

~~2. A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR COPELAND~~

2. LOCAL PLAN AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 The Local Plan Aims identify the underlying principles which the Plan intends to achieve through its implementation. The Plan Objectives detail how the plan will seek to ensure that these Aims are realised. The Local Plan Aims and Objectives will be achieved particularly through the implementation of the Development Strategy as set out in Chapter 3, but all policies and proposals as contained in the Plan will contribute.

2.1.2 To fully understand the reasoning behind the identified Aims and Objectives, there are several background issues which need to be taken into account. This chapter will provide a brief introduction to these issues, namely the need for regeneration (Section 2.2), sustainable development (Section 2.3) and other influential planning guidance, plans, strategies and initiatives (Sections 2.4 – 2.6). The Local Plan Aims and Objectives are listed in Sections 2.7 and 2.8 respectively.

2.2 THE NEED FOR REGENERATION

~~2.2.1 Sandwiched between the Lake District National Park and the Irish Sea, Copeland is one of the most attractive places to live, work or visit in North West England. It has a range of outstanding landscapes and wildlife habitat, distinctive character in its towns and villages, a rich history and cultural heritage and a strong sense of community identity.~~

2.2.2 Unfortunately the area is suffering from long term economic problems. It is still over-dependent on a declining manufacturing sector. New jobs in the nationally growing service sectors and knowledge based industries are difficult to attract. Poor road and rail connections together with Copeland's remoteness from the main national and European markets mean transport costs are high. The perceptions of distance and (largely unfair) image of industrial decline and dereliction can put off potential new investors. The level of business startups from within the area is low and the facilities for training and higher education are limited. ~~Between 1998 and 2001 there was a decline of over 3,000 jobs or 10.5% of the employment base which was mainly in manufacturing.~~ During the last 10 years there has been a loss of nearly 3000 manufacturing jobs, not including Sellafield. The effect of these problems hit our local communities in different ways but overall there has been a worrying 4% fall in population over the last 10 years from 72,000 in 1991 to 69,200 in 2001 across the whole of the borough and this tends to reflect an out

migration of younger age groups leaving the area for education and jobs elsewhere.

Table DS1: Population Change 1991 - 2001

| Age Group | 1991 | 2001 | Change |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 0-14 | 14240 | 12670 | -1,570 |
| 15-29 | 15440 | 11487 | -3,959 |
| 30-44 | 15510 | 15764 | 254 |
| 45 - retirement | 14310 | 15893 | 1,583 |
| Retirement + | 12530 | 13433 | 903 |
| TOTAL | 72030 | 69247 | -2,783 |

Source: ONS Census & MYE data

- 2.2.3** There are high rates of unemployment in some urban parts of the Borough with evidence of significant long term and “hidden” unemployment in places. There are wards in the main towns where unemployment coincides with other worrying signs of social stress – low incomes/benefit dependency, health problems etc and they feature high in the national tables of deprivation with just under half the wards in Copeland appearing in the worst 20% nationally.

Table DS2 : Unemployment August 2003: Worst Wards

| Ward | Male | % | Female | % | Total | % |
|--------------------|------|------|--------|-----|-------|------|
| Sandwith | 97 | 12.9 | 30 | 6.7 | 127 | 10.6 |
| Mirehouse West | 73 | 11 | 25 | 5.7 | 98 | 8.9 |
| Harbour | 98 | 10.3 | 26 | 4.3 | 124 | 7.9 |
| Frizington | 49 | 6.5 | 19 | 4 | 68 | 5.5 |
| Howgate | 57 | 6.6 | 14 | 2.3 | 71 | 4.8 |
| Distington | 41 | 6 | 13 | 2.8 | 54 | 4.7 |
| Mirehouse East | 38 | 6.2 | 8 | 1.9 | 46 | 4.5 |
| Cleator Moor South | 41 | 4.7 | 21 | 3.5 | 62 | 4.2 |
| Kells | 43 | 6 | 6 | 1.1 | 49 | 4 |
| Egremont North | 69 | 5.3 | 18 | 2 | 87 | 3.9 |
| Hensingham | 57 | 5.3 | 15 | 1.8 | 72 | 3.8 |
| Egremont South | 46 | 4.9 | 10 | 1.6 | 56 | 3.6 |
| Newtown | 43 | 4.2 | 19 | 2.7 | 62 | 3.6 |
| Cleator Moor North | 57 | 4.1 | 20 | 2.2 | 77 | 3.3 |
| | | | | | | |
| COPELAND | 989 | 4.4 | 319 | 1.6 | 1308 | 3.1 |
| North West | | 4.1 | | 1.4 | | 2.8 |
| Gt Britain | | 3.7 | | 1.4 | | 2.6 |

