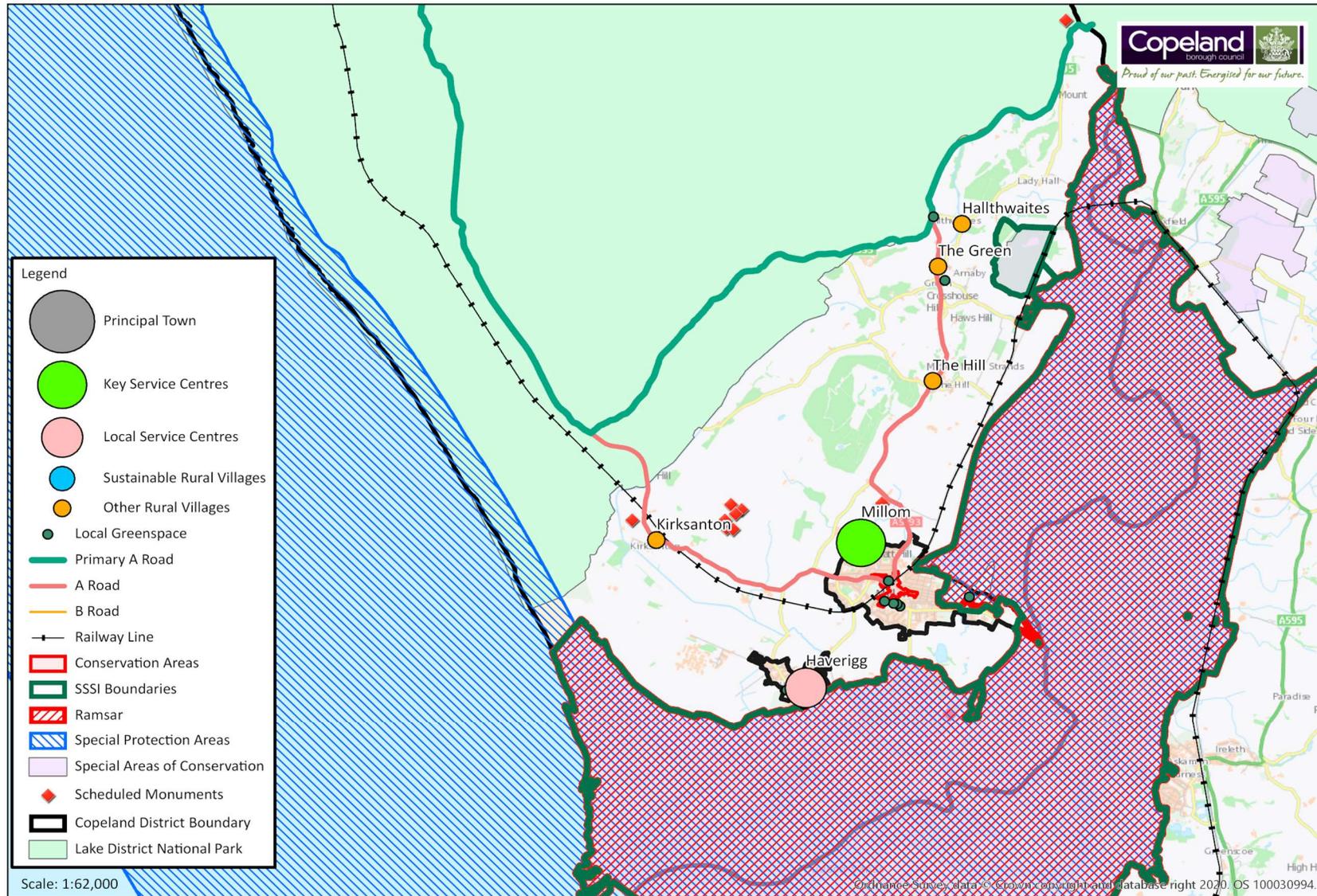


Figure 11: Places Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland South



## 10.4 Copeland's Connectivity

- 10.4.1 Copeland is a relatively remote part of the North West and key routes into the Borough are indirect.
- 10.4.2 The A595 runs through the Borough from North to South and connects the Borough with Allerdale to the north and South Lakeland to the South. From Whitehaven, it is just over 50 minutes to the M6 North (junction 40) and approximately 1 hour 15 from Millom (junction 36).
- 10.4.3 The Cumbrian coast rail line runs through the Borough and connects to services on the West Coast mainline, as well as tourist attractions in the National Park such as the L'al Ratty.
- 10.4.4 Digital connectivity in Copeland is generally good and is recognised as being vital given the rural nature of the Borough and the development of new, more flexible and remote ways of working post Covid-19.

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good digital connectivity</li> <li>• Harbour and 400 berth marina</li> <li>• Location on three national cycle routes: C2C, Hadrian's Wall and Reivers Route</li> <li>• 7 day rail service through the Borough along an attractive route with links to tourist facilities within the LDNP (e.g. L'al Ratty at Ravenglass)</li> <li>• Regular train links to airports at Carlisle, Newcastle and Manchester</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geography and topography acts as a physical barrier to land transport</li> <li>• Infrequent rail services with single tracks in part</li> <li>• Pinch points on the A595</li> <li>• Negative perceptions of "remoteness"</li> <li>• Limited rural bus services, particularly in the South of the Borough</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of growth corridor on the Eastern fringes of Whitehaven to connect key employment and housing areas and reduce congestion in the town centre</li> <li>• Reduced reliance upon physical infrastructure through new, more flexible ways of working post Covid-19</li> <li>• Creation of a "Digital Grid" in Whitehaven</li> <li>• Improved rail and bus service</li> <li>• Improvements to Whitehaven rail station and improved connectivity between between the station and town centre</li> <li>• Opportunity to encourage regular cruise liners to the harbour</li> <li>• Opportunities to use the harbour for activities associated with potential future off shore wind energy developments</li> <li>• Coastal activity trail</li> </ul>

Figure 12: Connectivity Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland North

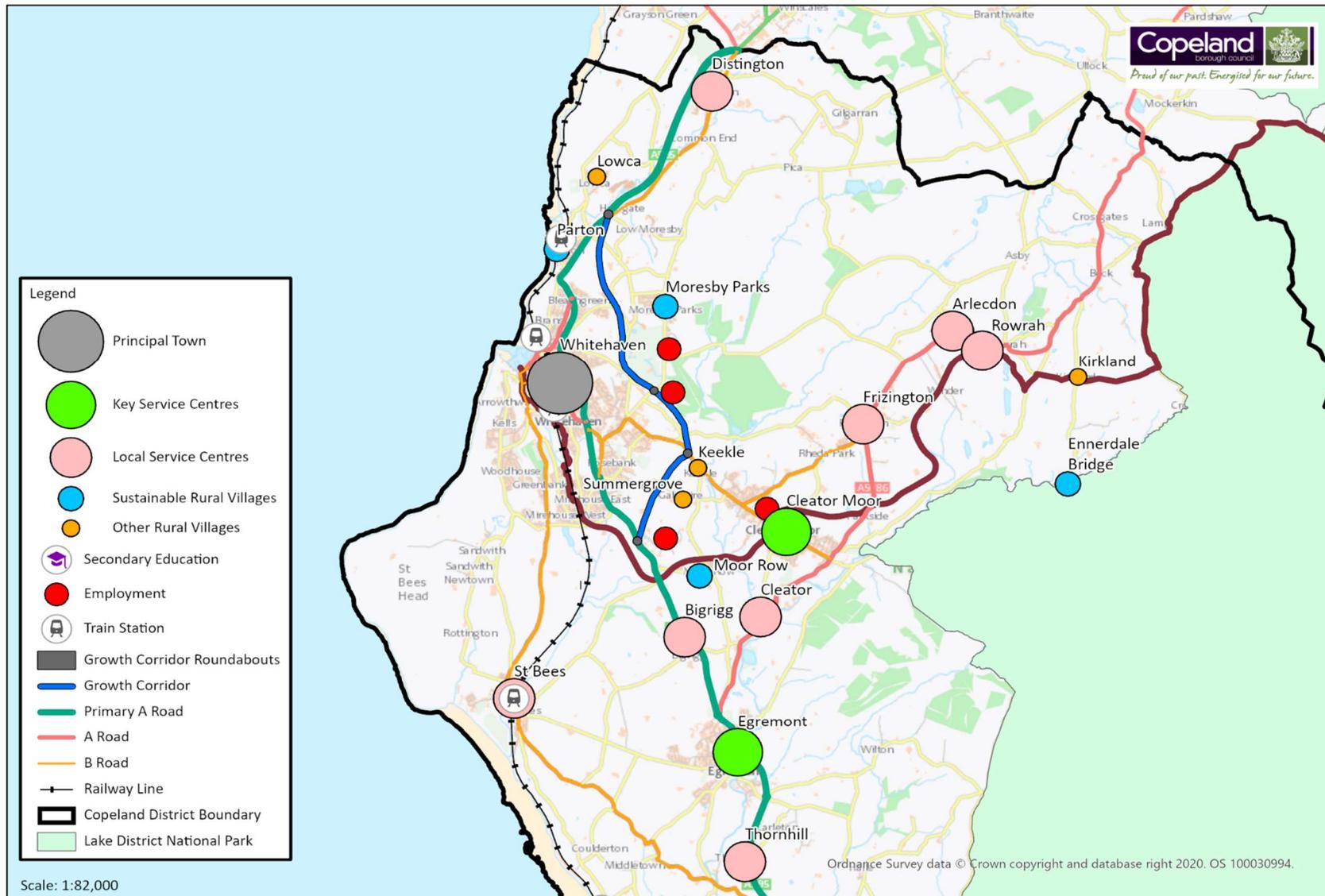


Figure 13: Connectivity Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland Mid

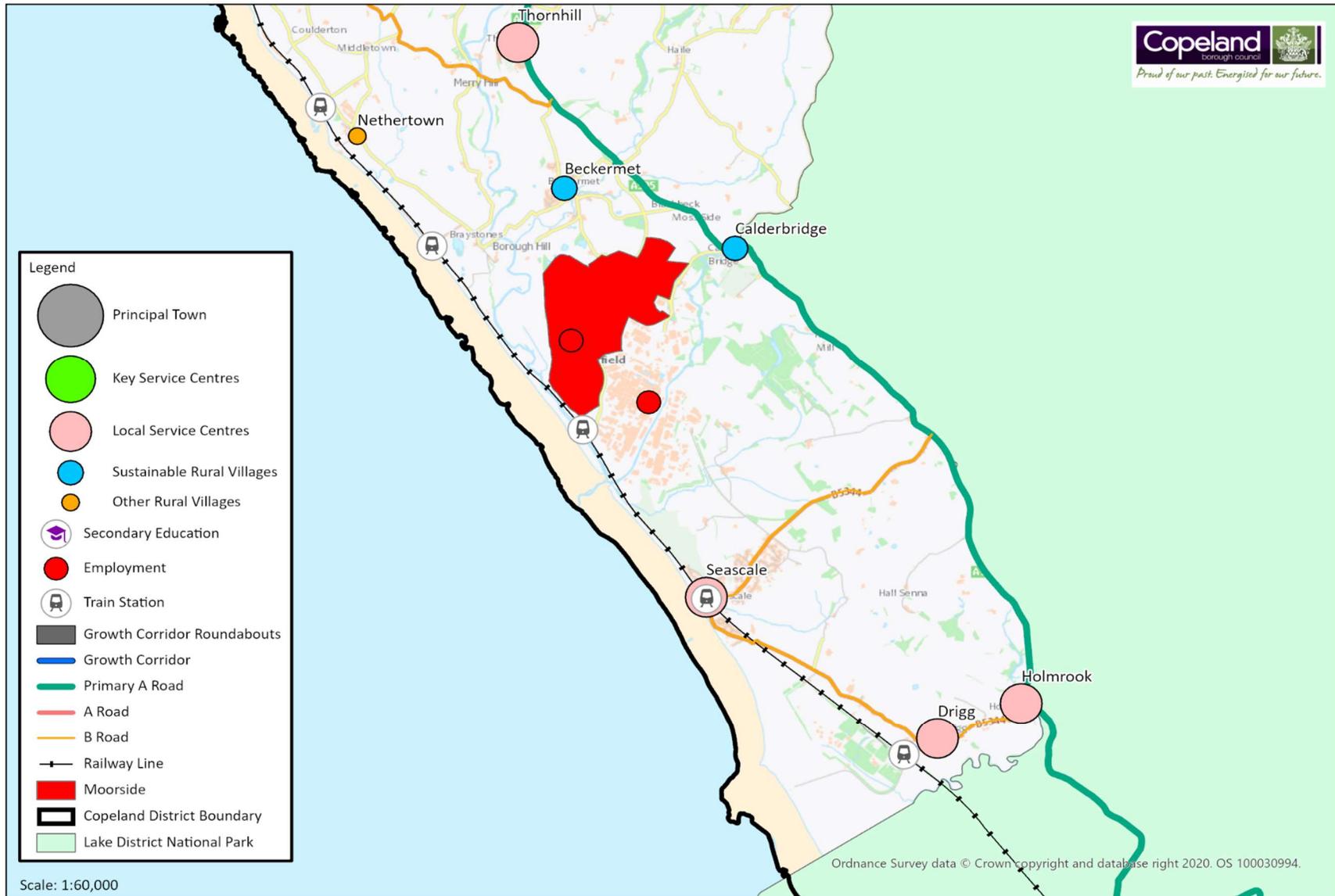
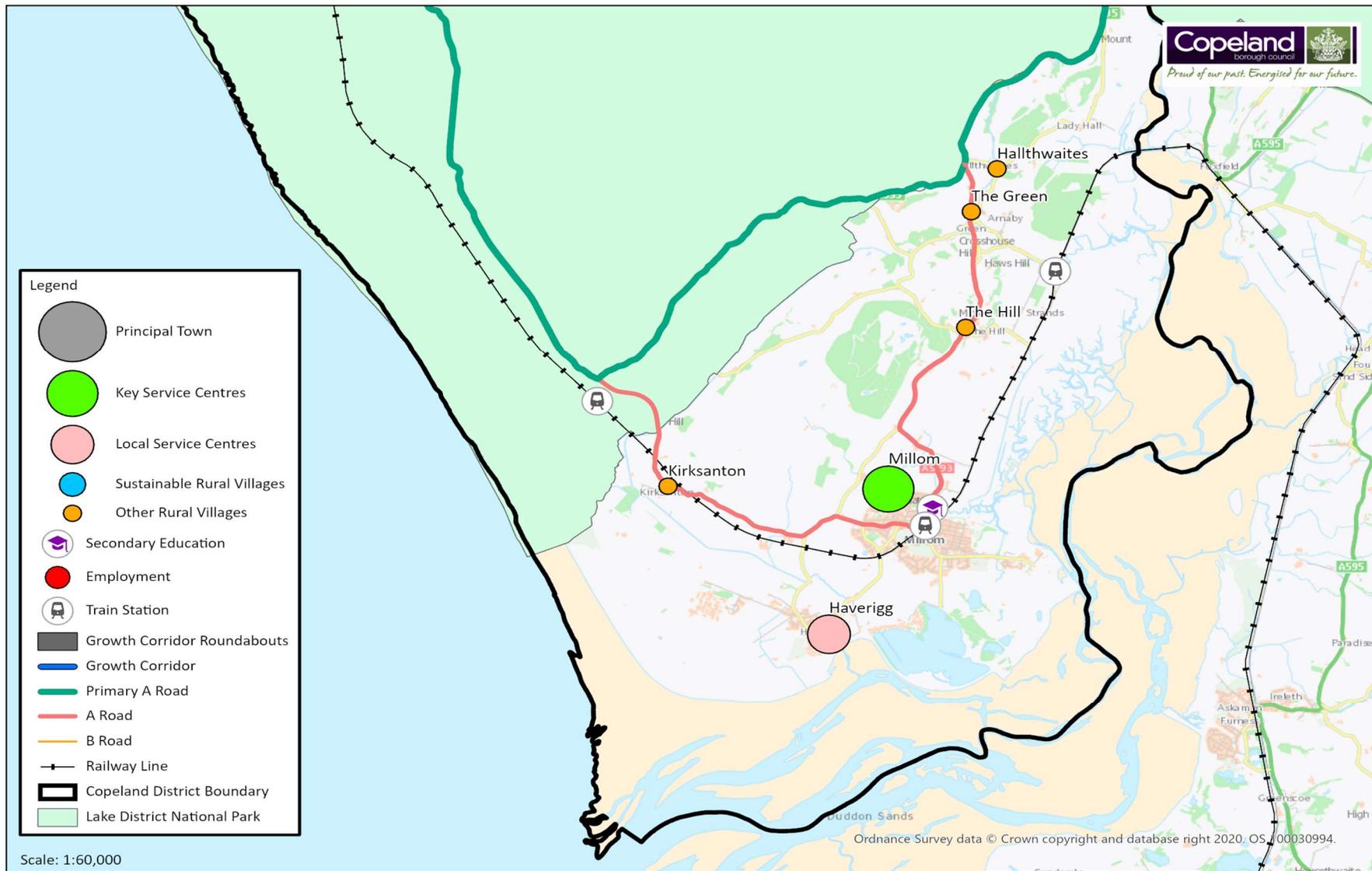


Figure 14: Connectivity Assets and Aspirations Map - Copeland South





The Candlestick

# Strategy & Standards

# Strategy and Standards

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## 11 Introduction to Chapter

- 11.1.1 This chapter sets out the overall strategy for the Local Plan which guides all development in the Borough, setting out where development should take place, what it should look like and what requirements and standards will be expected. It also identifies the Council's key strategic development priorities; these are transformational, anchor projects that will have a significant positive impact upon our communities.

# Development Strategy

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## 12 Sustainable Development and Settlements

### 12.1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 12.1.1 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 otherwise.
- 12.1.2 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 the Borough whilst minimising, and preventing where possible, negative impacts, such as waste, pollution and damage to the built and natural environment.
- 12.1.3 Draft Policy DS1PO below demonstrates the Council's commitment to supporting sustainable development and should be read alongside Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which is a material consideration when making planning decisions.
- 12.1.4 Policy DS1PO also demonstrates the Council's commitment to early, meaningful engagement with developers and relevant bodies to improve the quality of development. 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"*

#### Policy DS1PO: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development



The Council will take a positive approach to sustainable development by approving applications without delay where they accord with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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.

### 12.2 Settlement Hierarchy

- 12.2.1 Identifying areas for growth is one of the most important ways the Local Plan can contribute to sustainable development and 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.

- 12.2.2 Categorising the Borough’s settlements recognises their different characters, roles and functions and helps distinguish between them and areas of open countryside (which can also include smaller hamlets and clusters of buildings). Settlements within the parts of Copeland in the National Park are dealt with in the Lake District National Park Local Plan and are therefore not listed below.
- 12.2.3 The Council has produced a Development Strategy Topic Paper which discusses how the preferred settlement hierarchy has been developed and explains the reasons for discounting alternative hierarchies. The preferred approach considers matters such as service, employment and public transport provision, physical connections between settlements, existing committed developments<sup>13</sup> and constraints to development. The document scores and ranks settlements within the Borough using a scoring matrix which takes these factors into account.
- 12.2.4 The preferred hierarchy, as identified in Policy DS2PO, focusses the majority of development over the plan period in the four towns. These are the most sustainable parts of the Borough containing a broad range of services and being well connected to areas outside the Borough. Directing new development to the Borough’s towns will improve their offer, increase their attractiveness and help support regeneration strategies.
- 12.2.5 Whilst the towns remain the focus for development 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. These factors are important to help reduce social isolation, particularly in places such as Copeland which have an ageing population.
- 12.2.6 Rural areas have also become more popular since the outbreak of Covid-19, with Rightmove recently reporting that they have seen a 126% increase in the number of enquiries from city residents about village homes across June and July compared to previous year’s figures<sup>14</sup>.
- 12.2.7 Beneath the Principal Town and Key service Centres, the hierarchy now identifies 3 tiers of villages where development would be supported: Local Service Centres, Sustainable Villages and Other Rural Villages. A definition of each is included within policy DS2PO. The hierarchy contains 5 tiers of settlements in total (excluding the open countryside), compared to only 3 tiers within the adopted Core Strategy. The preferred hierarchy also allows for development in a greater number of villages within those tiers than the Core Strategy does at present, allowing for development within 25<sup>15</sup>, villages (or village

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 supplements 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.

<sup>13</sup> Those with an extant planning permission or which have been completed since the start of the plan period

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/news/articles/property-news/escape-to-the-country>

<sup>15</sup> Ennerdale Bridge and Kirkland are considered to be separate settlements under the preferred hierarchy given the poor pedestrian links and the distance between them, as are Lowca and Parton.

clusters), albeit varying amounts dependent upon which tier the settlement is in, compared to 14 at present.

- 12.2.8 The preferred hierarchy also recognises that settlements do not operate in isolation and where two or more settlements are connected to safe, accessible walking routes of less than a mile and/or a frequent bus or train service, they have been grouped together as a cluster. This 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.
- 12.2.9 A safe walking route is one that has street lighting and a continuous pavement that is at least 2m wide. A frequent bus or train service is one that would allow a village resident working standard office hours (9am-5pm) in a nearby town to travel there and back by public transport. When considering train links, the distance from the station to the main settlement and the safety of the route was also considered. For example, whilst The Green benefits from a regular train service to Millom, the 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.
- 12.2.10 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.

**Policy DS2PO: 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 specifically identified within the Plan to meet the strategic growth needs of the Borough.

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
<b>Principal Town</b>	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 Boroughs by public transport.	Whitehaven

<b>Key Service Centres</b>	The Borough'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.	Cleator Moor
		Egremont
		Millom
<b>Local Service Centres</b>	These centres have a supporting role to the Borough'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.	Seascale
		Drigg & Holmrook
		Frizington & Rheda
		St Bees
		Distington & Common End
		Haverigg
		Arlecdon & Rowrah
		Thornhill
		Bigrigg
		Cleator (links to Cleator Moor)
<b>Sustainable Rural Villages</b>	Settlements which offer a limited number of services but which could support a limited amount of growth to maintain communities.	Beckermet
		Ennerdale Bridge <sup>16</sup>
		Moresby Parks
		Calderbridge
		Moor Row
		Parton <sup>16</sup>
<b>Other Rural Villages</b>	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 future housing needs to be met and support existing local services.	Summergrove
		The Green
		Kirkland
		Keekle
		Kirksanton
		Hallthwaites
		Nethertown
		The Hill
Lowca		
<b>Open Countryside</b>	Remaining parts of the Borough including smaller settlements not listed above.	

<sup>16</sup> The Core Strategy currently shows Ennerdale Bridge and Kirkland as being part of a cluster, however pedestrian links between the villages are poor and therefore they are included within the preferred strategy as individual settlements, similarly with Lowca and Parton.

Figure 15: Settlement Hierarchy - Copeland North

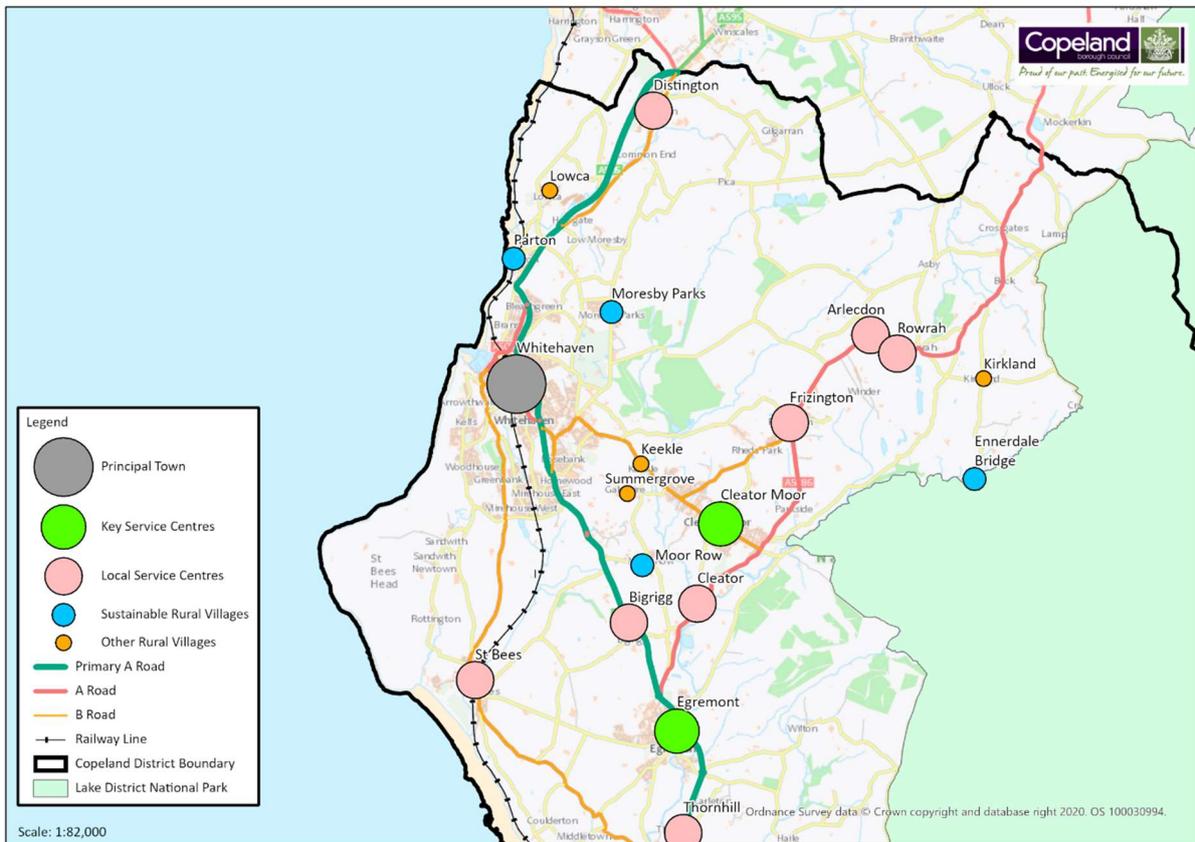


Figure 16: Settlement Hierarchy - Copeland Mid

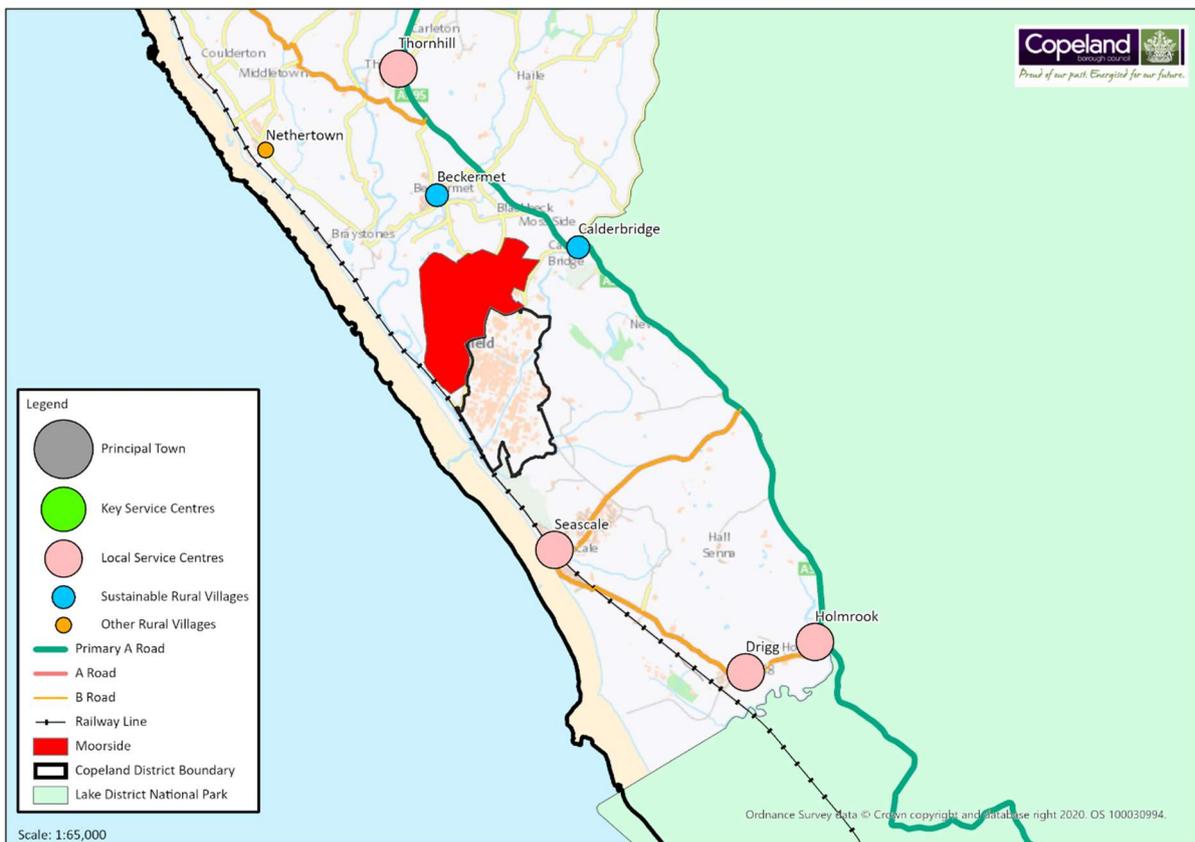
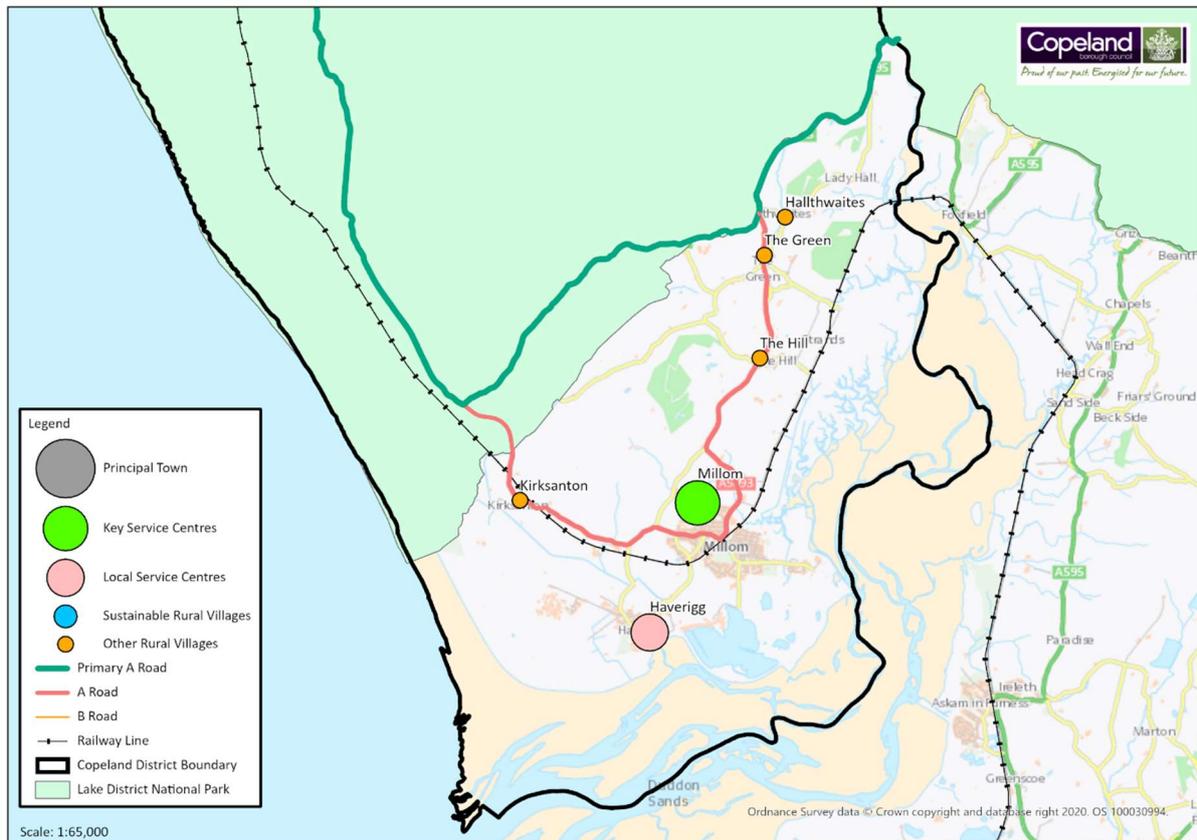


Figure 17: Settlement Hierarchy - Copeland South



## 12.3 Settlement Boundaries

12.3.1 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 such boundaries is defined as open countryside where development is generally restricted.

12.3.2 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.

12.3.3 When identifying appropriate boundaries around the settlements within the hierarchy, consideration was given to the following:

- existing boundaries identified in the Core Strategy
- the amount of land that would be required to meet housing needs identified in each settlement
- whether there were any opportunities to extend the boundary to allow for additional development without causing unacceptable intrusion into the open countryside. The availability and suitability of sites within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has been taken into account as well as any smaller sites which are excluded from the SHLAA due to their size but which would constitute a rounding off of the settlement.
- whether any extension would cause two or more settlements to merge

- constraints such as landscape, the natural environment, heritage assets and their setting
  - planning approvals on sites outside the existing Core Strategy boundaries and existing developments
- 12.3.4 The preferred Settlement Boundaries are identified in Appendix A and on the Proposals Map. Boundaries are based on clearly delineated curtilage edges or landscape features (both natural and unnatural) such as hedgerows or roads.
- 12.3.5 Policy DS3PO allows for appropriate development to take place on sites directly adjoining and well-connected to towns and Local Service Centres, subject to certain criteria. 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 and important landscapes and the character of settlements are protected.
- 12.3.6 Development adjoining lower tier settlements will not be permitted, unless it falls within one of the exceptions listed in the open countryside section of the policy. This is in order to ensure that the needs of these smaller villages are met, without undermining the growth and regeneration aspirations in the towns and larger villages.
- 12.3.7 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.
- 12.3.8 Smaller sites on the edge of the settlement have also been considered, even though they are excluded from the SHLAA assessment due to their size<sup>17</sup>, 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.

### Policy DS3PO: Settlement Boundaries



Settlement boundaries are identified on the Local Plan Proposals Map; development within these boundaries will be supported where it accords with the Development Plan.

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 directly adjoins the settlement boundary of a town or local service centre; and
  - b) the site is or can be physically connected to the existing settlement by safe pedestrian links; 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
    - the proposal is for a specific type of housing supported by Policies H14, H15 or H17.

<sup>17</sup> Sites under 0.25ha are excluded from SHLAA assessment

2) The proposal is for one of the following types of development and a proven need for such a 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
- Agricultural, forestry, farm diversification or tourism proposals which require such a location

## 13 Strategic Development Priorities

13.1.1 Copeland is currently undergoing a significant period of change and it is vital that the Local Plan reflects those changes and supports the Council priorities listed within the Growth Strategy<sup>18</sup>, the Housing Strategy, the Corporate Strategy and the Towns Visions documents.

13.1.2 Draft Policy DS4PO below identifies a number of key drivers for change based upon the opportunities identified in the Spatial Portrait. These are transformational projects that will have significant positive impacts upon our communities and help level up the Borough. Development that helps drive forward these projects will be prioritised and the Council will work with partners to secure funding to enable delivery.

13.1.3 The following paragraphs contain a brief overview of each priority projects and further information can be found in the relevant chapter.

### Development that supports the Energy Coast brand, provides opportunities for training and education and helps establish the Borough as a Place for Innovation and Centre for Nuclear Excellence and Clean Energy

13.1.4 Copeland has always been at the forefront of the UK's nuclear programme. The Borough occupies a prominent position on the Energy Coast and benefits from a highly skilled workforce. Further investment in the nuclear and clean energy sectors in the Borough will help Cumbria achieve its goal of "net zero" by 2037.

13.1.5 Sellafield is the only facility in the UK that is capable of managing low, medium and high level radioactive material, together with the environmental remediation of the site. Whilst its reprocessing mission is coming to an end, the management of nuclear materials, together with the environmental remediation of the site, will provide employment opportunities well beyond the timeframes of the Local Plan. The Borough is also home to the Low Level Waste Repository at Drigg, which deals with the management, treatment and disposal of low activity.

13.1.6 Copeland was identified in the Government's UK Energy Policy as the location for a new 3.4GW nuclear power plant. Whilst the project has stalled, Moorside is still an identified site in the NPS, remains available and is suitable to house a range of nuclear and clean energy related developments, including a potential Clean Energy Park.

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<sup>18</sup> The Council is currently producing a Copeland Vision and a Nuclear Prospectus to update the Growth Strategy

13.1.7 The Council is producing a new Economic Vision document for the Borough, and a supporting Nuclear Prospectus document which will highlight the value of West Cumbria’s nuclear capability, skills and assets in delivery of the Government’s Nuclear Sector Deal. The Local Plan has a role to play by prioritising those developments that help deliver the Energy Coast brand and establish the Borough as a Centre of Nuclear Excellence and clean energy, such as the projects listed below. Further details regarding each project can be found in the Economy chapter.

**The development of Westlakes Science Park, Whitehaven as strategic hub for science and engineering expertise and research and development industries**

Westlakes Science Park contains high quality units including laboratories for science and innovation within an attractive setting and good access to the A595 on the edge of Whitehaven. It is acknowledged that clustering high-tech and Research & Development industries in one place has a number of benefits. The Local Plan therefore recognises its importance as a key employment site in the Borough and will work with BEC, the sites owners, to ensure benefits are maximised.



*Photo: Westlakes Science Park*



**The creation of an Enterprise Campus and Innovation Hub**

An opportunity has been identified to create a modern Enterprise Campus and Innovation Hub to complement the offer on Westlakes Science and Technology Park. The site will encourage new business and investment and create an environment where nuclear-allied activities can cluster and thrive.

The Council will work with partners and occupiers to produce a Masterplan for the site and secure funding.

