

5.0 ECONOMIC REGENERATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 Economic regeneration is fundamental to creating a good quality of life in Copeland. The Council wishes to see:

- A diverse economy based on healthy, growing businesses which operate competitively in the area and which sustains existing population levels as a minimum objective
- Healthy town centres meeting the needs of residents by providing a range of services and facilities
- Access to jobs for all who want them
- Social exclusion addressed both generally and particularly in the most deprived parts of the area where poor housing conditions, poor health and poor educational achievement are focused

5.1.2 This section of the Local Plan considers the following spatial implications of these objectives taking into account the requirements of the Development Strategy

- Identifying a supply of employment land
- Making our town centres more attractive for investment
- Encouraging the development of tourism
- Supporting the rural economy

The nuclear industry is considered in a separate chapter both because of its importance to the economy and because of its social and environmental policy impacts

5.2 EMPLOYMENT

5.2.1 The Development Strategy acknowledges the projected loss of jobs in the nuclear industry from 2010 onwards and the likelihood of continuing decline in the manufacturing sector. To counteract this the Council is seeking to attract or create 8500 jobs over the plan period to 2015. These will be in those sectors of the national economy which are able to operate competitively in a peripheral location with relatively poor road and rail links to the main national and international markets.

5.2.2 The Development Strategy refers to the New Vision for West Cumbria and Furness and the Copeland Economic Regeneration Action Plan being developed to support job creation. A new Urban Regeneration Company, West Lakes Renaissance, together with the Cumbria Rural Regeneration Company have been established with substantial resources to

deliver these jobs. The local plan policies in this chapter are designed to work in conjunction with the economic programmes and initiatives undertaken by these new companies and by the Council in partnership with other bodies.

5.2.3 This review of the plan includes ~~generous and wide-ranging land allocations~~ for employment-related development and measures to encourage prospective developers. It reflects the changing locational and qualitative needs of the new knowledge and service based businesses which will replace the traditional manufacturing industries. The environmental impact of these is often benign to the extent that land use zoning can be superseded by a mixed use policy approach. ~~Some Employment Opportunity Sites have been identified where such mixed development would be appropriate~~

5.2.4 The Council has looked closely at the possibility of land previously used or allocated for industry being suitable for housing. Notwithstanding the relatively weak housing market a small amount of employment land has been reallocated to housing use. However the priority is to ensure that a sufficient choice of land is available for employment use throughout Copeland.

The Local Economy

5.2.5 The Copeland economy is dominated by British Nuclear ~~Fuel's~~ Group's Sellafield Works. In 2003, 12,000 people were employed on site (35% of all jobs in the Borough) with a further 2,600 dependent on the plant through linkage in terms of goods and services provided. Over the last 10 years there has been a shift from manufacturing to the service sector with significant job losses in the chemical and clothing industries in particular. The health service, local government and Haverigg Prison are important employers. Even so the service sector is under represented particularly in the business services sector. Agriculture and forestry, although determining the state of the rural landscape, is not a major source of employment.

Table EM1 : Employee Analysis by Industrial Sector 2001-2003

Industrial sector	Copeland		N-West	GB
	Nos	%	%	%
Agriculture and fishing	406	1.5	0.6	1.0
Energy and water	473	1.8	0.7	0.8
Manufacturing	8624	32.8	16.4	14.2
Construction	1099	4.2	4.6	4.5
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	4684	17.8	24.9	24.3
Transport and communications	518	2.0	5.9	6.1
Banking, finance and insurance, etc	3084	11.7	16.2	19.6
Public administration, education and health	6449	24.6	26.1	24.3
Other services	923	3.5	4.6	5.2
Total	26257			

Source: NOMIS: Annual Business Inquiry 2001

Industrial sector	Copeland		N West	GB
	Nos	%	%	%
Agriculture and fishing	365	1.2	0.5	0.9
Energy and water	110	0.4	0.3	0.7
Manufacturing	9854	33.3	14.5	12.6
Construction	1503	5.1	4.7	4.4
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	5468	18.5	24.9	24.7
Transport and communications	692	2.3	6.1	6.0
Banking, finance and insurance, etc	3682	12.4	17.6	19.8
Public administration, education and health	6602	22.3	26.8	25.8
Other services	1326	4.5	4.6	5.2
Total	29601			

Source: NOMIS: Annual Business Inquiry 2003

5.2.6 The employment situation in the Borough is currently weak. In the 1980s employment was cushioned by construction and development work at Sellafield. From the mid 1990s the area responded only slowly to national and regional reductions in unemployment. Currently the unemployment rate is the second worst in Cumbria and there is a continuing out migration of people in the younger working age group. The area also lacks a tradition of enterprise with a relatively low level of business start ups.

5.2.7 However, there has been some success in attracting investment. The Vertex call centre in Whitehaven currently supports 300 150 jobs and the Westlakes Science and Technology Park has developed from its inception in 1995 to house 7800 knowledge based jobs particularly in nuclear technologies. Tourism is also now a key employer with an estimated 431800 (full time equivalent) jobs directly dependent on visitor expenditure.

5.2.8 For the future the effect of changes in the nuclear industry will be far reaching. The details of these changes are still evolving but the baseline scenario assumes that reprocessing of both

oxide and magnox fuels ceases from 2010/2012. This would result in a loss of 5500 jobs on site by 2015 (the period of the Local Plan) and 8000 by 2025. The effect on the Copeland economy is significant since over 70% of Sellafield employees live and work here. In addition the area is still undergoing structural change in the manufacturing sector. A recent study (Recent Trends and Forecasts for the Copeland Economy. DTZ Pineda 2002) forecasts that employment in Copeland will fall from 33900 in 2000 to 27200 in 2015, a decline of 20% over this period compared to a 4% growth forecast for the North West. It should be noted that this is a trend forecast and does not take into account proposed interventions.

5.2.9 Future policy is also influenced by the concentration of economic problems. Two factors are

- The relative impact of the job losses on individual communities depends on how reliant they are on Sellafield. Currently it is estimated that in Cleator Moor Sellafield employees make up 51% of employment in the town, in Egremont the figures is 45% and in Whitehaven 30%
- High levels of unemployment are concentrated in the mining villages and in areas of social housing in the towns. They go hand in hand with other indicators of social exclusion of poor health and high levels of benefit dependency

5.2.10 The attraction of inward investment and business growth will be influenced by

- The location of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) in West Cumbria and the potential to develop nuclear related jobs associated with this, with the nuclear skills base, and with the establishment of a centre of excellence based on nuclear technologies
- The importance of healthy mixed use town centres as a draw for service sector development
- The opportunity to create jobs in tourism by developing the coastal renaissance theme and links to the Isle of Man and further afield
- The importance of Information and Communications Technology to businesses
- The need to rise to the "regeneration challenge" by addressing the image of Copeland and West Cumbria as being environmentally degraded and remote (supported by Regional Planning Policy Guidance Policy EC6)
- The opportunity to promote clusters of existing and new economic activity in employment growth sectors. (Regional Planning Guidance Policy EC5)

- The ability to respond to inward investment opportunities and as part of this the benefit of having a range of good quality sites and premises available

Employment Land and Premises

- 5.2.11 New job opportunities for a minimum 7000 people are required over the plan period. In accordance with the Structure Plan approach no attempt is made to convert a labour supply to a specific land requirement. What is considered important is to ensure that there is a range of sites available which are attractive, accessible, serviced and environmentally acceptable in accordance with the Local Plan Development Strategy.
- 5.2.12 The current stock of land available for development ~~either with planning permission or previously allocated in local plans~~ amounts to ~~112ha~~ 51ha. New employment allocations amounting to 37ha have also been designated. Regional Planning Guidance identifies a range of land market sector needs. The Structure Plan seeks to maintain an ongoing supply of land in each of these sectors in accordance with sub regional needs. Table EM2 sets out the current situation
- 5.2.13 There has been little development of employment land over the period 1997 to 2003. Excluding development activity within existing sites the only significant new development has been at Westlakes and in Whitehaven Town Centre. The Council has assessed ~~considers that the existing Local Employment and Strategic Site provision~~ previously allocated employment sites and has concluded that some are no longer considered appropriate for employment use or have been reduced in size in order to fit with the Development Strategy and JSP requirements. ~~is well related to existing employment centres and meets the spatial requirements of the Development Strategy (Policies DEV 2 and DEV 3) and the advice contained in PPG 4 "Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms" as regards a choice of locations close to the communities to be served. This provision is expected to be adequate for the plan period.~~
- 5.2.14 Additional employment land provision is proposed at Westlakes to reflect the opportunities for investment associated with the NDA (see Policy EMP2). ~~Other Employment Opportunity Sites~~ Two Whitehaven Opportunity Sites have been identified where there are various options for mixed use development and where further feasibility work is needed. ~~They include the Whitehaven Pow Beck/Coastal Fringe regeneration area where the expansion of commercial and leisure based activity to the south of the town centre close to wards showing high levels of deprivation will be encouraged (Policy EMP 3).~~