Source: NOMIS

2.2.4

The physical effect of these trends are evident in some of our housing areas where demand is almost non-existent and the housing environment is poor and getting worse. The town centres at Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom are struggling to provide shopping and other services for the local communities.

**Table DS3 : Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000
Copeland Wards within worst 20% Nationally**

| Ward Name | Rank of Index of Multiple Deprivation | Index of Multiple Deprivation Score |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Mirehouse West | 84 | 70.13 |
| Sandwith | 96 | 69.01 |
| Cleator Moor South | 739 | 46.41 |
| Mirehouse East | 805 | 45.16 |
| Distington | 892 | 43.83 |
| Frizington | 906 | 43.41 |
| Harbour | 908 | 43.39 |
| Cleator Moor North | 1174 | 39.32 |
| Hensingham | 1175 | 39.30 |
| Kells | 1547 | 34.39 |
| Holborn Hill | 1573 | 34.06 |
| Howgate | 1622 | 33.51 |
| Egremont North | 1636 | 33.37 |

*Note: IMD rank is out of a national total of 8414 wards.
1 = most deprived, 8414 = least deprived*

Table DS2 : Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004
Copeland Wards within worst 20% Nationally

| <u>Ward Name</u> | <u>Rank of Index of Multiple Deprivation</u> | <u>Index of Multiple Deprivation Score</u> |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Sandwith</u> | <u>236</u> | 48.75 |
| <u>Mirehouse</u> | <u>472</u> | 41.35 |
| <u>Cleator Moor South</u> | <u>822</u> | 35.83 |
| <u>Harbour</u> | <u>942</u> | 33.98 |
| <u>Frizington</u> | <u>1058</u> | 32.46 |
| <u>Distington</u> | <u>1114</u> | 31.85 |
| <u>Cleator Moor North</u> | <u>1314</u> | 29.70 |
| <u>Egremont North</u> | <u>1411</u> | 28.66 |
| <u>Kells</u> | <u>1524</u> | 27.70 |
| <u>Hensingham</u> | <u>1561</u> | 27.34 |

Note: IMD rank is out of a national total of 7936 wards. 1 = most deprived, 7936 = least deprived

2.2.5

This in part also reflects the difficulties being encountered in the surrounding rural communities. Agriculture was already facing an uncertain future before the Foot and Mouth crisis. Many farmers are now selling up and the whole basis of the industry is changing. The need for diversification and new thinking in the rural economy is clear.

Sellafield

The nuclear power plants and reprocessing facilities at Sellafield have created a significant number of jobs for local people over the years. There has been a range of direct employment – scientific/professional and management/ skilled and unskilled and many £m injected into the local economy through contracting and local purchase. The site has provided the main opportunities for local people to train and gain qualifications and helped create new businesses in related fields.

At the same time, dependence on a single major employer is not healthy – (especially for an area which has seen the effects of such dependence before in mining, heavy manufacturing and chemicals). Wage levels at Sellafield are relatively high and have tended to increase the average income statistics for Copeland. This has worked to the Borough's disadvantage in terms of additional funding assistance to tackle the problems faced by many communities where income levels are low. There are conflicting views about nuclear energy and some perceptions about the site have made it difficult to attract alternative investment.

Parts of the Sellafield complex are due to close down over the next few years. The organisation of the nuclear industry is about to change markedly with the creation of the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency. A scaled down operation at Sellafield will have a significant effect on the local economy.

This represents the most important single issue facing our community over the next few years.