### **The development of the North Shore Innovation Zone in Whitehaven<sup>19</sup>**

The Innovation Zone is a low carbon project that will transform the waterfront and northern gateway into the town. The Council is working alongside BEC<sup>20</sup>, Sellafield Ltd, the Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners and other partners to enhance the area and develop a new hotel, new restaurants, start-up incubator units and modern offices overlooking the harbour. Work has already commenced on the Buzz Station<sup>21</sup> which includes space for business start-ups and networking, and is due for completion in Spring 2021.



*Photo: Proposed Buzz Station, Whitehaven*



### **The development of a Clean Energy Park**

The development of a Clean Energy Park would help strengthen the Borough's position on Britain's Energy Coast and help Cumbria achieve its aim of being net zero carbon by 2037. The Park could host a large nuclear power station (Moorside) and/or a mix of small modular reactors, advanced modular reactors and other clean energy technologies. Its location in Copeland would benefit from the existing expertise in clean energy our workforce has.

### **The development of a new strategic employment site on the Eastern Fringes of Whitehaven**

Should the forthcoming Employment Development Needs Assessment identify need for additional or higher quality employment land in the Borough, East Whitehaven would be an ideal location, subject to the availability of land, given its links to the A595 and potential growth corridor linked to the Whitehaven Relief Road and its proximity to existing employment areas at Westlakes Science Park and Leconfield.



*Photo: Eastern Whitehaven*

<sup>19</sup> Photo c/o becnorthshore.com

<sup>20</sup> Formerly known as Britain's Energy Coast

<sup>21</sup> A £300 million scheme housed in the former bus station

Development that helps establish the Lake District Coast brand and enhances the experience economy and our natural and built environment

- 13.1.8 The Copeland Growth Strategy identifies the visitor economy as a key growth priority, identifying a range of opportunities where the offer could be enhanced. Developing Copeland as the Lake District Coast destination, also helps support the Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan 2014-2024 document which lists the rural and visitor economy as one of its key priority areas.
- 13.1.9 The following projects will help establish Copeland as the Lake District Coast, enhance our experience economy and encourage longer visitor stays. Further information regarding each can be found in the Economy chapter.

**The improvement of linkages between Whitehaven town centre and the Harbourside**

This project has been identified through the Future High Streets Funding bid process and will enable people to move more freely between the town’s retail core and the harbourside, better enabling linked visits and increasing footfall.

*Photo: Whitehaven Waterfront*



**The establishment of “Experience Whitehaven” including the creation of new arcades and hubs in Whitehaven Town Centre**

This project will encourage visitors to the town centre to stay for longer by increasing the number of linked trips.

*Photo: Former Whittles Store, Whitehaven*

**The establishment of a Sports and Leisure Quarter in East Whitehaven**

The draft Sports and Physical Activity Strategy identifies a potential opportunity to refocus sporting facilities in East Whitehaven, around the existing Whitehaven Academy, Whitehaven Pool, Whitehaven Campus and Whitehaven (Overend) Sports Stadium, improving links between these facilities and with the rest of the town. This area benefits from its proximity to the A595, is more accessible to



residents in the south of the Borough than other parts of Whitehaven and there is potential land to provide space for additional facilities.

*Photo: Whitehaven Stadium*

### **The improvement of the sports and leisure offer in Millom**

Given the distance from Millom to sports facilities in Whitehaven and adjoining Boroughs, the Council's Draft Sports Strategy recommends that a small pool (15m x 8m) should be considered for the town, potentially co-located and managed with other health and well-being provision. This would support the following objectives for the town as set out in the Millom Vision document:

*“Support community health and wellbeing through the design of open space and the built environment, provision of recreational and health facilities...encourage an attractive and vibrant town centre with a range of retail, service and leisure uses...create a high-quality visitor experience and vibrant tourist economy...promote sustainable and active travel, countryside access and leisure tourism”*



### **Development that enhances our offer to users of national cycle routes and helps achieve our ambition to develop a coastal cycling route**

Whitehaven is the start of the C2C route and is also located on the Hadrian's Wall and Reivers national Cycle Routes. Opportunities have been identified as part of the Connecting Cumbria's Hidden Coast programme to create a new recreational route from Whitehaven to Millom, which largely follows the English Coastal Path and will include challenge activities, a hub for cyclists including a velotel in Whitehaven and art installations. Further funding is being sought through the Future High Streets Fund bid.

*Photo: Coastal Path signage, Whitehaven Harbour*

## Development that improves the Borough's residential offer in order to meet needs and aspirations

- 13.1.10 We recognise that housing needs in the Borough are changing and having a good range of housing to meet all needs is essential if we are to reverse the trend of population loss and support economic growth. The following are priority projects that will make our towns more attractive places to live.

### The development of large, key regeneration sites

Strategic regeneration sites have been identified across the Borough that will help transform the areas they are located in and help boost the supply of housing in the Borough. Masterplans will be required for each of these sites.

- Former Marchon Site, Whitehaven
- Harras Moor, Whitehaven
- South Mirehouse well-being Village, Whitehaven
- Moor Farm, Millom
- Land at Edgehill Park, Whitehaven

Maps of the sites are included in Appendix B and further information regarding each site can be found in the Housing chapter.



*Photo: Former Marchon Site, Whitehaven*



### Town Centre renewal schemes in Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Whitehaven

The Council has produced Spatial Frameworks for Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom which provide a strategy for change and identify areas for urban renewal programmes. These documents will help support bids for Town Deal funding and are available to view on the Council's website. A draft Framework for Whitehaven is currently being produced.

Development of such sites provides an opportunity to improve the town centre environment and provide a range of uses, including specialised housing for graduates, students and older people who would benefit from a town centre location.

*Photo: Egremont Town Centre*

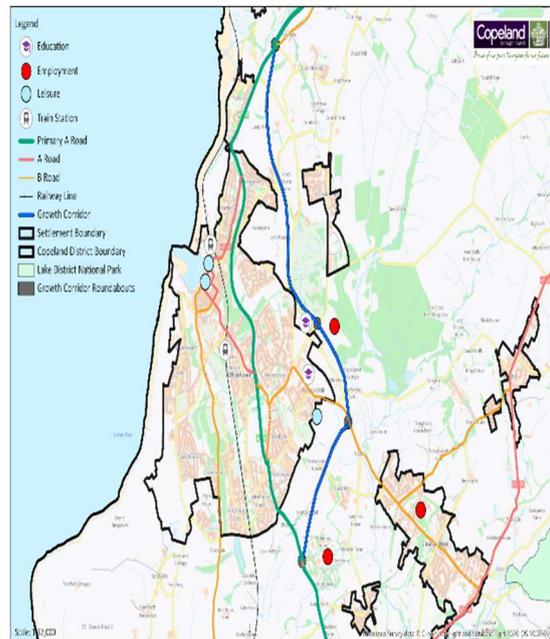
Infrastructure development which improves physical and digital connectivity within Copeland and between the Borough and surrounding districts

- 13.1.11 The provision of new and improved infrastructure is essential to ensure that the benefits of development are maximised and impacts upon the environment are reduced. The following have been identified as priority projects.
- 13.1.12 A key aspiration of the Council is to provide a new growth corridor for the borough around Whitehaven that will meet future business needs and support the borough's role as the UK's Clean Energy Coast.
- 13.1.13 At the heart of the growth corridor will be a key piece of new Strategic Road Network in the form of an Eastern Relief Road for Whitehaven, connecting the A595 at Howgate with the junction at Westlakes Science and Technology Park.
- 13.1.14 The benefits the relief road will provide include:
- Improved access and increased capacity for the regionally significant Westlakes Science and Technology Park
  - Supporting the creation of a new Strategic Employment Site in the borough with direct access onto the Strategic Road Network, at Hensingham Common
  - Providing excellent connections to, and between, the three key employment locations in the borough (Westlakes Science and Technology Park, Hensingham Common and Leconfield)
  - Unlocking new housing development to support the long term growth of the town
  - Supporting the creation of a new sports and leisure quarter for the town (building on the existing assets at the Copeland Stadium, Copeland Pool, Whitehaven Campus and redeveloped Whitehaven Academy), which will also easily accessible for many nearby towns and villages
  - Creating a more efficient and quicker route to Sellafield site, Moorside site and the Clean Energy Park
  - Creating greater resilience in the road network in the north of the borough
  - Provide better integration and connectivity for Whitehaven, as the current A595 route severs the town
  - Providing a new edge for the town
- 13.1.15 Highways England has carried out some initial work to identify options for the route of the relief road, but this work has now been paused as the scheme has not been included in the Department for Transport's *Road Investment Strategy 2 (2020-2025)* which outlines major projects for Highways England over the next five years.
- 13.1.16 The relief road remains a key priority for the Council and it is hoped that the project will still be developed in the shorter term by other means (e.g. to help deliver Moorside and/or the Clean Energy Park). The Council has identified our preferred route between the Howgate roundabout and Westlakes Science and Technology Park junction, together with an indication of what it can unlock.

## The development of a new growth corridor on the fringes of East Whitehaven

The provision of a carefully located, new relief road to the East of Whitehaven would fundamentally change the way the town and its surrounding area is accessed. It would provide opportunities to better connect existing and potential new employment and housing areas in the East of Whitehaven and neighbouring towns creating a growth corridor to support the long term growth of the town. It would also reduce the amount of congestion along the A595 and improve connections within Whitehaven, making it a more attractive and welcoming place for residents and visitors. It would also provide an opportunity to create a better-defined, green edge to Whitehaven which could have potential positive effects in terms of biodiversity.

The route of the suggested growth corridor can be seen in Figure 3.



### Improvements to the rail line and local stations

A major £100m+ project to improve capacity along the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line is currently being developed, which would increase accessibility and support sustainable travel and tourism in the Borough.

The Cumbrian Coast Line Community Rail Partnership leads on the delivery of improvements to the stations, infrastructure and services across Copeland. As of May 2020, almost all of Copeland's stations have been adopted and work is underway to improve the quality of these, including ticket office improvements in Whitehaven and plans for the installation of a shelter over the Sellafield station.

*Photo: Sellafield Station*

### Improved Connectivity between Whitehaven Station and the Town Centre

Currently Whitehaven Station and the town centre are poorly connected with access between the two via a busy main road and with limited wayfinding.

*Photo: Whitehaven Station*



### The Development of a Digital Grid in Whitehaven town centre and improvements to digital connectivity within Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom

The Future High Streets Fund bid recognises that digital connectivity in Whitehaven is varied. The creation of a digital grid within the town centre where people can access secure and free wi-fi will support businesses in the area and encourage visitors.

The Council is also exploring ways to improve connectivity in the Borough's other towns including through the Digital Borderlands and Connected Cumbria programmes.

### Policy DS4PO: Strategic Development Priority Projects



The following developments are strategic priority projects that will help transform our Borough, support economic growth and diversification and improve social and community infrastructure.

- Development that supports the Energy Coast brand, provides opportunities for training and education and helps establish the Borough as a Place for Innovation and Centre for Nuclear Excellence and Clean Energy in particular:
  - The development of Westlakes Science Park as strategic hub for science and engineering expertise and research and development industries
  - The creation of an Enterprise Campus and Innovation Hub

- The development of the North Shore Innovation Zone in Whitehaven
- The development of a Clean Energy Park
- The development of a new strategic employment site on the Eastern Fringes of Whitehaven
- Development that helps establish the Lake District Coast brand and enhances the experience economy and our natural and built environment, in particular:
  - The improvement of linkages between Whitehaven town centre and the Harbourside
  - The Establishment of “Experience Whitehaven” including the creation of new arcades and hubs in Whitehaven Town Centre
  - The establishment of a Sports and Leisure Quarter in East Whitehaven
  - The improvement of the sports and leisure offer in Millom
  - Development that enhances our offer to users of national cycle routes, promotes our location on Cumbria’s Hidden Coast and helps achieve our ambition to develop a coastal cycling route
- Development that improves the Borough’s residential offer in order to meet needs and aspirations, in particular
  - The development of large, key regeneration sites
  - Town Centre renewal schemes in Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Whitehaven
- Infrastructure development which improves physical and digital connectivity within Copeland and between the Borough and surrounding districts, in particular:
  - The development of a new growth corridor to the East of Whitehaven
  - Improvements to the rail line and local stations
  - Improved Connectivity between Whitehaven Station and the Town Centre
  - The development of a Digital Grid in Whitehaven town centre and improvements to digital connectivity within Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom

## 14 Strategic Development Principles

- 14.1.1 Copeland is going through a significant period of change with a number of large scale developments on the horizon. It is therefore important that we ensure new development is as sustainable in environmental, social and economic terms as it can be.
- 14.1.2 Draft Policy DS5PO identifies a number of principles that all development should aspire to achieve. The principles are guidelines rather than requirements, acknowledging that there may be impacts upon viability, however consideration will be given to relevant principles when determining the sustainability of a proposal. Developers should set out why they are unable to meet any of the principles in their applications.
- 14.1.3 The principles are based upon a number of topics discussed below:
- Mitigation and Adaption to Climate Change**
- 14.1.4 Climate change is one of the biggest challenges we face, particularly as a coastal Borough. The principles aim to reduce the carbon footprint of new development and mitigate the effects of climate change. Climate change is discussed further in the Copeland Economy chapter.

## Protection, enhancement and restoration of the Borough's valued natural and cultural assets

- 14.1.5 Copeland's natural and cultural assets have a positive impact upon the health and well-being of our residents and help attract visitors to the area. Our natural assets also help to reduce the effects of climate change and should be protected for their own sake, as they provide habitats for a number of species. Our natural and built environment is discussed further in the Copeland Places chapter.

## Creation and retention of quality places

- 14.1.6 We need to ensure that the places we create are of a high quality and help support our ambitions and aspirations. Design standards are discussed further in the Standards and Obligations Chapter.

## Healthy Communities

- 14.1.7 A number of principles relate to health, acknowledging the role planning can play in creating and maintaining healthy, inclusive and safe communities and supporting the current Growth Strategy which aims to encourage a healthy and vibrant lifestyle for residents and visitors.
- 14.1.8 The Council's Sustainability Appraisal identifies that Copeland has an ageing population, with lower levels of educational attainment and pockets of deprivation; these are all factors that affect health in the Borough.
- 14.1.9 The Local Plan can help deliver a number of these opportunities, for example by requiring new infrastructure and high quality green space provision as part of new development including space for sports and recreation, ensuring development is of a high quality which protects residential amenity and protecting important social and community facilities.
- 14.1.10 Sporting facilities are discussed further in the Copeland's Communities chapter and open spaces are discussed further in the Copeland Places chapter.

### Policy DS5PO: Development Principles



In order to achieve sustainable development in the Borough and meet Local Plan objectives, development must, where possible:

#### **Mitigation of and adaption to climate change**

- Minimise carbon emissions, maximise energy efficiency and help us to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change
- Be located on sites where there is no risk of flooding and where the development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere
- Protect, enhance and create new areas of green infrastructure, recognising the important role that the natural environment and healthy ecosystems have to play in the future social and economic, as well as environmental sustainability of Copeland
- Make the most efficient use of land by building at appropriate densities and reusing existing buildings and previously developed land

- Minimise waste, maximise opportunities for recycling and use sustainable construction methods, taking into account circular economy principles<sup>22</sup>
- Be located on sites which minimise the need to travel, with good, safe pedestrian links to services and facilities

### **Protection, enhancement and restoration of the Borough's valued natural and cultural assets**

Protect and enhance areas, sites, species and features of biodiversity or geodiversity value, important landscapes and the undeveloped coast including valued landscapes which form a setting to the Lake District National Park and areas of Heritage Coast.

- Conserve and enhance the Borough's cultural and heritage assets and their settings
- Provide and enhance recreational opportunities for the Borough's residents and its visitors, protecting existing provision where possible and ensuring that future development meets appropriate standards in terms of quantity and quality
- Protect the Borough's best and most versatile agricultural land from development
- Support the reclamation and redevelopment or restoration of the Borough's vacant or derelict sites, whilst taking account of landscape, biodiversity and historic environment objectives
- Minimise air, ground and water pollution, ensuring that development does not have a negative impact upon water quality (including waterbodies and bathing waters)

### **Creation and retention of quality places**

- Be of high quality in terms of design so that it retains and enhances locally distinctive places and raises aspirations
- Provide or safeguard good levels of residential amenity and security, reducing the fear of crime and minimising the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour
- Be supported by the relevant infrastructure, ensuring it can accommodate traffic and access arrangements in ways that make it safe and convenient for pedestrians and cyclists to move around
- Address land contamination with appropriate remediation measures

### **Healthy Communities**

- Adopt dementia-friendly design principles<sup>23</sup>
- Provide opportunities for food growing
- Contribute to the creation of mixed communities, helping to reduce social isolation and create community resilience
- Retain and enhance valuable community facilities (including healthcare, cultural and education facilities)
- Include community energy generation to provide low carbon heat and/or power and address energy poverty
- Enhance local pedestrian links to promote physical activity

<sup>22</sup> This involves keeping resources in use for as long as possible, extracting the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recovering and regenerating products and materials at the end of each service life (wrap.org.uk). For example through the reuse of building materials on site.

<sup>23</sup> The Council will produce a Supplementary Planning Document relating to design which to support this Policy. This will provide further guidance for developers on issues such as how to incorporate dementia-friendly principles into their developments.

# Development Standards

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## 15 Development and Infrastructure

15.1.1 When planning for new development it is necessary to understand the infrastructure that will be required to support this growth. A requirement of the NPPF is for Local Plans to set out the contributions expected from development, as this will give developers some certainty on infrastructure requirements and the viability of a site at the earliest stage. Such policies should however, not undermine the deliverability of the plan. To understand infrastructure needs and the viability of sites for potential allocation and development, the Council are preparing/have prepared the following evidence base documents discussed below.

### Infrastructure Delivery Plan

15.1.2 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will test anticipated growth, identify the current level of infrastructure provision across Copeland and define the level of planned infrastructure. Where growth exceeds capacity the additional infrastructure required will be identified, with a broad estimated cost, funding sources and details of who is responsible for delivery.

15.1.3 The types of infrastructure that will be assessed are; Coastal change management, flood risk and drainage, highways and transport (including walking and cycle routes) 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.

15.1.4 The assessment will be based on the proposed development quantum for the plan period to 2035. It is intended that a Draft IDP will be published alongside this document and will be reviewed and updated at Publication Stage. The Council will continue to engage with infrastructure providers including Cumbria County Council in respect of drainage, education and highways as well as Highways England and utility services to ensure that their programmes of improvements merges with projected growth across the Borough.

15.1.5 Some of the potential development sites in the Local Plan could be affected by infrastructure constraints. Where possible, the IDP will identify how such constraints to development are expected to be overcome. For example some sites may need to be phased later in the plan period to allow time for the necessary infrastructure to be developed. Funding sources other than planning obligations, for example funding bids will also be explored. However, in some cases the constraints may be so significant that they cannot be realistically overcome, and will therefore not be included in the Local Plan.

### Viability Assessment

15.1.6 A Stage One Copeland Economic Viability Assessment was completed in 2017 that provided a generic, formula based approach to assess the viability of an appropriate spectrum of representative types of development scenario within the Borough. At this stage the viability modelling identified a mixed picture of viability. This picture is not uncommon with neighbouring authorities and across the wider region.

15.1.7 To date market intelligence has not supported a Copeland Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as such the Stage One Study focussed on Section 106 contributions. 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.

- 15.1.8 To ensure an up to date analysis of viability a detailed and site specific Stage Two Whole Plan and CIL Viability Assessment will be commissioned and published pre- publication stage of the local plan. It is however anticipated that market intelligence will remain the same in that CIL is unlikely to be supported within Copeland.

#### Open Space Assessment (2020)

- 15.1.9 This document includes an assessment of shortages of open space by typology and where improvements to existing spaces will be required to accommodate growth. Appendix D of this Report describes the provision of open spaces that will help inform on and off site requirements through Section 106 planning contributions.

#### A Ten Year Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (2020)

- 15.1.10 This document includes an assessment of the supply and demand for indoor sports and recreation facilities in Copeland. The final version of this document is expected in November 2020 and will set out what improvements and/or new facilities are needed in the Borough. The Publication Draft will set out where developer contributions will be required towards such improvements/facilities.

#### Housing Needs Study (2020) and Strategic Housing Market Assessment

- 15.1.11 Affordable housing will be required on some new developments, the requirements are set out within Policy H9PO of this document and have been informed by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Housing Needs Study.

## 15.2 Developer Contributions

- 15.2.1 Developer contributions form an essential part in providing the funds required to deliver the necessary infrastructure and services to support new development. Planning obligations within Copeland currently take the form of Section 106 agreements and County Council Section 278 highways agreements. It is anticipated that some new development will require developer contributions. When identifying and collecting contributions the Council will ensure compliance with the three tests set out in the NPPF (Para 56 a, b, c)
- 15.2.2 The Council intends to produce a separate Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), the date of publication is to be confirmed. The SPD will set out the Council's approach to planning obligations and the types of contribution that the Council may seek to secure, from new development.
- 15.2.3 Any decision on whether to progress a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be informed by the Stage Two Stage Whole Plan and CIL Viability Assessment that will be commissioned and published prior to the publication stage of the Local Plan.
- 15.2.4 In compliance with national policy, Local Plan policies that include contributions will be viability tested at plan making stage. It will therefore be assumed that new development proposals are viable. As such, at planning application stage if an applicant considers a new proposal is not viable it will then be up to the applicant to demonstrate the particular circumstances that justify the need for a new viability assessment and for the Council to determine what weight is given to the assessment having regard to all circumstances.

15.2.5 The Council will publish an Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement summarising developer contributions data, received through Section 106 and Section 278 planning contributions. The statement will provide detail on how developer contributions are supporting new development and local infrastructure. The statement will be made available on the Council’s website alongside future Local Plan Annual Monitoring Reports.

15.2.6 Policy DS6PO sets out contributions for the enhancement of existing or provision of new infrastructure, facilities and services, which will be in addition to any infrastructure requirements set out within the individual site allocation policies. Enhancement of existing provisions may include improvements to adjacent or nearby green spaces where there is under provision or a need to improve (subject to meeting the NPPF tests Para 56 a, b, c). Where new public green space is required it is expected that land management solutions will be arranged by the developer and third party and agreed through a Section 106 legal agreement.

**Policy DS6PO: Planning Obligations**



1. Where it is reasonable, necessary and directly related to the development Copeland Borough Council, through planning obligations (until such time an alternative method is introduced), will secure:

- a) The enhancement of existing or provision of new infrastructure, facilities and services including: (this list is not exhaustive)

Physical Infrastructure	Social Infrastructure	Green Infrastructure
Digital connectivity	Affordable housing *see policy H8PO	Including public open space, play areas, sports facilities and allotments (Table at Appendix D provides information on under/over provision by settlement)
Transport and Highways improvements (including public transport and sustainable transport solutions)	Education facilities	Nature conservation, biodiversity net gain -% *see policy N2PO
Cycle parking Car Parking Electric charging points	Community facilities including health and social care	Environmental improvements

Footpaths and cycle ways	Public realm (including public art and cultural enhancements)	Landscaping
Drainage infrastructure	-	Tree planting
Measures to conserve or enhance Heritage assets	-	-
Flood risk mitigation measures and surface water management	-	-
Low carbon energy and renewable energy infrastructure	-	-

b) Where appropriate future maintenance of car parking provision and sustainable transport solutions will be required in perpetuity;

c) Future maintenance and/or monitoring of other facilities delivered as a result of development for a period of 15 years or as agreed/identified in a specific Development Plan policy;

d) Future management and monitoring of biodiversity net gain will be required for a period of 30 years

2. The Council will expect planning obligations to be provided on site unless specific circumstances make off-site contributions more appropriate and;

3. 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 viability assessment must be submitted to, and agreed by the Council, as early as possible within the planning application process.

## 16 Development Standards

### 16.1 Design

16.1.1 High quality design is crucial to promoting sustainable development and ensures that the character and appearance of an area, and the street scene in general, is not harmed but also enhanced. A well designed development both residential and commercial will enhance the existing built and natural environment, be appropriate to its intended use, support safer communities, good health and well-being and promote energy efficiency.

16.1.2 Copeland's heritage is an important aspect of the built environment in our towns and villages. The Council has produced a Conservation Area Design Guides which will help

inform the high quality design standards expected to safeguard and enhance the character of our conservation areas and historic buildings.

- 16.1.3 The Local Plan seeks to meet the Council's wider objectives as a front runner in areas including net zero and a digital economy. By meeting these objectives and high standards of design, Copeland will provide the quality environments where people can live, work and enjoy leisure time.
- 16.1.4 National policy endorses the creation of high quality buildings and places as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. The Council will expect all new development to meet high quality standards of design. Detailed criteria is set out within individual Local Plan policies and the Council intends to produce a Design Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will expand upon Local Plan polices and provide more detailed design guidance for applicants seeking planning permission.
- 16.1.5 Policy DS7PO provides a summary of the standards expected on new developments with more detail provided within the individual polices.

#### Policy DS7PO: Design Standards



The Council will expect all new development to meet high quality standards of design. This means that developments must: (this list is not exhaustive)

- a) Create and enhance locally distinctive places, taking account of the local context in terms of the built, historic and natural environment
- b) Use good quality building materials that reflects local character and vernacular, sourced locally where possible
- c) Contribute towards good health and well-being by incorporating high quality and useful open spaces and layouts that encourage walking and cycling
- d) Provide safe, accessible and convenient pedestrian routes and allow for the safe access and manoeuvring of refuse and recycling vehicles
- e) Create opportunities that enhance the community offer and encourage social interaction.
- f) Be built to an appropriate density that enables effective use of land, whilst maintaining suitable levels of amenity
- g) Be of flexible design and adaptable for home working solutions
- h) Incorporate measures to design out crime, taking into consideration secured by design principles
- i) Be laid out in a way that maximises solar gain to internal spaces to promote energy efficiency and sustainable solutions.

## 16.2 Reducing Flood Risk

- 16.2.1 Given its coastal location, parts of the Borough are at risk from coastal flooding.
- 16.2.2 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.

- 16.2.3 The Cumbria Coastal Strategy, which is currently being developed, will build upon the Shoreline Management Plan and will set out how Cumbria County Council will manage the risks of coastal flooding and erosion in the county.
- 16.2.4 As well as being at risk from coastal erosion and flooding, there are also a number of waterbodies within the Borough that are prone to flooding. The Council’s Draft Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, produced in May 2018, identifies localised flooding issues in the South of Copeland, North Whitehaven and Cleator Moor. These areas are particularly susceptible to flash flood events.
- 16.2.5 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 zone 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.
- 16.2.6 The Council will continue to work with partners to manage the risks associated with coastal erosion and flooding. When identifying sites for allocation, consideration was given to flood risk at the earliest stage and sites were excluded where more than 50% of the site was in Flood Risk Zone 2 or 3<sup>24</sup>. 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 where possible<sup>25</sup>.

#### Policy DS8PO: Reducing Flood Risk



The Council will ensure that development in the Borough is not prejudiced by flood risk through:

- a) Allocating new build development on sites located outside areas at risk of flooding where possible and only permitting development in areas at risk of flooding where applicants have carried out the flood risk sequential and exception test to the satisfaction of the Council and appropriate mitigation is provided
- b) Ensuring that developments on important regeneration sites in Whitehaven Town Centre and Harbourside and Pow Beck Valley are designed to address the existing levels of flood risk without increasing flood risk elsewhere
- c) Supporting measures to address the constraints of existing drainage infrastructure capacity and avoiding development in areas where the existing drainage infrastructure is inadequate

<sup>24</sup> Unless the area of the site outside the flood risk zone measured more than 0.25ha

<sup>25</sup> This may not always be possible, for example if development is required to deliver regeneration on a town centre site.

- d) Supporting new flood defence measures to protect against both tidal and fluvial flooding in the Borough, including appropriate land management as part of a catchment wide approach
- e) Requiring the provision of sustainable drainage systems within new developments in accordance with Policy DS9PO
- f) 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 phases of the Shoreline Management Plan.

## 16.3 Sustainable Drainage

- 16.3.1 The need to minimise future developments 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 all new development must incorporate SuDs in accordance with Policy DS9PO below.

### Policy DS9PO: Sustainable Drainage



Where appropriate new development must incorporate sustainable drainage systems. Drainage systems should be well designed with consideration given to the additional benefits they can provide as spaces for biodiversity and recreation.

Development on Greenfield sites should seek to achieve pre-development or better levels of surface water drainage 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. 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
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.

## 16.4 Landscaping

- 16.4.1 National policy requires Councils to protect and enhance valued landscapes. A detailed Copeland Settlement Landscape Character Assessment has been undertaken to support the Local Plan and assist decision makers when considering planning applications and allocations and this is discussed further in the Copeland Places chapter. In order to maintain and enhance our landscapes, the Council will expect a high quality landscaping scheme to be submitted with all proposals for major development.

### Policy DS10PO: 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. The landscaping scheme should also include details of the position, species and number of new trees and landscape features as well as any which will be lost.

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. Native species should be used where possible.

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.

## 16.5 Protecting Soils

- 16.5.1 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 contamination<sup>26</sup>.
- 16.5.2 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.
- 16.5.3 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.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn265.pdf>

## **Policy DS11PO: Soils and Contamination**



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

Sustainable construction measures should be used to conserve good quality soils, protect soils from contamination and avoid soil compaction around root protection areas

Development should not result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.



THE FLOWER BASKET

THE FLOWER BASKET

# Copeland's Economy

# Copeland's Economy

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## 17 Introducing the Chapter

17.1.1 This chapter describes Copeland's economy in general and then looks at each of its key elements (clean energy, nuclear, retail and leisure and tourism) in more detail. It also considers the likely transformation of Copeland's economy over the Local Plan period which will include:

- Changes at Sellafield, and opportunities to broaden the supply chain and export the skills developed on the site
- New low carbon energy generation
- The transformation of our town centres
- Sellafield's role in providing business incubator opportunities at premises including the new Buzz Station in Whitehaven
- The growth of the tourism and visitor sector

17.1.2 Growing Copeland's economy is a key priority for the Council. The Development Strategy and policies 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.

# Economic Context and Employment

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## 18 Economic Context and Employment: Assets and Aspirations



## 19 Economic Context and Employment: Key Facts

78.3% of the working age population in Copeland are economically active (ONS 2018)

Copeland falls within its own self-contained economic geography, the travel to work area (TTWA), where 77.1% of its residents also work in the Borough

Copeland accommodates approximately 3,165 local businesses, that are typically smaller than other parts of Cumbria.

50% of Copeland's jobs are based in the nuclear industry.

Reliance on a single employer where the medium to long term workforce is set to decline - estimated 60% of Copeland's GVA currently dependant on Sellafield

Opportunity to create a specialist cluster of businesses, based around expertise developed at the Sellafield site, which can then grow and create exports, and also be transferred to other sectors and markets.

14.8% of households in Copeland have an annual income of less than £10,000 (ONS 2016)

High entry rates into apprenticeships as result of the nuclear sector

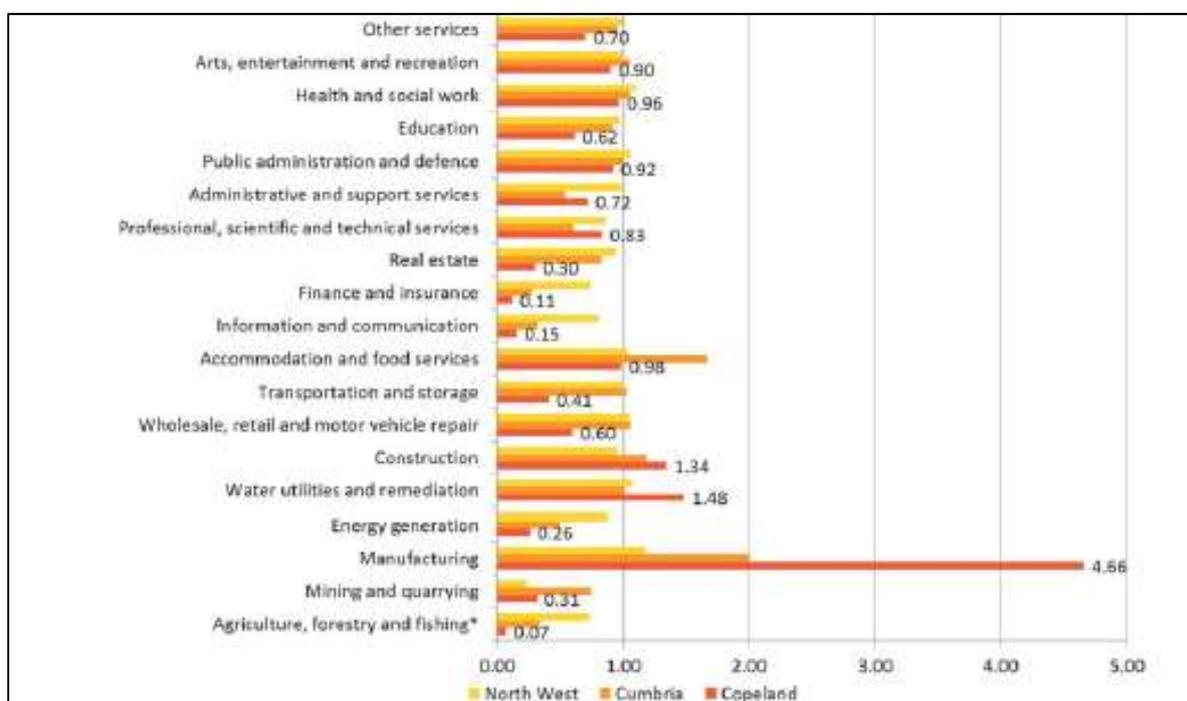
The increased tourism and leisure offer will also provide new opportunities for the local workforce

Westlakes Science and Technology Park is the focus for a knowledge campus of international significance

## 20 Defining Copeland's Economy

- 20.1.1 Copeland's economy is unique. It occupies a prominent position on Britain's Energy Coast' and is the Centre of Nuclear Excellence.
- 20.1.2 Copeland shares many of its specialisms with the rest of Cumbria. These cover a number of established and emerging industries, and generate a range of employment opportunities across different skill levels. Identified within Copeland's workforce are people with a range of transferable skills and capabilities in areas such as clean energy, robotics, research and engineering.
- 20.1.3 66% of the Borough is located within the Lake District National Park that holds World Heritage Status and is the most visited National Park in the UK, generating the largest tourism spend in England and Wales. The Borough's new branding of the 'Lake District Coast' will provide opportunities for new and improved leisure and tourism provision to entice visitors from the National Park to the more coastal and diverse parts of the Borough covered by this Local Plan thus improving the local economy.
- 20.1.4 Figure 19 identifies the make-up of the Copeland employment sectors at 2017. As can be seen the largest sector is manufacturing, which is far higher than Cumbria and the North West region and is a clear reflection of the nuclear sector and supply chain that operates within the Borough. Other employment sectors are fairly evenly spread out with the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services playing an important role for the Borough's tourist economy.

Figure 18: Analysis of Employment Sectors



Source: ONS (2017)

- 20.1.5 In terms of occupation type and skills, Copeland has a greater proportion of employees working in skilled trades and professional occupations than in England as a whole, which can largely be attributed to the nuclear and research sectors as can be seen from Table 3 below.

Table 3: Occupation Type 2019

	Copeland		Cumbria		England	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
1: managers, directors and senior officials	2,400	8.1	23,300	9.8	3,227,800	11.7
2: professional occupations	7,000	23.6	40,700	17.1	5,922,000	21.5
3: associate prof & tech occupations	3,100	10.5	26,100	11	4,053,800	14.7
4: administrative and secretarial occupations	2,000	6.8	20,900	8.8	2,646,600	9.6
5: skilled trades occupations	3,300	11.2	40,300	16.9	2,720,800	9.9
6: caring, leisure and other service occupations	1,600	5.3	18,100	7.6	2,455,700	8.9
7: sales and customer service occupations	4,000	13.4	17,000	7.1	1,936,500	7
8: process, plant and machine operatives	3,800	12.7	19,700	8.3	1,699,200	6.2
9: elementary occupations	2,500	8.4	31,900	13.4	2,801,400	10.2

Source: Cumbria Observatory/ONS

20.1.6 Table 4 demonstrates that Copeland accommodates more than 3000 businesses (2017) the overwhelming majority are considered to be ‘micro’ in size, meaning they employ 9 employees or less. Copeland’s businesses are typically smaller than in the rest of Cumbria, the North West and UK; the Borough has fewer medium and large sized businesses (Table 4)

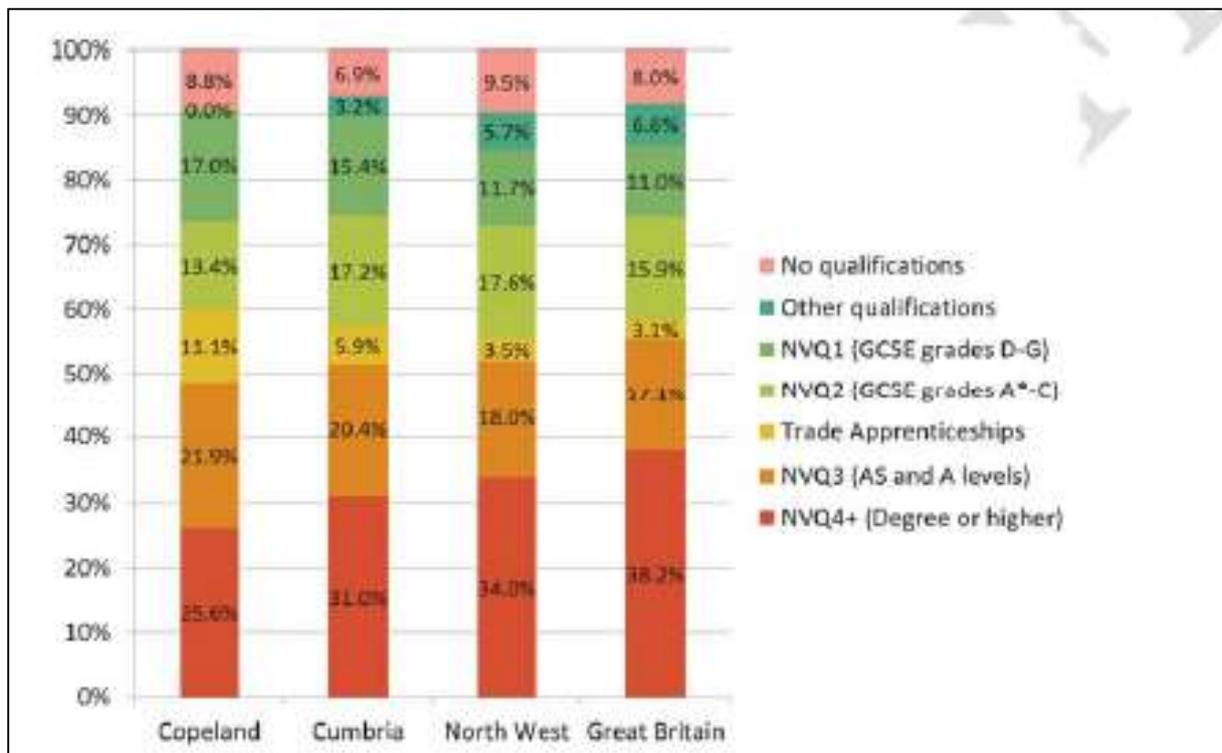
Table 4: Business Size (Employees)

Area	Micro (0 to 9)	Small (10 to 49)	Medium-sized (50 to 249)	Large (250+)	Total
Copeland	2,750	345	60	10	3,165
	86.9%	10.9%	1.9%	0.3%	100.0%
Cumbria	84.5%	13.1%	2.0%	0.3%	100.0%
North West	82.6%	14.0%	3.0%	0.5%	100.0%
United Kingdom	84.1%	12.9%	2.6%	0.4%	100.0%

Source: ONS 2017

20.1.7 Figure 19 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. The Borough 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.

