

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the deposit version of a new Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan. It follows on from a consultation carried out in November 2001 through to January 2002 with residents, visitors, local groups and organisations on what they considered to be the main land use and development issues affecting Cumbria over the next 15 years.
- 1.2 The Deposit Plan is a formal stage in the preparation of the new Structure Plan. Anyone can support or object to proposals in the Deposit Plan. These will be carefully considered with changes to the Plan negotiated where appropriate. Any outstanding issues will be debated at a public inquiry called the Examination in Public.

What is the Structure Plan?

- 1.3 The Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan is a statutory document that guides changes in land use. It provides a strategy and policies for the development and use of land within Cumbria, including the Lake District National Park but excluding the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It provides a framework for the preparation of local plans, see Figure 1. The County Council also prepares a Minerals and Waste Local Plan for the area outside the National Park. These translate the broad Structure Plan policies into more detailed policies and site allocations. The Structure Plan, together with Local Plans, provides the context for deciding planning applications. The Structure Plan therefore has a major influence on the future pattern of development in the County.
- 1.4 Cumbria County Council and the Lake District National Park Authority are each responsible for the preparation of a Structure Plan for their areas. It makes sense for these Plans to be produced jointly, so that the planning of the County is coordinated.



Figure 1 Local Plan Areas

Why do we need a new Structure Plan?

- 1.5 The existing Structure Plan was adopted in 1995. Much has happened in Cumbria since its preparation and there have been significant changes in the Government's approaches to planning, particularly the growing importance of achieving sustainable development. To be effective the Structure Plan must be kept up to date. The existing Structure Plan covers the period from 1991–2006. This replacement Structure Plan will guide development to 2016.

What has influenced the Structure Plan?

- 1.6 The Structure Plan takes into account changes that have taken place in European, National and Regional Policy, see Figure 2. Regional Planning Guidance for the North West is particularly important. This provides the spatial strategy and development framework for policies in the Structure Plan. Policies contained within Regional Planning Guidance, which includes the Regional Transport Strategy and their relationship with the Structure Plan¹ are listed in Schedule 1.

- 1.7 In the National Park the strategic planning policies must support the statutory purposes for its designation, modified by the 1995 Environment Act: -
- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and
 - To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

Where irreconcilable conflict arises between these purposes, the first prevails. In pursuing these purposes, the National Park Authority must also:

- Seek to foster the economic and social well being of local communities within the National Park.

This must be achieved without involving significant expenditure by the National Park Authority and through co-operation with those agencies whose task it is to promote the economic or social development of the area.

- 1.8 The Structure Plan also relates to and provides the context for the development of other more local policy documents such as Community Strategies and Parish plans.

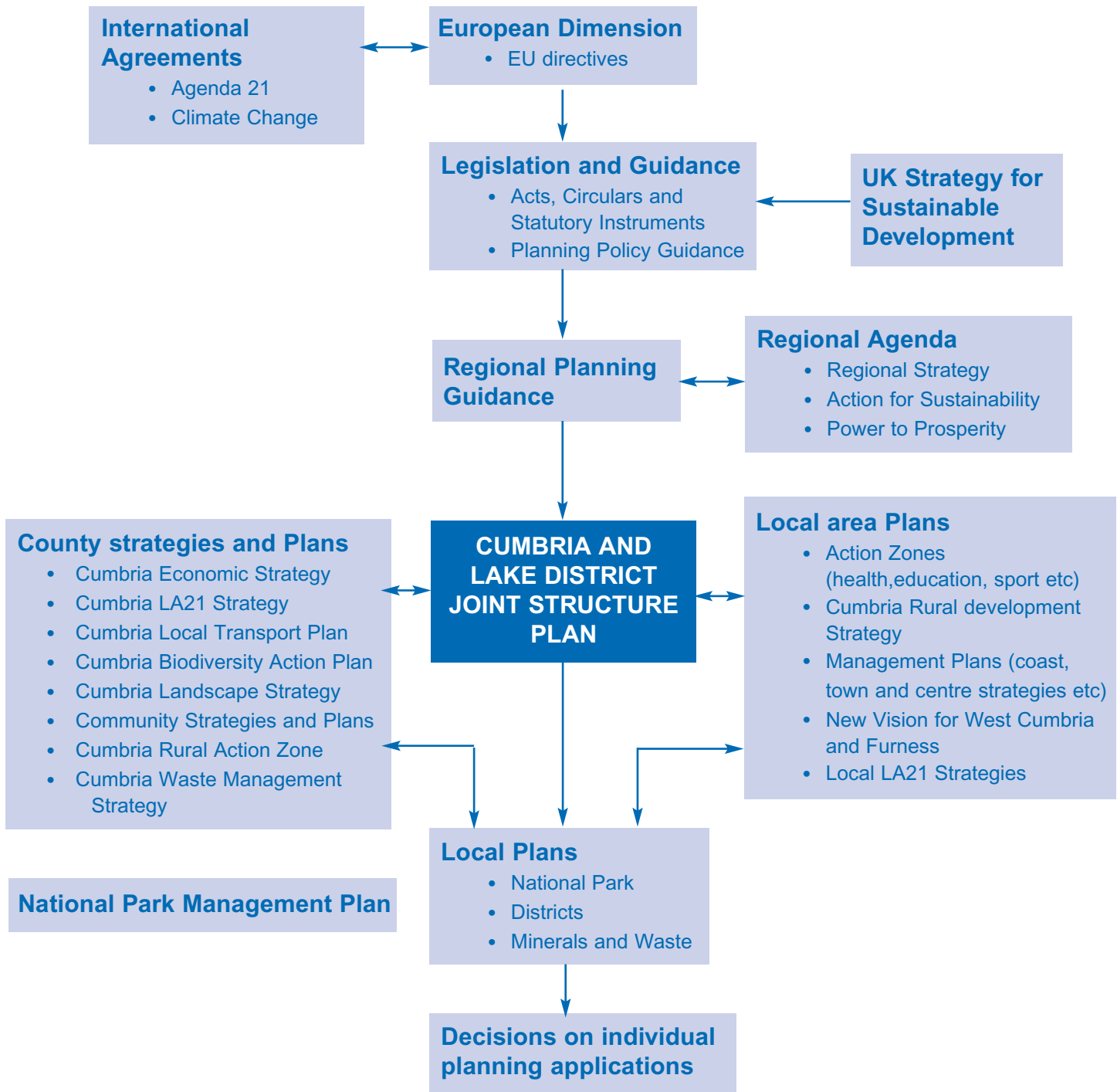


Figure 2 Policy Context Diagram

Content of Plan

- 1.9 The formal part of the Structure Plan consists of a 'Written Statement' of policies for the development and use of land in the County and a 'Key Diagram' showing which policies apply to the different parts of the County. The Written Statement is clearly identified by blue coloured sections. The Key Diagram is inside the back cover.
- 1.10 The rest of the text is known as the 'Explanatory Memorandum'. It is not part of the formal Plan but provides a fuller explanation and interpretation of the policies.
- 1.11 The Written Statement begins with a section on the overall strategy for development. This is followed by sections dealing with specific subject areas. All policies within the Structure Plan should be read together. Some policies are broken down into separate sections, but, unless the policy indicates otherwise their order does not convey any priority. The concluding section sets out how the performance of policies will be measured and who will be involved in their implementation.

Your views are important

- 1.12 Please find time to fill in a comments form. These can be sent to the addresses below, sent by email to: enquiries@planningcumbria.org or submitted via the website www.planningcumbria.org

All responses must be received by 12 July 2003.

Please note that all comments received will be available for public inspection.

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