Forecasts for the Council in ~~September 2002~~ June 2003 suggest that there could be ~~up to~~ at least 7,000 job losses in the area as a result of Sellafield contraction which represents a net reduction of ~~20~~27% of all jobs in Copeland. Clearly action must be taken to foster alternative employment opportunities and the policies and proposals of this Local Plan must assist the process. This also includes the introduction of greater flexibility in terms of housing land allocations and allowances to widen choice and to help balance local housing markets.

Equally, the effect of the changes on the Sellafield site itself is a major land-use issue. Although the nature of the nuclear cycle involves timescales well beyond that of the Local Plan decisions on the direction of waste management and long-term decommissioning issues must engage the local community in terms of planning policy. Chapter 9 on Sellafield and the Nuclear Industry draws these matters and others together in justifying a number of specific policies

2.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2.3.1 At the heart of government policy is the notion of balance between economic growth, social progress and environmental/natural resource protection. This is encapsulated in the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (1999) which looks to achieve “a better life for everyone now and for generations to come”. It has four key objectives:

- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- Effective protection of the environment
- Prudent use of natural resources
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

2.3.2 These objectives are developed through a variety of frameworks for action. In terms of the planning system the main drivers are Planning Policy Guidance Notes with additional requirements incorporated in best practice advice, Ministerial Statements etc.

~~2.4.3 From these we would highlight the following Sustainable Development Principles which are key to the policies and proposals of the Local Plan:~~

Sustainable Development Principles

- To concentrate development in the main urban areas where there are more facilities, jobs and transport choices
- To prioritise development sites, particularly for housing where a sequential approach should be adopted which involves the reuse or conversion of empty buildings followed by the reuse of previously developed land (brownfield sites) and only then the use of previously undeveloped (greenfield) sites
- To provide a decent home and housing environment for everyone with greater choice in size, type and location and especially catering for affordability and special needs
- To make more efficient use of sites by encouraging higher densities of development especially for housing and by undertaking urban capacity studies to examine development and redevelopment potential in existing built areas.
- To promote development with a mix of uses so that people can live closer to jobs, shops and facilities without the need to travel long distances especially by car
- To ensure that all new development is accessible by public transport, walking or cycling and by people with walking difficulties and that reduced parking standards are applied to discourage trips by car
- To protect important resources of environmental, social or economic "capital" eg natural habitats, landscape, open space, archaeological and historic sites, the undeveloped coast, conservation areas, the best/most versatile agricultural land etc
- To ensure that the scale of new development is compatible with the size and character of existing settlements
- To encourage high quality design and materials in all development, sympathetic to surrounding uses and site character and taking into account efficiency, safety and fear/risk of crime criteria – good design and landscaping can improve the quality of the existing

environment, attract business and investment and reinforce civic pride and a sense of place

- To encourage economic growth and development by providing a range of suitable sites which take account of the needs of existing and future business and assists the regeneration of areas with economic and social stress
- To maintain the vitality, viability and character of town centres as places to live, work, shop and spend leisure time — preference for new retail, leisure or commercial development should be given to defined town centres followed by edge of town centre sites followed by edge of centre locations and finally locations with access to a range of transport modes
- To promote the diversification of the rural economy including the identification of key settlements which should accommodate most local development needs for housing, employment and services
- To ensure that new development is not located in areas liable to flood or where there is risk of coastal erosion/inundation — and equally to ensure that new development does not create such problems
- To encourage development which minimises waste, pollution and demands on existing infrastructure and services eg water supplies and drainage systems and which assists energy conservation
- To promote the restoration of derelict and neglected land and to deal with contamination

2.3.3

Government action is also built on the development of these principles alongside various cross-cutting themes eg social inclusion, economic competitiveness, "livability". In this way land use planning can become better co-ordinated with other services so that issues like Neighbourhood Renewal and Rural Regeneration can be tackled in a more holistic way.