Table EM2 : Proposed Employment Sites

	Site	Existing site available <u>Employment land with planning permission (ha)</u>	New allocation <u>Employment allocations (EMP1) (ha)</u>	JSP 5 year need	Permitted use
	Business/Science Park	46.25 31.84	20.00 19.12	10.00	B1, D1
E1	See Policy EMP2 <u>Westlakes Science and Technology Park</u>	46.25 31.84	20.00 19.12		To be identified within larger area of search (see Policy EMP 2)
	Strategic Employment Site	12.70		5.00	B1,2,8
E2	Whitehaven Commercial Park	12.70			Also bulky <u>non food</u> retail
	Local Employment Site	52.77 6.65	17.92	13.00	B1,2,8
E3	<i>Whitehaven</i> Haig Enterprise Park	0.20			Also special uses/ leisure/ tourism Also leisure (<u>see also HSG2 (HA32) re mixed use</u>) Consent for haulage
E4	Sneckyeat Road	3.80	1.72		
E5	Red Lonning	0.60			
E6	Micklam Brickworks	4.05			
E7	<i>Cleator Moor</i> Leconfield	2.55			
E8	Leconfield Extension	11.90	5.28		
E9	Cleator Mills	4.40	2.74		
E10	<i>Egremont</i> Bridge End	1.10			
E11	Bridge End Extension	5.60	2.9		
E12	<i>Millom</i> Millom Pier		3.00		
E13	Mainsgate Road	3.75	1.58		
E14	Devonshire Road	1.20			
E15	Former ironworks	2.00			
E16	<i>Others</i> Beckermet Industrial Est	7.25			
E17	Furnace Row, Distington	4.20			
E18	Frizington Road, Frizington	1.00			
E19	Scalegill Rd, Moor Row	0.57			
E20	Station Yard, Moor Row	0.60			
E21	Rowrah Station Yard Ext.	0.30			
E21	Seascale Rural Workshops	0.70	0.70		
	Employment Opportunity Site		90.26		
EOS1	Millom Pier		7.45		B1, maritime, leisure
EOS2	Rhodia/Huntsman		70.33		Rationalisation +
EOS3	Pow Beck Whitehaven		12.48		B1/B2/amenity B1, retail, leisure
	Total	111.72 51.19	110.26 37.04	28.00	

Note: Class B1 is business use and includes offices, research and development, studios, labs as well as light industry.
 Class B2 is general industrial use
 Class B8 is use of storage or as a distribution centre

POLICY EMP 1 : Employment land allocation

The designation of land for employment use includes approximately ~~112ha~~ **88ha** of land allocated or with planning permission for employment use set out in Table ~~EMP1~~ **EM2**. Within these areas development for or changes of use to the employment uses set out **prescribed** in Table ~~EMP2~~ **EM2** will be permitted provided that the requirements of ~~Policy DEV 6~~ **other plan policies** are met.

5.2.15 ~~Some sites previously allocated are no longer considered appropriate for employment use. The Keekle Opencast Site has returned to agricultural use and would be costly to service. It has reverted to a greenfield site. Land at Pelham House, Calderbridge does not meet the criteria in the Structure Plan for a Business Park and is no longer allocated as such.~~

5.2.16 The designation of land for employment and industry uses in Policy EMP 1 is based on the classification of sites in Regional Planning Guidance and the Joint Structure Plan

Business/ Science Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class B1, D1 • Over 1ha • Access to the Primary Route Network • Served by public transport, cycle and pedestrian networks • Good proximity/links to Key Service Centres • Masterplan and very high standard of design and landscaping • Potential for links to higher education institutions and knowledge based industry
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The Westlakes Science and Technology Park

The Park is of great significance to West Cumbria as a focus for the development of nuclear technologies and skills and as a high quality location for knowledge based employment. The North West Development Agency has designated it a Regional Investment Site.

The first phases of development have proved very successful in attracting new commercial and technology/research enterprises. A landscaping plan, thematic layout and design brief for the existing ~~allocated~~ site has ~~se~~ been approved. The aim will be to

produce individual groups of high quality business park development within a parkland setting on the urban fringe, well-related to the advocated road improvements, areas of socio-economic deprivation and at the centre of the North Copeland “growth-triangle”. Some 700 jobs have been created through existing development in the and the Park has the potential to become one of the top Science Parks in the country with an international reputation especially in the areas of environmental science, biotechnology, genetics, environmental engineering, nuclear technologies and decommissioning. To further this aim all new development on the Park will be restricted to B1 uses which covers offices, research and development, studios, laboratories, high tech and light industry uses but only where the use comprises scientific research and development with ancillary industrial production. In order to preserve the research and development focus of the Park, mass production or high tonnage production will not be permitted.

An exception to this approach will be development associated with higher education under the D1 Use Class. The proposed takeover of the West Lakes Research Institute by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) has brought about considerable potential for higher education and academic research associated development at Westlakes Science and Technology Park.

The Council fully recognises the benefits of encouraging technological innovation and its transfer to business within the site and will seek to work with UCLAN to accommodate its requirements for future academic expansion. Any academic uses (both undergraduate taught provision and post graduate research) will remain ancillary to the primary commercial role of the Park itself and student housing accommodation will not be permitted within the Park.

Overall, with the potential for future growth in mind, 17ha of land have been allocated. All proposed development on the Park must be designed to a high standard and Transport Assessments and/or Travel Plans will be required in accordance with Policy TSP7. A sensitive landscaping scheme will also be an essential part of any development proposals to maintain the established character of the Park.

- ~~Geoffrey Scholfield Laboratories~~
- ~~Princess Royal Research Institute~~
- ~~Post Graduate Centre~~
- ~~Ingwell Hall Business Park~~
- ~~Fleswick Court office accommodation~~
- Innovation Centre

The servicing of roads and sewers for Phase 2 and a further 8 development platforms are under construction. In the light of the success of the site and the likelihood of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority generating further demand a masterplan exercise is being undertaken to provide the framework for expansion beyond the site boundary together with a detailed design brief for Phase 2.

POLICY EMP 2 : Westlakes Science and Technology Park

~~Areas of search have been delineated on the Proposals Map for an extension of the Park. It is expected that a further 20ha of land will be brought forward for development during the plan period. An Action Plan will be produced to deal with the detailed implications and locational issues.~~

Land with planning permission and land allocated for employment use has been identified on the proposals map as E1. Within this area development in Use Classes B1 and D1 will be permitted.

Development must be designed to a high standard and make a positive contribution towards the high quality appearance of the Park.

<p>Strategic Employment Site</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 5ha developed in large plots • Classes B1, B2 and B8 • Access to the Primary Route Network • Potential to be served by public transport • Good proximity/links to Key Service Centres • Masterplan incorporating landscaping
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Whitehaven Commercial Park

The site has an impressive location looking over the western Lake District fells. Its shortcomings have been a desolate environment and relatively poor access to the A595 Trunk Road. Recent landscaping and tree planting have made this a more attractive site and the advocated Whitehaven Eastern Relief Road (see 6.2.6) will better relate the site to the Primary Road Network as it would the various other employment sites in East and South Whitehaven, Cleator Moor and Frizington. The Council has based its Commercial and Contracting Services functions here.

