

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~~ Following the consultations carried out between May and July 2003 on the deposit version of the new Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan this document has been prepared showing the proposed changes. The proposed changes comprise new wording, which for presentation purposes is underlined or deletions to the original text, which is shown as crossed through. ~~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~~ Expressions of support or disagreement can be made on the Proposed Changes proposals in the Deposit Plan. ~~These will be carefully considered~~ and, together ~~with changes to the Plan negotiated where appropriate. A~~ any ~~any~~ outstanding issues from the consultation on the Deposit Plan, may ~~will~~ be debated at a public inquiry called the Examination in Public. This is scheduled to commence on the 28th September 2004.

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.

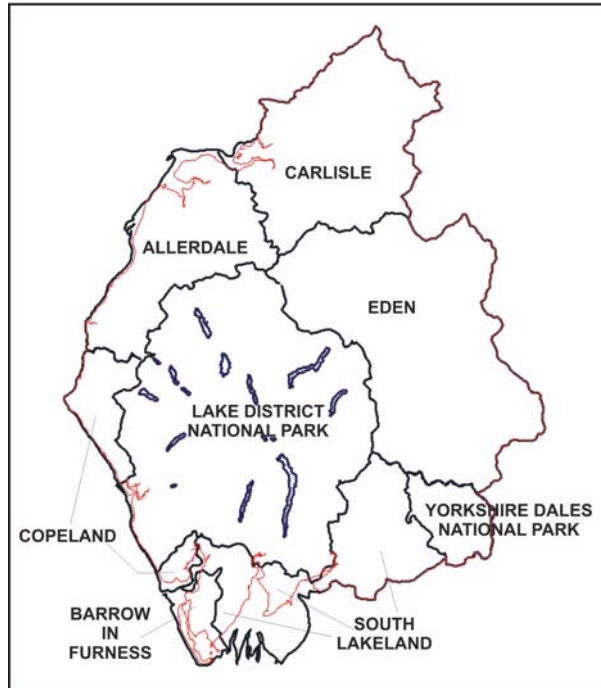


Figure 1 Local Plan Areas

- 1.5 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.

Why do we need a new Structure Plan?

- 1.6 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?

- 1.7 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.

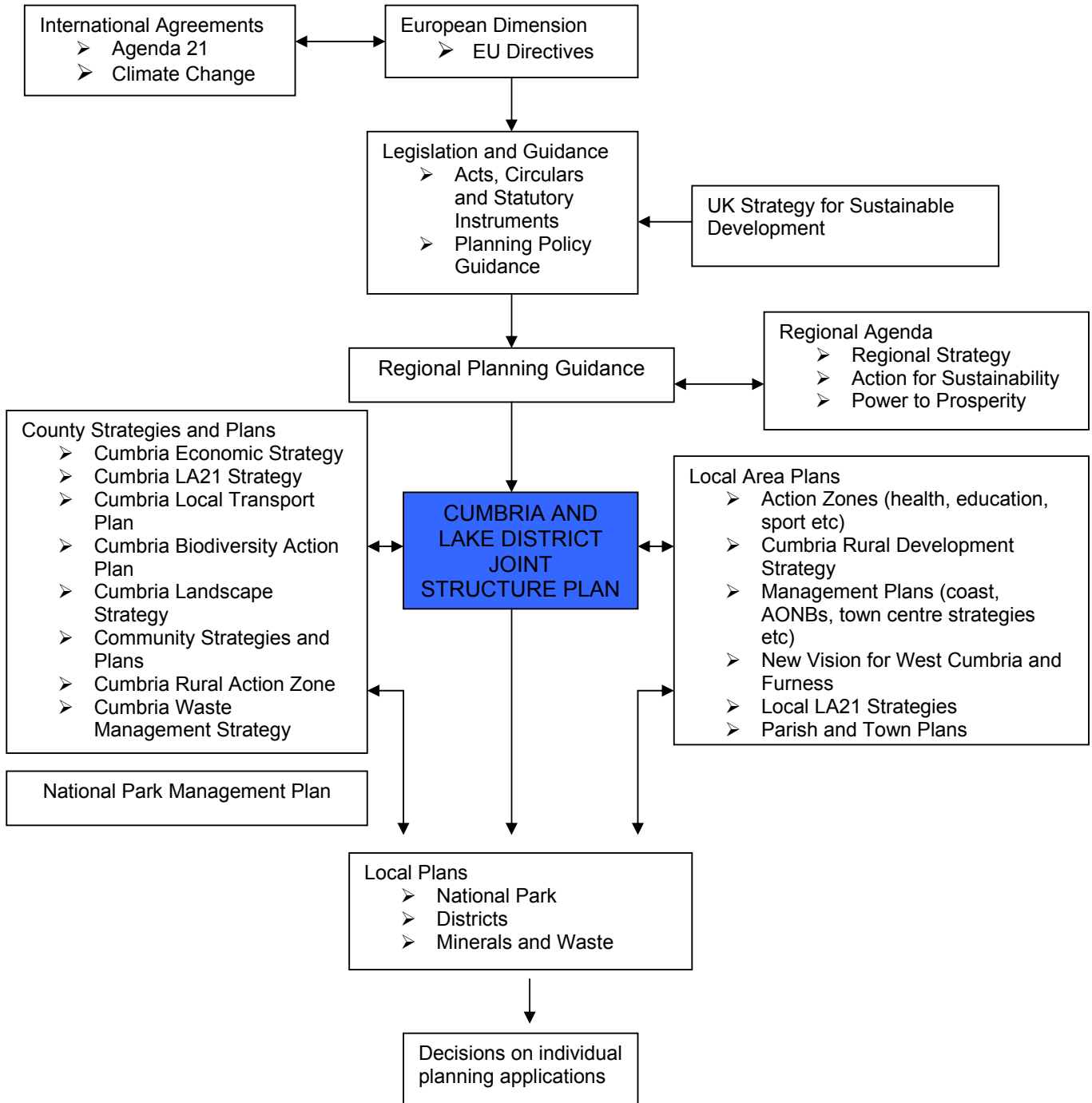


Figure 2 Policy Context Diagram

1.8 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.

1.9 In the three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Arnside/Silverdale, North Pennines and Solway Coast, strategic policies must support their primary purpose of designation – to conserve and enhance natural beauty. In pursuing the primary purpose account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Recreation is not an objective of designation, but demand should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservations of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

1.10 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.

Content of the Plan

1.11 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~~ the coloured sections. The Key Diagram is inside the back cover.

1.12 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.

- 1.13 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.

Changes to the Planning System

- 1.14 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act has been given the Royal Assent. This results in changes to the Planning System. The principal changes will be to replace Regional Planning Guidance with statutory Regional Spatial Strategies and to abolish the current system of Structure Plans and Local Plans. Local Plans will be replaced by a series of Local Development Documents collectively known as Local Development Frameworks. Policies previously contained in Structure Plans will if still appropriate be included in sub regional sections of the Regional Spatial Strategies.
- 1.15 The new system will take time to become established. To ensure continuity, transitional arrangements have been put in place to allow the old system to continue. This Structure Plan will therefore remain relevant as a basis for guiding Local Plans and decisions on planning applications whilst new plans are being prepared. To avoid confusion between the two planning systems any references contained within this Plan are to the old system of Plans.

Your views are important

1.16 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 noon on 17 July 2004.

Please note that comments received must relate to the Proposed Changes only and not to the content of the original Deposit Plan. All comments received will be available for public inspection.

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