2.3.4

This is the whole premise of the government's programme of action:

"Sustainable Communities : Building for the Future" (Feb 2003) which provides a touchstone for most of the regional and local strategies referred to above. The role of land-use or spatial

planning is recognised as part of the delivery mechanism for action through its planning “cascade” of

- Regional Spatial Strategy (North West) (formerly Regional Planning Guidance (North West))
- Joint Structure Plan (Cumbria)
- The Local Plan (Copeland)

2.3.5 A Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan has also been published. The appraisal process has ensured that the Aims and Objectives and hence the policies of the Plan are sustainable.

2.4 REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY ~~PLANNING GUIDANCE~~ FOR THE NORTH WEST

2.4.1 On commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (September 2004) Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG 13) automatically assumed the status of a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The existing RPG was published in March 2003 and is currently undergoing a partial review. The overriding aim of RSS13 is to “promote sustainable patterns of spatial development and physical change (where) economic, social and environmental interests (are) advanced together and support each other”.

2.4.2 RSS13 sets out Core Development Principles and a Spatial Development Framework for the whole North West Region.

~~2.5.1 A cross-cutting approach is adopted in the Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG13), published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in March 2003. Its overriding aim is to “promote sustainable patterns of spatial development and physical change (where) economic, social and environmental interests (are) advanced together and support each other”~~

~~2.5.2 Its Key Objectives are:~~

- ~~• To achieve greater economic competitiveness and growth with associated social progress~~
- ~~• To secure an urban renaissance in the cities and towns of the North West~~
- ~~• To ensure the sensitive and integrated development and management of the coastal zone, and secure the revival of coastal resort towns and other coastal settlements~~

- To sustain and revive the Region's rural communities and the rural economy
- To ensure active management of the Region's environmental and cultural assets
- To secure a better image for the Region and high environmental and design quality
- To create an accessible Region with efficient and fully integrated transport system

2.5.3 More detailed policies are set out in the Chapters which follow under each of the 7 Key Objective headings. There are, though, two further layers of RRG Strategy. Firstly the Core Development Principles which are:

- Policy DPI Economy in the Use of Land and Buildings
- Policy DP2 Enhancing the Quality of Life
- Policy DP3 Quality in New Development
- Policy DP4 Promoting Sustainable Economic Growth and Competitiveness and Social Inclusion

These policies all contain requirements as to the content of development plans and the sort of impact assessments and supplementary guidance which should follow on. Reference is also made to the use of planning obligations and conditions and the phasing of development to achieve planning objectives.

2.5.4 The second layer is the Spatial Development Framework. Only 5 of the policies here have direct relevance to Cumbria but they include the most important aspect of RPG for Copeland. This is the identification of West Cumbria and Furness as a Regeneration Priority Area (Policy SD3) where there is "a need for development and re-development to ensure the physical enhancement, significant regeneration and gradual restructuring". Operation of the RPG's "Economic Growth" or EC Policies are the principal means of achieving regeneration particularly Policy EC6 "The Regeneration Challenge".

2.5.5 Policy SD3 also envisages the use of a key service centres approach where smaller towns and larger villages will accommodate most development requirements, subject to appropriate scale and nature and related to the local community's needs.

~~2.5.6 The other Spatial Development Framework policies relevant to Copeland are:~~

- ~~• SD6 which allows for some reassessment of settlement boundaries if urban expansion/consolidation is appropriate along public transport corridors~~
- ~~• SD7 overall strengthens requirement for coastal protection policies but equally makes provision for economic development and diversification, particularly related to tourism, harbour and regionally significant development~~
- ~~• SD8 generally maintains countryside protection but promises diversification of the rural economy where it is appropriate in scale and nature and firmly tied to the needs of local communities~~
- ~~• SD9 The Regional Transport Strategy. Its aim is to support the achievement of the other SD policies on the ground especially by encouraging multi-modal solutions, provision for high quality public transport and other non-car modes and improving transport environments. Specifically the Regional Transport Strategy includes one major road improvement in Copeland the A595 Parton-Lillyhall Scheme. This is scheduled for completion in 2007 and its route must be protected in the Local Plan.~~

2.5 CUMBRIA AND LAKE DISTRICT JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN

~~2.5.1 The Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan (JSP), prepared by Cumbria County Council and the Lake District National Park Authority, provides the sub regional context for the Local Plan. It applies the principles and objectives as set by RSS13 to Cumbria.~~