Figure 19: Population Qualifications



Source: ONS 2017

## 21 Moving Forward – Economic Growth

21.1.1 Copeland is going through a period of change and transformation, which brings with it new opportunities, placing the Borough in a key position to provide organisations, companies and home workers with the right environment to operate from. The key drivers for change are:

- Quality of Life -Home working opportunities, meaning that people can now choose to live and work in Copeland, without the need for regular travel to the cities and more urban areas.
- Opportunity to promote flexible working and ‘touch down’ office space
- Digital connectivity, which has improved considerably across Cumbria over the last 5 years<sup>27</sup> and access to superfast broadband in Copeland is better than the Cumbrian average, being almost on par with national coverage.
- A readymade work force with the transferrable skills required to adapt to the creation, manufacturing and maintenance of new technology
- Opportunities linked to Sellafield decommissioning and the Transformation Programme and Project Partners (PPP) Framework. PPP involves Sellafield Ltd procuring a significant proportion of Sellafield’s supply chain services in project and programme management, engineering and design, civil and process rather than Sellafield Ltd delivering the services itself. This will enable the supply chain to grow and develop those skills and services for a wider market, from a base in Copeland.

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.thecumbrialep.co.uk/improving-our-digital-connectivity/>

- Britain’s Energy Coast (BEC): A partnership promoting the region and creating networks for support, strength and success
- Enterprise Campus and Innovation Hub (ISH) : A cluster of networked public, private and academic organisations with ambitions to grow, diversify and export nuclear and non-nuclear products and services from Cumbria into UK and international markets
- A new metallurgical coal mine to the south of Whitehaven ‘West Cumbria Mining’ will directly create 500 new jobs and an additional 200 supply chain opportunities, with 80% of jobs being available to local communities
- Westlakes Science and Technology Park
- West Cumberland Hospital and Medical School in Whitehaven and the UCLAN centre for excellence in rural medicine
- Opportunities for a new link road and growth corridor to the East of Whitehaven
- The North Shore Development – plans for a hotel, office development and incubator space
- The untapped potential for Whitehaven harbour

21.1.2 The Councils aspirations for change are reflected in the Copeland Growth Strategy 2016-2020 and the Draft 2040 Growth Strategy (currently being produced). Both documents reinforce that Copeland is “open for business” and set an ambitious strategy which aims to make the Borough a key driver in the Northern Powerhouse. The strategies which can be viewed at <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/policies-and-strategies> include a number of growth priorities in the following areas:

- Workforce, skills and education
- Enterprise and Innovation
- Engineering
- Energy Coast
- Connectivity
- Visitor economy
- Vibrant towns and communities
- Environment and sustainability
- Quality of life

21.1.3 The 2040 Growth Strategy currently being produced takes a longer term view to 2040, (which will be incorporated into the next stage of the Local Plan). The Local Plan will be a key mechanism to enable the success of the Growth Strategy and Copeland Vision and will reflect an up to date position including a reflection of Covid-19 implications.

## 21.2 Challenges to Economic Growth and how the Council’s Economic Ambitions will be achieved<sup>28</sup>

21.2.1 The potential impacts of Covid-19 are set out within the introduction to this Chapter, it is also important to highlight the challenges that may result from ‘Brexit.’ The outcome of negotiations on the UK’s future relationship with the EU, particularly its access to the single market, remain unknown and it is an area that will be reviewed and discussed in the 2020 EDNA.

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<sup>28</sup> This section will be updated once new evidence becomes available through the 2018 EDNA and subsequent 2020 assessment and Employment Land Availability Study (ELAS).

21.2.2 In response to the Government’s National Industrial Strategy (November 2017), the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (CLEP) produced a final draft of the Cumbria Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) that was submitted to government in March 2019. The Strategy covers the period up to 2030.

21.2.3 The Cumbria Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) sets out the vision for Cumbria, the five strategic objectives for the County with associated targets, a number of supporting priorities, and identifies the following Copeland specific challenges, strengths and opportunities.

Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Reliance on a single employer where the medium to long term workforce is set to decline - estimated 60% of Copeland’s GVA currently dependant on Sellafield</li> <li>•Low rates of enterprise creation</li> <li>•The least accessible part of Cumbria</li> <li>•High wage levels not fully benefitting local economy with many Sellafield workers living outside the Borough</li> <li>•High youth unemployment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•High median earnings and low house prices</li> <li>•Centre of UK’s nuclear sector with Sellafield and host of R&amp;D, innovation and training facilities</li> <li>•Located on western edge of Lake District with scope to enhance tourism activity</li> <li>•Historic town centre and Whitehaven harbour</li> <li>•The largest concentration nationally of nuclear skills</li> <li>•Major concentration of wider range of nuclear research activities, training/skills development and supply chain firms (many at Westlakes Science Park)</li> <li>•High entry rates into apprenticeships as result of the nuclear sector</li> <li>•Starting point for the C2C cycle route and Coast to Coast walk</li> </ul>

21.2.4 Whilst it is accepted that some of the data and challenges identified in the LIS (above) paints a negative picture for parts of Copeland’s economy and workforce, funding through the LEP and the Governments Levelling up Agenda will enable Copeland to respond positively to the challenges. In addition some of the data reflects a different period in time, when home working wasn’t ‘the new normal’, digital connectivity was not so advanced in Cumbria and some of the opportunities set out above were not on the horizon.

21.2.5 A number of the strategic opportunities detailed below are also identified as Strategic Priorities in the Development Strategy section of this Local Plan. These are opportunities for positive change which will support the Borough in achieving its full potential. The projects will provide opportunities for new and improved working environments, improved digital connectivity, research and training centres, start- up business hubs, visitor, leisure and tourist attractions and accommodation, town centre diversification and public realm enhancements to re-invent our towns as quality destinations for living, shopping, leisure and tourism.

21.2.6 Table 5 sets out the current position and the resultant opportunities for improvement:

Table 5: Key Facts and Opportunities

Position /Fact	Opportunities, Benefits and Reasoning
<p>Copeland falls within its own self- contained economic geography, the Whitehaven travel to work area (TTWA), where 50% of Copeland’s jobs are based in the nuclear industry, and 77.1% of Copeland residents working in the Borough. Copeland’s greatest commuting relationships are with the other Cumbrian authorities and in particularly neighbouring Allerdale.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable communities</li> <li>• Close links with neighbouring Cumbrian authorities</li> <li>• Less impact on the carbon footprint created by fewer car journeys travelling longer distances to work</li> <li>• Locally skilled workforce</li> <li>• Transferable skills</li> <li>• More opportunities for home working</li> </ul>
<p>Copeland accommodates approximately 3,165 local businesses, the overwhelming majority of which are micro in size with 0 to 9 employees (86.9%) (ONS 2017). Copeland’s businesses are typically smaller than in the rest of Cumbria, the North West and the UK; the Borough has fewer medium and large sized businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small businesses have the opportunity to grow</li> <li>• New start up facilities such as The Buzz Station provide opportunities for new business adventures to test the market</li> <li>• Larger businesses will be encouraged to the area through opportunities for home working, new initiatives including the Clean Energy Park</li> <li>• The transferrable and unique skills of the local workforce</li> <li>• The ‘new normal’ quality of life and affordability of home ownership will encourage people and businesses to relocate to Copeland</li> </ul>
<p>Labour Market – Copeland’s economically active population is 55.4% whilst Great Britain’s rate is 63.2% the economic activity rates mirror this trend. In particular, the employment rate is just 50.2% in Copeland compared to 60.2% in Great Britain. (ONS 2017)</p> <p>Low employment and economic activity rates combined with high economic inactivity rates means that Copeland’s businesses have a proportionally smaller labour market to draw upon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This data reflects the Borough’s higher than average ageing population</li> <li>• New provisions including home working, the Clean Energy Park, the Sellafield transformation, start- up facilities, increased tourism and leisure offer are some of the opportunities available to the working age population to relocate to Copeland, which will result in a more balanced demographic and increased choice in the labour market.</li> </ul>
<p>High rates of home working can influence economic geographies and the requirement for employment space. 2015 ONS data estimates that 13.7% of the UK work force are classed as home workers. This figure is much lower in Copeland at 8.6%, which is largely reflected by the high proportion of workers at the Sellafield site</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a factor that will become more significant in the ‘new normal’ the Council sees this as an opportunity to provide flexible work space and adaptable spaces in new housing developments.</li> <li>• Improved digital connectivity since the census data was produced will also contribute to more people in Copeland being able to work from home.</li> </ul>

Position /Fact	Opportunities, Benefits and Reasoning
<p>Demonstrated in Figure 19 is the level of qualifications held by Copeland residents aged between 16 and 64 in 2016, which identifies a different picture to the comparison areas. Most notably is the proportion of people in Copeland with degree level or higher is just 25.6% in Copeland, compared to the Great Britain average of 38.2%.</p> <p>Analysis of Key Sectors Copeland shares many of its specialisms with the rest of Cumbria. These cover a number of established and emerging industries, and generate a range of employment opportunities across different skill levels. For example the nuclear and energy sector is a key employer in Copeland and across Cumbria, with many roles requiring degree level or higher vocational qualifications. In contrast the tourism and hospitality sector is characterised by lower skilled roles with accompanying lower wages and productivity compared to others.</p> <p>Figure 18 demonstrates the analysis of employment sectors in Copeland compared to Cumbria and the North West. The analysis shows that in most sectors Copeland has an under representation of employment, which is driven by a significant over representation of employment in the manufacturing industry which relates to Sellafield.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This figure is reflective of the ageing population when fewer people went to university</li> <li>• Recent increase in the take up of locals apprenticeship schemes is a positive input</li> <li>• It is however an important area to improve, which can be achieved through improved employment opportunities such as The Clean Energy Park attracting new people to reside in Copeland.</li> <li>• Additionally the new education campuses in Egremont and Whitehaven will provide a strong basis for the next generation to achieve the appropriate level of qualification to ensure their place at education facilities for higher education.</li> <li>• It is important to recognise the increasing tourism, leisure and hospitality sector in Copeland. With this increased offer it is anticipated that additional companies will offer work based and flexible hours of working - not all positions within this sector require a person to be qualified to degree level, they however play an important role in Copeland's economy.</li> <li>• The transformation at Sellafield will result in a different picture moving forward, partly in light of the transferrable skills of the workforce</li> <li>• The increased tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors will increase representation in this sector</li> <li>• New opportunities at The Clean Energy Park will also increase representation in sectors such as engineering and research</li> </ul>
<p>Copeland suffers from concentrations of deprivation; with just over 12% of Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) falling within the 10% most deprived LSOAs in England and 73% of LSOAs falling within the 50% most deprived LSOAs in England</p> <p>5.7% of people claiming unemployment benefit, above national average at 4.7% (March 2017)</p> <p>14.8% of households in Copeland have an annual income of less than £10,000 (ONS 2016)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is an area that Copeland are keen to improve and a number of projects are already in place to support communities including 'Well Whitehaven'.</li> <li>• Projects are also underway to regenerate areas and provide better quality living accommodation.</li> <li>• It is envisaged that the new education facilities/hubs at Egremont and Whitehaven will provide the support for students to achieve their potential and be in a better position to earn a higher wage and benefit from an improved quality of life.</li> </ul>

Position /Fact	Opportunities, Benefits and Reasoning
Estimated rates claiming unemployment benefits in Copeland is above national average at 5.7%, compared to a national average of 4.7% (ONS March 2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The increased tourism and leisure offer will also provide new opportunities for the local workforce</li> </ul>
Business start-ups in Copeland is fragile, with statistics showing the lowest annual number of start-ups per 10,000 working age residents (44.5), compared to (112.6) for England (Cumbria.gov.uk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purpose built developments including the new Buzz Station in Whitehaven will provide new start -ups with the right venues to test their products and business ideas</li> </ul>

- 21.2.7 Some factors remain unknown at this point, however ‘the new normal’ will bring new opportunities for Copeland’s work force, residents and new and existing communities, in light of the increased focus on homeworking and digital connectivity. As a leader in clean energy and pioneers in net zero our beautiful coast line, rural nature, proximity to the Lake District National Park and being one of the most affordable places to live in the Country, we are in key position to provide sustainable solutions that promote an excellent work life balance for all to enjoy.
- 21.2.8 With the above in mind, the Council continues to progress its ‘Strategic Priorities’ and bring forward a number of ambitions set out in the ‘Copeland Growth Strategy’ and ‘The Copeland Vision and Prospectus’ which will be the drivers for change to unlock and reboot the Borough’s economic growth potential.
- 21.2.9 National Policy (NPPF para 80) places significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking account of both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The Local Plan seeks to support proposals for innovative economic growth and retention of existing businesses by ensuring that Copeland has a range of appropriate land, sites and opportunity areas to meet the needs for businesses to grow and settle in Copeland.

### Policy E1PO: Economic Growth



The economy of Copeland Borough will be rebooted, strengthened and broadened to provide a diverse range of employment and economic opportunities to 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, and growth corridor 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. Office development will be supported where it accords with the Sequential Test as defined in National Policy and Guidance.
- Supporting flexible workspace and touch down zones to provide opportunities for ‘the new normal’
- Creating a broader based and resilient economy, that encourages a skilled work force to remain in or relocate to the Borough.
- 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 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 of Rural Areas by supporting rural diversification that will encourage, tourism, recreation, rural regeneration, and farm diversification, and complement new appropriate agriculture and forestry development where appropriate.

### 21.3 Location of Employment Sites

- 21.3.1 In supporting the Council’s growth ambitions and reboot 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 life time of the Local Plan. In light of ‘the new normal’ there is likely to be an increased demand for flexible work space and new provisions for flexible homeworking community and digital hubs which must also be accommodated for.
- 21.3.2 The economic objective as set out in the NPPF (para 8a) places an emphasis on Local Plans to ensure that there is enough suitable employment land in terms of use type, quality and quantity is available as such the Council carried out a ‘Call for Employment Sites’ in early 2020.
- 21.3.3 The allocation of sites and future opportunity areas for employment and economic uses will be consulted upon again once we understand existing availability in terms of amount and suitability and future employment/economic need across the Borough that will be identified through the EDNA and ELAS. The studies will be commissioned prior to the next stage of plan production.
- 21.3.4 The studies will provide an up to date review of the suitability of existing employment land and sites and identify opportunities for a new strategic high quality employment site along the ‘Growth Corridor’ to the East of Whitehaven, where the Council’s aspirations can be realised in terms of providing the right land to deliver a new high quality Strategic Employment Site.
- 21.3.5 In the interim, a draft study has been produced that provides the position at 2018 and includes a chapter setting out the key changes and challenges up to 2020 that will be reflected upon in the later study.

- 21.3.6 The Local Plan identifies a number of changes that have occurred between 2018 and 2020 that will impact upon the 2020 position that includes; impacts of Covid 19 and Brexit, new opportunities at the Moorside Site, (Clean Energy Park), Enterprise Campus and Innovation Hub (ISH project), Sellafield decommissioning and transformation, West Cumbria Mining, Future High Street Funds and Towns Bids, improved digital connectivity, more opportunities for homeworking, resulting in the potential of less need for traditional office space and increased need for touch down and flexible working spaces.
- 21.3.7 Whilst the NSIP scheme to deliver a new nuclear power station at Moorside is currently on hold, the development remains as a priority in the National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure and a Council ambition and the 2018 EDNA reflects this position. As explained in para 10.4.4 the 2018 study does not reflect on Clean Energy Park that could be located on part of the Moorside site, however the 2020 EDNA update which will be produced prior to the Publication Draft will take this and the other developments listed in the paragraph above into account.
- 21.3.8 In identifying a 2018 employment space need for Copeland the EDNA models four different scenarios. Each scenario draws upon a different set of assumptions; some reflect economic growth; whilst another is underpinned by past rates of employment land delivery. The net requirements identified (excluding potential demand in the Lake District National Park) range from **-7.68ha to +43.59ha** over the period 2017 to 2035.
- 21.3.9 The lower figure of **-7.68ha** reflects the baseline labour demand scenario, with total demand suppressed by a negative requirement for manufacturing (B1c/B2) land, which offsets the positive requirement for both office and warehousing/distribution uses. Given the likelihood of developments listed above coming forward over the Plan period, this scenario is not considered to be a true reflection of future employment land needs in the Borough.
- 21.3.10 The study reflects that if the Council were to plan for zero net change in relation to manufacturing land, the Borough would require **1.95ha** of employment land to meet the needs of office and distribution occupiers. This is considerably lower than the requirements for **12.50ha** of B class land associated with a continuation of past take up rates.
- 21.3.11 The higher figure of **+43.59ha** is based upon a Policy-On Labour Demand scenario that models the additional demand for employment space that could be generated by changes to Sellafield's operational model and the potential for large scale nuclear build at Moorside. The scenario is underpinned by intelligence regarding the forecast peaks in employment at Moorside which, whilst significant, are likely to be relatively short in duration, with less clarity at present regarding the extent to which this will translate to a more sustainable uplift in employment and employment land needs over the plan period.
- 21.3.12 At this stage of plan production and prior to publication of the 2020 ELAS and EDNA, and in light of the Council's growth agenda the decision has been taken to plan for the higher figure of **+43.59ha** by including opportunities for the development of a new Strategic Employment Site along the growth corridor that includes Hensingham Common and/or an extension at Whitehaven Commercial Park at Moresby Parks. Employment land need will be further reflected upon and reviewed as more evidence becomes available in the 2020 studies.
- 21.3.13 The development will be in addition to the Enterprise Campus and Innovation Hub (ISH) project that if delivered will create a cluster of networked public, private and academic organisations with ambitions to grow, diversify and export nuclear and non-nuclear

products and services from Cumbria into UK and international markets. This project will support economic growth, based on capability developed in delivering the Sellafield mission, while diversifying our local economy, increasing UK exports and Winning UK Business.

- 21.3.14 Copeland is the right place to develop such a Campus given its ready -made workforce with unique and transferable skills. This particular site benefits from its proximity to Sellafield, Westlakes Science Park, the A595 and Lillyhall in neighbouring Allerdale. Lillyhall (which has close links to the University of Cumbria) and the National College for Nuclear, based in Copeland, and provides the learning hub for the next generation to achieve their ambitions in the nuclear and clean energy sectors.
- 21.3.15 A list of proposed Employment allocations is included in Policies E3PO and E4PO (and mapped in Appendix E).
- 21.3.16 Different types of employment have different requirements in terms of their location, neighbour impact and needs of the business. The underlying logic is wherever possible to locate activity in centres where there are shared services, good transport links and choice, and the potential for reinforcing sustainable growth.

**Policy E2PO: Location of Employment**



Proposals for economic development opportunities will be supported where they;

- Provide the type and scale of development that is appropriate for its settlement as identified in the table below; and are
- Located on allocated employment sites and existing employment land either through the reuse or redevelopment of existing premises and where appropriate intensification of uses; or
- Located on land identified as areas for economic growth.

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 and biodiversity

Applications for economic development outside of the Borough’s towns and local service centres 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
<b>Principal Town</b>	A range of employment types including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of existing businesses</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New start-ups and incubator facilities</li> <li>• Digital businesses</li> <li>• Improvements and expansion of the existing tourism offer</li> <li>• Creation of new tourism opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Key Service Centre</b>	<p>A range of small and medium scale enterprises including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of existing businesses</li> <li>• New start-ups and incubator facilities</li> <li>• Digital businesses</li> <li>• Improvements and expansion of the existing tourism offer</li> <li>• Creation of new tourism opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Local Centre</b>	<p>Small scale economic opportunities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversion and re-use of existing buildings</li> <li>• Improvements and upgrade of existing buildings and employment sites</li> <li>• Improvements and expansion of the existing tourism offer</li> <li>• Creation of new tourism opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable Rural Villages</b>	<p>Small scale economic opportunity linked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of existing businesses</li> <li>• Re-use of existing buildings</li> <li>• Diversification of existing buildings that provide economic opportunity suitable to the role of a sustainable rural village</li> </ul>
<b>Other Rural Villages</b>	<p>Small scale economic opportunity linked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of existing businesses</li> <li>• Re-use of existing buildings</li> <li>• Diversification of existing buildings that provide economic opportunity suitable to the role of a rural village</li> </ul>
<b>Open Countryside</b>	<p>Small scale economic opportunity linked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of existing businesses</li> <li>• Re-use of existing buildings</li> <li>• Diversification of existing buildings that provide economic opportunity suitable to an open countryside location</li> </ul>

## 21.4 Westlakes Science and Technology Park

- 21.4.1 Westlakes Science and Technology Park is the most prestigious employment site in Copeland and this is highlighted by its inclusion as a Strategic Development Priority earlier in the Local Plan. Companies based at the Park provide a range of skills and services including international design, engineering and other professional services.
- 21.4.2 The Science Park is a regionally important site, located approximately 2 miles from Whitehaven on the A595. It accommodates around 2000 personnel in eleven main, modern buildings and is of great importance to West Cumbria, as a focus for the development of research based companies, with a particular focus on nuclear technologies, medicine and skills and their technological transfer.
- 21.4.3 Permitted uses on the site are at present restricted to technology and ancillary B1 (office) and D1 (research). It is however recognised that broadening the uses on the site may make it more attractive to potential occupiers and would also bring benefits to nearby residents. It is important however that any new businesses do not affect the vitality and viability of nearby town centres.

### Policy E3PO: Westlakes Science and Technology Park (Regionally Significant Science Park)



The Westlakes Science and Technology Park will continue to be the focus for a knowledge campus of international significance in line with the requirements of policies DS7PO, E4PO and BE4PO with regards to uses and design standards.

Uses will be restricted to B1 and D1 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.

The Council will work with the site's owners to produce a Masterplan for Westlakes to inform its future development.

## 21.5 Employment Sites

- 21.5.1 Copeland has a number of existing employment sites of differing quality, size, and available space and use classes. Westlakes Science and Technology Park is explained above, other major employment sites in the Borough include Leconfield at Cleator Moor, Whitehaven Commercial Park at Moresby Parks, Bridge End in Egremont and Devonshire Road in Millom.
- 21.5.2 Research suggests that demand in Cumbria generally comes from expansion of existing businesses, with more limited demand from new business formation, anecdotal evidence suggests that the current lack of a Strategic Business Park is limiting inward investment in Copeland. In order to meet this potential demand the Council is proposing to identify such a site and create a hierarchy of employment sites as follows:

- **Regionally Significant Science Park:** To be the focus of Research and Development business (See Policy E3PO)
- **Strategic Employment Site:** to attract larger scale inward investment
- **Major Employment Site:** For larger and growing local businesses and SMEs moving into the Borough
- **Local Employment Site:** For new and expanding smaller local businesses

21.5.3 Proposed allocations within each tier are identified in draft Policy E4PO. A number of additional employment sites have been put forward for consideration; these are listed in Appendix F and are considered further in the Council’s Employment and Opportunity Sites Document. Demand and availability of appropriate sites will be reviewed through the EDNA and ELAS later this year prior to the next stage of Local Plan production.

21.5.4 The Council will continue to support development on existing employment sites and allocations where they are in accordance with policies in the Development Strategy.

### Policy E4PO: Employment Sites and Allocations



Development within the boundaries of the following employment sites and allocations will be supported where criteria set out in policies E1PO and E2PO is met. Development is restricted to B1, B2 and B8 Use Classes.

	Site	Total Site Size (Approx - hectares)
<b>Strategic Employment Site</b>	Hensingham Common, Whitehaven*	30ha
	Leconfield Industrial Estate	14.4ha
<b>Major Employment Sites</b>	Whitehaven Commercial Park, Moresby Parks	12ha
	Bridge End, Egremont	12.5ha
<b>Local Employment Sites</b>	Sneckyeat Rd, Whitehaven	4.9ha
	Haig Business Park, Whitehaven	2.6ha
	Furnace Row, Distington	3.1ha
	Frizington Rd, Frizington	1.6ha
	Seascale Rural Workshops	1.4ha
	Devonshire Rd, Millom	5.9ha
Mainsgate Rd, Millom	3.4ha	

21.5.5 It is expected that this new strategic site in the Whitehaven area (identified with an \* in the table above), together with the clear purpose of each type of site, will enable

clustering of businesses both within a particular site and across the 'Whitehaven Cluster'. This will enable businesses to share ideas, benefit from economies of scale and provide a more comprehensive and commercially attractive package of skills and services, both locally and to the wider UK and global markets.

- 21.5.6 At present the exact location, size and boundaries of the Hensingham Common site are purely indicative only and further work needs to be carried out to determine whether the site is available and suitable or whether an alternative location should be considered.
- 21.5.7 As stated above, following completion of the EDNA and ELAS existing sites, proposed allocations and new sites submitted through the previous Call for Sites will be reviewed to reflect the latest evidence in terms of need and suitability. It is anticipated that a consultation of sites for economic/employment use will take place prior to consultation of the Publication Stage of the Local Plan and the table above will be reviewed and amended to reflect the latest position.

## 21.6 Opportunity Sites and Areas

- 21.6.1 National Policy NPPF para 81 c) 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.
- 21.6.2 National Policy (NPPF para 117 and 118 c) promotes 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.
- 21.6.3 The Council will support the development and/or redevelopment of the opportunity sites. The focus of the sites will be for inward investment and regeneration.
- 21.6.4 A list of suggested Opportunity Sites<sup>29</sup> is available at Appendix G. Further information regarding each opportunity site and details of the types of development the Council feels would be suitable on each will be produced prior to the production of the Local Plan Publication Draft. 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 site is developed holistically.

### Policy E5PO: Opportunity Sites and Areas



The Council will support the development and/or redevelopment of identified Opportunity Sites and Areas in and adjacent to the towns of Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom. The focus of the sites will be for inward investment and regeneration.

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

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<sup>29</sup> As well as individual opportunity sites, the Retail Study has identified two broad Opportunity Areas on the edge of Whitehaven Town Centre where there are opportunities for regeneration.

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.

21.6.5 Opportunity Sites will be reviewed as the plan progresses and more evidence becomes available in the EDNA and ELAS and other evidence based documents. The Council is considering the option of a portfolio of sites that will be made publically available on the Council's website and kept up to date through the annual monitoring process.

## 21.7 Safeguarding Employment Sites

21.7.1 Following a review of employment land across the Borough (existing, new, opportunity and regeneration areas), policies for economic/employment use will be added and updated accordingly. In line with the NPPF the Council will take a positive approach for applications for alternative uses of employment sites in line with requirements set out in draft Policy E6PO.

21.7.2 A definition of the use classes referred to in draft Policy E6PO can be found in the Local Plan Glossary.

### Policy E6PO: Safeguarding of Employment Sites



Employment sites will be retained and safeguarded where there is a reasonable prospect of them being required for that purpose. The requirement of such sites will be monitored over the plan period and considered for alternate uses, or deallocated, where there is clear evidence that the site is no longer required for use class B1, B2 and B8 employment.

Where proposals are submitted for non-‘B1, B2 and B8’ use classes on employment sites, regard will be given to the following:

- The extent to which the proposals are responding to local needs for such development.
- The lack of suitable, alternative sites being available to meet the demand.
- The need to safeguard the integrity of neighbouring uses, including their continued use for employment purposes.
- The potential impact on the strategic role and function of the remaining employment land, in meeting the future needs in the Borough.
- The need to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres.

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.

## 21.8 Homeworking

- 21.8.1 In light of Covid-19 and 'the new normal' it is likely that more people will continue to work from home more often, if not full time, and good digital connectivity in Copeland allows this to take place. Given this, the Council is keen to support change and be a front runner in testing new models, including flexible space and touch down points built into housing schemes, which is set out in more detail in the Housing Chapter.
- 21.8.2 In many cases working from home is Permitted Development, and does not require a planning application to be submitted to and determined by the Council. Policy E7PO is intended to assess proposals for a change of use of land and premises for home working where the use will impact on the neighbouring community and a planning permission is required, to ensure impacts upon neighbouring residents (e.g. through increased noise and disturbance and additional pressures on parking) are considered.

### Policy E7PO: Home Working



Proposals for working from home and conversion of space to employment use will be supported where it does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses (e.g. through noise, disturbance or a loss of privacy) and additional parking needs linked to the business can be accommodated comfortably within the vicinity of the site without detriment to local residents.

# Climate Change and Clean Energy

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## 22 Climate Change and Clean Energy: Assets and Aspirations

**Opportunities to create a new Clean Energy Park**

**Copeland and Cumbria target for net zero by 2037**

**Copeland and West Cumbria: front runners in clean energy technology and leaders in pioneering ways to achieve net zero carbon**

**Copeland: Clean and Beautiful**

**Highly experienced workforce with transferable skills**

**Opportunities for wind energy developments identified in the Wind Energy Technical Study**

## 23 Climate Change and Clean Energy: Key Facts

Climate change is one of the biggest global threats facing people and wildlife.

Copeland is particularly vulnerable to climate change given its coastal location and the fact that it contains a number of waterbodies.

The Government's strategy for zero carbon by 2050 the Clean Growth Strategy sets out a comprehensive set of policies and proposals that aim to accelerate the pace of 'clean growth'. Copeland as front runners in clean energy research and innovation are committed to supporting a more aspirational transition to a carbon neutral future by 2037.

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 mitigate the likely impact of existing climate change"*.

## 24 Key Acts, Legislation and Projects (Climate Change)

24.1.1 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. Cumbria has set itself a more aspirational target of being net zero by 2037.

24.1.2 In 2015, Member Countries of the UN adopted the UN Sustainable Development Goals ("the SDGs") which replace the Millennium Development Goals introduced at the start of the millennium. The UN argue that the 17 goals – designed to eradicate poverty, respond to climate change and promote peaceful and prosperous livelihoods are integrated. Many organisations and Local Authorities have now adopted particular SDGs and used them as a template to tackle key areas including:

- **SDG-7 Affordable & Clean Energy:** which discusses increasing the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix and improving energy efficiencies;
- **SDG-11 Sustainable Cities & Communities:** which supports strengthened regional development planning;
- **SDG-12 Responsible Consumption & Production:** which outlines measures to substantially reduce waste generation through greater awareness of the waste triangle, and promotion of commercially sustainable practices in procurement and contracting;
- **SDG-13 Climate Action:** which supports the integration of climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

24.1.3 In light of the Government's strategy for 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.'

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

24.1.4 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 mitigate the likely impact of existing climate change*". In order to take meaningful action against 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. To date, two key actions have been taken:

- Small World Consulting produced an updated "Carbon Baseline Report" for Cumbria earlier this year, in order to understand the starting point for climate action<sup>30</sup>, and;
- A Local Authority Climate Policy Group has been established, "to position Local Authorities to develop consistent and ambitious policy across Cumbria in order to meet our Net Zero Carbon targets and limit harm to the environment. The group will act to coordinate and drive the county-wide climate policy agenda and provide

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<sup>30</sup> <https://slacc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Cumbria-Carbon-Baseline-Report-2019-200229-Final.pdf>

support and guidance to officers on policy development and carbon reduction approaches”. The Council’s Nuclear & Energy Manager is a member of this group.

- 24.1.5 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.
- 24.1.6 The Planning and Energy Act 2004 allows local councils to set reasonable requirements in their development plan documents for:
- A proportion of energy used in development in their area to be energy from renewable sources in the locality of the development
  - A proportion of energy used in development in their area to be low-carbon energy from sources in the locality of the development
- 24.1.7 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*”. The consultation sets out two options:
- A 20% reduction in carbon emissions compared to the current standard for an average home which could be delivered through a requirement for high fabric standards (triple glazing and minimal heat loss from walls, ceilings and roofs)
  - A 31% reduction in carbon emissions compared to the current standard. This could be delivered through the installation of carbon-saving technology such as photovoltaic (solar) panels and better fabric standards.

## 25 Climate Change

- 25.1.1 Climate change is one of the biggest global threats facing people and wildlife. 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.
- 25.1.2 Copeland is at the Centre of Nuclear Excellence (CoNE), and recognised as a key player of ‘The Clean Energy Coast’ brand. The Borough is recognised for how clean it is in terms of environmental quality with generally good air quality and clean water, and has massive potential to contribute nationally to the UK’s Clean Growth agenda for net zero carbon by 2050.
- 25.1.3 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.
- 25.1.4 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.

- 25.1.5 The Council’s own 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 the Borough to do likewise”.
- 25.1.6 The Local Plan has a key role to play in ensuring that new development does not increase the emissions responsible for climate change. Key to meeting this challenge is directing new development to the most sustainable locations to reduce the need to travel by car and for new development to be built from sustainable materials with energy efficient systems for water and heat.
- 25.1.7 The Council’s support for renewable and low carbon energy developments, and community led renewable and low carbon developments is set out within Corporate strategies and Local Plan policy. The important role that green infrastructure and good design plays in mitigating and adapting to climate change is also key.
- 25.1.8 A Design Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be produced to give guidance to developers on how sustainable development can be achieved. A timetable for the production of this and other documents is available in the Council’s Local Development Scheme.

## 25.2 Reducing the Impacts of Development on Climate Change

- 25.2.1 The Council is committed to challenging the causes and impacts of climate change by working with partners and developers to deliver energy efficient developments.
- 25.2.2 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 usage.

### Policy CC1PO: Reducing the impacts of development on climate change



To reduce the impact of development on climate change developers are encouraged to:

- Use energy efficient construction methods and locally sourced, recycled materials;
- Incorporate renewable energy production equipment, such as photovoltaics, hydrogen energy;
- Incorporate low carbon or decentralised energy schemes appropriate to the scale and location;
- Maximises the design of building(s), to ensure layout, design and materials are as energy efficient as possible, incorporating Passivhaus principles
- Incorporates measures to reduce the consumption of energy, water and other resources post-completion
- Steering new development away from areas at highest risk of flooding
- Incorporates space to park cycles and charge electrical vehicles

- Includes measures that incentivise local, sustainable travel, that also benefits health including; provision of walking and cycling routes and good access to public transport

## 26 Clean Energy

### 26.1 Large Scale Renewable Energy Developments

- 26.1.1 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 the Borough.
- 26.1.2 Proposals for large scale renewable energy developments (excluding nuclear and wind developments) will be assessed against the criteria in Policy CC2PO. Proposals will need to consider issues including impacts on local amenity, the environment, landscapes and heritage. Cumulative impacts and impacts during the construction of projects will also need to be considered.
- 26.1.3 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 CC2PO: Large Scale Renewable Energy Developments, Geothermal, Low-carbon and Decarbonisation, Hydrogen to Electricity Plants, and other Large Scale Technologies (excluding nuclear and wind energy developments)**



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

The Council will support proposals for large scale renewable and carbon neutral energy schemes that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant adverse effect as a result of their scale, siting or design on the following:

- Landscape character
- Visual amenity
- Biodiversity
- Geodiversity
- Flood risk
- Townscape

- Coastal change
- Heritage assets
- Highway safety
- Aviation and defence navigation systems/communication
- The amenities of sensitive neighbouring uses (including by virtue of noise, dust, odour, air quality, traffic or visual impact)

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

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

Where renewable energy installations become non-operational for a period in excess of 6 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.

## 26.2 Wind Energy Development

- 26.2.1 In contributing towards the achievement of national renewable energy targets the Council has commissioned a study to identify and assess appropriate land to allocate as Areas Suitable for Wind Energy. The Study identifies constraints to wind energy including landscape constraints, 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 H.
- 26.2.2 The document also identifies key considerations which developers should take into account when developing proposals for wind energy developments.
- 26.2.3 The following policy will apply to all wind energy developments. The Policy requires applicants to demonstrate, in line with footnote 49 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.

### Policy CC3PO: Wind Energy Developments



Consideration must be given to the Council's Wind Energy Technical Document prior to submitting proposals for wind turbines.

#### Large Turbines

Wind turbines 50m in height or over must be located in Areas Suitable for Wind Energy as shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map, unless the proposal is for the repowering of existing turbines or windfarms or is for a proposal to extend the life of an existing turbine.

