Introduction

Over the past few years Allerdale Borough Council has been working on the production of a new Local Plan for the area of Allerdale that lies outside the National Park.

The new Plan will determine how future development will shape your community and outlines the spatial strategy for the area and the planning policies that will be used to manage development proposals through the planning application process.

We produced an ‘issues and options’ document and consulted on it in 2006 with an additional consultation on an updated document in 2009. During these two periods of consultation we gathered a wide range of feedback from local communities, businesses and organisations on the emerging vision and objectives of the Borough. Together with national policy and local evidence these views and comments have helped to shape our ‘preferred options’ for the future of Allerdale.

This is a summary of the ‘preferred options’ for the Local Plan Core Strategy. It is a consultation document and the Council would like your views on the options and questions presented.

We are also consulting on our ‘preferred options’ for the Local Plan Development Management Policies and other associated assessments and welcome your views on these as well. All documents are available on our website at www.allerdale.gov.uk/localplan.
Core Strategy

The Core Strategy will be the principal document of the Allerdale Local Plan and the most important, setting out the strategic vision of how Allerdale is expected to evolve over the next fifteen years.

The Core Strategy illustrates the Council’s vision, strategic objectives and the broad spatial strategy to guide future development and growth in Allerdale, it does not set out site-specific proposals. This document will be the starting point for the determination of planning applications and will be supported by other documents relating to the allocation of land and more detailed development management policies. The structure of the Core Strategy is illustrated in the diagram below.

It will guide the aspirations of not only Allerdale Borough Council but also other key service providers and stakeholders, whose input will be essential to the successful implementation of the strategy.

Each policy within the Core Strategy is linked directly to other policy areas, national policy, evidence, strategic objectives and includes reference to Council strategies. Some cross-referencing to other policies in the development plan is also provided, but it should be noted that all policies within the development plan are mutually dependent and should be read together as a whole.
Vision

The vision is key to what Allerdale is trying to achieve in the future.

By 2028 Allerdale’s communities will be sustainable, prosperous, safe, healthy and vibrant. The economy will be strong, diversified and well connected, with a growing and highly skilled population, with high employment, building on skills and opportunities in the nuclear, energy and tourism sectors.

It will be a place that is adaptable to the challenges of climate change, has a diverse and extensive network of green infrastructure, unspoilt landscape and coastline, accessible for all, with a natural environment that protects and delivers areas rich in biodiversity.

It will be a place where all sections of society have access to affordable, well designed homes designed to meet a range of needs, close to jobs, services and public transport, where historic environments are protected and enhanced and sustainable development, investment and successful regeneration has created prosperous towns supported by sustainable rural communities.

The vision for Allerdale is supported by area based visions for each of the main settlements and the rural areas, as well as key objectives that are needed to deliver the overall vision. The vision and objectives were developed over a number of years in consultation with Allerdale communities and using up-to-date evidence to identify the main issues.

The rest of the plan includes a number of strategic and topic based policies that are designed to deliver these visions and objectives while also following national guidance and being developed using robust and up-to-date evidence.
Core Strategy Structure

The Core Structure is a long document, however, as we would like as many people as possible to be involved in its development we have produced this summary document and the following table to give a snapshot of each section to enable you more quickly find areas of interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>7-14</td>
<td>Includes information on the role and function of the Core Strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial Portrait</td>
<td>15-25</td>
<td>Sets the scene for the plan and establishing issues that need to be tackled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision and Objectives</td>
<td>26-29</td>
<td>Sets out the issues the vision for the future of Allerdale and objectives of how we will get there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Policies</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>Provides details of overarching importance, establishing the central themes of the plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial Policies</td>
<td>46-67</td>
<td>Sets out the level and distribution of future growth that is required to meet our objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area Policies</td>
<td>68-87</td>
<td>Draws together the issues of importance for each of the areas in Allerdale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>89-166</td>
<td>Sets out the key policies to help us meet the housing needs of the current and future communities within Allerdale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>117-162</td>
<td>Includes the key policies to help Allerdale achieve sustainable economic development and reach its economic aspirations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>163-171</td>
<td>Sets out the essential policy to ensure that we are able to provide and support a sustainable transport network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Environment</td>
<td>173-190</td>
<td>Sets out our approach to design and the key principles for development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Environment</td>
<td>191-217</td>
<td>Includes a number of policies to ensure that the environment is protected and enhanced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and Implementation</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>How we will help to deliver our policies and chart the progress to meeting the plan vision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout this summary we have included page references to the full Core Strategy Preferred Options document. This will enables you to find full policies, explanations and read about the alternative approaches that we have considered.
Strategic Policies

The strategic policies set out the core principles of the plan to provide a clear focus to help the sustainable growth of Allerdale and therefore, deliver our vision and objectives.