Local Employment Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 5ha • Classes B1, B2 and B8 • Adequate transport access • Good proximity/links to Service Centres • Masterplan incorporating landscaping
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1. Haig Enterprise Park
2. Sneckyeat Road Industrial Estate
3. Red Lonning Industrial Site
4. ~~Former Micklam brickworks, Lowca~~
5. Leconfield Street, Cleator Moor
6. Adjoining Cleator Mills, Cleator
7. Bridge End, Egremont
8. ~~Furnace Row, Distington~~
9. Frizington Road, Frizington
10. ~~Station Yard, Moor Row~~
11. ~~Rowrah Industrial Site~~
12. Seascale Rural Workshops Site
13. Mainsgate Road, Millom
14. Devonshire Road, Millom
15. ~~Beckermeth Industrial Estate~~

These sites are ~~mainly brownfield sites~~ located within or adjacent to the Key Service and Local Centres in the Settlement Classification (Policies DEV 2 and DEV 3) and within the North Copeland "growth triangle". ~~Land at Distington is allocated despite its proximity to the Strategic Lillyhall Estate as an alternative, small business orientated site in an area of higher than average unemployment.~~ Further workshop space is allocated at Seascale because of its important role in the Mid Copeland rural area and, of course, Millom acts as the employment centre for most of South Copeland. It is recognised that the Millom Pier employment allocation is a particularly sensitive site in terms of nature conservation and an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required as an integral part of any development proposals.

5.2.17 Whitehaven Opportunity Sites

Two sites have been identified in Whitehaven which Employment Opportunity Sites are suitable for a wider range of employment use but may also be suitable for non employment use

Millom Pier

~~An extremely attractive setting on the Duddon estuary adjoining the Devonshire Road Industrial Estate and the Millom Sewage Works. It has been used for scrap storage and ship breaking. It has potential to be developed for the export of local aggregates and/or off shore support as well as more traditional land based~~

~~development. It is a sensitive site with the Duddon Estuary Special Protection Area alongside. An Environmental Assessment will be required as an integral part of any development proposals.~~

Rhodia/Huntsman ~~Former Marchon site, Kells, Whitehaven~~

~~The site of the former Marchon chemical works and a smaller pit yard at Townhead provide an opportunity for brownfield employment and leisure use. Part of the site is still occupied by Huntsman but it is anticipated that all operations will cease by June 2005 and any comprehensive redevelopment scheme will depend on whether the company invests here. Much of leaving the site is unused. ~~and~~ the Environment Agency has notified it as a “special site” in relation to clean up of contamination and investigations are underway into the most appropriate remediation works and possible end uses.~~

Whitehaven Pow Beck Development

~~This site is within a regeneration area. A preliminary masterplanning exercise has been carried out for this area. The way forward is a more detailed development study to include~~

- ~~A new spine road along the Pow Beck valley~~
- ~~A substantial improvement to the existing sports stadium of Whitehaven Rugby League Club and adjoining users~~
- ~~A new commercial park overlooking the Pow Beck valley and the sports area together with silt/debris and water retention improvements in the Pow Beck floodplain~~

In both cases an Action Plan will be produced to consider the detailed implications and locational issues associated with these areas as part of the Local Development Framework.

POLICY EMP 3 : Employment Whitehaven Opportunity Development Sites

~~Areas of land in Whitehaven and Millem have been delineated on the Proposals Map as Whitehaven Opportunity Sites. for employment related development amounting to an estimated 90ha of employment land to be brought forward during the plan period. Within these areas employment generating development will be approved particularly those uses set out in Table EM2. An Action Plan will be produced to consider the detailed implications and~~

~~locational issues associated with the Pow Beck development.~~ These areas are being investigated as to their future development potential and contribution they can make to the regeneration strategies in the Borough. Detailed implications and locational issues associated with these sites will be the subject of future planning policy documents as soon as practicably possible.

5.2.18 The Council will expect all new employment developments to be of a generally high standard of design and to meet the requirements of Policy DEV 6 7. Schemes of over 4ha should be the subject of a development brief (see 2.11.3(2) 3.4.5).

5.2.19 ~~The allocation of employment land together with existing commitments is fairly generous and further large scale sites are not considered necessary to achieve the economic objectives of the plan. At the same time, however,~~ ~~†~~The Council recognises that existing firms should be allowed to expand or redevelop where such development can be satisfactorily accommodated either within or immediately adjacent to existing site boundaries and is demonstrated to be safe, no threat to public amenity and environmentally acceptable. In considering such proposals the Council will have due regard to Policies DEV 1 and DEV 6 7. Separate policies apply to the nuclear industry and are set out in Chapter 9 10.

POLICY EMP 4 : Extension of an existing employment use

Proposals for the extension of an existing employment use and which meet the requirements of other plan policies ~~Policy DEV-6~~ will be approved

5.2.20 The Council is keenly aware of the need to encourage small business development throughout the Borough. There is a particular need to maintain a supply of affordable sites and premises for new starters and existing firms. It is apparent that there is much underused and vacant land and property within the larger settlements which could usefully be brought into employment use but the Council is determined to ensure that such development does not pose a threat to the health, safety or amenity of adjoining neighbours, particularly in areas of primarily residential use. It will also expect new development to achieve good standards of design and service provision. In some cases the Council may consider the use of temporary or personal planning permissions to control development in the interests of established communities.

POLICY EMP 5 : Employment use in the towns Key Service and Local Centres

Within the defined limits of the Key Service and Local Centres proposals for appropriately scaled employment development, redevelopment or building conversions will be permitted subject to compliance with ~~Policy DEV 6~~ other plan policies.

- 5.2.21** Whilst some employment uses can quite easily co-exist with adjoining residential or other community use there are existing employment sites within the built-up areas of settlements which create nuisance to adjoining users. The Council will not sanction the further development or expansion of such employment sites and will actively encourage “bad neighbour” non-confronting uses to relocate to a more appropriate location in the Borough.

POLICY EMP 6 : Bad Neighbour Development

Proposals for additional development on or expansion of “bad neighbour” non-conforming employment sites will not be permitted. Where environmental difficulties are being experienced as a result of the present location of a firm encouragement will be given to the firm to relocate to a more appropriate site elsewhere in the plan area that satisfies the requirements of ~~Policy DEV 6~~ other plan policies.

- 5.2.22** The environment of many of the older employment areas of the Borough fails to meet acceptable modern standards and is in need of comprehensive improvement. The Council will actively encourage site owners and occupiers to undertake improvements. It may prepare employment area improvement schemes and will endeavour to procure some part of the investment required from appropriate sources.

- 5.2.23** Sometimes, and despite the best efforts of developers, it can prove difficult to assemble land for development of employment sites. Where genuine difficulties are experienced the Council will consider using its powers of compulsory purchase but will only do so where it is in the interests of securing the proper development of land in accordance with local plan policies. This will normally be subject to the prior agreement of the developer to reimburse to the Council the full cost of acquisition including any compensation.

POLICY EMP 7 : Use of Compulsory Powers

~~To facilitate development in accordance with local plan objectives the Council will use its powers to acquire land for employment purposes where a developer is not able to assemble land.~~

- 5.2.24 It is considered that the principal employment sites the subject of Policy EMP 1 are in the terms of line with the requirements of Joint Structure Plan Policy EM44 12 “viable for employment purposes” within the plan period and would not be suitable for other use within the plan period. In other cases it will be acceptable to permit the use or reuse of land and buildings in employment use for other uses so long as the wider community benefits outweigh the loss of employment land.

POLICY EMP 8 7: Alternative use of Employment Sites

Outside Policy EMP 1 employment sites the development or change of use of land or premises currently or last in employment use to non-employment use will only be permitted if the proposed use meets the requirements of ~~Policy DEV-6~~ other plan policies and:

1. there is no current or likely future demand for the site or premises ; or
2. the site or use gives rise to environmental problems which can be mitigated with an alternative use in accordance with Policy EMP6 ; or
3. it is the only viable means of retaining a building of architectural or historic interest ; or
4. it is not an important part of a wider regeneration proposal or meets ~~an established~~ need established by the Local Plan in support of the Community Strategy ; or
5. ~~the site is less than 0.4ha~~

5.3 TOWN CENTRES AND SHOPPING

- 5.3.1 The shopping function of the Key Service Centres and Local Centres defined in the Development Strategy is of major importance to the economic and social well-being of the local community. In the past this hierarchy of shopping and service

provision at the local level satisfied consumer demands but retailing has radically changed over the last twenty years and this is likely to continue. Economies of scale in dealing with new technologies and the distribution and storage of goods has encouraged a trend towards larger shops which can offer the customer a wider range of cheaper, high quality merchandise. Equally higher disposable incomes, wider car-ownership and higher expectations as regards the quality of the shopping environment have altered the general perception of distance and changed consumer shopping habits. The differing thresholds associated with convenience (mainly food), shopping and shopping for comparison goods (e.g. clothes, shoes) and bulk durable items (e.g. DIY, furniture) have widened considerably. The development of the Lanes Shopping Centre at Carlisle, Newcastle/Gateshead and out of town retail development at Workington have all significantly altered the regional and sub-regional retail balance as it affects North Copeland and South Copeland is being similarly affected by developments at Barrow, Lancaster and Kendal.