### **All Turbines**

Proposals should not individually or cumulatively have a significant adverse effect as a result of their scale, siting or design on the following:

- Landscape character
- Visual amenity
- Biodiversity
- Geodiversity
- Flood risk
- Townscape
- Coastal change
- Heritage assets
- Highway safety
- Aviation and defence navigation systems/communication
- The amenities of sensitive neighbouring uses (including by virtue of noise, dust, odour, shadow flicker, air quality, traffic, visual impact or glare)

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

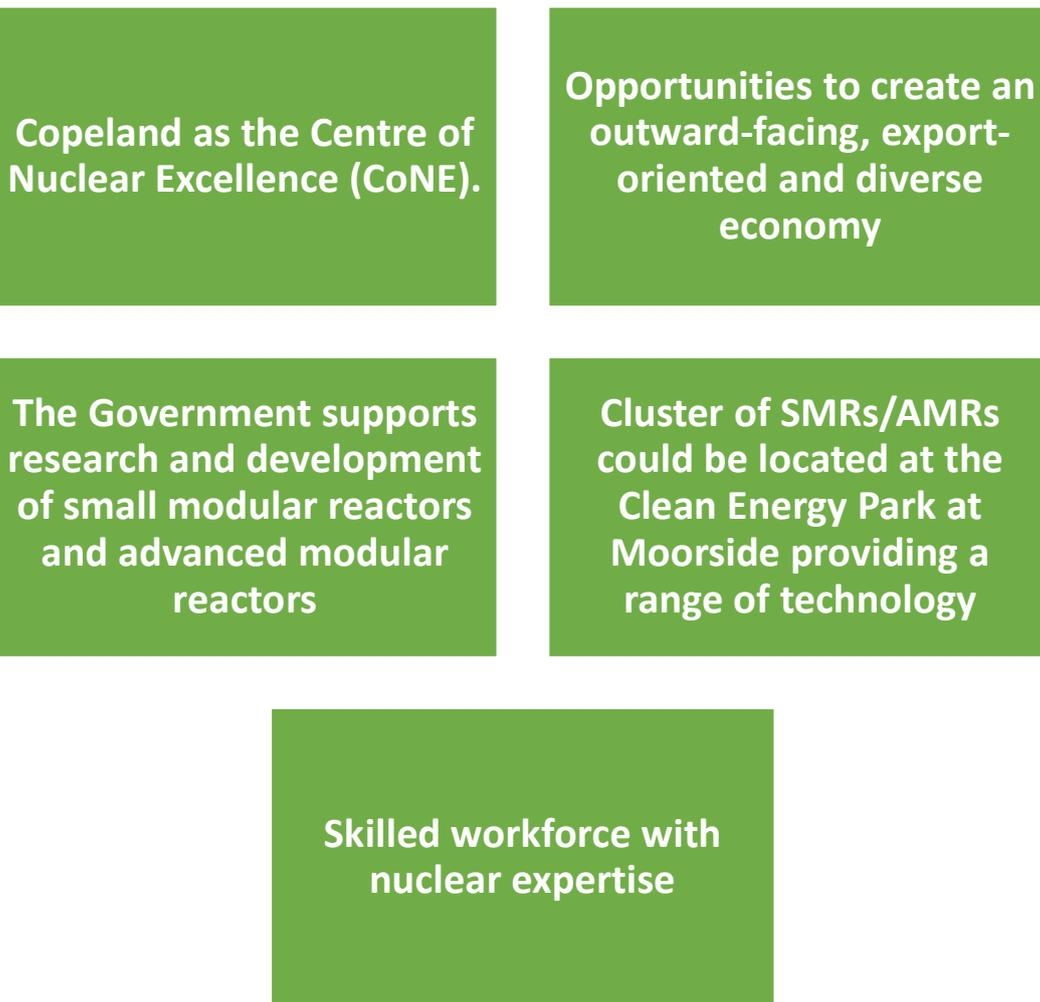
Proposals will only be considered suitable where it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by local communities during consultation have been fully addressed.

Where turbines become non-operational for a period in excess of 6 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.

# Nuclear Energy

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## 27 Nuclear Energy: Assets and Aspirations



## 28 Nuclear Energy: Key Facts

The transformation and decommissioning of Sellafield is a 100 year project, commencing 2020

The nuclear sector contributes 22% of Cumbria's GVA and generates over £3.5bn to the county's economy

Copeland and Cumbria as a whole, benefit from a number of strengths in the nuclear and energy sectors. It is estimated that 50% of all jobs in the Borough are based in the nuclear sector

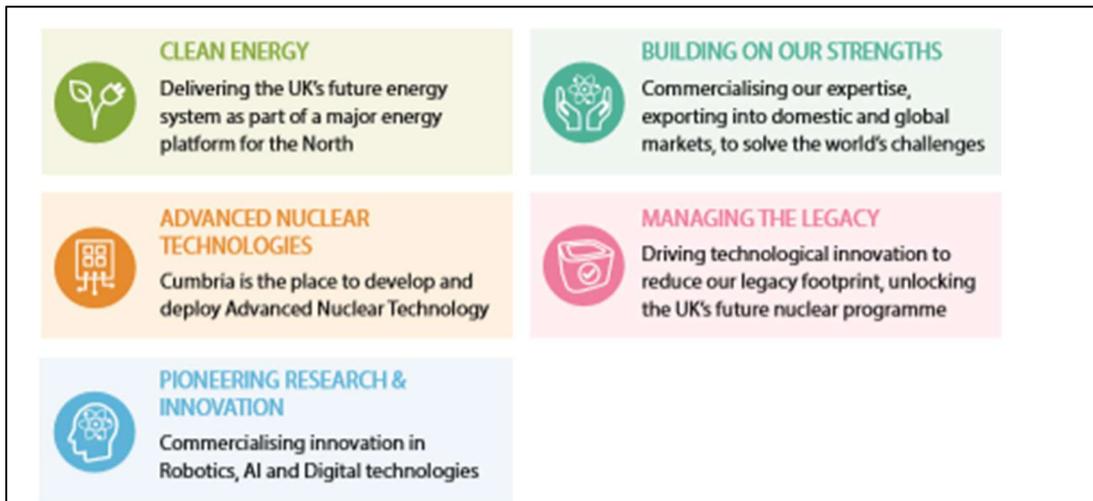
Sellafield employs 11,000 people and hires approximately 60 graduates each year in nuclear and non-nuclear roles, as well as having a number of apprentice schemes

Sellafield and the supply chain, contributes more to the UK economy than any other nuclear region.

The Cumbria Nuclear Prospectus has recently been endorsed by the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership which supports the development of a Cumbria Clean Energy Park at Moorside

## 29 Nuclear Development

- 29.1.1 This section sets out new opportunities for the nuclear sector, which can be broken down into:
- Sellafield – the decommissioning and remediation of the site, and opportunities that comes from the Transformation and PPP processes
  - New nuclear power generation at Moorside
  - Wider opportunities that can arise from the Cumbria Clean Energy Park
  - Development of Small modular reactors (SMR's) a type of nuclear fission reactor which are smaller than conventional reactors and manufactured at a plant and brought to a site to be assembled and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMR's) defined as a broad group of advanced nuclear technologies which use pressurised or boiling water for primary cooling could be located at Fellside and the Sellafield Site;
  - Cluster of SMRs/AMRs could be located at the Clean Energy Park at Moorside providing a range of technology
- 29.1.2 Copeland's unique position as the front runners in nuclear technology and the 'Global Centre for Nuclear Excellence' ensures that we are in pole position to become a significant contributor to advanced nuclear technologies and the Governments net zero ambitions.
- 29.1.3 Copeland is host to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) Headquarters, the Sellafield site, UK Low Level Waste Repository and National Nuclear Laboratory's central labs. The nuclear sites support the UK civil and defence nuclear sectors, with important links to academic institutions and Research and Development programmes across the UK and around the world.
- 29.1.4 Cumbria has a highly experienced work force engaged in the nuclear industry, with inherent capability across industry, the supply chain and academia within a supportive community, and is the only place in the UK with the ability to support new nuclear ambitions as well as managing our nuclear legacy. Through the Nuclear Innovation Programme we are already developing future fuels and de-risking policy decisions for the UK's future low carbon energy system.
- 29.1.5 A new enterprising and dynamic vision is being produced that sets out a roadmap 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. We will be the trailblazer for the UK's decarbonised energy-system –a blend of nuclear new build and advanced nuclear technologies providing heat and power for local use or distribution via the National Grid, and producing low carbon synthetic fuels, with links into wider hydrogen and offshore wind networks in the North West.
- 29.1.6 This vision is set out under 5 themes:



- 29.1.7 In preparation of achieving the vision, a significant investment proposal is being designed around a Cumbria Clean Energy Park, primarily at the Moorside site in Copeland. If successful the Energy Park could host a large nuclear 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.
- 29.1.8 Of significant importance for any new nuclear proposal is to ensure the support of our communities who have lived with the nuclear industry for the last fifty years, and have generally accepted it as part of everyday life in West Cumbria.

**Policy CC4PO: Supporting Development of the Nuclear Sector**



- A) The Council will support and encourage the development of the nuclear sector, including new nuclear missions within Copeland where the following criteria is met;
- I. Proposals will be in accordance with relevant National Policy and Government Guidance.
  - II. The Councils approved Nuclear Position Statements will be a material consideration when assessing proposals.
  - III. Proposals will make a demonstrable positive contribution to the development and deployment of low carbon energy technologies, to help deliver a net zero carbon future.
- B) Proposals for new nuclear build and associated infrastructure, including small modular reactors (SMR), advanced modular reactors (AMR) technologies will be assessed against criteria I-III above.
- C) Proposals that deliver the Sellafield mission will be supported where they meet the criteria in Policy CC7PO

D) The Council will work proactively with Cumbria County Council and the site operators of the Low Level Waste Repository and the Sellafield site in the development and the management of materials and associated facilities and infrastructure.

E) In applying this policy the Council will expect all nuclear sector-related development in the Borough to make a proportionate and meaningful contribution to local economic, social and environmental strategies/priorities.

## 29.2 Nuclear Decommissioning and Transformation

29.2.1 When reprocessing operations at Sellafield cease, Sellafield Ltd.'s mission will shift towards decommissioning and environmental remediation. Sellafield Ltd is the organisation responsible for the safe operation and clean-up of the site. The site houses over 1000 buildings including nuclear facilities related to spent fuel reprocessing and storage, nuclear materials management, waste treatment and storage. The site is also host to Calder Hall Magnox station, the Windscale Pile reactors, Windscale Advanced Gas Cooled Reactor prototype and legacy ponds and silo facilities. This nuclear legacy makes Sellafield one of the most complex nuclear decommissioning challenges in the world.

29.2.2 Sellafield and its supply chain in Cumbria, contribute more to the UK economy than any other nuclear region.

### Industrial Strategy and Nuclear Sector Deal

29.2.3 The UK Industrial Strategy will be delivered by a series of Sector Deals, commitments by the industry, with government support, to work collectively to drive clean growth, increase productivity and support the UK Export Strategy. The 2018 Nuclear Sector Deal makes a series of commitments, including reducing the cost of managing the UK's nuclear legacy by 20% by 2030.

29.2.4 Sellafield is home to a significant proportion of the UK's decommissioning scope, and its supply chain have a critical role to play in achieving the sector's legacy cost reduction targets, and in tackling the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's Grand Challenges:

- Reducing and reshaping the Waste Hierarchy
- Intelligent Infrastructure
- Keeping humans out of harm's way
- Digital approaches and data driven decision making

29.2.5 Sellafield's changing mission presents a potential threat to the local economy, which has become highly attuned to the site's needs. However, by demonstrating progress against nationally significant missions, and by delivering on the UK nuclear sector's commitments, Sellafield can create higher value from public funding, with increased spill over benefits for the local economy. The Sellafield Transformation is an opportunity to create a more diverse and resilient local economy, opening up opportunities to export nuclear and non-nuclear products and services into domestic and international markets, as well as attracting and growing new businesses to West Cumbria.

### Implications of Decommissioning

- Copeland economy- (directly or indirectly) 60% reliant on Sellafield spend

- Success by Sellafield Ltd in delivering the site mission will lead to slow but inevitable decline
- Sellafield Ltd remit does not allow commercialisation of capabilities by the Company
- Current interventions may be inadequate to ensure a thriving, sustainable economy
- Copeland and the regional economy will need to have less dependence on Sellafield

#### Opportunities from Decommissioning

- Sellafield Transformation Plan sets out a new relationship with the supply chain, and a “smaller Sellafield”;
- Opportunities to create an outward-facing, export-oriented and diverse economy;

29.2.6 The Vision for Sellafield, is as an anchor institution of our current economy, simply by adopting 21<sup>st</sup> century working from anywhere practices, by procuring more effectively and by collaborating properly, will make a huge local economic impact in our towns and industrial parks simply by delivering its mission differently.

#### Policy CC5PO: Maximising opportunities from Nuclear Decommissioning and Transformation



The Council will maximise opportunities resulting from nuclear decommissioning and transformation 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 and the Westlakes Science and Technology Park as centres of research and development
- 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 and off-set the forecast decrease in workforce there
- 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 young 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.

## 29.3 Nuclear Energy Sector Development and Infrastructure

- 29.3.1 The Council believes that the Moorside site is fundamental to the delivery of the nation's energy security and Net Zero Carbon target. The Moorside site is designated in the current National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure (EN-6) for large scale nuclear, a policy position that the Council fully supports.
- 29.3.2 This demonstrates our ambition to support new nuclear developments that make meaningful contribution to a low carbon economy and which bring potentially significant economic benefit to the area. The Vision for the Cumbria Clean Energy Park at Moorside if delivered will support the Council and the Government in achieving its vision for net carbon.

### Policy CC6PO: Supporting Nuclear Energy Sector Development and Infrastructure



The Council will support nuclear energy sector development and associated major infrastructure projects by working with potential developers to identify sites for a range of associated activities including supply chain operations, worker accommodation, and other uses supporting the development of additional energy generating capacity projects and associated infrastructure. The development of sites will be supported where the following criteria is met:

- a) The proposal aligns with the Council's approved 'Nuclear Position Statements' unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise
- b) The development is sited on a designated employment site or on suitable sites within settlement boundaries or otherwise be accompanied by a justifiable exceptional need case.
- c) Any new energy transmission infrastructure will minimise potential impacts on the Borough's landscape and natural environment, and the health and amenity of its community and visitors;
- d) Sites must be located to minimise any adverse impacts and must be capable of leaving a positive legacy for the Borough and its communities.

Pre application advice should be sought with the Council at an early stage of the proposal's development.

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

The Council will seek an appropriately scoped, scaled and phased package of measures, to mitigate the impacts of the development. This should include details of all infrastructure, employment and assistance with programmes of economic, environmental and social regeneration, where relevant, in the Borough.

- 29.3.3 Sellafield continues to occupy a prominent position in the Borough's economy, employing 11,000 people. The company also hires approximately 60 graduates each year in nuclear and non-nuclear roles, as well as having a number of apprentice schemes.

- 29.3.4 The Council will continue to pro-actively work with Sellafield to accommodate their needs whilst minimising the impacts of development on local communities and the environment.
- 29.3.5 In recognition of the role that the nuclear sector plays in Copeland's economy and community, since 2015 the Council has maintained a suite of Nuclear Position Statements. These statements ensure that the Council's interactions with the nuclear sector consistently reflect the Council's agreed position on nuclear matters.

#### Policy CC7PO - Nuclear Sector 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 the Borough is to work with operators of the facilities at the Sellafield licensed nuclear site and Cumbria County Council to ensure that:

- a) All nuclear development proposals align with the Council's approved 'Nuclear Position Statements' unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise.
- b) All nuclear development (other than monitoring, maintenance and investigatory work necessarily done off-site) shall be sited within existing designated Sellafield site boundary unless Criterion C applies.
- c) Where any proposed development is outside the designated boundary at Sellafield it shall be sited on a designated employment site or on suitable sites within settlement boundaries in accordance with the principles set out in Policies DS2PO and DS3PO, or otherwise accompanied by a justifiable exceptional need case<sup>31</sup>.
- d) With the exception of irradiated fuel and nuclear materials, no radioactive material is imported for treatment or storage on the Sellafield licensed site unless the proposal represents the best practical environmental option and is an interim proposal pending agreement on a national disposal route.
- e) Proposals for any new development are submitted with long term management plans to set out how operations will be co-ordinated to minimise any harmful effects and mitigate or compensate for physical environmental impacts.
- f) Proposals include provision for adequate infrastructure to support the new development.
- g) Proposals involve and secure the support of the local community and stakeholders where relevant.
- h) Proposals include measures to mitigate any adverse effects of the proposed development and provide a positive local social impact by enhancing the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of the community.

- 29.3.6 Under the planning legislation demolition is classed as development for which prior notification is required which controls the method of demolition and restoration (not the principle), both of which have to be satisfactory. The purpose of this control is to give local planning authorities the opportunity to regulate the details of demolition in order to

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<sup>31</sup> A development proposal which is supported by a statement outlining the special 'site specific' circumstances that demonstrate the need / reason for that development on planning grounds to be on that particular site (as opposed to elsewhere) and which justify the proposal in that location as an exception to established planning policies.

minimise the impact of that activity on local amenity. On the Sellafield site the methods of demolition are stringently controlled and the majority of the cleared sites are identified for immediate re-use.

- 29.3.7 There is an active programme of demolition on the Sellafield site as part of site decommissioning and remediation. Approximately 500 buildings/ structures are identified for demolition by 2040 which will free up much valuable land resource on the site and from 2033 the rate of demolition is expected to increase significantly which will involve buildings within the Separation Area.
- 29.3.8 As part of the strategy for supporting the development of the nuclear sector in Policy CC5PO and the wider spatial principles, the following policy sets out the detailed considerations for proposals for demolition and development related to the nuclear sector.

#### **Policy CC8PO: Nuclear demolition**



Demolition of buildings or structures on the Sellafield site shall conform to the following principles:

- 1) Demonstrate an acceptable method of demolition.
- 2) Provide full details of a programme of restoration of the site and /or redevelopment.
- 3) Shall not adversely affect any ecological assets unless it can be demonstrated that appropriate mitigation or compensation can be provided.

# Retail and Leisure

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## 30 Retail and Leisure: Assets and Aspirations

**Towns Bids: Cleator Moor -  
Low carbon opportunities,  
changed economy and  
better connectivity**

**Our town's 'Building Back  
Better' funding  
opportunities**

**Borderlands Programme:  
Egremont – Altering the  
economic base of the town  
resulting in resilience and  
sustainability**

**Future High Street Funds:  
Whitehaven high street  
diversification and  
improved facilities**

**Towns Bids: Millom – Low  
carbon opportunities,  
changed economy and  
better connectivity**

## 31 Retail and Leisure: Key Facts

Whitehaven is the Principal Town in Copeland and provides the main hub of retail, leisure and service uses within the Borough.

The town was one of the first post-renaissance planned towns in the country.

Findings in the 2020 Whitehaven Health Check (WHC), conclude that current vacancy rates are in line with national averages.

Copeland has three identified Key Service Centres; Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom to the south that provide convenience and comparison shopping, and a range of other services to serve the settlement and surrounding communities.

Findings in the 2020 Cleator Moor Health Check identified a vacancy rate of 30%, triple the national average.

Findings in the 2020 Egremont Health Check identified a vacancy rate of 24%, more than double national average.

Findings in the 2020 Millom Health Check identified a vacancy rate of 19.2% almost double national average.

Nationally –there has been a 42% drop in retail property investment between 2014 and 2018 (Grimsey)

## 32 Retail and Leisure in Copeland

- 32.1.1 Demonstrated in the 'Key Facts' for this chapter is the uniqueness, variety and the enormous potential that our towns have.
- 32.1.2 The retail offer within Copeland is built around the Principal Town of Whitehaven and the three Key Service Centres of Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom to the South.
- 32.1.3 Whitehaven is one of the earliest and most complete post-medieval planned towns in England. It 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 and the Rum Story and a range of independent and national retailers, cafes, bars, bistros, cinema and bingo hall.
- 32.1.4 Egremont, dating back to medieval times, is home to the extensive 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, library and a national chain convenience store that is a key anchor for the town.

- 32.1.5 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 land mark, with Millom Park creating a significant green area in the heart of the town. The town also has a railway line and station which runs along the coastline from Barrow in Furness to the south and Carlisle to the north. The retail and leisure offer includes a range of local stores, public houses, library and a national chain convenience store that is a key anchor for the town.



- 32.1.6 Cleator Moor is closely located to Ennerdale Water (which is a dark skies area) and offers a small range of independent stores, public houses, 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.
- 32.1.7 Funding bids are being developed to deliver the changes needed; Future High Streets Fund (Whitehaven), Towns Bids (Cleator Moor and Millom) and Borderlands Community Deal (Egremont) and bring with them opportunities to improve the offer and encourage

visitors and residents to visit more frequently and spend longer in the towns, therefore increasing income to local businesses.

- 32.1.8 Below the Key Service Centres are a range of Local Service Centres and Sustainable Villages that offer a range of retail, leisure and service provisions to support the daily needs of local communities.
- 32.1.9 At the time of writing the Draft Preferred Options Covid-19 restrictions are in place. During these challenging times the wider Council is preparing for the potential impacts to our town centres retail function, resulting from reduced footfall and the potential for permanent closures. The shifting pattern to home working, not just during the pandemic but also the potential for a longer term permanent shift. Possible outcomes for office uses include less demand for traditional office space, with more people working from home either part or full time.
- 32.1.10 The Council has reflected on amendments to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 made on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020, which come into force in England on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. In recognition of our time frames that commits us to a public consultation in September 2020 it has been agreed that any policy revisions required as a result of the changes to the use class order will be made at Draft Publication Stage.
- 32.1.11 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. As such the Council is taking a proactive approach and identifying strategic interventions to create better town centres through initiatives including Future High Street Fund, Towns Bids and the Borderlands Community Fund.

## 32.2 Challenges

- 32.2.1 It is accepted that some aspects of our centres are in need of the following:
- regeneration,
  - improved connectivity (digital and cycling and walking routes),
  - diversification of uses to create quality leisure and shopping experiences
  - new and improved flexible built and public open spaces for people to relax in
  - new and improved opportunities for overnight stays and living accommodation
- 32.2.2 Such improvements will help entice more people into our centres, increase footfall, and improve health and well-being. This will help grow our economy and deliver spaces where communities can enjoy Copeland's 'Local Welcoming Experience'.
- 32.2.3 Over the last decade or so, towns across the country have seen decline, boarded up shopfronts and in some cases household retail names going into liquidation. These impacts are a result of a number of factors including the 2008 financial crash, consumer behaviour patterns with a shift towards internet shopping and services including banks and estate agencies, increase in out of town multi facility retail and leisure development, uncertainty over Brexit and increased rents and business charges.
- 32.2.4 Added to the difficulties already faced by retailers and the leisure and tourism industries is the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic. At the time of drafting the Local Plan (Preferred Options 2020), social distancing restrictions are in place, which is having an enormous impact on the economy as a whole and of particular significance to the retail, leisure, hospitality and tourism industries. Only convenience and essential stores remained open to the public

between March and the end of May. Some restrictions began to ease from June, however social distancing measures remain in place.

32.2.5 It is too early to understand the full economic impact of lockdown and the number of businesses that will not re-open. It is however widely accepted that already struggling town centres throughout the country will never be the same again and wholesale change is needed to reboot our towns and make them once again vibrant and successful. This will be achieved through the Governments Levelling up Agenda, successful funding bids and local community and stakeholder buy in and commitment to deliver the local solutions needed.

32.2.6 A Covid-19 Supplement of the Grimsey Review for town centres has recently been published and is titled 'Build Back Better'. 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 purpose which is summarised in the following three topic areas:

*Table 6: How Towns Can Thrive Post Covid (Grimsey 2020)*

Topic	Requirement
Localism	A massive shift in power away from central government to local communities and a renewed focus on localism. Local people must be empowered to redesign their own high streets and have a say on the businesses, services and amenities that occupy it, with increased Compulsory Power Orders (CPO's) if necessary
Leadership	Local leaders valued and recognised in the same way that powerful mayors are viewed in other countries. Candidates for leadership roles should be selected for having a broad range of dynamic and collaborative skills in order to get the best out of their communities. They must embrace change in order to build back better
Fewer cars, more greenspace	Fewer streets and a huge expansion of green space, parks and town squares. Our towns and cities must no longer be designed solely around the car as people learn to appreciate the benefit of open spaces

32.2.7 The Grimsey Study also sets out the following facts and figures researched prior to the Pandemic:



<http://www.vanishinghighstreet.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Grimsey-Covid-19-Supplement-June-2020.pdf>

### 32.3 Opportunities

- 32.3.1 In Copeland we firmly believe that our towns have so much to offer and with the right direction, community and stakeholder buy in and appropriate funding and investment we can and will ‘build our towns back better.’ A recent 2020 ‘Shop Local’ campaign has been launched to support our business and retail sector. The campaign is being used to promote and highlight the valuable assets that town centres are to our local communities, which will result in increased footfall and an economic boost to our economy.
- 32.3.2 Other initiatives being considered include an architecturally designed container village at North Shore in Whitehaven, which if developed could be host to a range of food and beverage start-ups, entertainment stages, cultural/arts attractions, and urban farming projects.
- 32.3.3 Several studies, projects, masterplans, and funding bids are underway to support our ambitions, all of which are set out below.
- 32.3.4 In 2018 the Council produced Spatial Frameworks for Whitehaven (draft -not yet adopted) and the three Key Service Centres: the following frameworks have been recommended for each town:

*Table 7: Town Centre Spatial Frameworks: Opportunities for Retail and Leisure Identified*

Town	Framework
Cleator Moor	The Framework includes an "Experience Cleator Moor" initiative that promotes the Cleator Moor as a contemporary market town which celebrates its sporting heritage. Opportunities that improve the existing outdoor sports and leisure provision and fill in identified gaps (e.g. cycling, playing fields, walks to the National Park and sports clubs) are

Town	Framework
	identified, particularly in the North East of the town linked to Copeland Bowls and Sports Centre and King George's Field pitches.
Egremont	The Framework 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.
Millom	The Framework 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.
Whitehaven (DRAFT)	<p>The draft framework approach for Whitehaven is divided into four cross cutting initiatives: Welcome Whitehaven, Connecting Whitehaven, Experience Whitehaven and Whitehaven Green Chains. The vision for the existing town centre and surrounding areas have been split into locational areas: Areas located in around the town centre are: the Harbour and north shore, the historic core, and the town centre south , that have the following Masterplan Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To realise Whitehaven’s status as a Capital Town – A centre of innovation at the heart of Cumbria’s energy Coast.</li> <li>• To ensure the long term economic prosperity and environmental resilience as an employment and retail centre and a leisure and tourism destination.</li> <li>• To deliver new mixed use development on key sites within the town centre</li> <li>• To comprehensively improve the design of the public realm and ensure the animation of our outdoor spaces and water space.</li> <li>• To create a first class welcome and a better quality visitor experience and vibrant night time economy</li> <li>• To create a better connected and more legible town centre, ensuring quality walking and cycling links between destination areas and to long distance paths</li> <li>• To realise the potential of unique historic environments to support the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the town</li> <li>• To support community health, wellbeing and healthy lifestyles.</li> </ul>

32.3.5 The frameworks set out in the table above have been developed through the views of Council officers, local communities, stakeholders and consultants with specialist knowledge in town centre regeneration and development. Utilising the visions set out in the town centre frameworks, the Council is progressing a range of funding bids set out in the table below that if successful will contribute towards the reboot and growth of our local economy and support the implementation of significant improvements and changes to the town centre experience of Whitehaven and the three key service centres of Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom.

Table 8: Town Centre Funding Opportunities

Town	Type of Bid	Status	Focus
Whitehaven	Future High Street Funds	Full business case submitted to Government June 2020	High street diversification, towards alternate uses including improved leisure facilities and town centre living.
Cleator Moor	Towns Bid	Invited by Government to bid for a share of the Towns Fund. Investment plans are in the process of being drawn up ahead of the submission date of 31 January 2021.	Opportunities directed at Low carbon, and changed economy for the whole towns with better connections and use of spaces.
Millom	Towns Bid	Invited by Government to bid for a share of the Towns Fund. Investment plans are in the process of being drawn up ahead of the submission date of 31 January 2021.	Opportunities directed at Low carbon, and changed economy for the whole towns with better connections and use of spaces.
Egremont	Borderlands Places Programme	Priority town in Copeland. A full business case is being developed for the countywide programme for submission by the end of the year with a view to implementation 2021.	Opportunities are directed at altering the economic base of towns, resulting in resilience and sustainability.

32.3.6 The Whitehaven Future High Street Funds (FHSF) Full Business Case submitted to Government in June 2020 focuses on the following 5 key areas:

- Diversify the town centre by creating a broader mix of uses and space for start-ups and investment, as well as supporting modernisation and town centre living.
- Increase and spread footfall in the town across the town centre, connecting areas with opportunity, creating a positive impact on both day and night time economies.
- Increase footfall through creating a more appealing retail experience and opportunities for leisure use both within the units and the street space.
- Improve traffic and pedestrian flow through and around the town, creating more accessible and safer shared spaces
- Provide smart/connected residential options and leisure experiences to improve town functionality and appeal to a wider audience.

32.3.7 A whole range of new and exciting development opportunities that the Local Plan is keen to support have been through feasibility testing and submitted with the FHSF Full Business Case are highlighted in Table 9 below: Further information can also be viewed at: <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/node/43105>

Table 9: Whitehaven Town Centre Opportunities

Southern Arcade	Harbourside Restaurant and Bars	24 Hour Community, Digital Grid, Digital Hub
Food and Leisure Hub	Velotel and C2C Cycling Hub	Registry Ceremonies
Indoor Crazy Golf	Games Rooms and Arena	Escape Rooms
Craft Brewery	Coffee Shop and Reading Rooms	Connecting Public Realm
Serviced Apartments and Town Centre Living	New and Improved Green Spaces and Community Meeting Areas	Improved Connectivity and wayfinding between the town centre, harbour, train station and road, cycling and pedestrian routes
Restored Landmark Building (Whittles)	Community and Business Service Desk	Flexible Hot Desks and Touch Down Spaces

32.3.8 A separate Retail, Leisure and Town Centre Study has been undertaken which will provide a key evidence base document to inform the Local Plan. Copeland and Allerdale Borough Council’s commissioned the joint West Cumbria study in early 2020. The study focuses on National Retail, Leisure and Town Centre, policy and guidance (NPPF and NPPG) in the following areas: Town centre health checks, future need including convenience and comparison goods and leisure provision.

32.3.9 Resident, stakeholder and business consultations were undertaken as part of this study which were held prior to the start of Covid-19 lockdown. Although the study has reflected on the current situation and will inform Local Plan policy it is considered necessary to undertake a future review once the economic impacts of Covid-19 are better understood. It is likely that a review will take place in 12 to 18 months, by which point we should also better understand the economic impacts of Brexit.

32.3.10 Findings from the West Cumbria Study are reflected in policy and supporting text and a summary of the key retail and leisure floorspace capacity findings is included in the paragraphs below.

**Retail Capacity – Convenience: Existing and Predicted Future Requirements for the Plan Period:**

32.3.11 Whitehaven in particular is well served with a good range of convenience stores and supermarkets, catering for most needs. At the time of survey national chains in and around Whitehaven Town Centre include Aldi, Asda, Heron Foods, Iceland, Morrison’s, and Tesco.

32.3.12 Within the town centre boundaries of the key service centres convenience store national chain retailers include: The Co-op, Nisa, and Tesco. Of particular note is the lack of an anchor store in Cleator Moor town centre.

32.3.13 In rectifying the shortfalls highlighted in the study we are keen to work with promoters to expand our retail offer and in particularly would welcome interest for a convenience store within Cleator Moor town centre boundary to provide an anchor store and increase

footfall and a higher end offer in Whitehaven town centre or edge of centre. (Subject to meeting requirements of the sequential test and impact threshold)

Table 10: Convenience Floorspace - Quantitative Need

Year	Surplus (£m)	Commitments (£m)	Residual (£m)	Floorspace Requirement	
				Minimum (sq.m)	Maximum (sq.m)
2020	19.6	2.0	17.7	1,400	2,400
2025	16.9	2.0	15.0	1,200	2,000
2030	14.9	2.0	12.9	1,000	1,700
2035	13.4	2.0	11.4	900	1,500

32.3.14 Table 10 identifies the quantitative need for convenience goods floorspace across Copeland (after commitments). It is estimated that between **900 and 1500sqm** of additional floorspace will be required up to 2035.

#### Retail Capacity – Comparison: Existing and Predicted Future Requirements for the Plan Period

32.3.15 Findings of the Study conclude that there is not an additional requirement for comparison goods floorspace, and a potential oversupply by the end of the plan period. Whilst at face value this is accepted, Whitehaven town centre in particular has relatively few units with appropriately sized net sales floorspace and suitable parking for the collection of large goods, for example white and large electrical goods and DIY products. As such there are opportunities to reconfigure the supply of comparison floor space to meet future demands.

32.3.16 National Policy (NPPF para 85 d) and e) requires a range of suitable town centre sites to be allocated in Local Plans to meet the scale and type of development to be needed over a ten year period. Where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town uses, then appropriate well connected edge of centre sites should be considered. The Retail Study has identified two opportunity area on the edge of Whitehaven town centre that could support larger units for a range of uses including comparison sales and leisure use with on-site parking if required.

32.3.17 Other improvements that would result from investment and subsequent development of town centre and edge of centre opportunity and regeneration areas, will focus around; Improved 'way finding' from the Whitehaven Train Station located at the North Shore area, to the harbour and town centre and a new covered market hall. Appropriate sites will be identified, mapped and included in the Local Plan as they become available and discussions with developers, investors and promoters are welcomed.

#### Leisure Use Floorspace Capacity: Existing and Predicted Future Requirements for the Plan Period

32.3.18 Whitehaven and the key services centres have a range of leisure provision including bars, cafes, bistros, a small cinema, bingo hall, pool hall (the Rack Shack) and multi- use facilities for entertainment functions including local bands and theatre productions. Findings of the study suggest that there may be some capacity for the addition of 3 cinema screens and a 5 lane ten pin bowling venue, another option suggested by FHSF consultants includes the refurbishment of the cinema and adjacent bingo hall.

32.3.19 Research carried out in a Feasibility Study by Colliers, commissioned as part of the evidence base for (FHSF) makes recommendations for new and alternative leisure provision focussing on the Council’s ambitions to ‘Build our Towns Back Better’ and to provide a unique, diverse and welcoming local experience and destination to our communities and visitors. The Colliers study advocated the popularity of activities including indoor crazy golf, escape rooms and games rooms. In conclusion flexible sites and premises that could support a range of these activities may be appropriate for the town centres in future.

#### Leisure Centres, Swimming Pools, Hotels, Gyms and Spas

32.3.20 The towns have a limited range of leisure centres, swimming pools and gyms, mainly operated by Copeland Borough Council and local independent gym providers. There is a deemed gap in the market that could be filled through the development of a range of opportunities including: Private health clubs for the higher wage earners and 24 hour gyms that operate by card access and are particularly popular with the younger generation and shift workers. Sports facilities are considered in more detail in the Copeland’s Communities chapter.

32.3.21 Set out in more detail in the Tourism chapter is the range of hotel and overnight visitor accommodation available in Copeland. Two particular areas that the Council are keen to promote are the development of a high end water front hotel with health provision and spa and a Velotel to provide overnight accommodation in Whitehaven which is the start of the C2C cycle route. This is discussed in more detail in the Tourism section.

32.3.22 Improved health, well-being and quality places to enjoy leisure time is a key factor that runs through the Local Plan. To enhance our town centre offer the Council are keen to work with developers and promoters in delivering the opportunities highlighted above. Local Plan policies are intentionally flexible and support Copeland’s visions and aspirations and welcome opportunities for new and improved leisure facilities and accommodation subject to meeting requirements of the sequential tests and impact thresholds set out within Local Plan policy.

32.3.23 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 its town centre residents, businesses and communities. Policy R1PO sets out the strategic approach towards such development in town centres and other identified villages as set out in the Retail Hierarchy (Policy R2PO) and provides the overarching criteria in supporting the vitality and viability of the centres.

#### Policy R1PO: Vitality and Viability of Town Centres and other Identified Villages within the Hierarchy



The Council will seek to enhance the vitality and viability of town centres and other defined 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 at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, sufficient provision has been made to meet the forecast convenience retail capacity within the Borough up to 2035;
- Focus future retail, residential, leisure and other main town centre use development and investment in accordance with the hierarchy and role and function of centres set out in Policy R2PO, ensuring that proposals for new development are consistent in terms of scale and function with the size and role of the centre in question.
- 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 also 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 connectivity, digital and new and improved cycle and walking routes 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 (draft) extents of centre boundaries are defined at Appendix I.

*Where appropriate, development should also accord with the Copeland Conservation Area Design Guide <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/conservation-area-design-guide>*

## 32.4 Hierarchy of Centres

- 32.4.1 National Policy (NPPF Para 85 a) 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 DS2PO directs the main focus of development to the most sustainable locations within the Borough.
- 32.4.2 Whitehaven is the Principal Town in Copeland and provides the main hub of retail, leisure and service uses within the Borough. Findings of the draft 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 neighbouring town of Workington in Allerdale Borough Council is deemed to serve a more dominant comparison need. The Council's ambition is to improve Copeland's offer in this area through the identification of opportunity sites, with parking provision that can accommodate stores operating in, for example white goods, large electrical goods, DIY products and leisure uses that cannot be accommodated for within the town centre boundary.
- 32.4.3 Copeland has three identified Key Service Centres; Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom to the south that provide convenience and comparison shopping, and a range of other services to serve the settlement and surrounding communities.
- 32.4.4 National Policy (NPPF para 83 (a to d) and 84) supports a prosperous and rural economy. As a largely rural Borough, we understand the importance of supporting the sustainability of our rural communities and in respect to retail and main town centre uses supports the retention (Local Service Centres, Sustainable Rural Villages and Other Rural Villages) and (in Local Service Centres) the development of accessible local services and community facilities to meet the needs of local residents.