~~2.5.2 The JSP is also currently being reviewed. The second version of the JSP covering the period 2001-2016 was placed on deposit in June 2004 and the Examination in Public was held in October 2004. It is anticipated that the Plan will be adopted in late Spring 2005.~~

~~2.5.3 Policy issues and implications of both RSS and JSP are taken up in the relevant Chapters of the Local Plan. The relationship between all RSS, JSP and Local Plan policies are set out in Appendix 2.~~

~~2.6.1 This is the other major planning policy document influencing the Local Plan providing the sub-regional context. The JSP Authorities are currently preparing a new plan for the period~~

~~2001—2016. The first version of the new JSP was placed on deposit for consultation in June/July 2003. Adoption is expected in early 2005.~~

~~2.6.2 Its Strategy section applies the principles and objectives of RPG to Cumbria. Policy ST1 is an overarching policy to Promote Sustainable Development and covers most of the issues outlined in para 2.4.3 above. Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom are identified as Copeland's Key Service Centres in Policy ST2 where new development will be focussed whilst Policy ST3 requires Local Plans to define settlements where rural needs will be accommodated.~~

~~2.6.3 Policy ST6 highlights the priority for regeneration measures in West Cumbria and Furness and outlines the sort of development which should be allowed for. This includes:~~

- ~~• Large scale redevelopment where it secures an improved environment and appropriate mix of uses~~
- ~~• New housing to complement refurbishment of existing stock, offering quality and choice of housing markets~~
- ~~• A coastal renaissance which includes opportunities to expand on harbour related uses, sea transport links and maritime heritage. It includes the provision of new tourism attractions in coastal towns~~
- ~~• Generally promotion of new visitor accommodation~~
- ~~• Improved east-west transport communications to counteract West Cumbria's isolation together with improved ICT facilities~~

~~2.6.4 Policy ST9 relates to Major Development and sets out tests of need, safety and impact on economic, social and environmental capital. The criteria require that provision is made to meet local community needs where this would help mitigate any adverse effects.~~

~~2.6.5 Significant policies in the topic chapters of the JSP involve the following:~~

- ~~• Requirement for Local Plans to provide for a supply of readily available land for employment in 3 market sectors (with the Westlakes site included specifically in the Business/Science Park sector) Total : up to 84ha~~
- ~~• Requirement for an annual average of 190 dwellings granted planning permission in Copeland to 2016 (this is based on a~~

trend— apportionment of the RPG target for Cumbria which is 1170 dwellings

- ~~A target of 50% for houses constructed between 2002— 2016 to use previously developed land and buildings. Because of the “backlog” of unimplemented planning approvals, which tend to involve greenfield sites more than brownfield, this recycling target will be nearer 70% for new planning consents in Copeland over the plan period~~
- ~~Specified thresholds of development requiring the submission of Transport Assessments and Travel Plans plus new maximum car parking standards~~
- ~~The designation of a Coastal Zone differentiating between developed and undeveloped sections and linked to coastal defence management~~
- ~~The designation of “Areas of Search” for renewable energy projects~~
- ~~Encouragement of a Regional Park in the vicinity of Whitehaven particularly in association with the reclamation of derelict and contaminated land providing for biodiversity enhancement, new woodland cover and informal recreation~~

~~2.6.6 All these and other JSP policy issues are taken up in the appropriate chapters of the Local Plan. The relationship between all the Policies in RPG, the JSP and the Local Plan are set out in Appendix 2.~~

2.6 Other Plans, Strategies and Initiatives

2.6.1 ~~There are two other~~ many other Plans, Strategies and Initiatives in addition to the above which have influenced the Plan content. The emerging West Cumbria Community Strategy and Copeland 20/20 Vision are of particular significance to establishing large scale Strategies which reflect the documents and initiatives referred to above and which are the basis for drawing up the Aims and Objectives of the Local Plan.