5.3.2

The Council is extremely concerned as to the effects such rapid change is having on the vitality and viability of established shopping areas, especially the main town centre of Whitehaven and the central areas of Millom, Cleator Moor and Egremont. Government advice (PPG 6) recognises the need to sustain the vitality and viability of town centres through maintaining a range of complementary activities, through environmental enhancements, through encouraging investment in the redevelopment and refurbishment of premises and through tackling problems associated with vehicle congestion, servicing and parking. Within town centres planning policies should not be used to prevent competition between retailers. New retail and leisure development must undergo a sequential test to ensure that all available sites within town centres are considered before less central locations. These requirements are embodied in Joint Structure Plan Policies L48-51 [52-55](#) and [Policy DEV 5 \(3.1.8 - 3.1.9\)](#). Government advice also emphasises the importance of local neighbourhood and village convenience shops from both an economic and social standpoint.

Retail Issues in West Cumbria

5.3.3

The Local Plan has been informed by a retail study carried out by Roger Tym and Partners published in September 2003. The main findings of the report relevant to Copeland are [described below](#)

~~(a) The last ten years have seen five edge of town centre food retail developments in Whitehaven and small food~~

retail expansions in Egremont and Cleator Moor. The survey shows that over 90% of convenience goods expenditure in North Copeland is retained within the area. This is a very high level and is unlikely to increase. Equally there is little growth forecast in convenience goods per capita expenditure over the next ten years. It concludes that there is no further need for significant additional convenience floorspace but the matter is not clear cut and further issues need to be taken into account — particularly the increasing amount of comparison floorspace in existing “Food Supermarkets”.

b) — Almost all comparison goods shopping in Copeland is located in Whitehaven. Yet over the last six years the town share of West Cumbria expenditure has gone down by 7%. Most of this is accounted for by the growth in internet shopping and a relative increase in the popularity of Workington. Per capita expenditure on comparison goods is expected to continue to grow and if Whitehaven is to maintain its current share of the market then some 9100m² floorspace will be required by 2011

5.3.4 The last ten years has seen the construction of five edge of centre food store developments in Whitehaven and small food retail expansions in Egremont and Cleator Moor. The retail study shows that over 90% of convenience goods expenditure in North Copeland is retained within the area. The study concluded that there was little growth in convenience goods spending likely over the study period and there was unlikely to be a requirement for new large scale convenience shopping facilities. Nevertheless it will be important for the Council to promote proposals that result in qualitative improvements in provision or provide more convenient and accessible facilities.

5.3.5 Almost all comparison goods shopping in Copeland is located in Whitehaven. The study found that there was significant growth potential in comparison goods spending that could support up to 9,100 sq m of floor space by 2011 assuming Whitehaven were to maintain its current market share. However, Whitehaven is likely to experience competition from nearby centres and the Council will consider what scale of development would be appropriate to ensure the continued vitality and viability of Whitehaven.

5.3.6e) Cleator Moor and Egremont have been affected by the trend to centralisation. Both towns have vacancy rates of about 13% compared with the national rate of 8%

5.3.7d) In qualitative terms there was a relatively low level of general satisfaction with town centres in West Cumbria. Whitehaven was

second only to Cockermouth in complaints about car parking and traffic but provided the best offer in terms of variety and environmental quality.

Table TC1 : Town Centre Qualitative Indicators

	Cleanliness	Traffic and access	Variety and quality	More/ cheaper parking	Better public transport	None	Satisfied overall	Not satisfied overall
Cleator Moor	12%	0%	65%	6%	0%	0%	58%	38%
Cockermouth	2%	8%	52%	16%	2%	8%	78%	22%
Egremont	5%	3%	61%	8%	1%	3%	58%	38%
Maryport	13%	1%	66%	4%	0%	4%	51%	48%
Whitehaven	5%	9%	44%	12%	3%	10%	64%	33%
Workington	11%	3%	48%	4%	1%	15%	67%	32%

Source : Roger Tym 2003

Whitehaven Town Centre

5.3.8 Whitehaven has a total of 50,100m² retail floorspace with 38,900m² in the town centre and 11,200m² edge of town centre. It is the only major shopping centre in the plan area. Its Georgian heritage and harbour frontage make it a particularly attractive shopping destination but there are problems of fragmentation caused by heavy central traffic circulation, servicing difficulties for retailers and a perceived shortfall in parking provision.

5.3.9 The end of coal mining in West Cumbria and the anticipated loss of the remaining commercial traffic in the port led to the setting up of the Whitehaven Town Centre and Harbour Initiative in 1989. Perhaps the most important result of the Initiative was the formation of the Whitehaven Development Company, a public/private sector partnership between the Council, Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners, English Partnerships, the County Council and BNFL to direct resources to, and to promote regeneration of, the town centre and harbourside.

5.3.10 Over the last ten years the Development Company has implemented the "Vision for Whitehaven", a programme of redevelopment, improvements and marketing. The fundamental concept of the "Vision" was the creation of an attractive area of permanent water behind the Old Quay and Old North Wall which has become a marina and the base for a reinvigorated fishing industry. The other elements are :

1. Good urban design in the management of the existing high quality environment and in environmental improvements.
2. Priority for pedestrians through traffic calming and traffic management
3. Maintaining a strong shopping function by protecting the main shopping street from competing uses and by permitting edge of town centre large store development at the gateways to the town centre where adjacent car parking provides both for the store itself and gives access to the town centre.
4. The town centre and harbour becoming a visitor attraction in its own right.
5. A town centre of mixed uses including housing, recreation and employment.
6. Convenient access for public transport, cyclists and car drivers including adequate car parking provision consistent with the general need to reduce car use

5.3.11

The implementation of the Vision by the Development Company has helped to transform the town from a commercial port to an attractive visitor destination and sub regional service centre. The Development Company retains an important delivery role but this is now complemented by the establishment of a Whitehaven Regeneration Programme under the auspices of the Urban Regeneration Company, West Lakes Renaissance. A review of the town centre development framework is to be carried out. The subsequent detailed proposals will build on the objectives as set out in TCN 1 and will be carried taken forward to adoption by the Council as a Development Plan Document as ~~an Action Plan~~ under the direction of Policy TCN 1.

POLICY TCN 1 : Whitehaven Town Centre Strategy

The role of Whitehaven Town Centre as a principal focus for shopping, commercial and tourism-based activities in the Borough will be promoted and protected. ~~An Action Plan will be prepared to provide a detailed spatial framework based on the following objectives~~ : The objectives within the Town Centre are to encourage:

1. **encouraging further shopping, commercial and tourism related development especially where it effects physical integration between the town centre, the harbourside and the Pow Beck valley**
2. **safeguarding of important gateways to the town centre and of links and vistas between the town centre and harbour and edge of town centre car parks within new development or redevelopment**
3. **environmental improvements and traffic management measures including pedestrian-priority areas in the main shopping streets and harbour links**
4. **improved and new strategic car parking facilities at the Swingpump Lane multi-storey car park, ~~the Bus Workshop site at Wellington Row,~~ and on land associated with the redevelopment of town centre periphery Development Opportunity Sites together with the retention and improvement of existing permanent surface car parks**
5. **a bus/rail interchange to serve the town centre**
6. **~~attention to a high quality of design, materials and appearance in all development, redevelopment and environmental works~~ to maintain the essential character of the town centre and harbour.**

5.3.12

In its approach to development and redevelopment in the town centre the Council will not be overly prescriptive. Shopping is the key activity which gives the centre its vitality and will be encouraged above other uses. At the same time there are other uses and facilities including banks, building societies, cafes, leisure and community facilities and living accommodation all of which also contribute to liveliness and viability. However, such uses should not dominate the shopping role of the centre: the Council will actively discourage non-retail development of ground floor frontages in the primary shopping area of King Street (see ~~4.3.10~~ 5.3.16) and will ensure that uses like takeaway hot food outlets and amusement centres are appropriately controlled (see ~~8.11~~ 5.3.28 and 5.3.29). Mixed residential and commercial development is a traditional feature of the town centre and can often be accommodated above retail premises. Other car-related uses like petrol filling stations, taxi ranks etc, are best located on the edge of the shopping

area where they are less likely to cause problems for pedestrians. Similarly, and where in accordance with Policy DEV 5, new large retail stores or retail warehouses will be expected to locate on the periphery but within easy walking distance of the town centre (See ~~4.3.9~~ 5.3.13 - 15). Such developments usually involve substantial car parking facilities which can contribute to the overall town centre provision and help reduce traffic congestion. Light industrial uses can also be accommodated in peripheral situations or on the harbourside if marine-related, but with appropriate safeguards. General or special industry use groups will not be acceptable because they would be likely to damage the town centre environment of the people who shop, work or live there or nearby. Again it should be stressed that Whitehaven town centre is a nationally important Conservation Area and there are two other local Conservation Areas nearby at High Street and Corkickle. Design issues in new development are therefore of great significance (see Policy TCN 10)