32.4.5 Policy R2PO sets out the role and function including the type of retail, residential, leisure and main town centre development that is appropriate in each designation, in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy, and Policy DS2PO.

32.4.6 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.

### Policy R2PO: Hierarchy of Town Centres



The Borough Council will support retail, residential, leisure and other maintain town centre development where it is appropriate to its role and function as set out in the following table

Designation	Role and Function
<b>Principal Town</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principal focus of new and enhanced retail , neighbourhood facilities and other main town centre uses (as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework) in Copeland</li> </ul>
<b>Key Service Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convenience and comparison shopping, and a range of other services to serve the settlement and surrounding communities</li> </ul>
<b>Local Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
Sustainable Rural Villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
Other Rural Villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>

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

## 32.1 Sequential Test

32.1.1 National Policy (NPPF para 86) states that ‘Local Planning Authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre use<sup>32</sup>s which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan.’

32.1.2 The sequential test requires applicants to satisfactorily demonstrate that the use cannot be located in a town centre, 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

<sup>32</sup> See Glossary for definition

*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”.*

- 32.1.3 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 Draft Retail Study.
- 32.1.4 When carrying out the sequential test, applicants must demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale.

### Policy R3PO: Sequential Test



Proposals for Retail and Main Town Centre Uses will be directed in line with the ‘Hierarchy of Centres’ and ‘Role and Function’ as set out in Policy R2PO.

Where an applications 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 firstly, followed by edge of centre sites and only if no suitable sites are available will an out-of-town location be supported.

In the exceptional cases where new retail development will be supported in out of town locations, where the sequential test has been satisfied, biodiversity conservation interests must not be harmed as a result, the development respects the surrounding landscape and the highway is capable of supporting additional traffic linked to the use.

This policy does not apply to small scale rural development, including small scale rural offices but also applied to proposals to create new unrestricted retail floorspace through conversion or the removal of restrictive goods conditions.

## 32.2 Retail and Leisure Impact Assessments

- 32.2.1 National Policy (NPPF para 89) states that when assessing applications for retail (A1) 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.
- 32.2.2 Copeland has not previously set a local threshold and relied on the NPPF default threshold of 2500sqm. However, findings of the 2020 draft retail study recommend that a local threshold is set to avoid inappropriate out of centre development and should also apply 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.

- 32.2.3 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 R4PO and should set out the potential trade diversion impact assumptions.

**Policy R4PO: Retail and Leisure Impact Assessments**



Where retail or leisure development is proposed outside of a defined centre, and the proposal has a gross floorspace equalling or exceeding the levels set out in the table below, the impact from the proposed development must be robustly assessed. Applicants must undertake an impact assessment that is proportionate and locally appropriate to the scale and type of retail or leisure floorspace proposed. This assessment should satisfactorily address the requirements detailed in national policy.

**Thresholds for Impact Assessment**

Whitehaven Town Centre and Borough Wide excluding the criteria below that applies to Key Service Centres ( <i>Applies to new, retail and leisure proposals and those relating to mezzanine floorspace and variation of restrictive conditions</i> )	The proposal is in excess of *500sqm (gross)
Within 800 metres of the respective town centre boundary for the Key Service Centres (Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom) ( <i>Applies to new, retail and leisure proposals and those relating to mezzanine floorspace and variation of restrictive conditions</i> )	The proposal is in excess of 300sqm (gross)

The scope of an impact assessment should be discussed and agreed between the Borough Council and applicants at an early stage in the pre-application/application.

**32.3 Whitehaven Town Centre**

- 32.3.1 Whitehaven is Copeland’s Principal Town situated on the Lake District Coast and is the main focus for growth in the Borough. The town was one of the first post-renaissance planned towns in the country. Whitehaven has two physical assets – a 400 berth leisure harbour developed over centuries from its origins as an industrial port and a Georgian town centre with significant architectural merit and gridiron street layout.

- 32.3.2 The focus of retail activity within Whitehaven town centre is along the central pedestrianised area of King Street, with main town centre uses also located on Duke Street, Lowther Street and Tangier Street, and this has been identified as the Primary Shopping Area for the town in the Draft West Cumbria Retail Study. There are currently a

number of vacant units and although it is not practice to identify first floor vacancies in retail surveys, it is of note that there are a number of first floor vacancies that have the potential to be adapted for town centre living. King Street is the main focus for retail development in the FHSF bid and opportunities include the Southern Arcade and improved connectivity to public realm and the harbour.

- 32.3.3 In terms of leisure provision the town has a range of pubs, bars and cafes, a small cinema, bingo hall and a range of community facilities including a library, places of worship as well as a number of visitor attractions including the Beacon Museum and the Rum Story.
- 32.3.4 Findings of the 2020 Draft 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.
- 32.3.5 Whitehaven has much to offer and if the Future High Street Funds bid is successful it will play a significant role in helping the town to reach its potential. Opportunities identified in the 2020 Whitehaven Health Check include:
- Build on the transient workers trade
  - Build on and improve the quality of the leisure offer
  - Improve pedestrian movements and safety in the centre
  - Build on the town's independent businesses offer to provide a destination which meets the needs of local residents, transient workers and tourists
  - Build on its coastal location, tourist offer and regeneration of the Georgian architecture
- 32.3.6 Local Plan policies support the opportunities and direction set out in the FHSF submission business case and masterplan. A flexible approach for new development opportunities for the town centre, its businesses, local residents, visitors and tourists are encouraged to make Whitehaven a destination centre for people to visit and enjoy.

### Opportunity Sites and Areas

- 32.3.7 The Plan identifies a range of Opportunity Sites within and on the edge of Whitehaven identified which are in need of regeneration. These are identified at Appendix G. Such sites should be given consideration when carrying out the sequential test.
- 32.3.8 The Retail Study has also identified two broader Opportunity Areas outside but adjoining Whitehaven Town Centre where there are opportunities for regeneration and where a mixture of uses would be supported.
- 32.3.9 Policy R5PO sets out the requirements for development in and on the edge of the Whitehaven Town Centre Boundary.

#### Policy R5PO: 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 R6PO<sup>33</sup>
- Accords with the Whitehaven Town Centre and Harbourside Supplementary Planning Document
- 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 aesthetics of shop frontages and/or historic attributes;
- 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 consistent with the setting of a Conservation area of national significance;
- Strengthens the historic attributes of the town centre;
- Incorporates the strategic redevelopment schemes set out in the Whitehaven Masterplan

Town Centre and edge of centre opportunity and regeneration sites will be encouraged where development proposals meet the requirements of the sequential test and impact threshold.

*NB: Site locations will be updated when evidence in the Retail, Leisure and Town Centre study becomes available.*

## 32.4 Whitehaven Town Centre – Primary Shopping Area

- 32.4.1 National Policy (NPPF –para 85 b) requires Local Plans to define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted. There is no longer a requirement to identify specific primary and secondary frontages.
- 32.4.2 Annex 2 of the revised NPPF indicates that a primary shopping area is 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 Whitehaven Town Centre Proposed Boundary – Appendix I)
- 32.4.3 The purpose of identifying a Primary Shopping Area (PSA), supports a positive strategy for Whitehaven Town Centre. The study does not recommend that Local Plan policy imposes a threshold over the proportion of non-retail uses within the PSA, so that a level of

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<sup>33</sup> The Draft extents of the Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area is defined at Appendix I

flexibility is allowed whilst ensuring that the PSA continues to reflect the areas main function as a predominant retail centre.

- 32.4.4 Policy R6PO 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 R6PO: Whitehaven Town Centre Primary Shopping Area**



Whitehaven Primary Shopping Area is the focus for retail use in Copeland<sup>34</sup>. To support and promote the vitality and viability of the centre, proposals for other main town uses (i.e. non A1) 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 (A5 use) will not lead to more than two such uses adjoining each other; and
- d) The proposal will not have any unacceptable impact upon the local highway network and acceptable levels of parking are available nearby.

### **32.5 Key Service Centres**

- 32.5.1 The three Key Service Centres offer the next level of provision below the Principal Town of Whitehaven. Egremont and Cleator Moor are relatively close to Whitehaven, and their identified services reflect this fact. Millom, 51km to the south, provides a wider range of services to its hinterland, and will continue to offer a level of provision that reflects its location. Findings of the recent key service centre masterplans and visions identify all centres need strengthening to support diversification and sustainability.

#### **Policy R7PO: The Key Service Centres**



Development that supports the roles of Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom Town Centres as the Key Service Centres will be encouraged and supported where it:

<sup>34</sup> Its boundaries are shown at Appendix I.

- a) Is located within the Town Centre boundaries of the Key Service Centres (Draft Key Service Boundaries Appendix I);
- b) Provides convenience and comparison shopping, and a range of other services to serve the settlement and surrounding communities;
- c) Encourages evening and night time-uses that contribute to the vibrancy, inclusiveness and economic vitality of the centres;
- d) Diversifies the range of residential accommodation in the key service centres, including the re-use of vacant floors over shops;
- e) Strengthens and diversifies the towns offer.

## 32.6 Cleator Moor: Key Service Centre

32.6.1 Cleator Moor is situated approximately 5km south-east of Whitehaven and is relatively remote in terms of the national strategic highway network. Findings of the 2020 Health Check conclude that the town does not have a convenience anchor store, which impacts on footfall and overall the range of retail and services is relatively limited. At the time of survey the town had a vacancy rate of 30%, triple the national average.

32.6.2 Strengths and opportunities for the town include:

- The Market Square and strong civic quarter,
- A number of attractive historic buildings,
- Opportunities to build upon the market square and
- Strong community spirit.

32.6.3 If the Towns Fund Bid is successful this will provide financial opportunities for improvements to the town that will encourage increased footfall and new business start-ups.

32.6.4 Criteria set out in Policy R7aPO provides opportunities and flexibility to support the recovery of Cleator Moor.



### Policy R7aPO: Cleator Moor Town Centre



Development that provides opportunities to reduce the high level of vacancy rates, improve the viability, vitality and community spirit of Cleator Moor, Town Centre will be encouraged and supported where it accords with the Development Plan and:

- a) Provides opportunities that encourages residents, visitors and tourists to visit the Market Square and town centre;
- b) Diversifies the offer to meet needs of both residents and visitors;
- c) Results in the repair, regeneration and refurbishment of derelict buildings within the centre;
- d) Strengthens and diversifies the towns offer;
- e) Improves pedestrian safety, reduces on street parking and provides new appropriate parking provision.

## 32.7 Egremont: Key Service Centre

32.7.1 Egremont is situated approximately 3km inland and 8km south of Whitehaven and located off the A595, approximately 5km north of the Sellafield nuclear site. Findings of the 2020 Health Check conclude that the centre is anchored by the Co-op convenience store located on the high street. It is considered that the town is focussed around the Co-op store where footfall is highest. Vacancy rates at the time of survey were 24%, more than double the national average.

32.7.2 Strengths and opportunities for the town include;

- the Market Hall, library and outdoor market that increase footfall in the town,
- good level of parking; strong national multiple anchor.
- the main opportunity is to build upon the independent and community offer within the centre.



32.7.3 Criteria set out in Policy R7bPO provides for the opportunities and flexibility to support local businesses, improve services, streetscape and increase the footfall in Egremont Town Centre.

### Policy R7bPO: Egremont Town Centre



Development that provides opportunities to reduce the high level of vacancy rates, improve the viability, vitality and lack of investment in the Town Centre will be encouraged and supported where it accords with the Development Plan and:

- a) Provides opportunities for new leisure provision that encourages residents and visitors to the town centre;
- b) Builds upon the independent and community offer of the centre and supports additional use of the market hall;
- c) Provides improvements to public realm and signage;
- d) Results in the repair and renovation of derelict buildings ; and
- e) Involves the repair and renovation of vacant units in the gateways to the town.
- f) Strengthens and diversifies the towns offer.

## 32.8 Millom: Key Service Centre

32.8.1 Millom is situated in the south of the Borough, approximately 1.5km from the coast of the Duddon Estuary and somewhat isolated from the other towns. The town is located 11km north of the Borough of Barrow-in-Furness and 51km south of Whitehaven.

32.8.2 Findings of the 2020 Health Check conclude that the town centre benefits from Tesco as an anchor store. At the time of survey vacancy rates were at 19.2%, almost double national average.

32.8.3 Strengths and opportunities for the town include;

- a strong anchor store and a good overall convenience offer to attract footfall into the centre;
- the community uses such as the library, pavilion and theatre, and the recreation centre build upon the community spirit of the town.
- Opportunities include; improvements to public realm; regeneration of key historic buildings and the location presents opportunities for tourist visitors.



32.8.4 If the Towns Fund Bid is successful then this will provide financial opportunities for improvements to the town including public realm and regeneration of buildings.

32.8.5 Criteria set out in Policy R7cPO provides opportunities and flexibility to support local businesses, improve streetscape, buildings and a wider retail and leisure offer to increase the footfall in Millom Town Centre.

### Policy R7cPO: Millom Town Centre



Development that provides opportunities to decrease the need to shop on line, reduces the high level of vacancy rates, and improves the viability and vitality in the Town Centre will be encouraged and supported where it accords with the Development Plan and:

- a) Provides improvements to public realm across the town as well as a focus on Market Square;
- b) Results in the regeneration of historic buildings;
- c) Results in the repair and renovation of derelict buildings;
- d) Builds on the wider retail and leisure offer;
- e) Improves transport and pedestrian links from the train station into the heart of the town centre;
- f) Results in improved town centre coherence;
- g) Improves car parking provision;
- h) Strengthens and diversifies the towns offer.

### 32.9 Local Services Centres, Sustainable Villages and other rural villages

32.9.1 Retail areas beyond Key Service Centre level provide for small scale shopping and some local services. Other services are provided for in the Key Service Centres and Whitehaven.

32.9.2 The Council encourages the longevity of community services and provision necessary to make sustainable communities. Policy R8PO sets out the criteria to support and encourage such provisions.

#### Policy R8PO: Local Services Centres, Sustainable Villages and Other 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 in accordance with Policy R2PO.

Strong emphasis will be placed on the retention of existing provision and any proposal for loss of retail or service use will need to be robustly justified.

### 32.10 Open Countryside

32.10.1 National Policy (NPPF para 84) recognises that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements. 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.

32.10.2 Development should be directed to the most sustainable locations, Policy R9PO sets out the limited circumstances where retail and leisure type development may be appropriate in an open countryside location.

### Policy R9PO: Open Countryside (Rest of the Borough)



Small scale farm diversification, retail and leisure schemes will be considered where they meet the requirements of national policy and where:

- a) The development respects the character of its setting and the countryside
- b) There are sustainable transport links
- c) The development would not lead to harm to biodiversity interest
- d) It can be robustly justified that there is need for an open countryside location.

## 32.11 Non-Retail Development in Towns

32.11.1 The Council recognises the changing dynamics of town centres, and the need to be flexible in its approach, to the change of use and development of non-retail uses to ensure the future vitality of centres. Policy R10PO should be applied to non-retail development in all town centres with the exclusion of Whitehaven Primary Shopping Areas.

32.11.2 Town centre boundaries are shown in appendix I.

### Policy R10PO: Non-Retail Development in Town Centres



Proposals for non-retail (A1) 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 amenities of town centre residents; and
- d) The conversion of downstairs premises supports the conversion of upper floors for residential use.

## 32.12 Shopfronts

32.12.1 Shopfronts are a key part of the character of many historic shopping streets and conservation areas, but they have been widely harmed through neglect, removal and poor quality alteration. This has had a major cumulative effect on Copeland's settlements and is

therefore a key area in which improvements can be made. In light of this the Council are preparing a Shop Front Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will focus attention on the importance of these features, of maintaining them in good condition, repairing them in sensitive ways, and replacing them appropriately when they have been lost in the past.

32.12.2 Advertisements are considered in the Copeland Places chapter.

### Policy R11PO: 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.

### 32.13 Hot Food Takeaways

32.13.1 Healthy lifestyles and clean and tidy towns are supported by the Council, Policy R12PO sets out the detailed criteria that will be used to assess proposals for Hot Food Takeaways in the Borough.

### Policy R12PO: 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 the Borough's communities, hot food takeaways (use class A5) 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.

### 32.14 Loss of Village Shops, Post Offices and Public Houses

- 32.14.1 Copeland is a largely rural Borough with small villages and settlements located around Copeland. Village shops, post offices and public houses are key sustainable facilities for our communities. Policy R13PO sets out the criteria that will be considered for applicants that propose a change of use resulting in a loss of such provision.
- 32.14.2 See Policy H23PO (Community facilities) for proposals relating to the loss of community buildings.

#### **Policy R13PO: Loss of Village Shops, Post Offices and Public Houses**



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 an appropriate period of time 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; 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.

# Tourism

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## 33 Tourism: Assets and Aspirations

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

The Lake District Coast Brand with Whitehaven the Capital of the Lake District Coast

UNESCO World Heritage Site - Lake District National Park

St Bees is the western start of the Coast to Coast Walk that finishes in Robin Hood Bay

Whitehaven Harbour and marina

Whitehaven is the western start of the National Cycle Network Route 72

Location on England's Coastal Path route

Beautiful coastline and Victorian seaside towns and villages

## 34 Tourism: Key Facts

Two thirds of the Borough is located within the Lake District National Park World Heritage Site which is the most visited national park in the UK and generates the largest tourism spend in England and Wales (CLEP).

The visitor economy is an important aspect of Copeland's overall economy. The Copeland Growth Strategy (2016-2020) has identified around 1.8 million visitors per year. (16.4million annual visitors to the Lake District)

Copeland has a significant length of cycle ways with the Western start of the National Cycle Network Route 72 (C2C) designated as Whitehaven Harbour and is used by an average 12,000 cyclists each year.

Copeland has a 56 mile stretch of coastline from Lowca in the north to Duddon Bridge in the south with four designated amenity beaches including St Bees, Seascale, Silecroft and Haverigg.

Recent planning permission has been approved for a Coastal Activities Centre at Whitehaven Harbour that will offer sporting activity, space for music, theatre, exhibitions and other gatherings.

## 35 Copeland's Tourism Offer

35.1.1 Cumbria and the Lake District National Park (LDNP) in particular, is one of the most successful areas for tourism in the UK, with visitor economy acting as a lifeline to many of the remotest parts of the County. It is estimated that direct visitor economy spend supports direct GVA that is around 8% of Cumbria's total. The visitor economy is however far from evenly spread across Cumbria, with roughly half of all tourism spend occurring in the LDNP (CLEP).

35.1.2 Copeland is contextualised by a vast natural landscape, rugged coastline and large rural expanses that have shaped man's efforts over time; and continue to influence activity now. Copeland's cultural and tourism offer is defined by its rich and varied past. A history and legacy from the maritime trade, the progress and decline of heavy industry and mining. Back in the 1700's Whitehaven was the second largest port in England and one of the most important rum ports in the UK. Whitehaven was also the first planned town since medieval times, with many buildings being of Georgian architecture. The neighbouring town of Egremont dates back to medieval time and is home to the extensive ruins of the Norman Egremont Castle.

35.1.3 The development of Whitehaven harbour started back in 1634 with the beginning of the Irish coal trade. In 1634 Sir Christopher Lowther built a stone jetty, now known as the Old Quay. It is one of the oldest remaining coal wharves in Britain.



Various additions have been made since this date, with the final phase being the Queens Dock built between 1872 and 1876.

35.1.4 A number of surviving remains of the coal and iron industries include The Candlestick Chimney which was part of a colliery engine house built in 1850, the nearby Duke Pit fan-casing, which once housed a 36ft diameter wooden ventilation fan, Haig Pit which was the last to close in Whitehaven, and Saltom Pit which was the first under sea mine.

35.1.5 The harbour area was redeveloped from a working port associated with the Marchon Chemical Works at the turn of the 20th Century, and now offers facilities for locals and visitors, including the Millennium Walk, The Beacon Museum, apartment and town centre living, cafés and bars and a marina that has over 400 pontoon marina berths and extensive quay wall berths for larger boats.

35.1.6 A number of new initiatives highlighted below and explained in more detail in the subsequent chapters are currently being developed:

## Initiatives

- Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (CLEP) focus on upgrading the Cumbrian Coast Rail Line – a £100m plus project– forming foundation for future sustainable tourism for western lakes.
- CLEP have also commissioned a Cumbria Ports Study. Whitehaven is a tender port, and this is increasingly attractive to larger cruise activities as this can lend to the cruise experience. (This now needs to link into the Barrow ports initiative).
- 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.
- Promote the experience economy, inclusive access and sustainable travel through attract and disperse.
- Increase the number of visitors to the area and encourage them to stay longer and spend more.
- Increase resilience of our communities by increasing footfall and economic opportunities for our local businesses.
- The development of a new Coastal Activity Centre, Velotel and floating sea bins.

35.1.7 A recent 2020 Government press release identifies two Whitehaven projects that are set to transform Whitehaven Harbour. Both schemes are funded through Sellafield Ltd.’s social impact, multiplied programme.

35.1.8 The Edge<sup>35</sup> a coastal £3.6million activities centre, received planning approval in 2019 is expected to open in 2022, and will offer accommodation, cycle storage facilities and flexible activity spaces 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.

35.1.9 The centre will provide opportunities to animate the harbour through increased water sports activity including paddling and canoeing.



<sup>35</sup> Photo c/o <https://www.whitehavenhc.org.uk/the-edge-project>

- 35.1.10 The second scheme is being developed and delivered by the Whitehaven Youth Project. Sellafield has invested £100,000 to fund a filtration system at the marina that will feature a network of floating 'sea bins' as well as an environmental education programme.
- 35.1.11 The youth project will be working with the marina to add six more Sea bins to filter and remove plastics, microplastics and oil from the water, creating a cleaner and safer environment for water sports and marine wildlife.
- 35.1.12 By 2023, Whitehaven Marina will be the first in the world to boast 7 Sea bins, putting the town ahead of Dubai, which has six, and Sydney, which has two. Only four other places in the UK have them.



- 35.1.13 Other opportunities in close proximity to the harbour include the proposed development of a high quality hotel and purpose built offices with water front views and a Velotel to provide overnight accommodation for those partaking in the C2C cycle route.
- 35.1.14 A £300 million investment project at North Shore Harbour that is underway will boost the local economy, further regenerate the harbourside and encourage higher levels of tourism in and around Whitehaven. Further details on this project can be found at: <https://becnorthshore.com/>
- 35.1.15 There are several Victorian seaside resorts along the West Cumbrian coast with accommodation and tourist provision which include Haverigg, St Bees and Seascale within Copeland Borough. St Bees Head is the only defined heritage coastline between Wales and Scotland and is the starting point for the Coast to Coast walk which finishes at Robin Hood Bay in North Yorkshire. Other walking and cycling opportunities include national strategic cycle-ways; C2C, Hadrian's Wall cycleway and Reivers Route.

35.1.16 The visitor economy is an important aspect of Copeland’s overall economy. The Copeland Growth Strategy (2016-2020) has identified around 1.8 million visitors per year. With 16.4million annual visitors to the Lake District as a whole. As can be seen from the statistics below, visitors and revenue has improved from the earlier 2009 survey. The 2016-2020 Copeland Growth Strategy (currently being updated) seeks to further capitalise on Copeland’s existing tourism offer, develop new tourism opportunities and encourage visitors to the Lake District National Park to also visit the wider Copeland area.

A Cumbrian Visitor Survey ‘**2018 Report for Cumbrian Tourism**’ was published in October 2018, which makes comparison with an earlier 2009 survey.

Key findings for Copeland include:

- 5.3% increase in tourism days
- 4.6% increase in tourist numbers
- 5.1% increase in associated tourism revenue
- Day visitors increased by 4.6%
- Day visitors spend increased by 7.4%
- Total revenue -175.9m, a 32.4% growth since 2009

Employment – 2,320 FTE (nearer to double if considering part time nature of work)

35.1.17 As discussed earlier, Covid-19 restrictions remain in place, as such foreign and UK overnight travel was suspended between March and 4th July 2020. The full impact to the tourism economy is yet unknown, the Council as a whole are working on projects to reboot the economy of Copeland including its ‘experience economy’ which includes tourism. Increasing and enhancing tourism facilities for both day and longer stay visits was already high on the Councils agenda and Covid-19 has increased this priority in terms of marketing Copeland as a destination for people to enjoy all that the Borough has to offer.

35.1.18 Improving the tourism and leisure offer will also provide new opportunities for our communities by providing activities for their families during school holidays and staycations. In addition it is hoped that new, exciting and improved leisure activities and events will improve our night time economy and encourage our young people to stay living in Copeland.

35.1.19 It is anticipated that UK travel will become even more popular, as a result of Covid-19. A number of projects that Copeland officers are involved in are set out below. Future High Street Funds (FHSF), Towns Bids and the Borderlands Funds discussed in the Retail and Leisure sub-chapter have an emphasis on cycling, connectivity, new accommodation and leisure facilities in Whitehaven. Cycling and connectivity is a key theme for all of our town centres and enhanced tourism provisions alike. The importance of increased health and well-being identified as a key priority for Copeland as a whole.

## 35.2 Britain’s Visitor Economy

35.2.1 Since 2010 tourism has been the fastest growing sector in the UK in employment terms. Britain is forecast to have a tourism industry worth over £257 billion by 2025. Which is just under 10% of the UK GDP and supporting almost 3.8 million jobs, which is around 11% of the total UK number.

35.2.2 Tourism impact is amplified through the economy, so its impact is much wider than just direct spending levels. Tourism GVA is estimated to be 2.8 – meaning that for every

£1,000 generated in direct tourism GVA there is a further £1,800 that is supported elsewhere in the economy through the supply chain and consumer spending.

- 35.2.3 Inbound tourism will continue to be the fastest growing tourism sector – with spend by international visitors forecast to grow by over 6% a year in comparison with domestic spending by UK residents at just over 3%. The value of inbound tourism is forecast to grow from over £21bn in 2013 to £57bn by 2025, with the UK seeing an international tourism balance of payments surplus in 2023, almost forty years since the UK last reported a surplus.
- 35.2.4 The above information is taken from the Deloitte Tourism Jobs and Growth Report 2013. <https://www.visitbritain.org/visitor-economy-facts>

## 36 Maximising Tourism in Copeland

- 36.1.1 National planning policy places significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity and supports sustainable rural tourism that benefits business in rural areas, communities, visitors and which respects the character of the countryside.
- 36.1.2 The Borough has much to offer in terms of tourism opportunities. Enabling people to enjoy quality time in an area as beautiful and distinctive as Copeland, not only supports the local economy; being outdoors, enjoying activities whether it be swimming or paddling in the sea, walking or cycling along the coastal routes, enjoying the amazing sunsets and dark skies, or just relaxing with a coffee in one of the many towns' cafes and bistros also helps to improve the health and well-being of locals and visitors alike.
- 36.1.3 The Western Lakes that includes Copeland and its extensive coastline and impressive landscape is significantly different when compared to the central lakes area, and offers a different and varied experience to both tourists and residents. The Borough has numerous place bound assets that includes woodland areas, the coast and beaches, historic buildings and industrial heritage. These assets provide opportunities for attractions and activities that include water sports, adventure activities, cultural experiences wildlife trails, seaside experiences, new visitor accommodation and gateways and hubs to access these facilities.
- 36.1.4 Carlisle Airport re-opened for scheduled flights in April 2019 and is approximately 45 miles from Whitehaven and 75 miles from Millom. Other major gateways can be located by train and car within around a two hour journey include Newcastle, Liverpool and Manchester airports.
- 36.1.5 Day visits have in the past dominated the tourism sector, the Council realises the potential to expand the offer to encourage longer stays and to develop the weekend and short break market. Opportunities include new and improved quality hotels, guest houses, self-catering provisions and additional tourist sites for caravan and camping.
- 36.1.6 In light of the high numbers of contractors working in the nuclear industry and supply chain, much of the existing bed and breakfast and hotel accommodation is utilised by these workers during the week. The Council would welcome and support opportunities for the development of town centre self-contained apartments to accommodate workers during the week which would also provide an additional offer for tourists to spend weekends in Copeland. In addition existing hotels and bed and breakfasts could then be freed up and provide tourist accommodation.

36.1.7 Enhancements to existing and the provision of new café's, bars and restaurants in the towns will also provide for additional visitors and tourists to the area. In light of new licensing laws and a relaxation in planning bars and café owners now have the opportunity to provide outdoor seating areas for customers to enjoy drinks and refreshments. This relaxation is welcomed by the Council (where facilities are set out in a safe way that is appropriate for pedestrians, cyclists and other forms of transport) in supporting aspirations to enhance our towns as destinations for people to spend quality leisure time.



36.1.8 Expanding the Borough's tourism offer and raising its profile as the Lake District Coast (which offers a different and exciting experience to the National Park), will help to entice more of the 16.4million Lake District visitors to visit and stay in Copeland, where annual visits currently stand at around 1.8million.

36.1.9 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 5 unique selling points:



## 36.2 Tourism Opportunity Sites

36.2.1 Tourism opportunity sites can provide for large scale tourist activities that may not be possible or appropriate in the urban areas. The Council has commissioned consultants to carry out an assessment of such sites across the Borough to identify and promote suitable

sites. Once this work is completed, tourism opportunity sites included in the Core Strategy (Policy ER10) will be considered alongside new areas, to assess their suitability for inclusion in either the Local Plan or a supporting portfolio document.

### 36.3 Strengthening the Tourism Offer

- 36.3.1 The Council is working on a number of projects and initiatives that aim to strengthen the tourism offer in Copeland. One of the key areas is promoting the C2C cycle route and proving overnight accommodation for users of the route. 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 Councils objectives.

#### Policy T1PO: Strengthening the Tourism Offer



The Borough's tourism offer will be strengthened and maximised through a sustainable and proactive approach to enhance Copeland's role as a high quality and attractive destination for day visitors and longer stay tourists. 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, coordinating and managing the development of the Borough's offer and to maximise the 'Lake District Coast' brand.

### 36.4 Tourism Development

- 36.4.1 The Local Plan seeks to direct new tourism development to the most sustainable locations in the Borough. The Development Strategy and Policy T2PO sets out the hierarchy for sustainable development for both visitor attractions and accommodation.
- 36.4.2 In respect of overnight and longer stay visitor accommodation new build should be directed to the towns and local service centres. The development of overnight and long stay visitor accommodation below local service centres should be restricted to the diversification and change of use of existing buildings. A more flexible approach should be taken for temporary accommodation including caravan and campsites, (Policy T4PO) that have less impact on the local environment and character of an area.
- 36.4.3 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 life style offer. Proposals will be assessed against their impact on the environment and local communities

#### Policy T2PO: Tourism Development



The Local Plan supports the creation, enhancement and expansion of tourist attractions, visitor accommodation and infrastructure where it meets the following criteria:

Designation	Role and Function
Principal Town, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres	The majority of new development is directed to the Principal Town of Whitehaven, and to a lesser extent the Key Service and Local Service Centres ensuring that provision is of an appropriate scale and development is located where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact, and does not result in unacceptable harm to environmental assets or the character of the area.
Sustainable and other Rural Villages and Outside of Settlements	<p>Proposals in sustainable and other rural villages and outside of defined settlements for the development of tourism provision will be supported where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal is for a specific activity or function that requires a location that cannot be accommodated for within the Principal Town, Key Service or Local Service Centres; or</li> <li>• The proposal enhances the Borough’s existing place bound assets; or</li> <li>• The proposal is for the change of use, or diversification of an existing building, to provide overnight or longer stay visitor accommodation; or</li> <li>• The proposal is for a farm diversification scheme in a rural area that will provide or enhance tourist provision.</li> </ul> <p>In all circumstances development is of an appropriate scale located where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact, and does not result in unacceptable harm to environmental assets or the character of the area.</p>

36.4.4 Copeland has a stretch of coastline line that runs along its western edge with views out towards the Irish Sea and Scotland. Much of it is an area of beauty, home to wildlife and includes the St Bees Head Heritage Coast. Criteria for the undeveloped coast is set out in policy N6PO in the Natural Environment Chapter. Certain types of development that enhance Copeland’s tourism offer may be acceptable in close proximity to the developed coastline are set out in Policy T3PO.

**Policy T3PO: Coastal Development Outside of the Undeveloped 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 where:

- a) The proposal provides improved accessibility to the coastal walkways and cycle routes; or
- b) The proposal improves the quality and range of holiday accommodation including overnight tourist provision; or
- c) Gateways and/or hubs are enhanced or created; or

- d) Opportunities are provided to enhance the offer for both onshore and offshore visitors, at Whitehaven Harbour including provision for the docking of cruise ships; or
- e) The proposal provides enhancement to the Lake District Coast

In all circumstances development is of an appropriate scale located where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the visitor impact, and does not result in unacceptable harm to environmental assets or the character of the area.

## 36.5 Caravans and Camping Sites for Short Term Letting

36.5.1 Policy T4PO 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 expand to the developed coastal and rural locations, to enhance the overnight and longer stay tourism accommodation market which is encouraged by the Council. Policy T4PO provides the relevant development management principles.

### Policy T4PO: Caravans and Camping Sites for short term letting



Proposals for new static, touring caravan, and camping sites will be supported for short term 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 visual harm;
- iii. be effectively screened by existing landform, trees or planting; and,
- iv. not give rise to unacceptable impacts on the highway network or highway safety.

Proposals for year round use or occupancy of caravan and camping sites will 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.

## 37 Rural Economy

37.1.1 Copeland is a predominantly rural Borough 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 with businesses including traditional farming and forestry activities. Other important characteristics of our rural economy include the food and drink offer.

### 37.2 Agricultural Development

37.2.1 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 erode the local character.

#### Policy RE1PO: Agricultural Buildings



New agricultural buildings requiring planning permission will be supported where:

- a) A demonstrable 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 adverse harm to the landscape character; and,
- d) The building will not adversely impact upon the residential amenity of nearby residential properties.

### 37.3 Equestrian Development

37.3.1 The Council seeks to 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.

37.3.2 It is important that equestrian activities have a positive impact on rural areas and protect its 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 keeping horses, which supports horse welfare as well. 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 as having horses on the land and areas of hardsurfacing can reduce its permeability and create additional surface water run-off.

37.3.3 It will 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 RE2PO: Equestrian Related Development



Development proposals for equine 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:**

Commercial equestrian development shall:

- a) be located on the edge of Principal Town, Key Service Centres, or Local Service Centres, 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:

- it 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, exceptionally, we will only permit buildings in open countryside locations 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 adverse harm to the landscape character. 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.

## 37.4 Conversion of Rural Buildings to Commercial or Community Use

- 37.4.1 Draft Policy RE3PO 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.

### RE3PO: 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 contributes to the landscape character and/or historic environment;
- 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) The building is located adjacent to or in close proximity to an existing commercial/community use group of buildings, and is appropriate to the surroundings;
- e) Safe road access is in place or can be created without damaging the rural character of the surrounding area; and,
- f) 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
- g) Biodiversity conservation interests would not be harmed as a result of the conversion.

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





**Copeland's Communities**

# Housing

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## 38 Housing: Assets and Aspirations

In 2018 Copeland was named the 2<sup>nd</sup> happiest place to live in Britain by an Office of National Statistics well-being survey.

Copeland is one of the most affordable districts to live – with low house prices and the 6<sup>th</sup> highest average wages in UK.

The Local Plan will direct more development to more rural villages than at present to support rural communities.

The Borough is predominantly rural with over 65% of residents living within our four towns.

A good range of attractive housing allocations and sites is on offer to meet the housing needs of all our current and future residents.

## 39 Housing Key Facts

Copeland has a population of around 68,700 people. It contains four towns, Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Whitehaven which, with a population approaching 24,000, is the principal town.

The Borough has been identified as the most affordable place to live in England and Wales, in 2019 the average price paid for properties was estimated to be 2.8 times average annual earnings (Source ONS)

Our 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.

Approximately 35% of Copeland Borough's residents live in rural areas.

Copeland Borough is a self-contained housing market however there are significant differences between different parts of the Borough in terms of its housing offer.

The part of the Borough 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 of the Borough 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 the Borough in the National Park.

There are over 1000 empty homes in the Borough, over 800 of which are long-term empty. The Local Plan and Housing Strategy identify a number of actions to help bring such properties back into use.

## 40 Meeting Copeland's Housing Needs

### 40.1 Improving the Housing Offer

- 40.1.1 Ensuring the Borough 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.
- 40.1.2 Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership's 2019 Annual Report 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 5 years has been to take up employment in the Borough<sup>36</sup>.
- 40.1.3 The Council's Housing Needs Study (HNS) 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.
- 40.1.4 Interest from developers has been growing, this presents a real opportunity to improve the housing offer. Draft Policy H1PO below sets out how the Council will work with developers, other partners and stakeholders, to do this over the Plan period.

#### Policy H1PO: 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 amenities of existing residents;
- b) Supporting the renewal and improvement of the Borough'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; and
- d) Approving housing development on appropriate windfall sites where it accords with the Development Plan.

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<sup>36</sup> Based upon the housing needs survey carried out as part of the Housing Needs Assessment.

## 40.2 The Housing Requirement

40.2.1 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.

40.2.2 Local Planning Authorities are required to identify their Borough's housing need over the full plan period. Once adopted, the Council will need to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites in order to meet the identified housing need, otherwise there may be pressure to allow developments in less sustainable locations.



40.2.3 Paragraph 60 of the NPPF states that:

*“To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals.”*

### Standard Methodology

40.2.4 The Government has produced a standard methodology<sup>37</sup> for calculating housing need<sup>38</sup> at Local Authority level. The NPPF states that planning authorities should follow this methodology “*unless circumstances warrant an alternative approach*”.