S1 - Sustainable development principles
The preferred approach aims to promote sustainable development as a core principle. It seeks to ensure that new development within Allerdale is of a high standard, sustainable and sympathetic to the needs of both local communities and the environment.

Page 33

S2 - Adapting and mitigating the effects of Climate Change
Our preferred policy option seeks to ensure that new development contributes towards the reduction of carbon emissions, and that new development seeks to adapt to those aspects of climate change that are unavoidable.

Page 37

S3 - Delivering a Sustainable and Diverse Local Economy
The preferred approach sets out a key objective of the Local Plan to facilitate Allerdale’s economic strategy to ensure that we successfully grow and diversify the Borough’s economy.

Page 40

S4 - Developer Contributions
The selected policy option provides greater certainty for developers in terms of the intended use and scope of planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy. Setting out the key tools to ensure the delivery of infrastructure required to support the overall development of sustainable communities.

Page 43
Spatial Strategy

The spatial strategy is central to guiding Allerdale’s growth over the plan period and therefore crucial to delivering the vision and objectives of the Plan. The Strategy sets the framework for growth and development across Allerdale outlining the level of growth, our hierarchy for service provision and investment and, the spatial distribution of housing and employment growth.

S5 - Level of Growth

Our preferred approach sets out the growth of both housing stock and employment land that is required in order to meet our strategic objectives over the plan period. In order to achieve our vision and objectives the Plan must make provision for 4,560 dwellings (304 per year) and at least 45 hectares of employment land (3 hectares per year) over the plan period.

Page 46

S6 - Settlement Hierarchy

The role of this policy is to set out those settlements where growth and investment will be focussed. The central strategy ensures that the majority of development will be located in the existing urban centres that provide the best range of services, employment opportunities and access to public transport. The strategy also recognises that smaller rural settlements need to remain sustainable and where appropriate should have the opportunity for small-scale development.

Principal Service Centre - Workington

Key Service Centres - Maryport, Cockermouth, Wigton, Silloth and Aspatria

Local Service Centres - Abbeytown, Allonby, Brigham, Broughton, Broughton Moor, Dearham, Flimby, Great Clifton, Kirkbride, Prospect and Thursby.


Page 51
S7 - Role of Settlements
This policy provides more information on the role of each tier of the settlement hierarchy.
Page 59

S8 - Settlement Limits
This policy outlines the role of the rural areas in the future sustainable development of the Borough. It clearly sets out how development will be managed in the rural areas by explaining what is accepted and promoted in the open countryside.
Page 62
S9 - Distribution of Growth

Provides our preferred approach to distributing the overall growth between the four settlement levels and is central to the delivery of the strategy. The level of growth has been allocated to each level as follows;

Principle Centre - 35%
Key Service Centres - 39%
Local Service Centres - 20%
Rural Villages - 6%

Page 65

S10 – 15 Area Based Policies

Given the diversity of issues and opportunities across the Borough, the preferred option was to develop a series of sub area policies to highlight and address the strategic priorities of each locality, and provides a focus for neighbourhood planning.

Workington - p69  Wigton - p78
Cockermouth - p72  Silloth - p81
Maryport - p75  Aspatria - p84
Housing

Key aim – ‘creating a balanced housing market’

**HO1 - Balanced Housing Market**

Our preferred policy seeks to ensure that development results in the creation of a healthy and balanced housing market. It provides a focus for the rest of the housing chapter and a clear translation of the key chapter aim.

Page 91

**HO2 - Affordable Housing**

The preferred approach seeks to address the shortage of affordable housing and maximise its delivery by requiring a proportion of on-site affordable provision from residential development.

Within Key Service Centres housing development of 10 dwellings or more will be required to make provision for at least:

- Workington and Maryport: 20%
- Cockermouth: 40%
- Wigton: 20%

Outside of the Key Service Centres housing development of 5 dwellings or more will be required to make provision for at least:

- Workington and Maryport: 20%
- Cockermouth: 40%
- Wigton: 30%

Page 93
HO3 - Housing Mix

This policy encourages developers to contribute positively to the housing mix by providing the types of housing that are needed, using local evidence.