POLICY TCN 2 : Whitehaven Town Centre

In Whitehaven Town Centre planning permission will be granted for the following uses subject to other policies in the plan and provided that non-retail proposals are not detrimental to the main shopping function of the town centre:

Shops

Offices used by the public

Food and Drink outlets

Personal-service businesses

Hotels and Hostels

Community facilities open daily

Leisure and Recreation Facilities

Launderettes and dry cleaners

Houses and flats

Residential institutions

Car Parks

Public transport facilities

Marine-related development on the harbourside

~~**The boundary of the Town Centre is identified on the Proposals Map (Town Centre Inset)**~~

~~4.3.9~~

~~Land on the fringe of the town centre has been identified as the town centre periphery. This is land outside the historic core and is able to accommodate large retail stores and other~~

~~extensive land uses which provide services which are an integral part of an attractive town centre. In relation to the sequential test required by PPG 6 the town centre periphery is treated as if it were the town centre.~~

5.3.13 Policy DEV 5 sets out the sequential approach which will be applied when there are proposals for town centre uses development within Key Service Centres. Town centre uses include retail, leisure, entertainment facilities, intensive sport and recreation uses, offices, arts, culture and tourism developments and small scale community facilities. Such development should be located within the town centre boundary wherever possible. Only if no town centre sites are suitable can edge of centre sites be considered.

5.3.14 The protected historic built form and architecture of Whitehaven obviously places constraints on opportunities for larger retail schemes and other extensive land uses within the town centre boundaries. Land within easy walking distance of Whitehaven Town Centre has therefore been identified as 'Whitehaven Town Centre Periphery' on the proposals map (Town Centre Inset) and is considered by the Council to be the most suitable 'edge of town centre' areas in terms of Policy DEV 5 sequential approach. These areas are where the Council would prefer to direct any edge of centre development in order to support and contribute to regeneration strategies with the town.

5.3.15 The uses listed in Policy TCN3 which would potentially be subject to Policy DEV5 are offices, large retail stores / warehouses and leisure.

Policy TCN 3 : Whitehaven Town Centre Periphery

Development proposals for the following uses will be permitted in Whitehaven Town Centre Periphery, provided the requirements of Policies DEV6 TCN10, DEV5 and other plan policies are met:

Petrol Filling Stations
Taxi and vehicles hire business
Car showrooms
Car parks
Warehouses
Offices
Large retail stores/warehouses
Leisure

~~Provided that the requirements of Policies DEV 6 and TCN 10 are met and~~

The proposals must also be:

- 1 ~~the site is~~ easily accessed from the town centre by pedestrians, cyclists and people with impaired mobility;
- 2 ~~the site is~~ well related to town centre access roads and public transport facilities and is unlikely to add to traffic congestion within the town centre;
- 3 **and provide** adequate car parking ~~provision is made~~ in accordance with the standards set out Appendix 2

~~The boundary of the Town Centre Periphery is identified on the Proposals Map (Town Centre Inset)~~

5.3.16

The core shopping area of the town centre is along King Street between Market Place and Duke Street. Here retailing is the predominant use and the Council will resist the introduction of further non-retail uses at groundfloor level so that the lively shopping character of these important frontages is retained. The concentration of continuous shopping frontages is a major attraction to shoppers and should be maintained. King Street is, therefore, designated as the Prime Shopping Area within the terms of Policy TCN 4. There will still be an opportunity for the introduction of non-retail uses in this area at other floor levels and there are numerous opportunities in nearby streets subject to heavy pedestrian flows where such uses will be acceptable at groundfloor level.

Policy TCN 4 : The Prime Shopping Area

A Prime Shopping Area is designated in Whitehaven Town Centre as shown on the Proposals Map Inset within which continuous retail frontages will be sought and only retail outlets (Class A1) will be permitted in groundfloor premises.

Other Key Service Centres and Local Centres

5.3.17

Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom town centres are ranged between 3,000 and 5,200m². (net) shopping and commercial floorspace. Their importance is much more localised than that of Whitehaven although both Egremont and Millom possess a

wide range of service outlets in addition to convenience and durable goods shops. These town centres are more prone to leakage of expenditure to the larger retail developments, particularly food stores, and the Council is concerned to safeguard their future in the evolving sub-regional shopping context. It will therefore encourage new retail and service development to take place within the main central areas in a manner appropriate to the scale and character of each centre and the requirements of Policy DEV 5 will apply ~~will not support edge of town or out of town proposals unless it can be demonstrated that they would not have a weakening effect on the viability and vitality of the established shopping areas (Policy TCN 9).~~

POLICY TCN 5 : Other Key Service Centres ~~Town Centres and Local Centres~~

Proposals for retail and service development within the ~~established shopping areas of Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Local Centres~~ will be permitted subject to the requirements of Policies DEV5, TCN 10 and other plan policies.

5.3.18 The Council recognise that shops and services are essential to maintaining vitality and viability of our villages and surrounding rural communities. It will therefore support small scale developments which serve local needs and communities in the established shopping areas of local centres.

POLICY TCN 6: Local Centres

Proposals for retail and service development in local centres will be permitted within established shopping areas subject to other plan policies

5.3.19 At the same time the Council is mindful of the need for environmental improvements if these centres are to continue to perform their role as shopping and service providers to the local community and to attract visitors. A major post-bypass improvement scheme for Main Street, Egremont was undertaken in 1994 incorporating new surface treatments, street furniture and an enlarged Market area to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The Square at Cleator Moor was the subject of substantial refurbishment and landscaping to create an attractive focus to the town centre and similar improvements at the Market Square, Millom have recently been

completed. All three schemes benefited from European Structural Fund assistance and it is hoped to extend these improvements together with upgraded car parking, signage and other facilities to other parts of these centres during the plan period. Such improvements will incorporate the needs of people with impaired mobility and favour access to public transport facilities. Further guidance with regard to good shopfront design in Conservation Areas is provided in SPG3.

POLICY TCN 67 : Town Centre Improvements

~~The general environment within the shopping areas of Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and Local Centres will be improved by:~~ Development which improves the general environment within shopping areas of the Key and Local Service Centres will be permitted . These include proposals that:

1. ~~creating~~ new and enhanced pedestrian areas with improved access for people with disabilities;
2. ~~improving~~ car parks and access to public transport, and;
3. ~~building repair and~~ enhance shopfronts improvement schemes.

Town Centre Opportunity Sites

5.3.20

~~A number of s~~ Sites in the four main Whitehaven, Cleator Moor and Egremont town centres have been identified which are underused, vacant or derelict or where existing uses are not entirely compatible with their surroundings. There are a variety of development options and whilst the uses ascribed in Table TC2 are only intended for guidance they conform to the basic policy framework of the plan. In Whitehaven sites WTC 10 – 14 fall within the Whitehaven Town Centre Periphery (Policy TCN 3). Proposals for town centre uses on these sites will be required to comply with the sequential, needs, impact and accessibility tests as prescribed by Policy DEV5. Site reference numbers are marked on The Proposals Map ~~Whitehaven Town Centre Inset~~ in relation to Policy TCN 78.