40.2.5 The standard methodology uses 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 4. It must be noted that these projections are based upon past trends. Planning Policy Guidance (Housing and Economic Needs Assessment) states that a Local Plan is considered sound where it meets this minimum need figure.

40.2.6 Using the current year 2020 as a starting point, the standard methodology identifies a housing need for only 11 dwellings per year in Copeland.

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[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](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)

<sup>38</sup> The Government is currently consulting on Changes to the Current Planning System document which introduces a new methodology for calculating housing need. Its progress will be monitored and considered prior to the production of the Publication Draft.

40.2.7 The PPG states that the government will support aspirational councils who wish to set their housing requirements higher than the figure produced by the standard methodology 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

40.2.8 The PPG also 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.”* As shown in Figure 20, annual delivery has exceeded the figure produced by the standard methodology significantly over the previous 10 years.

### Strategic Housing Market Assessment

40.2.9 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Objectively Assessed Housing Need document (SHMA) has been produced to support the Local Plan. The document uses an alternative methodology for calculating housing need and analyses a range of different scenarios based upon demographic trends and employment projections.

40.2.10 Table 11 shows the level of housing need that would be required under the three main scenarios identified. All use the 2014 sub-national population projections as a starting point.

40.2.11 The economic projections used for the employment-led scenario are based upon employment growth forecasts provided by Cumbria County Council. The County Council uses the Cambridge Economics Local Economy Forecasting Model and make adjustments for local knowledge.

40.2.12 Table 11 demonstrates that only the employment-led scenario (Scenario 3) would provide enough housing to support jobs growth over the plan period. The other two scenarios would result in further losses to the economically active population in the Borough.

*Table 11: Housing Requirement Scenarios*

	Notes	Annual Housing Need (net additional dwellings) 2017-2035	Change to economically active population 2017-2035	Jobs growth supported 2017-2035
Demographic Baseline Scenario	Based on SNPP 2014	25	-2,949  Source: SHMA, Figure 5.6	N/A
Demographic-led Scenario	This scenario is based on a longer term (15 year)	140	-461	N/A

	<p>demographic trend than the baseline SNPP (plus unattributable population change).</p> <p>Adjustments have been applied to this projection to enable more positive household formation rates for younger people (aged 25 – 44)<sup>39</sup> and to take into account concealed households.</p>		Source: SHMA, Figure 5.6	
Employment -led Growth Scenario <sup>40</sup>	<p>Includes an uplift based on the most optimistic employment forecasts from CCC. It reflects information received from Sellafield Ltd indicating that some of the anticipated workforce decline due to Thorp/Magnox projects coming to a close will be mitigated by workforce redeployment due to increased decommissioning activity. It also includes employment projections linked to Moorside. This scenario also takes into account concealed households.</p>	200	+999  SHMA, Figure 5.11	+3.2% (+1,100)  SHMA, Figure 5.11

### Previous Delivery

- 40.2.13 The Core Strategy contains a requirement for a minimum of 230 dwellings per year to be delivered over the first 5 years of the Plan period with an uplift to provide an additional 30% on top of the basic requirement, equating to 300 dwellings per annum in the latter 10 years.
- 40.2.14 The table below shows how many net additional dwellings have been delivered annually over the past 10 years against this requirement. The highest number of dwellings delivered in a single year was 158 (in 2011/12), the least 110 (2018/19) and on average 137 new dwellings were added to the overall supply each year. The number of net additional dwellings increased between 2018/19 and 2019/20. The Council will work with developers to support the continuation of this upwards trend.
- 40.2.15 The number of dwellings delivered over the past ten years has never met the current housing requirement identified in the Core Strategy. This could be for a number of reasons; the target may be too high, the Core Strategy may not have allocated sufficient

<sup>39</sup> Responses from the development industry indicate support for this approach

<sup>40</sup> SHMA Scenario 3

attractive and developable sites or the economy may not have been able to support the delivery of additional houses.

Table 12: Previous Housing Delivery

Year	Net additional dwellings	Current 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
Average	137	-	-

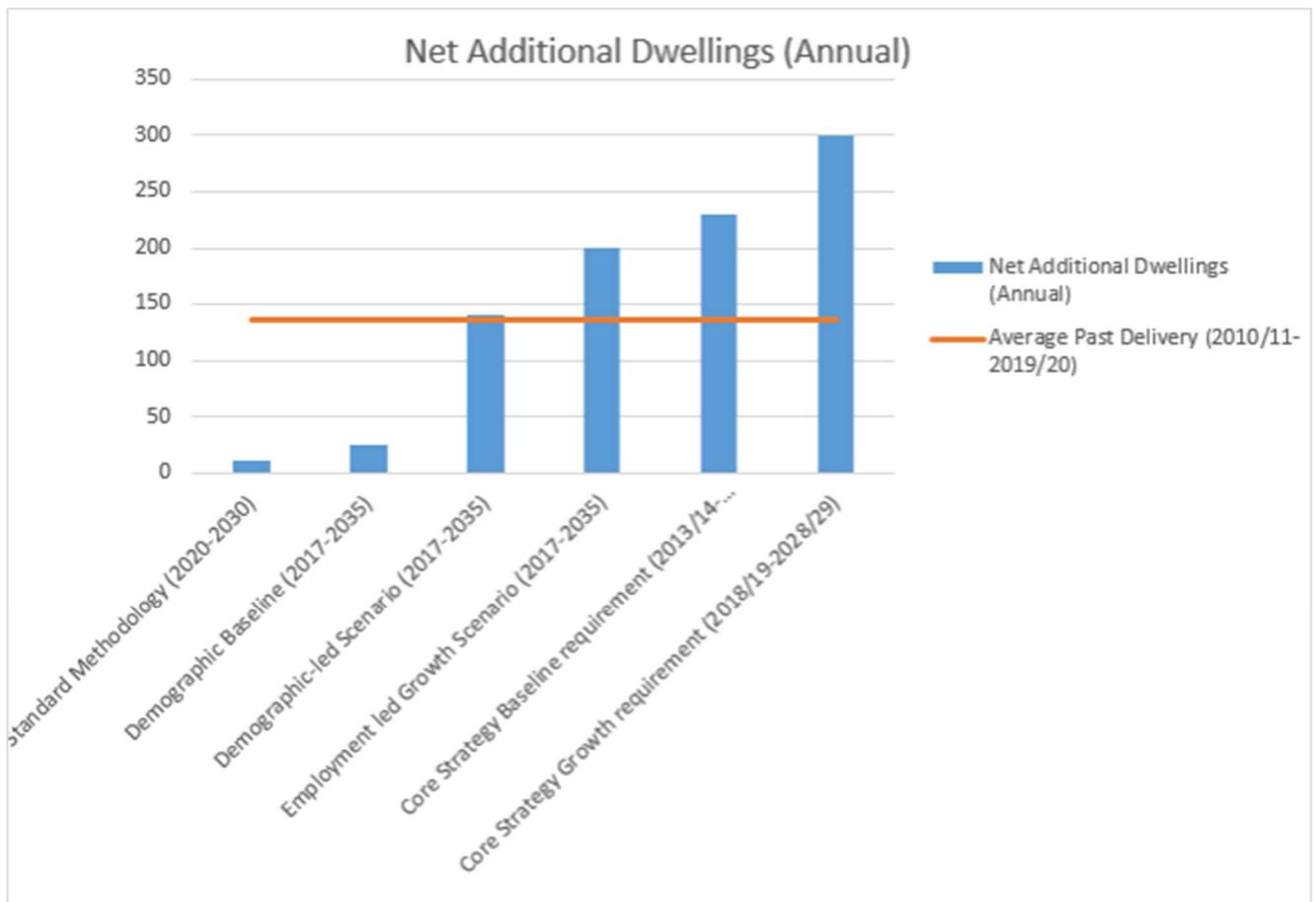
### Determining the Most Appropriate Housing Requirement

40.2.16 Figure 20 shows the level of housing need projected under each of the different methodologies described above and how they compare to the current housing requirement in the Core Strategy and past delivery rates.

Table 13: Housing Need Options

	Net additional dwellings (annual)
Standard Methodology (2020-2030)	11
Demographic Baseline (2017-2035)	25
Demographic-led baseline (2017-2035)	140
Employment led Growth (2017-2035)	200
Core Strategy Baseline requirement (2013/14-2017/18)	230
Core Strategy Growth requirement (2018/19-2028/29)	300
Average Past Delivery (2010/11 – 2019/20)	137

Figure 20: Housing Need Figures Compared to Previous Delivery



40.2.17 The housing need figure produced using the standard methodology does not provide a true reflection of housing need in the Borough. It is significantly lower than the number of homes that have been delivered on average over the past 10 years, and each individual year, and if it was taken forward as a housing requirement in the Local Plan would lead to further population loss and economic decline. 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 consultation also indicate that the development industry would not support a housing requirement based upon this figure.

40.2.18 In terms of the alternative options, Paragraph 48 of the SHMA states that

*“It can be concluded that the OAN for the planning authority area of Copeland lies in the range of 140 to 200 dwellings per annum.*

*A figure at the top end is likely to be the maximum required, as it relies on achieving the highest of the economic forecasts and there is clear uncertainty about future economic growth. Evidence of past delivery would also suggest that a housing requirement at the top end of the range might be difficult to achieve.*

*To be clear, it can be concluded that the OAN (for the planning authority area) to support demographic change, the general economy and affordable housing provision is for 140 dwellings per annum. It is suggested that the Council consider allocating enough land for a higher figure, which could be up to 200 dwellings per annum, to provide range and choice in the market and to support the growth associated with major projects. This would mean that the Local Plan would include a requirement that can meet the lower end of the range, but still be aspirational enough should economic growth mean there is a need to provide additional dwellings over and above this baseline position.”*

**It is vital that we provide the right amount and type of housing in the Borough 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 the Borough.**

- 40.2.19 Given this, a figure of 140 dwellings per annum will be taken forward as the housing requirement and will be used when calculating the rolling 5 year housing land supply. The housing requirement is not a ceiling however and in order to be aspirational and support economic growth in the Borough, sufficient land will be identified, through a combination of allocated sites, sites with extant planning permission, previous completions since 2017 and future windfalls<sup>41</sup> to provide 200 dwellings per year on average over the Plan period.

### Policy H2PO: Housing Requirement



The Housing requirement is for a minimum of 2520 net additional dwellings (an average of 140 dwellings per annum) to be provided between 2017 and 2035. This figure will be used when calculating the five year supply of deliverable housing sites in the Borough.

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, will provide a minimum of 3600 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 H3PO.

<sup>41</sup> A definition of Windfall site is included in the Local Plan Glossary

## 40.3 Housing Delivery

- 40.3.1 It is important that housing delivery is monitored regularly to ensure sites are coming forward as anticipated and housing needs are met. The Council will review its 5 year housing land supply position annually as well as reviewing the location and type of housing coming forward through the Annual Monitoring Report.
- 40.3.2 The next draft of the Local Plan, the Publication Draft, will contain a housing trajectory which demonstrates how much housing is anticipated to come forward on allocated and windfall sites and at what stage of the plan period.
- 40.3.3 Draft Policy H3PO 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.

### Policy H3PO: Housing Delivery



The Council will include a housing trajectory within the Publication Draft of the Local Plan which will identify how much housing will be expected to be delivered on allocated housing sites, sites with extant permission, future windfall sites and those that have been completed since 2017 and when.

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

1. If evidence suggests that, in any single monitoring year after 3 years of the plan's adoption, there has been significant persistent under-delivery against the housing requirement which puts the long term delivery of the Local Plan strategy at risk the Council will (in the following order):
  - Engage with the development industry to understand the reasons for under-delivery;
  - Produce an Action Plan which identifies methods for addressing any issues identified within 12 months of the end of the 3 year monitoring period. This may include reviewing existing allocations and exploring the reasons why sites have not come forward as anticipated;
  - Consider the production of a Site Allocations DPD or full/partial Local Plan Review. This may involve de-allocating housing sites which haven't come forward as expected (unless evidence demonstrates they will come forward at a later period) and allocating alternative deliverable sites identified in the latest Council Strategic Housing Land Availability document.
2. If evidence suggests that, at any time after 3 years of the plan's adoption, housing delivery has exceeded expectations within a particular tier of the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy H4PO which may put the overall strategy at risk the Council will consider carrying out a full/partial Local Plan Review.
3. 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).

## 40.4 Distribution of Housing

- 40.4.1 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 the Borough where people need and want to live, taking into account sustainability objectives.
- 40.4.2 Covid-19 has demonstrated that living close to work is no longer as important as it once was, with advances in remote and flexible working.
- 40.4.3 The Strategy and Standards chapter identifies the draft settlement hierarchy. It divides the Borough's four towns and 25 of its villages (or village clusters) into 5 distinct tiers, with the most sustainable settlements located at the top.
- 40.4.4 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.
- 40.4.5 Draft Policy H4PO sets out how many dwellings will be sought within each tier of the hierarchy in order to meet the baseline housing requirement of 2520 dwellings across the Borough over the Plan period. It also sets out how many additional dwellings will be required in each tier in order to support economic growth.
- 40.4.6 The majority of housing needed to meet the baseline requirement is directed to Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom (70% combined), with the additional 30% divided between Local Service Centres, Sustainable Rural Villages and Other Rural Villages. The additional growth is divided in the same way.
- 40.4.7 As the towns and Local Service Centres (some of which are formed from a cluster of smaller settlements) are the most sustainable parts of the Borough in terms of access and services, the number of dwellings assigned to each is not a ceiling and additional development will be supported where it accords with the Development Plan.
- 40.4.8 The number of dwellings identified for the Sustainable and Other Rural Settlements (253 and 108 respectively) are maximum figures in order to prevent sprawl and ensure the delivery of overall Local Plan strategy.

### Policy H4PO: Distribution of Housing



The distribution of housing in the Borough will be broadly in line with the settlement hierarchy set out below. Additional housing will be supported within the towns and Local Service Centres where it accords with the Development Plan. The amount of housing identified within the Sustainable Villages and Other Rural Villages, required to support economic growth, is limited to the amount shown below.

Hierarchy of Settlement	Settlements	Proportion/amount of requirement by tier (2520)	Proportion/amount of additional growth (1080)
<b>Principal Town</b>	Whitehaven	40% 1008 dwellings	40% 432 dwellings minimum
<b>Key Service Centres</b>	Cleator Moor	30% 756 dwellings	30% 324 dwellings minimum
	Egremont		
	Millom		
<b>Local Service Centres</b>	Seascale	20% 504 dwellings	20% 216 dwellings minimum
	Drigg/Holmrook		
	Frizington & Rheda		
	St Bees		
	Distington & Common End		
	Haverigg		
	Arlecdon & Rowrah		
	Thornhill		
	Bigrigg		
	Cleator (links to Cleator Moor)		
	<b>Sustainable Rural Villages</b>		
Ennerdale Bridge			
Moresby Parks			
Calderbridge			
Moor Row			
Parton			
<b>Other Rural Villages</b>	Summergrove	3% 76 dwellings	3% 32 dwellings maximum
	The Green		
	Kirkland		
	Keekle		
	Kirksanton		
	Hallthwaites		
	Nethertown		
	The Hill		
	Lowca		

## 40.5 Housing Allocations

40.5.1 It is important that a variety of attractive housing sites are allocated in the Local Plan to encourage developers and new residents to the Borough, existing residents' housing needs and aspirations and reverse the trend of population decline. Whilst the number of new homes delivered in the Borough has consistently fallen below the housing

requirement in the Core Strategy, there is increasing developer interest in the Borough. The proposed housing requirement is significantly lower than that in the Core Strategy and is considered to be achievable.

- 40.5.2 The Council has identified a number of large scale regeneration sites where new housing would be transformational and these are referred to in the Strategy and Standards section of the Local Plan as Strategic Development Priority Projects. They are also listed in Table 14 below. Given the scale of the sites and some of the challenges in terms of viability, we are working with developers and partners to seek external funding to unlock development (e.g. through funding necessary infrastructure, remediation etc).

Table 14: Key Regeneration Sites

Opportunities	
<p><b>Former Marchon Site, Whitehaven</b></p> <p>52ha</p> <p>Approx. 500 homes</p>	<p>The site benefits from an attractive coastal location and is in close proximity to the St Bees Heritage Coast and coastal recreational links.</p> <p>The Council is working with Homes England to investigate means of overcoming constraints to delivery such as potential contamination.</p> <p>Cumbria Mining has recently been granted planning permission for a new metallurgical coal mine on the southern part of the site which will create 500 new direct jobs.</p>
<p><b>Harras Moor, Whitehaven</b></p> <p>23.05ha</p> <p>Approx. 370m homes</p>	<p>Harras Moor has the potential to provide a high quality and distinctive new residential development comprising a mix of housing types, sizes and tenure to cater for local needs at an appropriate density.</p> <p>The scale of the site warrants a Masterplan approach to development which should allow development to be based on established key design principles. This will ensure that the development provides attractive streets, generous public open spaces and high quality landscaping that reinforces the existing mature vegetation and provides distinctive green corridors. The site provides the opportunity to establish new and safer pedestrian routes to key existing services, particularly the new education campus.</p>
<p><b>Mirehouse South Well-Being Village Whitehaven</b></p> <p>73.19ha</p> <p>Approx. 700 homes</p>	<p>Greenfield site situated in the Pow Beck Valley with good access to the A595 and in close proximity to high quality coasts and countryside and the Westlakes Science Park.</p> <p>This site was identified as an Associated Development site to support the construction of Moorside power station, providing construction worker accommodation while Moorside was being developed.</p> <p>The longer term ambition for the site is the delivery of a high quality well-being village which will contain a significant amount of landscaping and open space that can also be used by residents of the neighbouring Mirehouse estate. The site will also contain accommodation for students and extra care accommodation. The Council has begun</p>

	<p>producing development principles for the site and these will be used to inform discussions regarding any potential future development in this area to help provide a blueprint for healthy communities in the future and inform a future Masterplan for the area.</p> <p>The site is not considered appropriate to be developed as a 'standard' housing development and will remain outside the Settlement Boundary for this reason. The Council is currently exploring how the proposed 'legacy' can be achieved with or without the interim use as a worker accommodation site.</p>
<p><b>Land at Edgehill Park (part former Marchon car park), Whitehaven</b></p> <p>20.39ha</p> <p>Approx. 408 homes</p>	<p>The site is part greenfield and part previously developed with recent housing development to the north and south. The site has developer interest.</p>
<p><b>Moor Farm, Millom</b></p> <p>6.79ha</p> <p>Approx. 200 homes</p>	<p>This is a greenfield site to the south-west of Millom with developer interest. Pre-application enquiries have commenced.</p>

- 40.5.3 The Strategic Housing Land Availability (SHLAA) has identified a range of additional deliverable and developable housing sites. 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.
- 40.5.4 When determining which of the deliverable and developable sites should be allocated, consideration has been given to on site constraints and advice from key stakeholders including Cumbria Highways, the Lead Local Flood Risk Authority and United Utilities has been sought.
- 40.5.5 Where there has been a choice of sites, those that are the least constrained and have developer interest have been brought forward as a draft allocation. Remaining developable sites can be considered when the Local Plan is being reviewed if the draft allocations do not come forward as anticipated.
- 40.5.6 There are a number of settlements without proposed allocations as no potential sites have been put forward for assessment or there are uncertainties about the likelihood of sites identified in the SHLAA coming forward. In most cases the settlement boundary has been revised to allow development to take place should it come forward in the future.
- 40.5.7 The draft housing allocations are listed in Policy H5PO below and further details, including maps showing their location are included in Appendices I (maps) and J (supplementary

information). Those sites identified above as Key Regeneration Sites are marked with an asterisk within the policy.

- 40.5.8 An indicative yield is also shown in Policy H5PO. This is an estimation of how many dwellings are likely to be delivered based upon an assumed density of 25dph to help ensure that enough sites are allocated to deliver the Local Plan’s growth aspirations. The densities used to calculate indicative yield will not necessarily be the density which is best suited to the specific 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.
- 40.5.9 The following draft of the Local Plan, the Publication Draft, will specify how much open space and affordable housing will be expected on each allocated site, as well as providing a list of known constraints, in order to help developers identify potential costs upfront.
- 40.5.10 The SHLAA has also identified a number of 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.

### Policy H5PO: Housing Allocations



The following sites are allocated for housing over the Plan period 2017-2035. The yields identified are indicative only and alternative yields will be accepted where appropriate in accordance with Policy H7PO.

Settlement	Site Ref (SHLAA reference is shown in brackets <sup>42</sup> )	Address	Indicative Yield (dwellings – based on 25dph unless otherwise stated)
<b>Towns</b>			
Whitehaven	HWH1 (WE032 & WE001)	Land at West Cumberland Hospital and Snekyeat Rd	127
	HWH2 (WH011a)	Red Lonning and Harras Moor*	370 <sup>43</sup>
	HWH3 (WS008a & WS013)	Land at Edgehill Park (former Marchon Car Park)	510
	HWH4 (WW018/WW022)	Land south and west of St Mary's School	98
	HWH5 (WW014)	Former Marchon Site North*	532
	HWH6 (WW019a)	Land South of Waters Edge Close	35
Cleator Moor	HCM1 (CM028 & CM038)	Land at Jacktrees Road	127

<sup>42</sup> Please note, only part of the SHLAA site may form part of the allocated site. Please refer to the SHLAA for further details.

<sup>43</sup> Based on application discussions

	HCM2 (CM082a)	Land north of Dent Road	96
	HCM3 (CM008b)	Former Ehenside School	40
	HCM4 (CM025a)	Land at Mill Hill	81
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 Gammerscroft	107
	HMI2 (MI022 & MI026)	Moor Farm	195
<b>Local Service Centres</b>			
Arlecdon & Rowrah	HAR01 (AR009 & AR020)	Land East of Arlecdon Road	37
	HAR02 (AR018)	Park Road	9
Bigrigg	HBI1 (BI001)	Land north of Springfield Gardens	65
	HBI2 (BI002a)	Land west of Jubilee Gardens	19
	HBI3 (BI009a)	Springfield Farm	44
Distington	HDI1 (DI013a)	Land south of Prospect Works	30
	HDI2 (DI033)	Land south west of Rectory Place	64
Drigg & Holmrook	HDH1 (DH004)	Land north of Meadowbrook	32
	HDH2 (DH012)	Wray Head, Station Road	22
Frizington	HFR1 (FR043)	Land at Griffin Close	32
St Bees	HSB1 (SB001)	Land adjacent Abbots Court	58
	HSB2 (SB005)	Land north east Abbey Road	39
Seascale	HSE1 (SE030)	Land to west of Santon Way	45
	HSE2 (SE024)	Fairways Extension	22
Thornhill	HTH1 (TO002a)	Land to south of Thornhill	69
<b>Sustainable Rural Villages</b>			
Beckermet	HBE1 (BE003 & BE023)	Land north of Crofthouse Farm	46
	HBE2 (BE006)	Land adjacent to Mill Fields	27
Moor Row	HMR1 (MO009)	Land to north of social club	37
	HMR2 (MO006a)	Land to south of Scalegill Road	41
<b>Other Rural Villages</b>			
Lowca	HLO1 (LO004)	Solway Road	22
Summergrove	HSU1 (MO028)	Land to South West of Summergrove	80 <sup>37</sup>

## 40.6 New Housing Development

- 40.6.1 The aim of Policy H6PO below is to minimise any detrimental impacts of new housing development upon existing communities and will ensure development is built to a high standard, creating places where people will want to live and stay. 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.

### Policy H6PO: New Housing development



Planning permission will be granted for housing development on allocated and windfall sites providing that all of the following criteria are met:

- a) The design, layout, scale and appearance of the development is appropriate to the locality;
- b) An acceptable level of amenity is provided for future residents and maintained for existing neighbouring residents in terms of sunlighting and daylighting;
- c) Privacy is protected through distance or good design;
- d) The development will have no unacceptable overbearing impact upon neighbouring residents due to its scale, height and/or proximity;
- e) The layout promotes walking and where appropriate cycling, linking with existing footpaths and cycleways;
- f) Adequate external amenity space is provided, including for the storage of waste and recycling bins in a location which does not harm the streetscene;
- g) Adequate space for parking is provided, with preference given to parking spaces behind the building line to reduce street clutter;
- h) The proposal does not constitute inappropriate development of a residential garden which would harm the character of the area.

## 40.7 Housing Density and Mix

### Density

- 40.7.1 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 can result in residents becoming isolated within their communities. If densities are too high it can result in development cramming which can harm the character and appearance of an area.
- 40.7.2 Paragraph 122 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.

- 40.7.3 Identifying a specific density that must be met can make it difficult for a developer to meet identified housing needs e.g. where a need for bungalows has been identified as these tend to have a larger footprint than other house types. It 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.
- 40.7.4 As the Borough has a sufficient supply of housing sites, the Council feel that the most appropriate approach is to allow applicants to determine the most appropriate density for their developments, taking into account the above factors.

### Housing Mix

- 40.7.5 It is important that the housing built within the Borough is of the type, size and tenure that our communities need. The CLEP 2019 Annual Report identifies that a better and greater variety of housing is one of the keys to attracting people into Cumbria.
- 40.7.6 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment<sup>44</sup> 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.
- 40.7.7 The SHMA advises that the focus for new market housing over the plan period should be 2-3 bed properties, which the Housing Need Study also supports, although care needs to be given to ensure that an influx of new 3 bedroomed properties does not result in an increase in the number of empty 3 bedroomed homes, of which there are a large proportion already vacant.

Table 15: Suggested Housing Mix by Size and Tenure

Suggested Mix of Housing by Size and Tenure				
	1-bedroom	2-bedrooms	3-bedrooms	4+-bedrooms
Market	0-5%	25-30%	50-55%	15-20%
Affordable home ownership	10-15%	40-45%	35-40%	5-10%
Affordable housing (rented)	20-25%	40-45%	25-30%	5-10%

- 40.7.8 The Housing Needs Study also 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.”
- 40.7.9 In addition to this, the Council’s Housing Needs Study also identifies a shortage of purpose built, high quality, furnished key worker and student accommodation. At present some of the identified need is being met through Houses in Multiple Occupancy, and Draft Policy H12PO discusses this type of accommodation in more detail.
- 40.7.10 The Council’s Future High Streets Fund bid seeks to address this gap in the housing market by seeking funding to enable the development of modern, SMART<sup>45</sup> residential opportunities to meet the needs of young professionals and post-graduate students. Such accommodation will include access to communal leisure and workspace. The importance of space where people can work from home has been highlighted by the Covid-19

<sup>44</sup> Chapter 9

<sup>45</sup> See glossary for definition

situation and the Council encourages developers to include “touchdown points” within new housing developments to support homeworking.

### Policy H7PO: Housing Density and Mix



Developments should make the most effective use of land. When determining appropriate densities consideration should be 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 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.

## 40.8 Affordable Housing

- 40.8.1 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 growth benefits existing communities. One way of doing this is to require developers to provide affordable housing.
- 40.8.2 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 draft policy H8PO which identifies how this will be delivered in the Borough.
- 40.8.3 Whilst Copeland is considered to be the most affordable Borough in England, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identifies 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 the Borough whilst average incomes are the third largest nationally. 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.
- 40.8.4 The SHMA, paragraph 40, states that:
- “Overall, the cost of housing to buy in Copeland is relatively cheap in comparison with national figures. Additionally, the income levels likely to be required to access owner-occupied housing are often lower than might be needed to rent privately (for smaller homes). This would suggest that a key issue in the Borough is about access to capital (e.g. deposits, stamp duty, legal costs) as well as potentially some mortgage restrictions (e.g. where employment is temporary).”*
- 40.8.5 A significant amount of the Borough’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.

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

40.8.7 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

40.8.8 The SHMA states that over the plan period 2017 to 2035 there is a net deficit of up to 83 affordable homes (76 of these within the Plan area, outside the LDNP area) per annum across the whole of Copeland. This is based upon an overall amount of 200 homes being delivered annually.

40.8.9 It should be stressed that 76 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 draft Policy H8PO sets out how this will be achieved.

Table 16: Estimated Affordable Housing Need (inc area in LDNP)

Figure 6.18: Estimated Need for Affordable Housing (per annum) – by sub-area (linked to total provision of 198 dwellings per annum)						
	Current need	Newly forming households	Existing households falling into need	Total Gross Need	Relet Supply	Net Need
Whitehaven	4	99	79	182	148	34
Cleator Moor	2	29	26	57	56	1
Egremont	1	32	25	58	53	5
Whitehaven Rural	2	54	33	88	67	22
National Park	0	9	4	14	6	7
Millom	1	31	17	49	35	14
Whitehaven HMA	9	213	163	385	323	62
National Park	0	9	4	14	6	7
Millom HMA	1	31	17	49	35	14
Copeland	10	254	184	448	364	83

Source: Projection Modelling/affordability analysis

40.8.10 The NPPF<sup>46</sup>, paragraph 64, requires at least 10% of homes within major developments (over 10 units) to made available for affordable home ownership as part of the overall

<sup>46</sup> The Government is currently consulting on proposed changes to affordable housing and these will be taken into consideration when producing the Publication Draft of the Local Plan.

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:

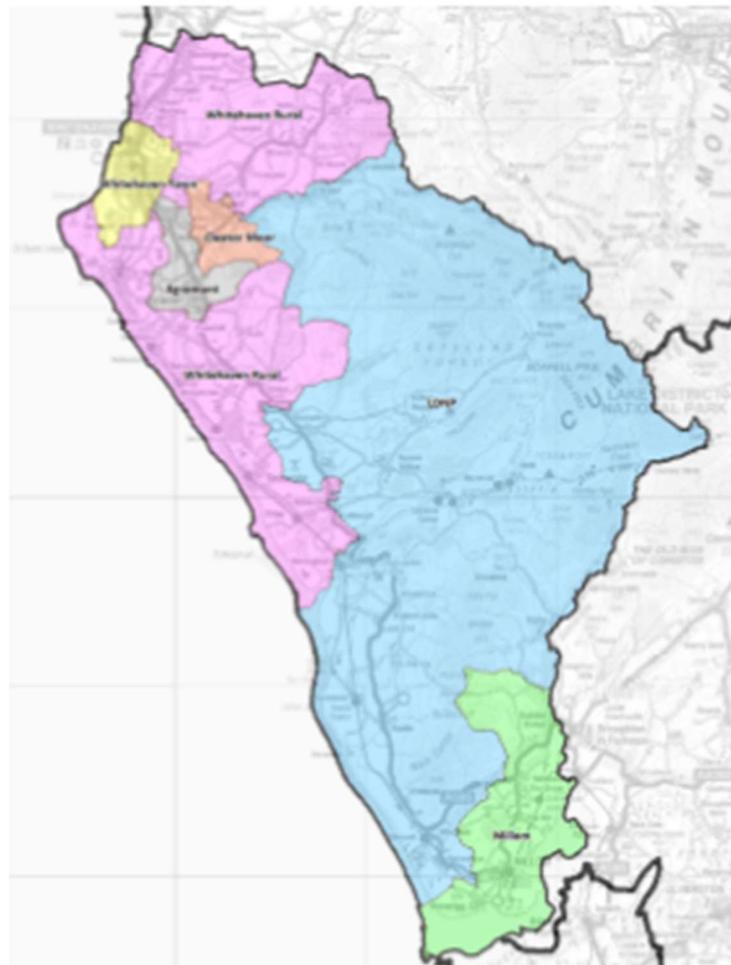
- provides solely for build to rent homes
- provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose built accommodation for the elderly, disabled or students etc)
- is proposed to be developed by people who wish to build or commission their own homes; or
- is exclusively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

40.8.11 The NPPF also allows the use of a smaller threshold in designated rural areas such as Copeland<sup>47</sup>. The Council’s Housing Needs Study identifies that housing in the Whitehaven Rural sub-area shown in pink below (which contains Arlecdon, Rowrah, Beckermeth, Bigrigg, Calderbridge, Distington, Drigg, Holmrook, Frizington, Kirkland, Ennerdale Bridge, Low Moresby, Howgate, Lowca, Moresby Parks, Parton, Sandwith, Seascale, St Bees and Thornhill) is the most expensive in the Borough and identifies this area as a priority for affordable housing development.

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<sup>47</sup> National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas designated as ‘rural’ under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985.

Figure 21: Housing Needs Study Sub-Areas



**KEY**

Whitehaven Rural
Lake District National Park
Millom
Egremont
Cleator Moor
Whitehaven Town

- 40.8.12 Given this, Draft Policy H8PO sets a requirement for 10% affordable homes to be provided on sites over 10 units in accordance with the NPPF, unless the site is located within the Whitehaven Rural area where the threshold is 5 units.
- 40.8.13 Whilst Whitehaven Town is also identified in the Housing Needs Study as a priority for affordable housing, reducing the threshold from 10 units to 5 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.
- 40.8.14 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

- 40.8.15 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.
- 40.8.16 Paragraph 57 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.”
- 40.8.17 The impacts of draft Policy H8PO, and other policies that require developer contributions, will be tested through a Local Plan Stage 2 Viability Study which will be produced prior to the submission of the Local Plan.
- 40.8.18 In accordance with the NPPF, draft Policy H8PO does allow developers to provide alternative levels of affordable housing in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, a site specific viability study must be submitted which demonstrates that circumstances have changed following the adoption of the Local Plan rendering the site unviable unless requirements are reduced. Any such viability assessment submitted should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.

## Empty Homes

- 40.8.19 The Council has aspirations to reduce the number of empty homes in the Borough 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”*
- 40.8.20 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 well-being;
  - 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

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

40.8.21 The Council is currently considering the mechanisms involved in collecting contributions and how they could be best spent off site taking into account experience elsewhere. Further details will be set out within the Publication Draft of the Local Plan. If this option is taken forward, we feel that 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<sup>48</sup>.

40.8.22 The priority should remain for affordable housing to be provided on site and it may not always be possible to adapt some of the stock to meet modern needs. However in line with national planning policy, Draft Policy H8PO 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

40.8.23 Whilst the NPPF promotes affordable home ownership over rental options, 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 the Borough.

40.8.24 The SHMA<sup>49</sup> states that:

*“Whilst the draft NPPF suggests a clear policy direction to provide 10% of all new housing as affordable home ownership, it is not clear that this is the best solution for the Borough. If possible, it would be more appropriate for the Council to seek 10% of housing to be made available with some initial upfront capital payment (such as a deposit contribution), rather than discount as Open Market Value (OMV). Such a payment could cover the deposit and other initial costs and would potentially need to be protected in some way so that the money is not lost if a household chooses to sell their property. Schemes such as Help-to-Buy could form part of such a package. This would still be targeted at the same group of households (likely to mainly be those currently privately renting but who would like to buy).”*

*“The bulk of the need is likely to be best met through provision of rented options (social/affordable), however it is recognised that there is a clear desire from Central Government to provide more “affordable” home ownership options and so some discounted market/shared ownership could be considered as part of any mix.”*

40.8.25 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.”*

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<sup>48</sup> Development must also still meet the three tests set out in the NPPF para 56

<sup>49</sup> Paragraph 42

40.8.26 Draft policy H8PO 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.

### Policy H8PO: Affordable housing



On sites of 10 units or more (or of 0.5ha or more in size), or on sites of 5 units or more within the Whitehaven Rural sub-area<sup>50</sup>, at least 10% of the homes provided should be affordable as defined in the NPPF 2019 (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

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 affordable housing developments:

- 40% discounted market sales housing, starter homes or other affordable home ownership routes<sup>51</sup>
- 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 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 exceptional 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.

## 40.9 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

40.9.1 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

<sup>50</sup> As identified in the Housing Needs Study 2020

<sup>51</sup> As defined in the NPPF Glossary

and Planning Act 2016. We also have a duty under the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015<sup>52</sup> to ensure a rolling five year supply of deliverable sites for travellers.

- 40.9.2 It is therefore necessary to update our evidence in relation to the housing needs of these communities and therefore a Cumbria wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) is being commissioned. It is hoped that a final report will be available next year. The GTAA will identify whether we need to allocate a specific site(s) and if so where this should be and how many caravan pitches it will need to contain.
- 40.9.3 Pitch provision will be provided in line with the Council's Development Strategy with the focus of site allocation in the Principal Town of Whitehaven and/or Key Service Centres of Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom.
- 40.9.4 Should a need for any additional or short term/transient pitches arise following the Plan's adoption, applications will be dealt with in accordance with draft policy H9PO below.

#### **Policy H9PO: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Windfall Sites**



Planning applications for the development of new or extension of existing Gypsy and Traveller sites will be supported where it accords 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 on landscape character and value, important 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 will be designed in accordance with national guidance.

### **40.10 Community-led and Self and Custom Housing**

- 40.10.1 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:

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/457420/Final\\_planning\\_and\\_travellers\\_policy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457420/Final_planning_and_travellers_policy.pdf)

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

40.10.2 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. Benefits for those who become involved in the process can include start-up grants and funding towards feasibility studies, housing needs surveys or planning permission. Capital and assistance applying for further funding may also be available.

40.10.3 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 the Borough, including a recent scheme in Ulpha (within the LDNP planning area).

40.10.4 The Council is a partner in the Cumbria and Lancaster Community-led housing hub. Further information can be found at the following link: <http://www.clhhub.org.uk/>

40.10.5 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 the Borough. 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.

40.10.6 The Council keeps a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the Borough for their own self and custom build housing (market or affordable). At present there are 15 people on the register but it is accepted that there may be additional people are interested in self-build projects who haven't registered. The self-build register can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/content/self-build-and-custom-housebuild-register>. There are also a number of sites currently with planning permission that are providing self-build plots.

### Policy H10PO: 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, where they accord with the Development Plan. 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 5 units.