Page 99
HO4 - Housing Renewal
Our approach seeks to encourage and facilitate housing renewal in areas of low demand housing and environmental deterioration. This approach recognises that for some areas of the Borough housing renewal is an issue that needs to be tackled in order to ensure our communities have access to good quality housing stock.
Page 104

HO5 - Rural exception sites
This policy complements policy HO2 (Affordable Housing) and aims to help deliver affordable rural housing by allowing sites where normally open market housing would not be allowed. There are a number of conditions which need to be met for a scheme to be considered acceptable.
Page 105

HO6 - Dwellings in the open countryside
This provides support for single dwellings in the open countryside where it would meet an essential need for workers in agriculture or forestry.
Page 108

HO7 - Elderly needs housing
Our policy approach ensures a proactive stance to promote and encourage the delivery of elderly needs housing throughout the Borough. Furthermore, the policy aims to provide a flexible approach to the range of needs.
Page 111

HO8 - Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Show People
This policy option provides specific details to ensure that the housing needs of Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show people are met. It outlines the circumstances and details to enable the Council to assess applications and identify suitable sites.
Page 114
Economy

Key Aim – 'sustainable economic development'

**EC1 - Location of employment land**

The preferred strategy ensures enough land of sufficient quality is available to meet the future employment requirements; giving consideration to all of the Borough’s employment needs. It sets out a hierarchy of available sites to help raise the quality of employment land on offer by enabling the prioritisation of investment and improvement.

The policy emphasises the key role of strategic sites in Allerdale’s economic future. It provides support for specific commercial clusters helping to facilitate the development of certain industries such as nuclear and related supply chain industries. The policy provides direction on the role of strategic sites such as Lillyhall, Port of Workington and Derwent Howe in delivering the important employment opportunities into the future, and promotes the role of other locally important sites in delivering the spatial strategy and meeting the needs of the whole of Allerdale.

Page 120

**EC2 - Employment allocations**

The strategy seeks to maintain existing employment sites and allocations until these are reviewed through the Site Allocations Document. The approach also supports landless growth by the extension and intensification of existing employment sites, and is designed to ensure efficient and sustainable use of land by restricting employment related developments out with existing sites and allocations.

Page 127

**EC3 - Rural economy and enterprise**

The preferred policy clearly sets out our desire to enable and encourage sustainable rural enterprise and diversification through the support of the rural economy. It serves to reiterate the objectives to protect the countryside and landscapes from harmful developments. Specific support is given for farm diversification and small scale businesses. Particular encouragement is given to the provision of businesses which serve local and community needs and to ‘work hubs’, improving the sustainability of rural settlements in the lower tiers whilst protecting the open countryside from unfettered development.

Page 131
EC4 - Skills and education

This is a key policy within the economy section, and the preferred option promotes the role and continued growth of the Energy Coast campus centred on Energus and Lakes College. In addition there is policy promoting the need to improve the quality of education facilities and how they are accessed, especially in rural areas.

Page 135

EC5 - Town centre and retail

This is a wide ranging policy designed to promote the vitality and viability of Allerdale’s town centres. The preferred policy establishes a hierarchy of centres with Workington as the principal retail centre followed by Maryport, Cockermouth and Wigton. Aspatria and Silloth are classified as smaller local service centres.

The importance of rural services is also recognised with policy to protect existing services and promote multi use of community facilities. The policy also seeks to ensure that retail, leisure and visitor development is accommodated in existing town centres rather than out of town, and that development enhances public realm and accessibility.

Page 138

EC6 - Tourism and leisure

The preferred approach promotes the creation, enhancement and expansion of tourism, cultural and leisure attractions and accommodation. While the emphasis on town centre locations remains, tourism in rural locations is also encouraged. Key projects are supported and promoted including: Derwent Forest, Roman Maryport, Hadrian’s Wall, AONB, Derwent Valley and Silloth Green.

Page 143
EC7 - Derwent forest

This policy is specifically designed to address the specific opportunities and challenges of the Derwent Forest site. It provides policy material in support of the development of Derwent Forest, ensuring that any potential development should maximising economic and social benefits, while taking account of its sensitive setting in open countryside and the wealth of biodiversity which exists on the site.

Page 148

EC8 – Stand alone renewable or low carbon technology

The preferred approach to our renewable energy policy follows government priorities for development of renewable resources and closely follows national planning policy in supporting and promoting renewable energy generation. Accordingly, the policy adopts a criteria based approach to encourage proposals to come forward to help meet renewable energy targets within Allerdale where they are acceptable. This approach works in conjunction with other Core Strategy policies to ensure the maximum level of resource is harnessed while minimising impact and where required provides scope for mitigation.

An additional section of the policy is provided to ensure that within the AONB and heritage setting renewable schemes are in keeping, and of scale that incurs minimal impact.

Page 152

EC9 - Nationally significant infrastructure and EC10 - New nuclear at Sellafield

Although Allerdale will not be the consenting authority for projects of national significance, there is potential that the Borough will be involved in proposals in the future. Given this, the policy provides details to help guide our future contribution.

Page 157
Transport

Key Aim – ‘sustainable transport and accessibility’

TR1 - Transport principles

The preferred approach sets out the strategy to enable reduced transport emissions and together with other policies it seeks to ensure sustainability within new development. Furthermore, it seeks to encourage greater levels of healthy transports modes, while also encouraging integration between development, the public transport network, access for all and appropriate levels of car parking.