Table TC2 : Town Centre Development Opportunity Sites

Whitehaven

	Site	Potential use or mix of uses	Area(ha)
WTC1	Quay Street Car Park West	Leisure/retail/office	0.3
WTC2	Mark House and The Park nightclub	Hotel/leisure/retail with ancillary residential Comprehensive development of the site as a hotel	0.25
WTC3	Old tyre depot and Harbour Commissioners Office	Leisure/office/residential	0.10
WTC4	Bus depot and old garage	Hotel/office/ retail / upper floor residential	0.18
WTC5	Bus Station and Garage	Office/car parking	0.28
WTC6	Old Dawnfresh factory site	Primarily harbour related particularly fishing/marina	1.41
WTC7	Old Studholme and Dixon garage	Residential/office	0.22
WTC8	Scrapyard Albion Street North	Car parking/retail	0.27
WTC9	Scrapyard and land south of Albion Street	Retail/office/residential	0.23
WTC10	Jacksons Timber Yard	Residential/office/retail	0.47
WTC11	Preston Street Garage	Office/residential	0.45
WTC12	BT depot	Office/residential/industry	0.90
WTC13	Ginns depot, Back Ginns housing and Border Engineering	Office/retail/car parking	3.0
WTC14	Coach Road	Office/residential/non food retail warehouse	1.27 0.63
WTC15	Harbour View	warehouse Residential	0.69
WTC16	Duke Pit	Residential/amenity	1.68

Egremont and Cleator Moor

ETC1	Land to rear of Main Street, Egremont	Retail/office/residential	0.88
CTC1	Market Square, Cleator Moor	Retail/residential/office	0.18

Policy TCN 7 8 : Town Centre Opportunity Development Sites

Proposals for the development of sites as indicated in Table TC2 will be permitted subject to Policies DEV 5, DEV 6 and TCN 10 and other plan policies.

Village and Neighbourhood Shopping

- 5.3.21 There will always be market opportunities for small, general retail outlets in the rural villages and for convenience trading in the larger new areas of housing development. However, these sectors have declined markedly in recent years as the new patterns of retailing have become established. Nevertheless the Council is mindful of the service they provide to those sections of the community who do not have access to a motor car or who are not frequently able to travel to the higher order centres and will seek to safeguard facilities through imposition of Policy SVC12. It will therefore also support proposals for new or extended floorspace provision including partial conversion of residential accommodation to retail use on a full or part-time basis. It will, however, take into account the effect on the amenity of nearby residents particularly in terms of late night opening and illuminated signage or floodlighting. Impact of development on the landscape will also be taken into consideration.

POLICY TCN 8 9 : Village and neighbourhood shopping

Proposals for small scale retail development in rural villages and in suburban areas of large new housing development to meet the needs of the local community will be permitted. The form of development will be expected to conform to the requirements of Policy ~~DEV 6~~ and TCN 10, and other plan policies and have regard to any development brief which may have been approved for the overall development.

Off ~~Out of~~ Centre Retailing

- 5.3.22 Proposals for out of centre large scale retail development must comply with Policy DEV5 and satisfy the sequential approach to location, needs, impact and accessibility tests which it prescribes. The Council does not consider that large store development is will be justified beyond the periphery edge of centre areas of Whitehaven town centre and the shopping areas of Cleator Moor, Egremont, Millom and or the Local Centres during the plan period. ~~The much needed regeneration of Whitehaven town centre and harbourside and the environmental improvements scheduled in the other centres would be seriously undermined if alternative large scale shopping facilities were to be approved in out of town locations. At the same time it should be noted that car ownership in these urban areas is relatively low and that many families rely on public transport for most of their shopping needs. Their interests would not be best served by an over emphasis on car borne shopping provision. It is~~

~~considered that the allowances for edge of centre development in Whitehaven by virtue of Policy TCN 3 and the existing permission for retailing at the Whitehaven Commercial Park will be sufficient to cater for large stores and retail warehouse developments during the plan period without jeopardising important objectives of the plan.~~

5.3.23

~~Should the supply of town centre and edge of centre acceptable sites for this purpose become exhausted during the plan period other sites within existing settlement boundaries may be considered in accordance with Policies DEV 5 and DEV 4. It will be necessary to show that the effect on the existing town centre is acceptable and any application should be accompanied by retail and traffic impact assessments. Developers should explore the possibility of developing on derelict land or rundown sites with good standard road access and access to public transport services and of sufficient size to accommodate adequate parking provision. The Council will not accept proposals which seek to utilise land allocated for residential other purposes in the plan where this would necessitate further releases of such land to compensate for their loss. In addition the Council may seek the use of an agreement under s.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in accordance with the provisions of Policy DEV 8 to overcome any planning objection associated with these forms of development.~~

POLICY TCN 9 : Off Centre Retailing

~~In accordance with the sequential test of PPG 6 and Structure Plan Policy L50 proposals for out of town large-scale retail development will not be permitted unless there are no alternative suitable town centre or town centre periphery sites for this purpose. In such cases proposals will be assessed against the requirements of Policies DEV 6 and TCN 10 and the following criteria:~~

- ~~1. the cumulative effect of the proposed development together with other recent or proposed developments should not significantly affect the vitality or viability of existing shopping centres~~
- ~~2. the proposed development should be within settlement limits or on a brownfield site~~
- ~~3. the proposal should not involve land allocated in the plan for residential use~~
- ~~4. the site should be served by a road system and car~~

~~parking provision capable of accommodating anticipated traffic flows (including heavy goods vehicles)~~

~~5. the site should be well served by public transport and cycle routes~~

~~In addition the Council may require the use of an agreement under s.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in accordance with the provisions of Policy DEV 7 to overcome any planning objection associated with the above criteria.~~

Design Issue

5.3.24

In all situations the Council will expect new town centre and shopping development to incorporate high standards of architectural design including external facing materials and signage which take account of the scale and character of adjoining property and the general situation. Development which would lead to the loss of locally important open space, trees or buildings will not be supported. It will also expect good access for all town centre users with separate servicing arrangements for vehicles wherever practicable. Car parking provision will be required in accordance with Council standards but in town centres where dedicated parking areas are not a feasible or desirable proposition the Council may accept a commuted payment for additional parking spaces to be provided on public car parks in lieu. However, such arrangements will only be required where significant new floorspace is proposed. The Council will expect particular attention to all these aspects of design in Conservation Areas (see Policies TCN 1(6), ENV29 [26](#) and ENV32 [29](#)). Guidance on the design of shopfronts in Whitehaven town centre is set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance 3 and the Council intends to produce further guidance on design, signage and access issues in town centres in due course.

POLICY TCN 10 : Town Centre Design

New town centre and shopping development will be expected to meet the requirements of ~~Policies DEV 6~~ **other plan policies** and comply with the following additional requirements :

1. high standards of design taking into account the relationship of the development with the surrounding area and properties in terms of scale and character and the requirements of Conservation Area/Listed

Building policies of the plan where appropriate

2. **no loss of important areas of open space, amenity sites, sites of wildlife importance, groups of trees or buildings which are of intrinsic significance to the locality**
3. **adequate access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with impaired mobility, separated wherever practicable from vehicle access**
4. **an appropriate level of car parking provision in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix 1, where necessary achieved through a s.106 Agreement**

Retailing Employment Sites

5.3.25

There is a trend for some retailing to emerge from manufacturing units on employment sites. Whilst a level of ancillary retail trade is acceptable, where it becomes the principal activity problems can ensue, usually associated with parking and disturbance to adjoining users. The Council is particularly anxious, however, to ensure that priority is given to industrial and high-tech uses on employment sites in order to achieve its economic objectives and it will therefore not support proposals for retail warehousing on such sites.

POLICY TCN 11 : Retailing on Employment Sites

~~The Council will resist p~~**Proposals for retail warehousing on existing employment sites or on those which are designated for employment use in the local plan will not be permitted.**

Street Markets

5.3.26

There are small weekly markets at Cleator Moor and Egremont and a larger twice-weekly market at Whitehaven. Such facilities are highly valued: they extend the retail choice for local consumers and add vibrancy and colour to the town centres. The Council is keen to encourage the market function and will bring forward proposals to improve the general setting of the established market sites as resources allow. The Market Place at Whitehaven has already featured in the first phase of environmental improvements in the town centre and the market areas at Cleator Moor and Egremont have also been upgraded.

POLICY TCN 12 : Street Markets

The Council will protect the established markets in the plan area and encourage the establishment of further such facilities. It will also bring forward environmental enhancement schemes to improve the general setting of markets as resources allow.

Non Retail Uses in Shopping Centres

- 5.3.27** Whilst certain non-retail uses are acceptable at groundfloor level within the main shopping areas they can have the effect of creating dead frontages and so reducing the visual appeal of the centre. Thus it is important that when such uses occupy premises with a shop window, displays appropriate to a shopping area are incorporated.

POLICY TCN 13 : Non Retail uses in Town Centres

Permitted non-retail uses in premises with a shop window will be required to incorporate a suitable window-display.