## 40.11 Specialist and Older Persons housing

- 40.11.1 The SHMA 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.
- 40.11.2 The Housing Needs Study also identifies that a large section of the Borough 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.
- 40.11.3 The Council supports the Borough'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.
- 40.11.4 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."
- 40.11.5 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.
- 40.11.6 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.
- 40.11.7 Cumbria County Council has 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 operate a grant funding programme<sup>53</sup> for potential providers looking to bring forward proposals for extra care/supported living schemes.
- 40.11.8 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. Draft Policy H11PO 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.
- 40.11.9 The Draft 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.

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

### **Policy H11PO: 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 H6PO and should not result in any unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbours in terms of noise and disturbance.

#### **40.12 Conversion and Subdivision of Properties**

- 40.12.1 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 the Borough's economy grows, particularly where there is an influx of temporary workers.
- 40.12.2 Draft Policy H12PO 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.
- 40.12.3 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) with between 3 and 6 occupants fall into a C4 Use Class and do not, at present, require planning permission. Larger HMOs with 7 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.
- 40.12.4 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.

- 40.12.5 As well as considering the impact upon neighbours, it is also important to consider the amenity, health and well-being of future residents of the HMO. Therefore draft Policy H12PO ensures that satisfactory access to sunlight and daylight, sufficient internal space, privacy and outlook is provided.
- 40.12.6 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. As the demand for short term accommodation increases in the Borough consideration should be given to the provision of an Article 4 Directive in those areas most affected.

#### **Policy H12PO: Conversion and sub-division of buildings to residential uses including large HMO's**



The subdivision of existing properties within the Borough's settlement boundaries, including those which create Houses in Multiple Occupancy, will be supported providing all 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 amenities of the area
- f) Cycle space is provided
- g) Safe access is available from both the front and rear of the property
- 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.

### **40.13 Extensions and Alterations**

- 40.13.1 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. Draft Policy H13PO seeks to ensure that any proposals for domestic extensions or alterations meet detailed requirements relating to design and amenity.

- 40.13.2 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 units.

### Policy H13PO: 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.

## 41 Rural Housing

### 41.1 New Housing in the Open Countryside

41.1.1 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 the Borough’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.

41.1.2 Whilst the NPPF supports rural development, it states<sup>54</sup> 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

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<sup>54</sup> NPPF, Paragraph 79

- The design is of exceptional quality

- 41.1.3 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.”<sup>55</sup>
- 41.1.4 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. 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.
- 41.1.5 Prior to the production of the Publication Draft of the Local Plan, the Council will define what is meant by “local connection” in a Local Occupancy Technical Paper which will prioritise residents with the greatest need.

#### Policy H14PO: Rural Exception Sites



Housing development within the open countryside will be permitted on rural exception sites, these are small sites where it is demonstrated that affordable housing is required to meet local needs.

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.

The development must meet an identified need to the satisfaction of the Council, must be well designed and appropriate in terms of size and scale for its location. The development must not result in a significant adverse impact on the character of the area or the surrounding landscape.

- 41.1.6 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

<sup>55</sup> NPPF Glossary definition

emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products, for example, by frost damage or the failure of automatic systems.

- 41.1.7 Draft Policy H15PO supports the erection of agricultural, forestry or other essential rural workers dwellings, where certain criteria is met. 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.
- 41.1.8 Where such dwellings are approved, occupancy will be retained for this purpose through the use of a planning condition.

#### Policy H15PO: 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;
- d) the functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned; and
- e) other planning requirements, e.g. in relation to access, or impact on the countryside, are satisfied.

## 41.2 Conversion of Rural Buildings to Residential Use in the open countryside

41.2.1 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 100m<sup>2</sup>). No more than 465m<sup>2</sup> of floor space can change use to 'larger dwelling houses' under this class and no more than 465m<sup>2</sup> 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 100m<sup>2</sup>)
- 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 square metres.

- 41.2.2 Draft Policy H16PO 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.
- 41.2.3 A species survey may be required where there is evidence of protected species, for example roosting bats.

### Policy H16PO: 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 and construction and contributes to the landscape character and/or historic environment;
- 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) The building is located adjacent to or in close proximity to an existing habitable group of buildings, and the number of dwellings proposed is appropriate to the surroundings;
- e) Safe road access is in place or can be created without damaging the rural character of the surrounding area; and
- f) 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.

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 H12PO.

### 41.3 Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside

- 41.3.1 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.
- 41.3.2 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 H17PO: 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 close to the footprint of the existing dwelling<sup>56</sup> to be replaced;
- b) the replacement dwelling and curtilage development is of a scale, form and design 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.

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.

## 41.4 Beach Bungalows

41.4.1 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.

41.4.2 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 H18PO: Beach Bungalows



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

- a) the existing Beach Bungalow to be replaced has an existing lawful use;
- b) any replacement Beach Bungalow is sited on the footprint of the existing Beach Bungalow to be replaced;
- c) the altered Beach Bungalow or replacement Beach Bungalow is not larger in scale and massing than the existing Beach Bungalow to be replaced; and,

<sup>56</sup> Existing dwelling refers to the main dwelling and excludes any out-buildings.

- d) the design of the altered Beach Bungalow or replacement Beach 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 of existing Beach Bungalows to permanent dwellings or holiday letting accommodation will not be permitted.

## 41.5 Removal of Occupancy Conditions

- 41.5.1 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.
- 41.5.2 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.
- 41.5.3 A technical note regarding “local occupancy” will be developed prior to the production of the Publication Draft of the Local Plan.

### Policy H19PO: Removal of occupancy conditions



The removal of a planning condition restricting the occupancy of a dwelling in 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 2 years.

## 41.6 Residential Caravans

- 41.6.1 Draft Policy H20PO is relevant to those proposals for caravans that require planning permission in order to ensure that negative impacts are minimised.
- 41.6.2 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 play room 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.

### **H20PO: 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 adverse impacts upon the landscape or cause visual harm;
- b) the siting of the caravan will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the amenities 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 DS2PO.

Where caravans are permitted, they should be well screened with appropriate landscaping where possible.

# Health, Sport and Community Facilities

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## 42 Health, Sport and Community Facilities: Assets and Aspirations

The creation of a Sporting Quarter in East Whitehaven to support the town centre offer

The development of water sports and enhancement of the cycling and walking offer in the Borough

The Borough's natural environment and opportunities for outdoor sports and recreation

The development of a new leisure sized pool to meet needs in Millom

## 43 Health, Sport and Community Facilities: Key Facts

Copeland is the second most deprived district in Cumbria and falls within the 30% most deprived nationally for overall deprivation

The Borough also falls within the 20% most deprived nationally in terms of employment deprivation and the 10% most deprived nationally in terms of health and disability deprivation (IMD).

The Borough has lower life expectancy at birth than the national average: for men 78.2years compared to the national average of 79.6 years and for women 81.5years compared to the national average of 83.1years (ONS 2018).

78.3% of residents in the Borough consider themselves to be in good or very good health (33.9% and 44.4% respectively) (ONS Census 2011)

Copeland has a strong sporting heritage and Whitehaven contains a leisure centre with a gym, pool and Sports Stadium. The new Whitehaven Campus also includes modern sports and leisure facilities.

78.7% of residents consider that their day to day activities are not limited by a health problem (ONS Census 2011)

65.8% of residents (adults 18+) were defined as being overweight in 2016/17 (Public Health England), this figure is higher than the county level (62.4%) and national level (61.3%)

The proportion of physically active adults (19+ years) in the Borough is also lower than the Cumbrian and national average with 64.8% of residents doing at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise in the previous 28 days.

The Council has commissioned a Sports and Physical Activity Strategy to assess the Borough's sports and leisure offer and identify areas of shortfall.

## 44 Sports and Leisure in Copeland

- 44.1.1 Copeland has a strong sporting heritage which the Council wishes to continue to support and develop recognising the socio-economic benefits sport and leisure can bring to our communities.
- 44.1.2 The Borough contains a number of sporting facilities including Copeland Stadium, Copeland Pool and Whitehaven Leisure Centre. The recently opened Campus Whitehaven also provides a modern sports and physical activity facility for the Borough.
- 44.1.3 Copeland also 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 pro-actively working with partners to complete and improve the stretches of the Path route within the Borough.
- 44.1.4 In recent years external funding has been secured to enhance opportunities for physical activity in the Borough. 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.

### 44.2 Health

- 44.2.1 The Borough is facing a number of challenges in terms of health as set out in the Key Facts at the start of this chapter.
- 44.2.2 Active Cumbria identifies two local priorities within the Cumbria County Council Copeland Locality Plan 2018-2021:
- To improve the health and well-being of Cumbria's super ageing population by supporting "inactive" older adults in identified areas to become more regularly active;
  - To contribute to a reduction in health inequalities in our most deprived communities by supporting inactive people of all ages to be more regularly active.
- 44.2.3 A number of Priority Wards have been identified in Copeland for both Older Adults and Low Socio-economic groups. This is reflected in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2016-2020 which contains an ambition to improve social wellbeing and a commitment to work with partners to support the most vulnerable in Copeland.
- 44.2.4 Economic inactivity statistics for 2018/19 (Nomis and the Active Lives Survey 2019) show that the Borough is above the national average in terms of residents with long term sickness, retired residents and inactive residents. Unemployed claimant rates are also twice the national average, with youth unemployment being a particular concern at over two times the national average. It is therefore not just a case of providing more sports and leisure facilities but making sure that they are accessible financially.

### 44.3 Provision and Protection of sport and leisure facilities

- 44.3.1 The NPPF, paragraph 92 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.'"*

- 44.3.2 The Council plans positively for the provision and use of community facilities and has commissioned the production of a Sports and Physical Activities Strategy to assess the quality and usage of existing facilities (including playing pitches) and identify where there are any shortages in provision, now and in the future. The Strategy will contain a Playing Pitch Strategy, an Indoor Facilities Study and a Play Strategy and is due for completion in November 2020.



- 44.3.3 The Local Plan Publication Draft will be informed by the final Strategy and will set out when developers will need to make contributions<sup>57</sup> to improve facilities or create new ones.
- 44.3.4 The Local Plan also guards against the loss of valued facilities, in accordance with paragraph 97 of the NPPF, and only allows their replacement with other uses in a limited number of circumstances as set out in draft Policy H21PO and H23PO below.
- 44.3.5 Playing pitches are dealt with separately in draft Policy H22PO as they are governed by specific national guidance<sup>58</sup>. The Policy does not refer to school playing pitches as they are protected by their own national legislation.

#### 44.4 Opportunities

- 44.4.1 The NPPF<sup>59</sup> acknowledges that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for health and well-being of

<sup>57</sup> Through a section 106 agreement

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport>

<sup>59</sup> Paragraph 96

communities and the forthcoming Sports and Physical Activity Strategy will identify areas where the Borough's offer can be improved.

- 44.4.2 The importance of sport and leisure has been recognised in the Council's forthcoming bids for Future High Street funding and Town Deals funding. The former aims to create leisure spaces that link Whitehaven town centre and harbour area and improved facilities for cyclists as discussed in the Economy and Connectivity chapters. The latter recognises the importance of sport in helping diversify the economies of, and bring community benefits to, Millom and Cleator Moor.
- 44.4.3 The funding bids for Cleator Moor and Millom build upon the opportunities identified within the Cleator Moor Spatial Framework: A Vision for Cleator Moor and the Millom Spatial Framework: A Vision for Millom documents published in August 2018. A Spatial Framework document has also been produced for Egremont. The key opportunities for sports identified within the three Spatial Frameworks are set out in Figure 22.
- 44.4.4 Opportunities for sport and activity will also be enhanced through the protection of open spaces within settlements as discussed in the Copeland Places chapter, through a number of the strategic development priority projects such as the development of an activity trail as discussed in the Development Strategy and by prioritising pedestrian and cycling needs over vehicular needs in new developments as discussed in the Connectivity chapter.

**Figure 22: Spatial Frameworks – Opportunities for Sports Identified**



### **Cleator Moor Spatial Framework**

The Framework includes an "Experience Cleator Moor" initiative that promotes the Cleator Moor as a contemporary market town which celebrates its sporting heritage.

Opportunities that improve the existing outdoor sports and leisure provision and fill in identified gaps (e.g. cycling, playing fields, walks to the national park and sports clubs) are identified, particularly in the North East of the town linked to Copeland Bowls and Sports Centre and King George's Field pitches.



### **Egremont Spatial Framework**

The Framework 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.



### **Millom Spatial Framework**

The Framework 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.

## **Policy H21PO: Sporting, Leisure and cultural Facilities (excluding playing pitches)**



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

New facilities should be accessible to all, should be located according to the Settlement Hierarchy where applicable, and must be informed by the Council's Indoor Facilities Study.

Development must:

- Prioritise brownfield sites where possible
- Be accessible by sustainable transport modes
- 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

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 demonstrated in the most up to date evidence base. Applicants must demonstrate that:

- a) The loss is required to in order to provide alternative sport or leisure provision and the needs for the new facility clearly outweigh the loss; or
- b) The facility is surplus to requirements; or
- c) The land in question only forms an ancillary use and its loss would not affect overall public usage of the facility; or
- d) The facility would be replaced by equivalent or better provision, with equivalent or better access and management arrangements within the same locality.

### **Policy H22PO: Playing Fields and Pitches**



Proposals which provide new playing pitches or ancillary facilities will be supported in principle, particularly those which help address deficits identified within the Sports Strategy.

Proposals affecting playing fields will only be permitted where the proposed development:

- a) affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch;
- b) Does not reduce the size of any playing pitch;
- c) Does not result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
- d) 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;
- e) Does not result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or
- f) Does not prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site and
- g) Where biodiversity conservation interests would not be harmed as a result.

Unless:

- i. The applicant has carried out a robust, up-to-date assessment of need and it is clear from this that the pitches affected are surplus to requirements; or
- ii. The Council's Sports Strategy identifies the pitches as being surplus to requirements; or

- iii. Any pitches lost will be replaced by equivalent or better provision in the same locality; or
- iv. The loss of the pitch for one sport will result in better provision for other sports which are in greater demand and the loss is therefore outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.

## 45 Community Facilities

- 45.1.1 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 for reducing social isolation and reducing the need to travel.
- 45.1.2 The Council maintains an Assets of Community Value list. These are assets that are nominated by community groups and parish councils and the group are given time to bid for assets included on the list if they are ever put up for sale in the 5 year period through the Community Right to Buy Scheme. The List currently contains 4 assets of Community Value in the Borough, 2 of which are within the Local Plan area.
- 45.1.3 Whilst our aim is to protect and retain such spaces, it is accepted that some are lost because they are no longer viable. Draft Policy H23PO protects such facilities in the Borough, whilst being 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.

### Policy H23PO: Community Facilities



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

- Prioritise brownfield sites where possible
- Be accessible by sustainable transport modes
- 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

The loss of existing community facilities 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 community facility or service is no longer feasible, having had regard to appropriate marketing (over an appropriate period of time 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; 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.

## 46 Advertisements

- 46.1.1 The following policy sets out the Councils approach to advertisements both within and outside areas of Special Advertisement Control. The Area of Special Advertisement Control is where additional restrictions are placed on the display of adverts.
- 46.1.2 The Council is currently considering whether to undertake a review of the Area of Special Advertisement Control.

### Policy H24PO: Advertisements



Applications for consent to display advertisements will be permitted where 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 considered 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.



# Copeland's Places



# Natural Environment

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## 47 Natural Environment: Assets and Aspirations

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

Stunning and varied landscapes including the highest mountain in England and the deepest lake

"Excellent" rated beaches

Clean air and Dark Skies

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

Opportunities to create a strategic Copeland Forest

## 48 Natural Environment: Key Facts

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

Our designated Natura 2000 sites, which include Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and RAMSAR sites are generally in a good condition

Our Sites of Special Scientific Interest are in mixed condition

There is a high likelihood of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land around the Millom area

Air quality in Copeland is typically very good with N02 levels well below the annual mean objective

Two of our four bathing waters were classified as being excellent in 2018, one was identified as being good and one was classed as being sufficient

There is a need to further improve the biological quality of rivers and ecological standard of estuaries and coasts in Copeland.

## 49 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

### 49.1 Defining Biodiversity

49.1.1 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 the following benefits:

- 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 well-being
- Cultural/spiritual attachments to natural environment
- Reduces flooding
- Important for soil production
- Open air classroom for learning about and monitoring the environment

### 49.2 International, National and Regional Designations

#### European Designations

49.2.1 Copeland contains a number of sites that are designated at European level for their biodiversity importance (Natura 2000 Sites), many of which extend beyond Borough 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.

49.2.2 International designations are identified on the draft proposals map and are listed in Table 17 below.

*Table 17: Natura 2000 Sites in Copeland*

Site	Designation	Habitat and Key species
Duddon Mosses	SAC	Bogs, marshes, water fringed vegetation, fens
Lake District High Fells	SAC	Inland water bodies (standing and running water), bogs, marshes, water fringed vegetation, fens, heath, scrub, maquis and garrigue, phygrana, dry grassland, steppes, humid grassland, mesophile grassland, alpine and sub-alpine grassland, broad-leaved deciduous woodland, inland rocks, screes, sands, permanent snow and ice

Site	Designation	Habitat and Key species
<b>Drigg Coast</b>	SAC	Tidal rivers, estuaries, mud flats, sand flats, lagoons (including saltwork basins), salt marshes, salt pastures, salt steppes, coastal sand dunes, sand beaches, machair, shingle, sea cliffs, islets
<b>Wast Water</b>	SAC	Inland water bodies (standing water, running water), dry grassland, steppes
<b>Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary</b>	SPA/Ramsar	Estuaries, mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, large shallow inlets and bays, perennial vegetation of stony banks. Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand, Atlantic salt meadows ( <i>Glaucopuccinellietaliamaritimae</i> ), shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> ('white dunes'), fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation ('grey dunes'), humid dune slacks, sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time, coastal lagoons. Reefs. Tidal rivers, estuaries, mudflats, sandflats, lagoons (including saltwork basins), salt marshes, salt pastures, salt steppes, coastal sand dunes, sand beaches, machair. Supports over 31,505 wildfowl.
<b>River Ehen</b>	SAC	Inland water bodies (standing water, running water), broad leaved deciduous woodland, coniferous woodland.
<b>Solway Firth</b>	pSPA	Estuarine/marine site, extensive areas of intertidal mudflats, fringing saltmarshes and grazing marshes. Supports a significant number of important species.

49.2.3 The Council has carried out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the draft policies and site allocations in the Local Plan and this has considered their effects (singularly and cumulatively) on the Natura 2000 network.

49.2.4 The draft HRA Screening Report identifies that a number of policies and allocations may have a likely significant effect on the Natura 2000 Network. The HRA Appropriate Assessment considers that all likely significant effects can be mitigated.

#### National and Local Designations

49.2.5 Copeland contains a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) listed in Table 18 below and identified on the draft 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

Table 18: Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Copeland (Habitats)

Site Name	Habitat	Condition - % favourable or unfavourable recovering
Duddon Valley Woodlands	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – upland, Dwarf shrub heath – upland,	61.85%
Stanley Ghyll	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - upland	0%
Brantrake Moss & Devoke Water	Acid grassland – upland, Standing open water and canals, Dwarf shrub heath – upland, Fen, marsh and swamp - lowland	100%
Milkingstead Wood	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland - upland	100%
Duddon Estuary	Littoral sediment, Supralittoral sediment, Neutral grassland – lowland, Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – lowland, Coastal lagoon, Earth heritage	97.81%
Shaw Meadow & Sea Pasture	Dwarf shrub heath – lowland, Neutral grassland - lowland	100%
Duddon Mosses	Bogs – lowland, Fen, marsh and swamp – lowland, Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland	58.51%
Greendale Mires	Fen, marsh and swamp - lowland	100%
Ennerdale	Standing open water and canals, Fen, marsh and swamp – lowland, Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – upland, Fen, marsh and swamp – lowland	98.37%
Wasdale Screes	Dwarf shrub heath – upland, Inland rock	100%
Pillar & Ennerdale Fells	Dwarf shrub heath – upland, Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – upland,	100%
Wast Water	Standing open water and canals, Neutral grassland - upland	0%

Source:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteList.aspx?siteName=&countyCode=9&responsiblePerson=&DesignationType=SSSI>

49.2.6 The Borough 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

49.2.7 The Borough contains a number of locally important County Wildlife Sites which are designated as part of the Cumbria Wildlife Trust's Wildlife Sites Project. The sites are considered to be of local importance for biodiversity, although they do not have statutory designation.

Table 19: County Wildlife Sites

High Park (nr Arlecdon)	Redness Point
Gilgarran Plantation	Andrews Gill
Studfold Willow Patch	Cunning Point and Cat Gill
Sandbeds Meadow	Castle Park Wood
Low Leys	Midgey Gill
Meadow Hunterhow Mire	Woodhouse Quarry
High Leys Meadow	Roska Park and Bellhouse Gill Wood
Rowrah Hall Quarry	Stanley Pond
Salter Wood	Rottington Common
Yeathouse Quarry	Brown Bank Mire
Parkside Pond	Longlands Lake
Birkhouse Pond	River Ehen Pond
Rheda South Park	Fish Hatcheries
Dub Beck	Oxenriggs Pond
Moresby Moss	Carlton Moor Wood
Bonnywood	Gibb Tarn
Braystones Coast	Brownbank Moss
Starling Castle	Silver How Bog
Sellafield Tarn	Panope Bog
Terrace Bank Wood	Seascale
Ponsonby Tarn	River Irt Grassland
Seascale Dunes and Foreshore	Kirksanton Moss
Bleawath Bog	Brocklebank Wood
Gaitskell Wood	Bleamoss (Dunningwell)
Fox's Wood	Hole House Wood
Lowscales Bank	Sheephouse Wood
Nicle Wood	Beck Wood (Millom)
Butts Foot Wood	Millom Marsh
High Brow Meadows (The Hill)	Raylands Wood

Source: Copeland Core Strategy

### Protected Species

49.2.8 The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan 2001 identifies protected species within the Borough, many of which may be found on sites which are not protected habitats. 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.

## 49.3 Geodiversity

- 49.3.1 Geodiversity is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms, along with the natural processes that shape them.
- 49.3.2 Copeland has a varied geology and a number of Sites of Scientific Interest in the Borough are designated specifically for their geological features. These are listed in Table 20 below.

Table 20: Sites of Scientific Importance in Copeland (Geology)

Site Name	Type	Condition: % favourable or unfavourable recovering
Water Crag	Earth Heritage	100%
Bowness Knott	Earth Heritage	100%
Buckbarrow Beck	Earth Heritage	100%
Annaside and Gutterby Banks	Earth Heritage	100%
Waberthwaite Quarry	Earth Heritage	100%
Beckfoot Quarry	Earth Heritage	100%
Nab Gill Mine	Earth Heritage	100%
Yeathouse Quarry	Earth Heritage	100%
River Calder Section	Earth Heritage	100%
Florence Mine	Earth Heritage	0%
St Bees Head	Earth Heritage, Supralittoral Rock	100%

Source: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

- 49.3.3 There are also a number of Local Geological Sites (formerly known as Regionally Important Geological Sites).

- 49.3.4 Both types of geological site are also shown on the draft proposals map.

## 49.4 Impacts of Development on Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- 49.4.1 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on Local Authorities to conserve biodiversity. The proposed Environmental Bill will update the Act to require both the conservation *and enhancement* of biodiversity.

- 49.4.2 Development can result in a direct loss of habitats and disturbance to species but can also have indirect effects through increasing pollution and accelerating the effects of climate change. The impacts of development should therefore be considered early in the design process.

- 49.4.3 Draft Local Plan policy NE1PO contains a mitigation hierarchy which supports the conservation of biodiversity and geodiversity. This follows guidance within paragraph 175 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.

- 49.4.4 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 must be sensitive to, and make provision for, the species' needs. Ecology reports should be undertaken by suitably qualified persons.

- 49.4.5 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.
- 49.4.6 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.
- 49.4.7 In accordance with paragraph 175 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.

## 49.5 Impacts upon Natura 2000 Sites

- 49.5.1 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 Natura 2000 Sites. The HRA must take into account any likely significant effects on such sites within Copeland and within a 20km radius of the Borough as well as those that are hydrologically linked to the Development Plan area.
- 49.5.2 The Screening Report should be submitted alongside the planning application. Where the report identifies that adverse effects on Natura 2000 Sites are likely, it should be followed by an Appropriate Assessment where appropriate.
- 49.5.3 Development that would cause harm to a 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.

## 49.6 Opportunities for Biodiversity Enhancement

- 49.6.1 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.



- 49.6.2 In terms of geodiversity, development can provide an opportunity to better understand geodiversity features, for example by providing public access and interpretation boards.
- 49.6.3 The Council will consider producing a Biodiversity and Development Supplementary Planning Document 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.

## 49.7 Sustainable Construction

- 49.7.1 Developers are encouraged, and in some cases will be required, to produce Sustainable Construction Management Plans to identify how construction will avoid, minimise or mitigate adverse effects on the environment and surrounding communities and to help ensure that development is compliant with environmental regulations and legislation. Such plans should identify the biodiversity features 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 sites biodiversity value and ensure they adapt their working practices accordingly (e.g. by not laying heavy materials down on a root protection zone)

### Policy N1PO Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity



Potential harmful impacts of any development upon biodiversity and geodiversity should be identified and considered at the earliest stage

Proposals must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Council, that the following sequential steps 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 of 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 Natura 2000 site, 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 sites as a whole is protected.

Planning permission will be refused for any development if significant harm cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for.

Sustainable construction methods should be used where possible.

Development proposals where the principal objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests will be supported in principle.

## 49.8 Biodiversity Net Gain

49.8.1 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.

49.8.2 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 Environment Bill. Once the Bill becomes statutory, it is anticipated that development will be required to achieve a minimum net gain of 10% for biodiversity using the Defra Biodiversity Metric model. Defra's 2.0 metric system calculates net gain by assigning a numerical value to each habitat, expressed as "biodiversity units". Emphasis will be on the habitats distinctiveness (is it of low, medium or high wildlife value), condition (is it a good example of its type) and extent (size).

49.8.3 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.

49.8.4 Any enhancements required will be set out in a planning obligation and must be maintained for at least 30 years. 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.

49.8.5 Draft Policy N2PO 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.



49.8.6 Whilst additional net gain above the government's suggested 10% is encouraged, the Council does not currently have any evidence to require a higher level. The 10% requirement has therefore been carried forward into Policy N2PO.

#### Local Nature Recovery Networks

49.8.7 Local Nature Recovery Networks were introduced in the Draft Environment Bill 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

49.8.8 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 well-being.

#### Biodiversity Credits

49.8.9 Further details regarding option 4 will be provided once government guidance has been published following the Environment Bill becoming statute. The Government have 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."*

#### Exceptions

49.8.10 It will not be appropriate to require net gains for every application. At present the draft Bill states that the requirement does not apply to national infrastructure projects, developments built under permitted development rights or householder development and does not apply to statutory sites (e.g. SACs, SPAs etc). This will be kept under review as the Bill passes through parliament and this supporting text will be updated as necessary so that it is clear what type of developments the following policy relates to.

#### Calculating Net Gain

49.8.11 In order to ensure consistency, and to aid monitoring, when calculating biodiversity net gain, applicants must use the Defra metric 2.0 (or any system replacing it), 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.

49.8.12 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 draft

Environment Bill sets the baseline as the time of application, but if this baseline has been intentionally lowered, the baseline date is to be 30<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Policy N2PO: Biodiversity Net Gain**



All development, with the exception of that listed in paragraph 49.8.10 above, must provide a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain over and above existing site levels. This is in addition to any compensatory habitat provided under Policy N1PO. Net gain should be delivered on site where possible. Where on-site provision is not appropriate, provision must be made elsewhere in order of the following preference:

1. Off site in an area identified as a Local Nature Recovery Network;
2. Off site on an alternative suitable site within the Borough
3. Through the purchase of an appropriate amount of national biodiversity units/credits.

Details must be submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Council, before the development can commence.

Sites where net gain is provided (on or off site) must be managed and monitored by the applicant or an appropriate body funded by the applicant for a minimum period of 30 years. Annual monitoring reports detailing the sites 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 Boroughs protected habitats and species in order to reduce its biodiversity value their deteriorated condition will not be taken into consideration and previous ecological records of the site and/or the ecological potential of the site will be used to decide the acceptability of any development proposals.

### **Policy N3PO: Local Nature Recovery Networks**



The Council will support the identification and implementation of Local Nature Recovery Networks that extend beyond the Boroughs boundaries and provide important linkages for wildlife within Copeland and beyond.

Development which protects or enhances nature recovery networks will be supported in principle.

## 49.9 Marine Conservation

49.9.1 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. Marine Conservation Zones are areas that protect a range of nationally important, rare or threatened habitats and species. The marine conservation zone is shown in Figure 23.

49.9.2 Earlier this year, the draft North West Inshore and Offshore Marine Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for adoption, following a public consultation earlier in the year<sup>60</sup>. This document 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. The Marine Plan covers:

- the area from mean high water spring tide to 12nm
- 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)

Figure 23: Cumbria Coast Marine Conservation Zone



c/o <https://www.livingseasnw.org.uk/conservation/marine-protected-areas/marine-conservation-zones/cumbria-coast>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/north-west-marine-plan>

- 49.9.3 Until adoption of the North West Marine Plan the [UK Maritime Policy Statement](#) should be applied.
- 49.9.4 The following policy highlights the importance of the Marine Plan, highlighting the fact that it is a material consideration when determining planning applications. It should also be noted that applicants may also require an appropriate license from the Marine Management Organisation.

#### Policy N4PO: Marine Planning



Where development has potential to harm (directly or indirectly) the marine environment, consideration will be given to the North West Marine Plan. Proposals should accord with relevant policies within the Marine Plan, taking account of economic, environmental and social considerations, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## 50 Landscape and Green Infrastructure

### 50.1 Landscape Character

- 50.1.1 The Borough contains a diverse range of landscapes, including a large area covered by the Lake District National Park.
- 50.1.2 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, 5 of these are found in Copeland.
- Lowland (CLT5)
  - Coastal Margins (CLT2)
  - Upland Fringes (CLT11)
  - Estuary and marsh (CLT1)
  - Coastal Sandstone (CLT2)
- 50.1.3 The Cumbria LCA describes the different character of each landscape type and provides guidance regarding how to retain their distinctiveness. Copeland Borough Council have produced a Settlement Landscape Character Assessment (SLCA) which reviews the assessments in the CLCA to ensure it remains up-to-date in those areas around existing settlements. These areas have been chosen for review as this is where pressure for additional development is generally found. 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. The Council

will commission a light touch review of the Cumbria Landscape Character Assessment in relation to the areas not covered by the SLCA in the Borough to ensure that the assessment for the remainder of the plan area<sup>61</sup> remains valid and up to date.

- 50.1.4 The SLCA assessed the sensitivity of each sub-area and the capacity of each to accommodate change, prominent hillsides, areas of strategic green infrastructure and proposed green wedges. It also identified where development may provide an opportunity to enhance landscapes, for example by better defining a settlement edge or reinforcing positive landscape characteristics.
- 50.1.5 Developers will be expected to consider the CLCA and SLCA, and where appropriate<sup>62</sup> the Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines document 2018<sup>63</sup>, when identifying sites for development, identifying the characteristics of their chosen site. Development on prominent hillsides and within strategic green infrastructure and green wedges should be avoided where possible.
- 50.1.6 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.

#### **Policy N5PO: Landscape Protection**



The Borough's landscapes will be protected and enhanced by:

- a) A Supporting proposals which enhance the value of the Borough's landscapes;
- b) B Protecting all landscapes from inappropriate change by ensuring that development does not detract from the distinctive characteristics of that particular area;
- c) C Where the benefits of the development outweigh the potential harm, ensuring that the impact of the development on the landscape is minimised through adequate mitigation.

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.

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<sup>61</sup> i.e. the area not covered by the Settlement Landscape Character Assessment

<sup>62</sup> For example where the proposal may affect the setting of the Lake District National Park

<sup>63</sup> [https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/150054/Final-LDNP-LCA-Final-180705.pdf](https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/150054/Final-LDNP-LCA-Final-180705.pdf)

## The Undeveloped Coast

- 50.1.7 Copeland's undeveloped coast is one of its best assets. It includes a number of Cumbria's best bathing beaches, a significant number of nature conservation and wildlife sites, and high quality landscapes.
- 50.1.8 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 designated Heritage Coast, the only one of its kind in the North West England. Natural England, the Colourful Coast Partnership and Copeland Borough Council are currently considering a proposal to extend the Heritage Coast northwards towards Whitehaven<sup>64</sup>.
- 50.1.9 The purpose of the heritage coast designation 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”*<sup>65</sup>
- 50.1.10 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 a Management Plan protects and enhances the Heritage Coast, whilst encouraging residents and visitors to use it for recreation.
- 50.1.11 The SLCA acknowledges that the undeveloped coast, particularly at St Bees Head, 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 N6PO below.

### Policy N6PO: 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 Head Heritage Coast.

The following types of development will however be supported:

- Development which supports the management of the undeveloped coast for biodiversity;

<sup>64</sup> <https://colourfulcoast.org.uk/about/heritage-coast-extension/>

<sup>65</sup> National Trust

- 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.

## 50.2 Green Infrastructure (GI)

50.2.1 The NPPF, paragraph 171, states that plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure.

50.2.2 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 well-being.

### 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.

50.2.3 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.

50.2.4 The Council’s evidence base documents have identified a number of types of green infrastructure within the Borough as listed below:

- **Prominent Hillside:** Open, undeveloped hillsides and open skylines that contribute to the landscape character of the Borough’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 Green 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
- **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 well-being, provide space for biodiversity and can help mitigate flooding.

- 50.2.5 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. The Council will work proactively with partners and the community to maintain and increase the amount of GI provision across the Borough over the Plan period and development that enhances areas of Green Infrastructure will be supported in principle.

### 50.3 Green Wedges

- 50.3.1 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.”
- 50.3.2 The SLCA identifies 7 key green wedges across the Borough which are shown on the draft 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.

#### Policy N7PO: Green Wedges



The Local Plan Proposals Map identifies Green Wedges within the Borough. 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 the special characteristics and quality of the landscape are conserved and enhanced.

### 50.4 Protected Green Spaces

- 50.4.1 There are a range of smaller open spaces within the Borough which are important for recreation, health and well-being and/or biodiversity. The Local Plan is supported by an Open Space Assessment (OSA) that identifies what open space provision exists in the area based on the following typologies.

50.4.2 The provision of playing fields and pitches is discussed in the Copeland’s Communities chapter and is considered in the Council’s Draft Playing Pitch Strategy, which forms part of the wider Sports and Physical Activity Strategy due for completion in November 2020.

*Table 21: Open Space Assessment Typologies*

<b>Typology</b>	<b>Primary purpose</b>
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.
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

- 50.4.3 The OSA assesses the quality and value of open spaces in the Borough, including those that are currently protected in the Core Strategy and identifies whether there are surplus or shortages of open space on a settlement basis, compared to the Borough average.
- 50.4.4 Appendix D 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 Strategy and Standards chapter.
- 50.4.5 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.
- 50.4.6 Based on the quality and value assessments, the OSA recommends that over 250 open spaces in the Borough’s settlements are protected from development where possible; this is almost double the number that are protected within the Core Strategy. The proposed protected spaces are identified on the Council’s Proposals Map.
- 50.4.7 Draft Policy N8PO 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.
- 50.4.8 Playing fields are discussed separately in the Copeland’s Communities chapter.

## Policy N8PO: Protected Green Spaces



The Local Plan Proposals Map identifies Protected Green spaces which are of a high quality and/or value.

Development proposals that enhance Protected Green Spaces will be supported in principle.

The loss of such Protected Green Spaces will be resisted unless equivalent replacement provision of the same or better quality is provided within the same settlement.

Proposals to develop other green 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.

## 50.5 Local Green Spaces (LGS)

50.5.1 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 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites or not, whereas standard protected green spaces are more vulnerable.

50.5.2 Paragraph 100 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.”*

50.5.3 The OSA proposes that 113 sites are designated as Local Green Spaces across the Borough, 42 of which are in Whitehaven. These sites are identified on the Proposals Map.

50.5.4 The Council has produced a Local Green Spaces Evidence Paper which will provides further details regarding each proposed LGS to support their designation.

## Policy N9PO: 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
- 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.

## 50.6 Trees and Woodland

- 50.6.1 The Borough contains a number of ancient woodlands and trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders as shown on the draft proposals map. The Council has ambitions to increase the amount of tree and woodland cover in the Borough and is exploring the opportunities available to create a strategic Copeland Forest, acknowledging that trees and woodland are an important resource, providing habitat and shade, improving the character of the built and natural environment and helping to reduce air pollution and surface water run-off. Policy CO6PO discusses the potential for a community forest further.
- 50.6.2 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.
- 50.6.3 The NPPF, states in paragraph 175 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 N10PO below supports this approach.

### Policy N10PO: Woodlands and Trees



Existing trees which contribute positively to the visual amenity and environmental value of their location will be protected.

Development proposals which are likely to affect any trees within the Borough 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 on site and with native species where possible.

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.