2.6.2 West Cumbria Community Strategy

At the West Cumbria level a new context is being cast by the West Cumbria Partnership. Its emerging Community Strategy envisages a community which is “innovative and sustainable and offers all its people a quality of life as individuals and in communities which enables them to play a full part in our society through their work, their leisure and their social networks”. There are three strands to the Strategy: Economic, Social and

Environmental Wellbeing but the Economy section involves the most activity and indicators including investment, business development and support training and education, transport improvements targeting community led improvements, and specific sectors like tourism.

2.6.3 Copeland 20/20 Vision

The Council's Corporate Plan also puts economic matters at the centre of its Mission Statement – "Through partnership and teamwork we will develop new job opportunities, ensure everyone has access to value for money services and achieve the best possible quality of life for the people of Copeland". Improving New Job Opportunities is the principal target. Companion goals involve Health and Community Safety, Making Copeland a Better Place to Live and Work and Improving Our Environment with specific targets and ways of working.

2.6.4 The Local Plan also takes into account and fosters the aims and objectives of many other plans, strategies, initiatives and bodies. These include the following:

Regional Economic Strategy
New Visions for West Cumbria and Furness
Rural Action Zone
Cumbria Rural Economic Zone
Copeland Economic Development Strategy
South Whitehaven Partnership
Cleator Moor Development Ltd
Market Towns Initiative (Millom and Egremont)
Changing Perceptions
Land Reclamation Programme
Western Lake District and Tourism Partnership Strategy
Whitehaven Town Centre Group
Local Transport Plan
Copeland Housing Strategy
Estuary and Coastal Management Plans
Landscape Character Assessment
Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan
Copeland Cultural Strategy

Westlakes Renaissance
Rural Regeneration Company
Action for Sustainability

~~2.2 REGENERATION STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES~~

~~2.2.1 There is a clear determination by the Council and its partners to tackle these economic and social issues and to seek a wholesale regeneration of the Borough. The Local Plan is one~~

of a whole series of strategies and initiatives which are being developed to assist the process. They are designed to link together as far as possible with the Local Plan providing for the physical expression of regeneration activity on the ground.

2.2.2 Regional Economic Strategy (North West Development Agency)

Sets out the regional priorities for targeted action and includes the designation of West Cumbria and Furness as a Priority Area for Regeneration. It identifies the Westlakes Science and Technology Park as one of 25 strategic sites in the North West, looks to encouraging tourism and other growth sectors as part of a wider "Coastal Renaissance" and calls for transport improvements to help the area overcome its peripherality problems.

2.2.3 New Vision for West Cumbria and Furness (North West Development Agency and local partners)

A sub regional strategy and action programme for regeneration. This is based on the designation of a West Cumbria Economic Development Zone to maximise EU assistance with implementation of the action programme overseen by a new Regeneration Company – Westlakes Renaissance (in which the Council is a funding partner). The most significant land-use requirements are:

- Provision for further development of Westlakes Science and Technology Park
- Enabling policies for port and port related development
- A strategic, co-ordinated approach to development and renewal in the Pow Beck/Coastal Fringe and town-centre and harbour areas of Whitehaven

These are particularly relevant to the needs of the targeted wards see para 2.1.2 above.

2.2.4 Rural areas

Parallel regional initiatives also target areas outside Whitehaven following the Foot and Mouth outbreak. A Rural Action Zone and Cumbria Rural Economic Zone provide the means to access resources and a sensitive handling of development needs will be necessary to balance between regeneration of the rural economy and the protection of environmental assets. A new Rural Regeneration Company has been set up to manage delivery.

2.2.5 Local Strategies and Action Programmes

- Copeland Economic Development Strategy — an annual expression objectives and review now published as a Service Plan drawing together the various strands of policy and action for economic regeneration in the Borough
- South Whitehaven Partnership and Cleator Moor Development Limited based on NWDA Single Regeneration Budgets and likely to continue under New Visions
- Market Town Initiatives at Egremont and Millom with NWDA support to implement action programmes
- Changing Perceptions : additional smaller scale community initiatives at Distington, Frizington and other North Copeland Wards
- Land Reclamation Programme
- Western Lake District Tourism Partnership Strategy
- Work of Whitehaven Town Centre Group