- 5.3.28** Food and drink uses are appropriate to most shopping frontages adding to the overall attractiveness of shopping areas. They will normally be acceptable except in Whitehaven's Prime Shopping Area (see Policy TCN 4). At the same time, the extra activity associated with such uses, especially take-away hot food establishments, does sometimes present problems such as additional noise, litter, smell and casual parking. The Council will need to be satisfied that sufficient efforts have been taken to minimise such difficulties and/or it may apply limiting conditions for this purpose. It will not usually grant permission for such uses where they adjoin residential property, including residential accommodation unconnected with the business on the upper floors of the premises and will require full details of all external chimneys and flues to be submitted as part of a planning application.

POLICY TCN 14 : Food and Drink uses in Town Centres

Proposals for food and drink uses in shopping areas will be permitted subject to the requirements of ~~Policies DEV 6 and TCN 10~~ and other plan policies with particular attention to :

- 1. the likely impact on the character and amenity of the general area and on nearby residential**

properties as a result of noise, disturbance, litter, smell, sewer discharge or visual intrusion

2. restrictions on late-night opening where late-night activity associated with the proposed use would be harmful to the general character and amenity of the area
3. any venting of the premises not causing undue nuisance to adjoining occupiers

~~The Council will require an appropriately designed and sited external litter bin to be provided in association with takeaway food outlets which must be emptied by the operators~~ will be required in association with takeaway food outlets.

5.3.29 Proposals for amusement centres or arcades will be dealt with in a similar fashion to those for food and drink uses. The Council will normally accept such uses in the main shopping areas but will expect the design of frontage and signing to conform to the special requirements of Conservation Areas. Problems can exist with these uses close to residential properties, churches or schools where they may cause disturbance and such locations should be avoided.

POLICY TCN 15 : Amusement Centres

Proposals for amusement centres in town centres will be permitted so long as the requirements of Policies ~~DEV 6~~ and TCN 10 and other plan policies are met and

- 1 the likely impact on the general character and amenity of the areas as a result of noise, disturbance or visual intrusion is acceptable
2. the location is not in close proximity to residential, religious or educational property
3. opening hours are restricted where late-night activity associated with the proposed use would be harmful to the general character and amenity of the area

Garden Centres

5.3.30 Garden centres usually cannot operate within shopping areas because of their extensive plant-growing and storage

requirements. Such uses will be acceptable within the settlement boundaries so long as they comply with parking and highway safety criteria and do not present any undue disturbance to adjoining occupiers of land particularly in residential areas. Exceptionally, where a special case can be made and subject to the other policies of the plan including Policy DEV 5 **6** consideration will be given to such uses on the periphery of settlements.

POLICY TCN 16 : Garden Centres

The development of new garden centres will be permitted within a settlement development boundary established in accordance with Policy DEV 54** or exceptionally on sites adjacent to these limits where the development meets the requirements of Policy DEV-6 other plan policies**

5.4 TOURISM

5.4.1 The plan area possesses substantial tourism resources which are largely under-used and under exploited. These are based on the natural advantages of both coast and countryside, a rich and diverse cultural heritage and a fascinating industrial history which extends from early stone axe factories to the nuclear age. Against this are obstacles to the development of tourism in the area. Its image to the outside world is poor, based in part on the effects of industrial dereliction, the various perceptions of Sellafield and the nuclear industry and lack of a specific identity. Peripherality is a problem, even with the many thousands of visitors each year to the Lake District National Park only a few miles away. There is also a cultural resistance to a customer focused and traditionally poorly paid employment sector. Associated with this is a lack of properly interpreted attractions, a poor range of accommodation and other facilities for tourists and a general lack of self-belief amongst local people in West Cumbria as a tourist destination. However over the last 10 years attitudes have been slowly changing and tourism is now an important part of the Copeland economy. In 2002 it is estimated that 1.2 million visitors spent some £61million and supported 3300 jobs (1620 full time equivalent)

5.4.2 The government's advice note PPG 21 recognises the importance of tourism as a contributor to the local economy and employment and expects local plan policies generally to be aimed at facilitating tourism development. Since it often depends on high quality environments such development can act as a positive force for environmental protection and

enhancement, for instance in urban regeneration schemes or as part of countryside conservation strategies (PPG 7). This may not always be the case, however, and the planning system must play its part in ensuring that the impact of tourism development is sustainable ([see Policy DEV1](#)) in the long term and that design quality is improved. Similar requirements are set by the Cumbria Joint Structure Plan Policy EM43-[15](#).

Tourism Strategies

5.4.3 Since the late 1980s the Council, together with other local authorities, the private sector and the Cumbria Tourist Board have promoted tourism in West Cumbria through a marketing partnership. More recently the NWDA Regional Tourism Strategy focuses in Cumbria on promoting the well known "attack" brand of the Lake District and using this to encourage visitors to go to "slipstream" markets which can develop as destinations in their own right. The Western Lake District is a slipstream brand promoted both by the Cumbria Tourist Board and by the Western Lake District Tourism Marketing Partnership supported by funding from the NWDA, the EU Objective 2 Programme and partners. Since 1992 this partnership approach has helped visitor numbers rise by over 50% and tourism dependent jobs increase from 2600 to 3300 in 2002. The aim is to continue to increase visitors to West Cumbria by 5% a year representing in Copeland another 500 jobs over the next ten years

5.4.4 The Regional Strategy also identifies particular opportunities for the Cumbria coast to develop as a cruise ship destination. Work on the technical viability of using the West Cumbria ports is ongoing

5.4.5 In the New Visions for Furness and West Cumbria one of the visions is that of "Coastal Renaissance" which would build a major tourism product based on the high landscape value and maritime and industrial heritage. A key project linked to this in Copeland is the ongoing development of the harbour and the development of the coastal fringe being implemented through the Whitehaven Regeneration Partnership

Visitor Attractions

5.4.6 Over the last few years partnership activities have led to a number of schemes to increase the stock and variety of attractions in the area. The Beacon and Rum Story in Whitehaven, and development at Florence Mine, Egremont and

Haig Pit, Whitehaven are examples which build on rich maritime, mining and historical themes. They add to the three principal attractions in the Borough at Muncaster Castle, the Ravenglass-Eskdale Railway (both in the National Park) and the Sellafield Visitor Centre. In Millom the Tourist Information Centre and Folk Museum have relocated to new premises in the old station. All these generate visitor spend and welcome economic activity. The Council will therefore encourage further, sensitive development which enhances or complements existing attractions and their facilities.

POLICY TSM 1 : Visitor Attractions

~~The Council will protect and promote e~~**Existing** tourist attractions **will be protected and promoted** and ~~will permit~~ development which contributes to their fuller interpretation, appearance or means of enjoyment **will be permitted** provided that it does not conflict with the principles of sustainable development set out in Policy ~~DEV 6~~ **other plan policies**.

5.4.7 At the same time in furtherance of the "Coastal Renaissance" theme and in recognition of the benefits a major development such as the Eden Project in Cornwall can bring the Council will encourage the investigation of further potential for tourist attractions throughout the plan area. All major proposals will be considered in the light of Policy DEV & **9**. However particular potential exists in the locations set out in Table TSM 1 below :

Table TS1 : Tourism Opportunity Sites

TOS1	<u>Hodbarrow</u> where the combination of water sports and nature interest need not be incompatible; on the fringes of the National Park
TOS2	development associated with urban fringe leisure and recreational use of the <u>Ehen / Keekle</u> valleys
TOS3	<u>Whitehaven Coastal Fringe</u> linking Whitehaven harbour with Haig Pit and the St Bees Heritage Coast
TOS4	associated with reclaimed slagbank at <u>Lowca</u> , the Micklam brickworks and the coast to the north

5.4.8 **Opportunities within these locations will be expected to focus on activities and facilities to assist interpretation and quiet enjoyment in undeveloped sections rather than hard development.** Whilst there will be a need for public sector

support for infrastructure the Council would expect projects to attract the private sector in their initiation and operation. It would also be desirable for local residents to benefit from new attractions. However, in all such development it is determined to balance economic benefit with the protection of amenity and will be particularly concerned to safeguard important areas of countryside and coast from development or over-exploitation. Suitable large-scale schemes will be expected to locate within or in close proximity to settlements, be well related to the main highway network and to incorporate all necessary services on site. The amenity of nearby residents will be an important consideration along with landscaping, building design, conservation and wildlife interests together with overall scale related to the site.