The policy also includes material to support rural exceptions, so that it does not inappropriately constrain suitable or essential development in rural areas.

Page 165

TR2 - Supporting and safeguarding strategic infrastructure

This policy provides support for strategic transport developments and aims to ensure the future development of known schemes is safeguarded.

Page 167
Built Environment

Key Aim – ‘good design, protection and enhancement’

**BE1 - Design and Development Principles**

This preferred policy promotes high standards of design and contains key design and development principles that will be used to guide all development. This is a key policy that will help us meet our key objectives, such as creating high quality local environments and combating the impacts of climate change.

Page 175

**BE2 - Previously developed and contaminated land**

This policy sets out our approach to previously developed land, and seeks to, where possible reuse previously developed land in the Borough. This is designed to assist us to deliver both local regeneration and sustainability objectives.

Page 178

**BE3 - Re-use of rural buildings**

The preferred strategy follows on from BE2 and seeks to make the most efficient use of existing buildings, by providing support for the re-use of rural buildings. This policy safeguards the economic and social sustainability of rural communities, as well as helping to retain traditional rural buildings that contribute to rural character. The policy seeks to secure re-use primarily for economic or community purposes before considering residential conversions, reflecting both the spatial strategy and the strategy to support rural economic growth.

Page 180
BE4 - Flood risk and surface water drainage
Our preferred policy establishes a presumption against development in high flood risk areas, where possible steering development to lower flood risk areas. It also highlights issues relating to surface water flooding ensuring that new development does not as far as is practically possible increase runoff.
Page 183

BE5 - Pollution management
The aim of our pollution management policy is to ensure that new development minimises, and where possible reduces emissions and other forms of pollution, including light and noise pollution and odour.
Page 186

BE6 - Historic environment
This policy seeks to safeguard and enhance key heritage assets, while also establishing a level of flexibility to allow historic environment to evolve.
Page 188
Natural Environment

Key Aim – ‘protect and enhance’

NE1 - Green Infrastructure
This policy sets out clear support for the provision, protection and enhancement of open land in both the natural and built environments (Green Infrastructure). This includes countryside through to urban parks and play areas, and which can provide a range of functions, such as contributing to biodiversity, alleviating flood risk and provides recreation.

Page 193

NE2 – Landscape
Our preferred approach to landscape provides a proactive and positive approach to encourage enhancement and management of landscape.

Page 197

NE3 - Biodiversity and geodiversity
This policy clearly sets out the conditions for the enhancement and protection of our biodiversity geodiversity assets.

Page 200
NE4 - Air, soil and water quality

This preferred policy is designed to support the sustainable development objectives of the plan and gives a clear message to developers that protection of the natural environment is a key objective. It would provide the necessary basis for a firm approach in requiring the consideration and inclusion of mitigation measures in development proposals to reduce environmental impact.

Page 203

NE5 - Open space and recreation

Our approach ensures that we provide the necessary amount and quality of open space to sustain our increases in population. The policy also provides details to safeguard historic parks and gardens from development whilst supporting scheme that involve the removal of unsympathetic features.

Page 206

NE6 - Countryside, coastal access and recreation

This policy ensures that proposals improve and promote access to and within the countryside and coastal areas through new outdoor recreational opportunities. Additionally, it seeks to prevent the obstruction of public rights of way and the integration of them into any adjacent development.

Page 210

NE7 - Shoreline management and coastal development

The policy seeks to ensure that coastal defence proposals were aligned with the actions/schemes set out in the Shoreline Management Plan. It also gives more certainty to coastal communities that are vulnerable to coastal change and/or erosion could be relocated.

Page 213
Monitoring and Implementation

The Core Strategy must be able to respond to changing needs and circumstances at the national, regional and local level. Monitoring will be carried out to help assess the effectiveness of the policies in delivering the vision and objectives of the spatial strategy and may indicate when policy changes may be required. This will be published in a report each year by the Council.
Get involved

We would like to involve as many people as possible in producing the Allerdale Local Plan. To help encourage both communities and individuals to have their say we will be holding a number of exhibitions, surgeries and workshops during the consultation period to promote the Plan and answer any questions.

You can view our ‘preferred options’ for Core Strategy, Development Management and associated documents

- Online at www.allerdale.gov.uk/localplan
- At the Council Offices and customer service centres
  - At any library in Allerdale
- At the public displays which will be touring the Borough.

We would prefer you to tell us what you think by using the on-line form at www.allerdale.gov.uk/localplan, however, you can also make your comments by filling in a form which is available to download, in libraries, customer service centres, or on request from us. Emails and letters would also be welcome.

Alternatively if you would like more information on the consultation or help to make a comment you can contact a member of the planning policy team using the following details;

Email: localplan@allerdale.gov.uk
Planning Policy Department
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The consultation period runs from 1 June 2012 to the 31 July 2012.