2.2.6 The most significant land use implications of all these Strategies and Initiatives are:

- a) Investment targets : including tourism, telecommunications based employment, bio and environmental technologies and food processing. Opportunities in the nuclear industry; planning for a reduced workforce at Sellafield and the strategic implications of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority located in West Cumbria
- b) Increasing importance of Westlakes as a centre for growth sector employment, research and development and higher education
- c) Town centres : the need for busy, attractive town centres involves fostering their employment potential and most new commercial, retail and leisure developments will be expected to locate in town centres and margins with good access
- d) Reuse of sites and premises : there is a need to bring derelict sites and buildings back into productive life and the success of projects under Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes (HERS) at Whitehaven and Egremont and the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) at

~~Cleator Moor which combine conservation and regeneration will be extended.~~

- ~~e) The designation of Opportunity Development Sites used in the previous Local Plan for Whitehaven town centre was a useful flexible approach allowing for a range of alternative uses or mix of uses in site development. This has been extended to other parts of the town and other centres.~~
- ~~f) Physical regeneration works assist in the removal of derelict and untidy sites which help improve the image of the area to potential investors and visitors and adds to the stock of community assets whether soft or hard end use.~~

~~2.3 OTHER PLANS/STRATEGIES~~

~~2.3.1 The Local Transport Plan (LTP)~~

~~Is prepared by Cumbria County Council and incorporates a strategic approach to the County's needs and a delivery programme for a five year period currently 2001 – 2006. It is the bid document to government for annual funding for transport measures and is heavily influenced by government policies on sustainability, inclusion and integration and the North West Regional Transport Strategy. There are a number of important schemes on the LTPs List of Priority Improvements including traffic calming, footways and a programme of railway station improvements. The next LTP for 2007 – 2011 will soon be in preparation. Strategically the most important projects for transport investment over the Local Plan period are:~~

- ~~• Whitehaven Eastern Relief road~~
- ~~• Pow Beck Spine Road, Whitehaven~~
- ~~• A transport interchange, Bransty Station area Whitehaven~~
- ~~• South Whitehaven housing areas traffic calming~~
- ~~• Town centre enhancements/people priority schemes~~
- ~~• Coastal Railway : schemes to encourage use~~

~~These projects are essential components of the wider regeneration and renewal programmes eg Pow Beck Spine~~

~~Road and South Whitehaven traffic calming in terms of the Pow Beck Coastal Fringe, the transport interchange facility at Whitehaven to assist town centre and tourism policies (and solve the current problems with bus parking in the centre).~~

~~The Council will continue to lobby for strategic improvements to the national road and rail links to Copeland including the campaign to retain trunk road status for the A595/A5092 South of Calderbridge.~~

~~2.3.2 Copeland Housing Strategy~~

~~Is prepared annually by the Council as an expression of its approach to dealing with management and renewal issues. The management of the Council's extensive housing stock has now passed to a new social housing landlord, Copeland Homes with better access to investment funding. The Council's role now becomes more strategic in co-ordinating its housing service delivery with the other agencies in improving health, policing, highway safety etc alongside housing and housing environments. This is the approach necessary to accord with the government's policies set out in "Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future" (February 2003) (see para 2.4.5 below) and the recent Regional Housing Strategy for the North West (August 2003). Enabling policies are required in the Local Plan to assist area renewal, the Supporting People Programme and balancing housing markets.~~

~~2.3.3 In addition there are a variety of other action plans and management plans which have involved the Council and/or its partners which include:~~

- ~~• Estuary and other Coastal Management Plans~~
- ~~• Landscape Character Assessment~~
- ~~• The Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan~~
- ~~• Copeland Cultural Strategy~~

~~Many of these are referred to and largely reflected in the Local Plan.~~

~~2.7 THE AIMS OF THE PLAN~~

~~2.7.1 There are two other large scale Strategies which reflect the documents and initiatives referred to above and which are the basis for drawing up the Aims of the Local Plan.~~

2.7.2 West Cumbria Community Strategy

At the West Cumbria level a new context is being cast by the West Cumbria Partnership. Its emerging Community Strategy envisages a community which is “innovative and sustainable and offers all its people a quality of life as individuals and in communities which enables them to play a full part in our society through their work, their leisure and their social networks”. There are three strands to the Strategy: Economic, Social and Environmental Wellbeing but the Economy section involves the most activity and indicators including investment, business development and support training and education, transport improvements targeting community led improvements, and specific sectors like tourism.