POLICY TSM 2 : Tourism Opportunity Sites

Proposals for large scale tourist development, particularly those which can also provide recreational opportunities for the local population will be permitted in the areas referred to in Table TS1 so long as they accord with the principles of sustainable design set out in Policy DEV 6 7 and in particular do not compromise the qualities and character of the undeveloped coast or public access thereto

Tourism Accommodation and Facilities

5.4.9 Apart from static holiday caravans there is a significant shortfall in all types of tourist accommodation in the plan area. The Council will, therefore, seek to encourage new development and the expansion of existing premises, particularly those which also bring employment benefits to the local community.

5.4.10 There is a need for a high quality hotel in Whitehaven and a number of the Town Centre Development Opportunity sites would be appropriate locations. The Council will support new serviced accommodation within the urban development boundary as well as proposals for extending existing hotel, guest house and bed and breakfast establishments

POLICY TSM 3 : Serviced Accommodation

Proposals for new or expanded hotel and other serviced accommodation will be permitted so long as the proposal would not conflict with sustainable design policies set out in Policy DEV 6 7 and the site is within the settlement

boundaries prescribed by Policy DEV 4 4 or adjoins is providing for an extension to existing serviced accommodation or related development which is well-related to the main highway network

5.4.11 Within the plan area there are a total of 840 static holiday and 210 touring caravan pitches with valid planning permission. Camping is allowed for up to 28 days in any twelve month period without need for planning permission but areas are set aside for this purpose on most of the established caravan sites. In addition there are a number of certificated sites for the Caravan Club members' use on an occasional basis. Whilst some caravan sites offer holiday chalet accommodation the majority of chalets tend to be reserved for residential use. The exception to this rule is Brockwood Park in the Whicham Valley which offers high standard holiday chalet accommodation.

5.4.12 Proposals for new caravan and/or chalet sites for visitor use will be carefully assessed. Perhaps because they have generally expanded in numbers in coastal locations where landscaping is difficult to establish and have usually involved a sizeable residential quota existing sites have not proved entirely satisfactory. Most new potential is expected to be identified in inland situations and consents will normally be restricted to seasonal occupation.

POLICY TSM 4 : Holiday Caravans Chalets and Camping

Proposals for new holiday caravan, chalet and/or camping sites or extensions to existing sites will be approved subject to conforming with the requirements of sustainable design set out in Policy DEV 6 7 and satisfying the following criteria :

- 1 the proposed site is well related to an existing settlement and the main highway network**
- 2. the proposed site possesses a high level of natural screening which, where necessary, is capable of reinforcement and extension**
- 3 the proposal does not adversely affect areas of undeveloped coastline**

5.4.13 Caravan storage sites are useful facilities that help to remove caravans from residential areas where they are often unsightly. Sites need to be secure and well-screened throughout the year and they should preferably be located close to settlements or within established building groups.

POLICY TSM 5 : Caravan Storage

Proposals for the storage of caravans will be permitted which meet the sustainable design requirements of Policy DEV 6 7 so long as the site:

- 1. is adequately screened all year round**
- 2. is well related to a settlement or building group without significant threat to the living conditions of nearby residents**

5.4.14 As noted in ~~3~~4.9.3 the groups of “beach bungalows” between St Bees and Braystones are an historic legacy of seaside, holiday accommodation. The Council accepts this use but feels that rebuilding and/or conversion of these properties to permanent dwellings does not accord with the Development Strategy and Policy DEV 67. It will allow the replacement of holiday chalets on a like for like basis, ie without substantial additions, underpinned by a legal agreement to prevent future use of the property as a sole means of residence.

POLICY TSM 6 : Beach Chalets

Planning permission will only be granted for the replacement of an existing holiday chalet on the coast where the applicant enters into a legally binding agreement with the Council to restrict occupation solely for holiday purposes. No new beach chalets will be allowed

5.4.15 In addition to main visitor attractions and accommodation, facilities such as restaurants, pubs, cafes and tea-rooms are essential to a successful tourism industry. The Council will support any such proposals in appropriate situations including the expansion of existing facilities subject to the requirements of plan policies.

~~POLICY TSM 7 : Tourism Related Facilities~~

~~**Proposals for new or expanded tourist-related facilities such as restaurants, pubs, cafes and tea-rooms including conversions will normally be permitted so long as the requirements of Policies DEV 6 and other policies in the local plan are met.**~~

5.5 RURAL AREAS

5.5.1 In accordance with Regional Planning Guidance Policies RU1 and RU2 the Local Plan supports the rural economy by looking favourably on employment diversification which helps to maintain viable and sustainable communities and respects the local environment.

5.5.2 The Council's employment policies are directed towards most new development taking place in the higher order centres close to the heaviest concentration of population and to the main communication route. The towns of Millom and Egremont in particular serve the rural hinterlands of mid and south Copeland and Policy EMP 1 sites are allocated here. In both cases regeneration proposals under the Countryside Agency Market Towns Initiative are being taken forward by local partnerships

5.5.3 The Council is also mindful of the needs of the smaller rural communities and will consider favourably proposals for appropriately scaled employment related development in rural settlements so long as it is compatible with surrounding uses and complies with the requirements of Structure Plan Policy EM12 14 and Local Plan Policies DEV 1 and DEV 6 7. This could include office and service sector development as well as small workshop schemes. There is too, scope for the conversion of large country houses or institutional buildings to office and research establishments and the conversion of agricultural buildings to light industrial, tourism and service use. In accordance with Policy HSG17 the Council will adopt a sequential approach to conversions in the countryside giving preference to employment use over residential use. ~~The Council is mindful of central government advice in recent circulars and PPG7 and will look at each such proposal on merit but will generally maintain a policy of restraint in the countryside. Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a new farm building has been constructed with the intention of early conversion to another use the history of the building will be taken into account.~~

5.5.4 Small scale tourist attractions in the rural areas, perhaps involving building conversion, may also be acceptable. Proposals must satisfy general requirements as regards the protection of important landscapes and amenity and not give rise to unacceptable parking problems or traffic generation. Within the changing context for agriculture there is a great deal of scope for farmers to diversify into tourism-related development but the Council will take great care in the control of all development in the countryside. It is in itself one of the area's

major attractions. Proposals for new building on isolated sites in the open countryside will not be sanctioned.

- 5.5.5** The Council is mindful of central government advice in recent circulars and PPG7 and will look at each such proposal on merit but will generally maintain a policy of restraint in the countryside. Where there is reasonable cause to believe that a new farm building has been constructed with the intention of early conversion to another use the history of the building will be taken into account. Proposals for new building on isolated sites in the open countryside will not be sanctioned.

NB: Wording of Paragraphs 5.5.3 to 5.5.5 is reordered from paragraphs 4.5.3 and 4.5.4 (1st Deposit Version)

POLICY RUR 1 : Employment use in Rural Areas

Proposals to convert buildings to employment use or to introduce small-scale ancillary development for employment purposes in rural areas will be permitted so long as the requirements of Policies ~~DEV 1 and DEV 6~~ other plan policies are met and

- 1. the building for conversion is structurally sound and capable of conversion without major rebuilding, extensions or remodelling of the existing fabric**
- 2. the character of the building for conversion is retained if traditionally constructed with existing features of interest and external facing materials incorporated into the design of conversion work**
- 3 the use would be compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape or built environment, and**
- 4 the use would not have a significant adverse traffic impact**

Where it is likely that the proposal could give rise to the need for replacement buildings, which may have a harmful effect on the landscape, ~~the Council will take this into account and may impose~~ a condition withdrawing permitted development rights for that particular agricultural unit or holding may be imposed

- ~~4.5.4 Small scale tourist attractions in the rural areas, perhaps involving building conversion, may also be acceptable. Proposals must satisfy general requirements as regards the protection of important landscapes and amenity and not give~~

~~rise to unacceptable parking problems or traffic generation. Within the changing context for agriculture there is a great deal of scope for farmers to diversify into tourism-related development but the Council will take great care in the control of all development in the countryside. It is in itself one of the area's major attractions. Proposals for new building on isolated sites in the open countryside will not be sanctioned.~~

~~POLICY RUR 2 : Rural Tourism Attractions~~

~~The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals for small-scale tourist attractions in the rural areas so long as they accord with the principles of sustainable design set out in Policy DEV 6 and the proposed site is part of an established building group~~