## 51 Air Quality

- 51.1.1 One of the Borough's key assets is its clean air.
- 51.1.2 The Council has recently produced its 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report. This states that air quality in Copeland is typically very good with  $\text{NO}_2$  levels well below the annual mean objective of  $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . The quality of air does however vary across the Borough, with the highest levels of  $\text{NO}_2$  found in central Whitehaven of ( $24.3 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  annual average), compared to the lowest levels ( $4.0 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  annual average) in the heart of Wasdale. The main polluter in the Borough is road traffic. This is likely to increase across the Borough, if the Local Plan strategy is successful in reversing population decline and attracting growth.
- 51.1.3 The Local Plan aims to minimise the impacts of new development on air quality by focussing new housing development close to key services and 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.
- 51.1.4 Increasing the amount of green infrastructure in the Borough, as discussed earlier in this chapter, will also help minimise the impacts on air quality.
- 51.1.5 The Council will continue to monitor air quality within the Borough and we will support landowners who wish to implement ammonia reduction measures from farming practices where possible. Ammonia reduction measures were suggested in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report as an additional means of reducing emissions. Further guidance for farmers on how they can implement such measures can be found 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>

# Built and Historic Environment

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## 52 Built and Historic Environment: Assets and Aspirations

Whitehaven's attractive, historic mainly Georgian town centre

2 World Heritage Sites: parts of the Lake District National Park and Hadrian's Wall

A wealth of Heritage Assets, including 8 Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Opportunities to better reveal heritage assets and capitalise on heritage tourism opportunities

Opportunities for social engagement in developing communities built heritage or craft skills

## 53 Built and Historic Environment: Key Facts

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 Borough has a wealth of heritage assets and contains 483 listed buildings, 14 of which have Grade I listed status, 120 Scheduled ancient monuments and 8 conservation areas

Four scheduled ancient monument on the Heritage at Risk Register

The Council is producing a suite of Heritage Impact Assessments to inform the Local Plan site allocation process

The Council is considering the production of a Local List of non-heritage assets

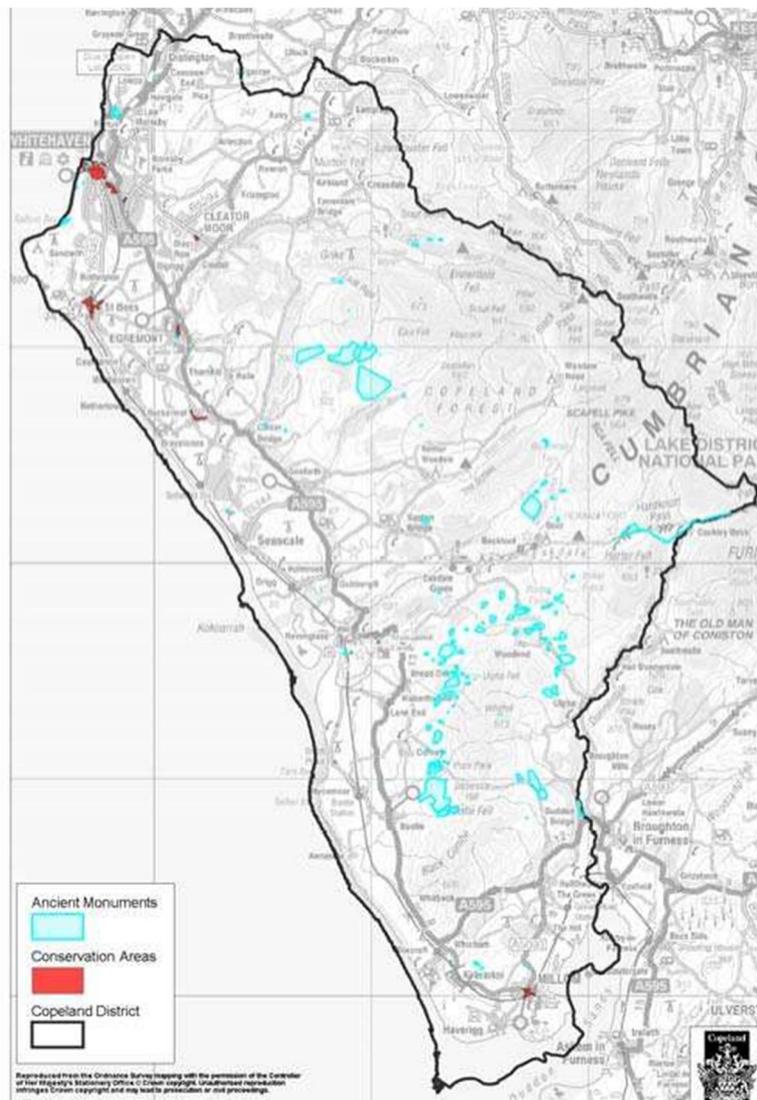
Egremont was founded with its castle in 1192, and although by the 17<sup>th</sup> century the castle had fallen into ruins, the town continued to use a room there as courthouse until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Egremont is now an attractive market town.

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 its mining history.

## 54 Heritage Assets

- 54.1.1 The NPPF<sup>66</sup>, 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.
- 54.1.2 Copeland contains a wealth of heritage assets, including the Lake District National Park World Heritage Site (outside but adjoining the Plan area), elements of Hadrian’s Wall *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* World Heritage Site, 483 listed buildings, 120 scheduled ancient monuments (SAMs) and 8 conservation areas. These are identified on the draft Proposals Map, with conservation areas and SAMs also shown in Figure 24 below.

Figure 24: Copeland's Heritage Assets



<sup>66</sup> Paragraph 184

54.1.3 The NPPF states that “Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment<sup>67</sup>”. Draft Policy BE1PO does this by listing the actions that will be taken by the Council to conserve and enhance the Borough’s historic environment.

## 54.2 Heritage Statements and Heritage Impact Assessments

54.2.1 The Council is in the process of producing a suite of Heritage Impact Assessments which will identify potential harm caused by future development on draft allocated sites to nearby heritage assets. A number of Conservation Area Appraisals are also being produced.

54.2.2 A Heritage Statement should also 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.

54.2.3 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

54.2.4 The level of detail included within the Statement should be proportionate to the asset’s importance.

### Policy BE1PO: Heritage Assets



Designated heritage assets and their setting will be conserved and enhanced by:

- Requiring a heritage impact assessment where appropriate
- Maintaining up-to-date records of the character and significance of Conservation Areas through conservation area appraisals
- Ensuring the correct weight has been given to an asset’s significance during decision making
- Ensuring that new development is sympathetic to local character and history
- Promoting heritage-led regeneration initiatives in the Borough, 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 the Borough’s architectural and archaeological resources

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<sup>67</sup> Paragraph 185, NPPF

- 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 the Borough’s settlements, through the application of high quality design and architecture that respects this character and enhances the setting of heritage assets

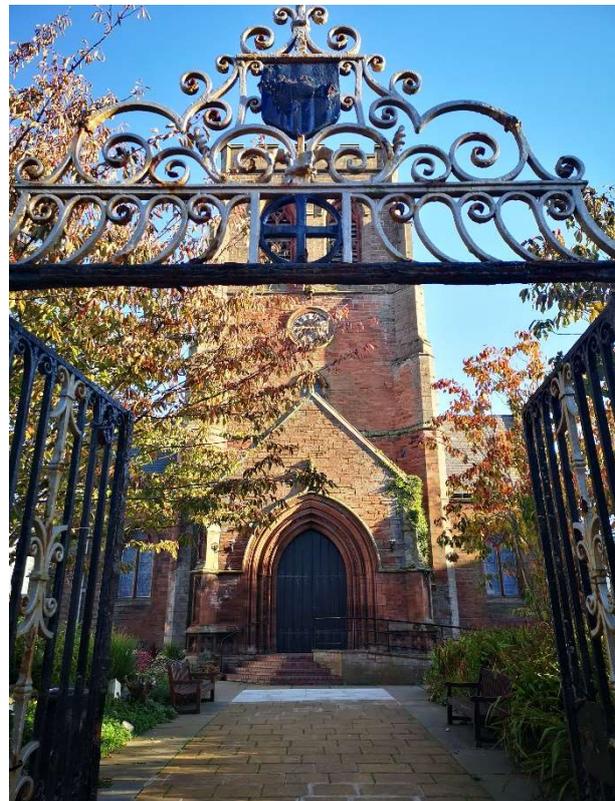
## 54.3 Designated Heritage Assets

### World Heritage Sites

- 54.3.1 Development that enhances or better reveals the significance of the Borough’s world heritage sites will be supported in principle. Proposals which are likely to have an effect upon World Heritage Sites should be determined in accordance with draft Policy BE2PO (Designated Heritage Assets).

### Listed Buildings

- 54.3.2 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. The decision in the Barnwell vs East Northamptonshire DC 2014 case made it clear that in enacting this duty, Local Planning Authorities should give should give “*considerable importance and weight*” to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings’ when carrying out the planning balancing exercise.



- 54.3.3 Draft Policy BE2PO 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

- 54.3.4 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.

54.3.5 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.

54.3.6 Draft Policy BE2PO is relevant to proposals within or affecting the setting of the Borough's Conservation Areas. It 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 63 of the NPPF.

#### **Policy BE2PO: 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.

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 in such cases listed within National Planning Policy Guidance<sup>68</sup>

Substantial harm to, or loss of:

- grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- scheduled 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.

Regardless of the level of harm, where proposals result in the loss of all or part of a heritage asset all reasonable steps must be taken by the developer to ensure that new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

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.

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<sup>68</sup> Paragraph 195

## 54.4 Archaeology

- 54.4.1 Caution must be taken where there are potential archaeological remains on site to help ensure they are preserved in the best condition possible.

### Policy BE3PO – Archaeology



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.

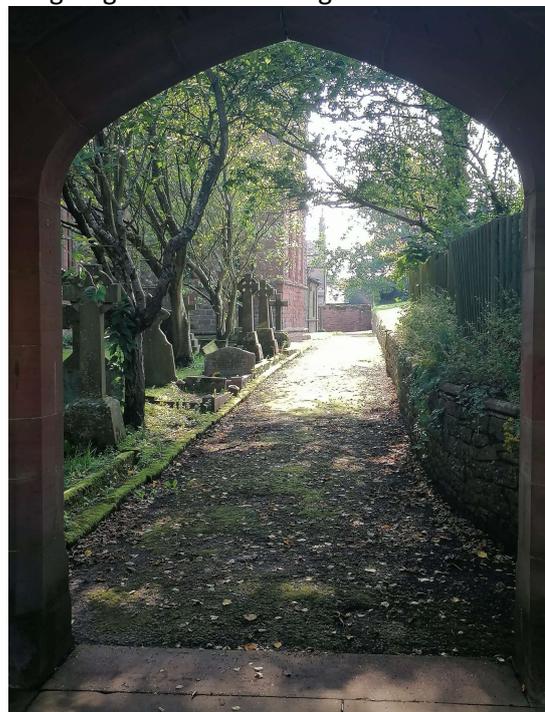
Development must protect, and where appropriate, reveal and allow public interpretation of, any archaeological remains on site. Where remains cannot be preserved or managed on site, provision must be made for their suitable archiving.

## 54.5 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 54.5.1 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.

- 54.5.2 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.

- 54.5.3 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.



54.5.4 The Council is currently considering the production of a Local List. 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 BE4PO: 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 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. In such cases, the developer will also be required to make a public record and advance understanding of the significance of the asset lost<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>69</sup> This record should be proportionate





# Connectivity

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## 55 Connectivity: Assets and Aspirations

Levels of super-fast broadband provision are on a par with the national average

Opportunities to expand 5g wireless coverage across the Borough and to create Digital Grids in town centres

Rail links to airports in Carlisle, Manchester, Newcastle along an attractive route which is a visitor attraction in its own right

High quality existing cycle and walking routes , including links to the Lake District National Park, opportunities to improve these further

Increased reliance on digital communications post Covid-19: opportunities for more people to work from home

Delivery of a new relief road in the East of Whitehaven. creates an opportunity to improve links and create a new growth corridor

Opportunities to reinstate former, disused railway lines as cycleways

## 56 Connectivity: Key Facts

Copeland has better coverage for UK Superfast (>24Mbps), EU superfast (>30Mbps) and Openreach (>30Mbps) compared to the rest of Cumbria. For (>100Mbps), a coverage gap appears across Cumbria as a whole (*Think broadband 2019*)

Copeland is served by 12 Openreach exchanges, a number of which provide homes and businesses with a choice of at least two internet providers (*Sam Knows 2019*).

The primary A-road through the Borough is the A595, which is part of the strategic road network from the A66 in the north.

The nearest motorway, the M6, is approximately 40 miles away from both Whitehaven and Millom.

78.6% of households own at least one car, a higher percentage than the national average of 74.2% (Cumbria Observatory 2019). 46% of the population travel 30km or less to work by car.

The Cumbrian Coast Line service runs the length of Copeland, and trains now run 7 days a week

Bus services around Whitehaven are frequent, with broader services to towns in North Cumbria, including Carlisle and Workington. Services in other parts of the Borough are less frequent and can be quite lengthy due to the remote geography and nature of Copeland's roads.

Copeland has a number of cycleways, with Whitehaven harbour acting as the Western starting point of the cross-country C2C cycle route that crosses the North of England. This route is used by approximately 100,000 visitors annually.

There are four long distance recreational footpaths through Copeland: the Cumbria Coastal Way; Coast to Coast (C2C) Walk; Cumberland Way; and Furness Way.

Carlisle Airport re-opened for scheduled flights in April 2019, with routes to Dublin, Belfast and London Southend.

## 57 Connectivity in Copeland

57.1.1 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. This relates to the need for improved methods of transport as well as advances in accessibility of communications technology and online information. This is essential for unlocking and supporting economic growth as well as improving social wellbeing and resilience within Copeland's communities and workforce.

57.1.2 The need for improved connectivity, both within and surrounding Copeland, has been further accelerated as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, emphasising the need for more flexible and sustainable ways of living and working. Whilst this presents challenges through forcing companies and individuals to adapt, there are a number of benefits to be gained



from this greater reliance on digital connectivity. Improving telecommunications can improve the viability and drive growth for small businesses, particularly in rural locations, by allowing them to advertise and sell their goods and services to a larger market as well as by streamlining processes.

57.1.3 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 5 years, with approximately 5% of the workforce mainly working from home as of December 2019 (ONS 2020). As a result of Covid-19 restrictions, this figure rose to 49.2% in April 2020 (ONS 2020).

57.1.4 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. Firstly, it limits the need to travel, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and decreasing the chance of road traffic accidents. It also frees 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.

57.1.5 There are also wider opportunities in terms of where we live and how we work. Large companies usually locate their corporate offices within cities, causing regional imbalances, further evidence can be found in the Stage 1 Viability and 2018 EDNA. However, with a greater emphasis on homeworking, there will be less need for workers to be present in offices at all times.

57.1.6 Employers can also choose to move away from large centralised premises to a network of smaller, more affordable premises in attractive places like Copeland. 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 will, in turn, contribute towards economic growth and unlocking further opportunities in the Borough as well as housing market improvements.

- 57.1.7 A 2019 Government survey also found that levels of self-reported wellbeing were slightly but consistently higher for people living in predominantly rural areas when compared to people living in cities (GOV 2018). As well as reducing restrictions on where people can choose to live, this reduced need for workers to be located in offices can benefit the employer by allowing them to employ the most suitable candidate for a job without being restricted by geographical location. Therefore it is vital that we support this shift, continuing to support improvements to digital connectivity and improve resilience and flexibility within the workforce.
- 57.1.8 Aside from the opportunities to work from home, digital networks and infrastructure play a significant part in our social and leisure needs. The lockdown measures resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic saw a surge in digital technology used for entertainment purposes, fulfilling cultural and religious needs, the provision of educational materials and accessing goods and services. In addition, staying in touch remotely with friends and family was the most frequently reported method for coping during the lockdown in all age groups, rating higher than non- digital hobbies such as reading and gardening (ONS 2020). This shows a significant shift towards a ‘new normal’, with adaptations to the way we live our lives and a greater reliance on digital technology. This has provided a clear indicator for the need to prioritise the improvement of digital and communications technology to allow for changes to the way we live and the enhancement of Copeland’s communities.
- 57.1.9 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. 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 and Coastal Location.
- 57.1.10 <sup>70</sup>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 within Copeland. This allows for improvements in physical and mental health and wellbeing. High quality walking and cycling networks are vital in improving air quality and reducing the contribution to climate change through a reduction in the number of vehicles on the roads. Copeland is a relatively rural Borough and therefore it is vital that opportunities for sustainable and efficient movement within and in and out of the Borough are maximised as far as possible. 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.

## 57.2 Communications

- 57.2.1 The NPPF states that: ‘Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such

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<sup>70</sup> Photograph c/o Cumbria Tourism

as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in most cases, provide the optimum solution.)’

- 57.2.2 Highlighted in the Future High Streets Funding Bid (FHSFB) is that ‘digital connectivity is varied in Whitehaven. There is access to 3G or 4G connectivity via mobile providers and 20 Wi-Fi hotspots, but there are data limits, black spots, minimal mobile charge points.’ As the Principal Town in the Borough ‘insufficient co-ordinated digital infrastructure is a challenge to maximising the opportunities for the town centre.’

*‘The provision of free Wi-Fi and improved digital access is considered to be an attraction and enabler to increase enterprise, visitor numbers, improve experience, empower businesses, engage citizens and create a better environment.’* To overcome these issues we are exploring opportunities to create a Digital Grid for Whitehaven. Whilst these comments have been made in respect of Whitehaven Town Centre, similar provisions would be of benefit across the wider Copeland area.

- 57.2.3 Copeland is currently exploring the potential for delivery through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and working with private sector providers. 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.

- 57.2.4 In the longer term the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has a goal to achieve 100% coverage of superfast broadband 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 Cumbria County Council and BT. 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.

- 57.2.5 The provision of BT Full Fibre technology is currently being trialled at new housing developments within the Borough. This sends a superfast broadband connection directly to the home, offering download speeds of up to 900Mbps (BT 2020).

- 57.2.6 Several broadband providers are currently undertaking trials to make broadband provision in new homes without the requirement for a land line. 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.

- 57.2.7 The NPPF 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’. (Para 113)

*‘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 114)

*'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 115).*

#### **Policy CO1PO: 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 technology. This is particularly important given the rural geography of the Borough and the need to support economic growth and social wellbeing.

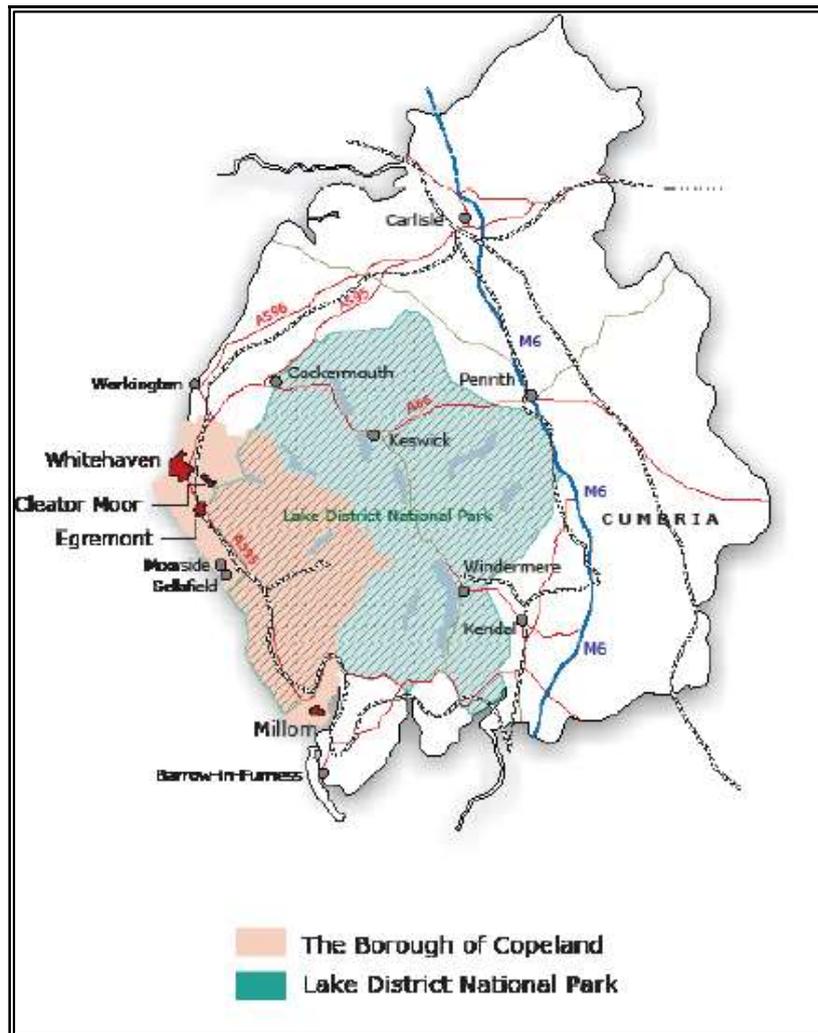
New development will be supported where it enables the enhancement of Copeland's digital infrastructure without harming the existing street scene or amenity. Adverse impacts on the successful functioning of existing digital infrastructure should be avoided or mitigated where possible.

This will be subject to appropriate safeguarding to protect sensitive sites, including those protected for their biodiversity value, important landscapes and heritage assets.

### **57.3 Transport systems within and around Copeland**

- 57.3.1 Providing access to high quality transport systems is a fundamental aspect of development as it provides 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 the Borough.
- 57.3.2 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 25.

Figure 25: Major Road Network

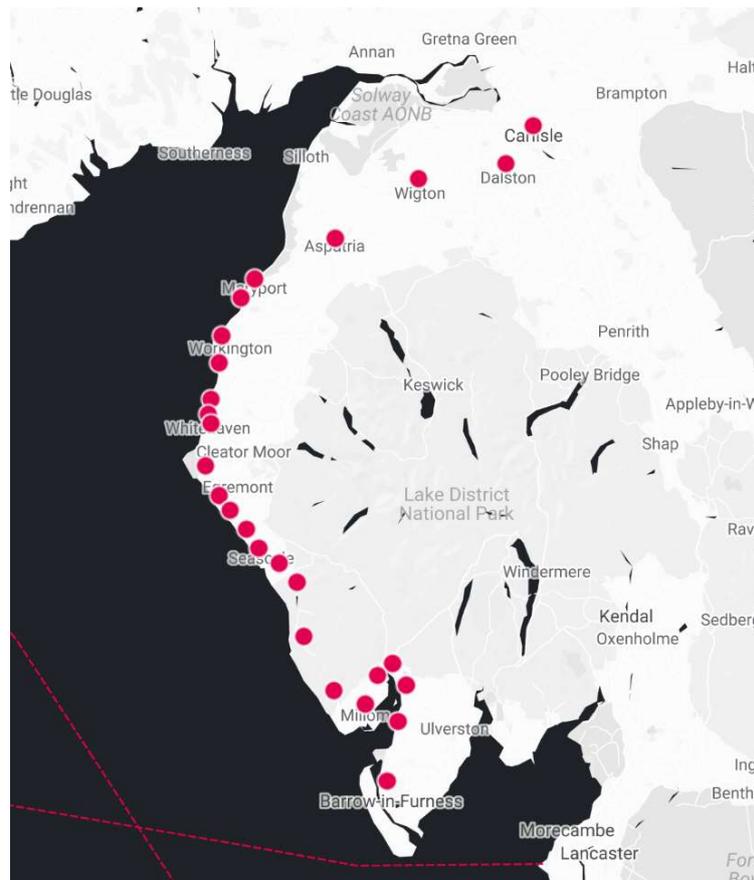


- 57.3.3 Discussions have been held around the potential for a new Eastern Relief Road for Whitehaven. While the project is not currently included in Highway England’s recently published Road Investment Strategy 2, it remains a priority for the Council. It is anticipated that this will reduce congestion around the town, provide greater resilience to the strategic road network, support development projects and provide new growth corridor for Whitehaven and the rest of the Borough. Copeland Borough Council will support any future progression towards the provision of a relief road.
- 57.3.4 Further information can be found in the Development Strategy chapter.

## 57.4 Public Transport Provision

- 57.4.1 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. 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 26 below:

Figure 26: Cumbrian Coast Rail Route



C/o Scenic Britain 2020

57.4.2 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. This contributes towards the reduced reliance of private cars for long distance journeys.

57.4.3 Bus services are frequent in north Copeland, with external services providing access to other north Cumbrian towns, including Carlisle and Workington. The main town in south Copeland, Millom, is well connected to Barrow-in-Furness by bus. However, the rural location of Copeland means that services between Whitehaven and Millom are limited, with infrequent stops at the villages between the two settlements.

## 57.5 Planning for transport

57.5.1 The NPPF states that: “Transport issues should be considered at the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals” (Para 102)

*“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” (NPPF Para 103)*

*“Support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.” (NPPF Para 104 a)*

- 57.5.2 Many issues relating to transport are regulated outside of the remit of Local Planning and require input from the Department for Transport (DfT). Highways England is responsible for the strategic road network whilst Cumbria County Council plays the role of the Local Highways Authority, maintaining approximately 692km of roads within Copeland.
- 57.5.3 The Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is currently focussing on the infrastructure investment required to support growth across the full range of Cumbria's strategic networks, including rail, road, cycle ways 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.
- 57.5.4 It is important for Copeland Borough Council to prioritise investment bids to ensure that the most appropriate and effective improvements to the road network and sustainable public transport are delivered across the Borough.
- 57.5.5 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies the Council's priorities for transport, including highway improvements.

#### **Policy CO2PO: Priorities for improving connectivity within Copeland**



The Council will support the allocation and safeguarding of land that facilitates transport priorities within the Borough. 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) Whitehaven Town Centre Enhancements Scheme
- e) Maintaining and improving the stations, infrastructure and services on the Cumbrian Coastal Railway.
- f) Improvements to the local cycle and walking network to encourage active travel.

Transport priorities will be encouraged where they improve road safety and journey times within the Borough.

Development that is likely to have a detrimental impact on the Highway network will be resisted.

#### **Policy CO3PO: Priorities for improving transport links to and from the Borough**



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 the Borough and key regional and national networks, including the M6, A66, A590 and the A595
- b) Proposals to increase the number and frequency of rail services serving the rest of Cumbria and further, where possible.

Proposals that have the potential to compromise improvements to transport links will be resisted.

## 57.6 Sustainable Transport

57.6.1 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.

57.6.2 <sup>71</sup>Sustainable transport and accessibility to employment and services presents a larger challenge in Copeland than most places and is therefore a key priority for the Council. The extent of public transport provision in the Borough has been outlined previously, with limited access to bus services in south Copeland. The dispersed population and rural nature of the Borough make public transport less viable than in urban areas, with several villages having poor public transport links and higher reliance on private vehicles. It is therefore vital that we continue to promote the use of public transport networks within Copeland, making them safe, accessible and attractive, contributing towards green recovery and unlocking economic potential.

57.6.3 A key challenge faced during the Covid-19 lockdown was urged from the Government to only use public transport if absolutely essential. Whilst this was fundamental in reducing the spread of the disease, it reduced public transport use to between 4% and 8% of average levels during April and May 2020 (DfT 2020), with many people concerned about travel by bus or train. It is therefore absolutely vital that we continue to promote the use of public transport networks within Copeland, making them safe, accessible and attractive forms of transport and contributing towards green recovery and unlocking economic potential.



57.6.4 Progress has been made on several schemes which encourage public transport improvements. The Cumbrian Coast Line Community Rail Partnership leads on the delivery of improvements to the stations, infrastructure and services across Copeland. As of August

<sup>71</sup> Photo c/o <https://www.timesandstar.co.uk>

2020, almost all of Copeland's stations have been adopted and they are working with the rail operator and Network Rail to improve the quality of these, including ticket office improvements in Whitehaven and plans for the installation of a shelter over the Sellafield station. Further improvements are in discussion for the future. It is anticipated that these improvements will have a significant impact on public transport use within the Borough.

## 57.7 Active travel

- 57.7.1 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 also contributes 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.
- 57.7.2 During the Covid-19 lockdown, many people turned to walking and cycling as their main form of leaving the house and getting exercise. The Department for Transport produced daily statistics on transport use during this time, which found that cycle use had increased exponentially, based on the average figure of an equivalent day. For example, on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the use of cycling was at 324% the average level, with car use down to approximately 29% (DfT 2020). The number of cyclists daily was consistently high during this time. This shows that people are willing to cycle if they have reason to.
- 57.7.3 Aside from the aforementioned benefits arising from sustainable and active travel, the Covid-19 crisis has provided opportunity for people to explore and appreciate their local communities rather than travelling further afield for recreational purposes. This is likely to encourage people to stay within Copeland and enjoy the beautiful countryside and coastal environments on their doorstep. Therefore it is vital that improvements to active transport routes are prioritised to contribute towards a modal shift and prevent people from resorting back to car use post pandemic.
- 57.7.4 In May 2020, The Government announced a £2bn active travel fund for the UK, following unprecedented levels of walking and cycling during the pandemic. 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).
- 57.7.5 On a local scale, Cumbria County Council are 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 has already been carried out for the scheme, with the implementation being expected from 2021 onwards dependent on funding.

## 57.8 Reducing greenhouse emissions

- 57.8.1 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.
- 57.8.2 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.

57.8.3 In addition to this, 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 (ULEVs) so customers can overcome the upfront cost of an electric car;
- £80 million investment (alongside £15 million from Highways England) to support charging infrastructure deployment;
- Introduction of the Automated and Electric Vehicles (AEV) Act of 2018, which sets out the legislative requirements for electric charging infrastructure, including a requirement for interoperability of systems.

57.8.4 Copeland currently benefits from clean air and it is important that our standards do not start to fall. We will continue to support development that provides innovative and sustainable modes of transport and contributes towards the further reduction of Greenhouse gas emissions.



## 57.9 Electric Vehicles

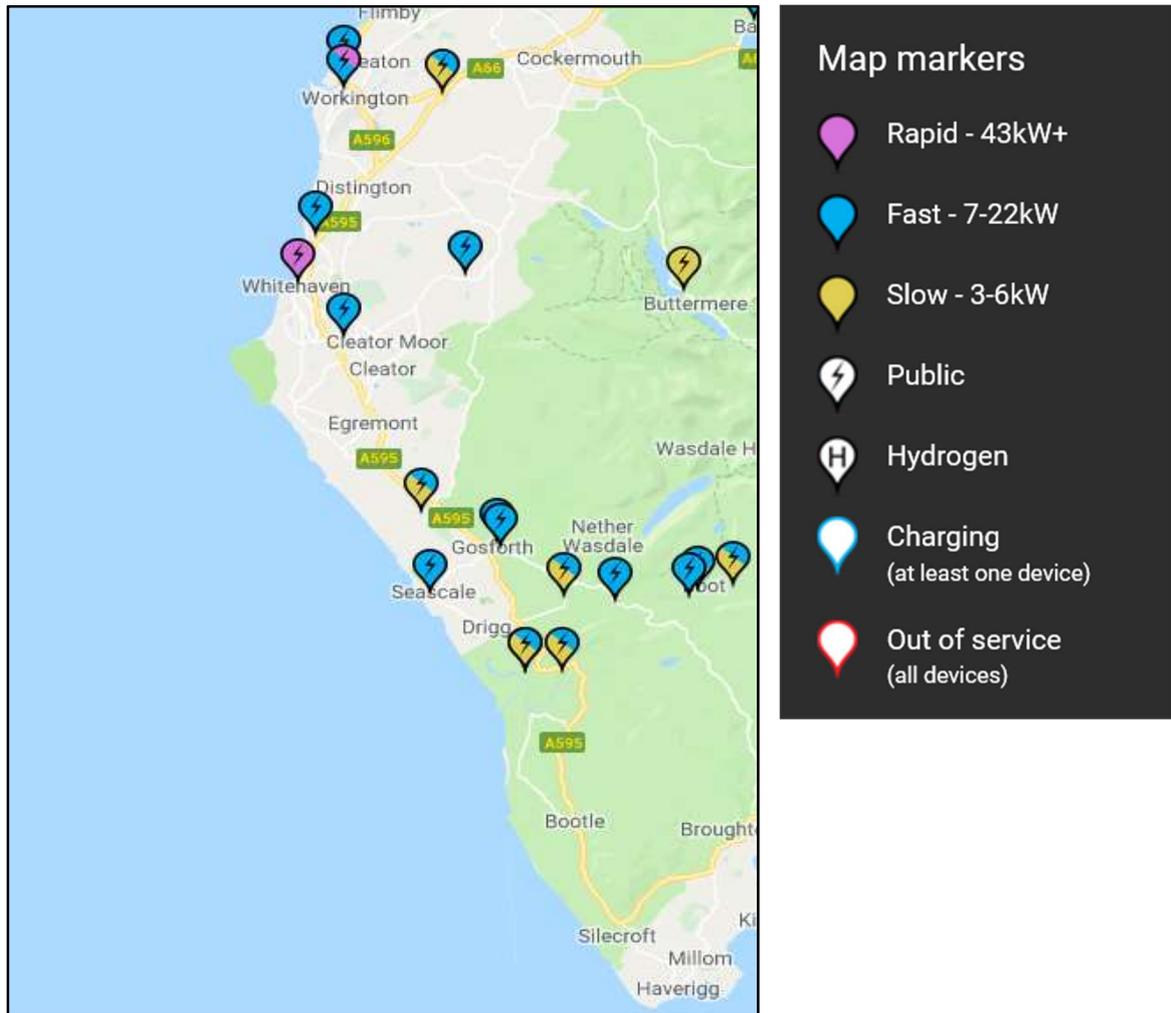
57.9.1 A key method for reducing emissions and improving sustainability within the Borough is through the promotion of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV), including Electric Vehicles (EVs). In July 2018, the Road to Zero Strategy set an aspiration for “at least 50%, and as many as 70%, of new car sales and up to 40% of new van sales being ultra-low emission by 2030”. However, reducing emissions from road transport remains a challenge, with only 0.5% of all vehicles licensed in the UK in 2018 being ULEV vehicles (ONS 2019).

57.9.2 The adoption and future development of the ULEV transport network will require the development of suitable charging infrastructure. Charge points are categorised as Fast (7-22kW) and Rapid (22kW+). A 2018 Department for Transport (DfT) study of rapid charge points provides an analysis of data since 2013 relating to the usage of Local Authority charge points installed under the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) grants, and is available via the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/764265/electric-chargepoint-analysis-2017-rapids-revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/764265/electric-chargepoint-analysis-2017-rapids-revised.pdf)

57.9.3 Figure 27 identifies electrical vehicle charging points in Copeland. This is only a partial picture showing publically available charges. A link to the interactive map can be found at <https://www.zap-map.com/>

Figure 27: Electric Vehicle Charging Points



## 57.10 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

57.10.1 In terms of assessing impact of large scale development the NPPF 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.' (Para 111). 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 and is included here in Appendix J.

### Policy CO4PO: Sustainable Travel



The Council will support developments which encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport. In particular, the following will be encouraged:

- a) Proposals that have safe and direct connections to routes that promote active travel, such as walking and cycling, and those that provide access to regular public transport services.
- b) Proposals that encourage the sustainable movement of freight.
- c) Proposals for the integration of electric vehicle charging infrastructure into new developments. This will have different requirements dependent on the scale of development.

Developments that are likely to generate a large amount of movement will be required to be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan. The criteria for these requirements will be outlined in Appendix J.

## 57.11 Transport Hierarchy

- 57.11.1 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 CO5PO: 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) Vehicles that facilitate car sharing
- e) All other vehicles

Developments should be designed so as to maximise the use of transport modes towards the top of the hierarchy whilst ensuring appropriate access for emergency vehicles at all times.

The needs of disabled people ought to be considered at all stages of the transport hierarchy, with appropriate provisions made to improve accessibility.

## 57.12 Countryside Access

- 57.12.1 Copeland benefits from some of the most attractive areas of open countryside, including the Lake District National Park<sup>72</sup>. The provision of safe and high quality access to these destinations is vital to ensure that residents are able to enjoy such areas, helping to

<sup>72</sup> Which falls outside the remit of this Local Plan

improve physical and mental health and well-being. 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.

- 57.12.2 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 C6PO below seeks to help residents and visitors to exercise that right.
- 57.12.3 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.
- 57.12.4 Provision should be made to ensure that wheelchair users, families with pushchairs and the visually impaired are able to access Copeland's abundant countryside. Cumbria County Council have identified a number of routes that provide 'access for all'. In Copeland, these routes include Longlands Lake in Cleator and Walkmill Community Woodland at Moresby Parks, Whitehaven. We will continue to support the development of routes to provide access for all.

#### **Policy CO6PO: 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. Where appropriate, access should make provision for those with limited mobility.

#### **57.13 Parking Standards**

- 57.13.1 Ensuring that adequate parking is available is vital, both within new residential developments and in and around town centres and 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.

- 57.13.2 A key element of encouraging sustainable transport within the Borough 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 the town centre.
- 57.13.3 Parking standards are currently informed by appendix 1 of the 2017 Cumbria Design Guide, produced by Cumbria County Council. This supports Local Planning Authorities in assessing the potential impacts of development on a site by site basis within the context of the Development Plan, site specific considerations and national policy. This covers the following development types: residential, commercial, institutional, care and educational facilities.
- 57.13.4 A Parking Study for Whitehaven has also recently been completed. This sets out guidance for managing parking within the Borough and for providing appropriate car parking provision for new developments.

#### **Policy CO7PO: Parking Standards**



Proposals for new development will be required to provide adequate parking provision in accordance with the Cumbria Development Design Guide (or any document that replaces it) where appropriate. Where there is satisfactory evidence that this cannot be provided, sufficient on street parking will be required without detriment to the street scene or residential amenity. There will also be a requirement for the provision of secure cycle parking in all new car parks as well as accessible parking bays and associated development.

Development will be supported where it accords with the Whitehaven Parking Strategy. 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 be situated in appropriate locations.



# GLOSSARY

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**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 (Cumbria County Council).

**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 the Borough, 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 Regulation 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.

**House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO):** HMO's 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

**Key Service Centre:** The Boroughs 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 Centre:** There are a total of 17 Local Centres across the borough. 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 every day 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)

**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 the provision of highways. Sometimes called a "Section 106" agreement.

**Primary Shopping Area:** An area where retail development and use is concentrated

**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).

**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.

**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 Centre and 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)

**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.

**Special Protection Area (SPA):** Sites classified under the European Community Directive on Wild Birds to protect internationally important bird species

**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 urban 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.

**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.

**Windfall sites:** Sites not specifically identified within the development plan.

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