2.7.3 Copeland 20/20 Vision

The Council’s Corporate Plan also puts economic matters at the centre of its Mission Statement – “Through partnership and teamwork we will develop new job opportunities, ensure everyone has access to value for money services and achieve the best possible quality of life for the people of Copeland”. Improving New Job Opportunities is the principal target. Companion goals involve Health and Community Safety, Making Copeland a Better Place to Live and Work and Improving Our Environment with specific targets and ways of working.

2.7.4 The following Aims of the Local Plan are a distillation of the themes running through the Community Strategy and Copeland 20/20:

Aims of the Local Plan

- To stabilise Copeland’s population by curbing out migration and endeavouring to achieve a more balanced age structure
- To promote and facilitate the economic regeneration of the Borough so as to achieve a stable and diverse employment base that becomes largely self-sustaining
- To ensure that throughout the plan period there is an adequate supply of land which is attractive to investors and which will accommodate the needs of industry, housing, shopping, leisure and community development
- To encourage development to take place where it

~~makes best use of existing infrastructure and resources where it contributes towards achieving more sustainable patterns of development~~

- ~~• To seek the provision of an efficient transportation system responsive to the needs of all sections of the community and which contributes to environmental improvements within the Borough and helps reduce its isolation from national and regional networks.~~
- ~~• To protect, conserve and enhance the Borough's landscape, built environment, historic heritage and sites of ecological and recreational importance.~~
- ~~• To improve areas of poor environment and dereliction and encourage higher standards of design in new development~~
- ~~• To ensure that no development takes place which puts the health, safety and security of people at risk whether now or in the future~~
- ~~• To support those services in the realms of social, community and recreation provision which help maintain or improve the quality of life for Borough residents especially in areas of deprivation~~

~~2.7.5 The Key to how these aims are to be achieved is the Plan's Development Strategy which is based on the Sustainable Development Principles outline above (2.4.3).~~

2.7 LOCAL PLAN AIMS

2.7.1 The Local Plan Aims are derived from the above local needs and circumstances (Section 2.2) integrated with the need for sustainability (Section 2.3) and aims of other influential plans and strategies (Sections 2.4-2.6).

2.7.2 The Local Plan Aims are as follows:

- Secure a stable and balanced population whilst improving public health, safety and quality of life**
- Protect and enhance landscapes, habitats and the built and natural environments**
- Make the most effective use of existing buildings and infrastructure, previously developed land and natural resources**

- Promote and facilitate economic regeneration to achieve stable, diverse and self sustaining employment

2.8 LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

2.8.1 The Local Plan Objectives fall under the four Plan Aims as listed above. As with the Plan Aims, they have been refined at local level through interpretation of national and regional objectives. Further explanation of the formulation of the objectives is provided in the Sustainability Appraisal which accompanies this document. The Local Plan Objectives are as follows:

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVES

1. Stabilise and maintain population levels within communities in the plan area
2. Ensure that local facilities and services are available to everyone
3. Ensure that housing needs of the community are met locally and that decent, good quality affordable homes are available to all
4. Increase community participation in decisions regarding the future of development in the planning area
5. Protect and enhance landscapes and townscapes
6. Protect and enhance biodiversity
7. Protect and enhance features of historical and archaeological importance
8. Ensure that development is not at risk from flooding and does not cause flooding elsewhere
9. Reuse existing buildings and previously developed land before greenfield sites
10. Protect and improve ground, surface and marine water quality
11. Ensure that air quality is not adversely affected by development
12. Promote recycling, waste minimisation and renewable energy
13. Reduce number of journeys made by private car
14. Encourage SUSTAINABLE economic growth and development

15. Encourage diversification of urban and rural economies

16. Improve opportunities and access to jobs

17. Promote leisure and tourism and increase visitor numbers