

2 Strategy

- 2.1 Cumbria is a county of great diversity in its environment and communities. The quality of much of its built, natural and historic environment is exceptional. There are good services and facilities and a wide range of opportunities for employment and housing. However, there are significant economic and social problems.
- 2.2 The challenge for the Structure Plan is to provide for the need for growth and regeneration in both rural and urban areas and ensure that development is managed in a manner that protects and enhances the environment through wise stewardship. The Structure Plan must meet the needs of communities. It must address the contrasts that exist between areas of consistently low employment and areas of above average employment and opportunity, between high quality living environments and areas of urban dereliction. It needs to address social and economic changes affecting different parts of the county. The Structure Plan seeks to enable sustainable development to take place. There is scope in the county for the need for growth and environmental protection to be met without being in conflict.

A Sustainable Vision for Cumbria

- 2.3 The aim of the Structure Plan is to secure a more sustainable pattern of development, reflecting the Government's four sustainable development objectives:
- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone,
 - effective protection of the environment,
 - prudent use of natural resources,
 - maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.
- 2.4 Sustainable development is about advancing all these objectives together rather than trading the benefits of one against another. It is about 'ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come'². Taking a wider and longer term view will enable development to be planned so that consideration is given to the need to conserve resources and avoid the harmful effects of climate change. The Regional Spatial Strategy requires development plan policies to contribute towards national targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, so as to minimise the damaging impacts of climate change. The implications for potential local threats have been considered in respect of the plan's policies concerning renewable energy and flood prevention.
- 2.5 Policy ST1 sets out the vision for sustainable communities in Cumbria. All policies in the Structure Plan encourage development or land use change to bring communities closer to these objectives. The Structure Plan is but one policy document affecting sustainability objectives. There is a need in the context of Action for Sustainability and the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment, for a holistic approach to monitoring sustainability in Cumbria relating to all sustainability targets. **Policy ST1.**

Policy ST1: A Sustainable Vision for Cumbria

The overall quality of life within Cumbria should be enhanced through the promotion of sustainable development that seeks to protect the environment, ensure prudent use of resources and maintain social progress and economic growth.

Urban and rural communities should be sustained through measures that, in combination, advance the four objectives of sustainable development and achieve:

- a flourishing and diverse local economy
- access to good quality housing for all
- a full range of appropriate and accessible services
- good transport services and communications linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services
- quality built, natural and historic environments
- places to live in a safe and healthy manner
- vibrant, harmonious and inclusive communities

Policy ST2: Assessing impact on sustainability

Development or land use change affecting important environmental, social and economic assets should be assessed in terms of benefits and disbenefits. Where appropriate this will require transport, environmental and other impact assessments to assess the full effect of new development and identify the need for any mitigation.

Promoting sustainability in new development

2.6 All development has an impact. It can affect the environment, the economy, the quality of people's lives and the way resources are consumed. The Structure Plan provides the framework to ensure that any adverse impact of development is minimised and that development promotes sustainability. Detailed consideration of site specific issues will be developed through Local Development Frameworks and decisions on individual planning applications. It is important that both of these are informed by a full assessment of the wider effect of any proposed development. It is proposed to publish further guidance on how to undertake these assessments in partnership with relevant agencies and other organisations. This guidance will take account of the need for strategic environmental assessments, sustainability targets and the identification of environmental, social and economic capital.

Policy ST2.

2.7 Policy ST3 sets out specific principles, amplified below, which apply to all new development regardless of its purpose or general location. These principles are in addition to policies set out elsewhere in the Structure Plan.

1) Seeking sustainable locations: The approach first seeks sites for development consistent with Policies ST5, ST6 and ST7, which focus development on key and local service centres. Local Planning Authorities should define the boundaries of these settlements within Local Development Frameworks. Boundaries should respect landscape character and environmental capacity. There will be continuing emphasis on securing economy in the use of land and buildings consistent with national guidance and Policy DP1 of the Regional Spatial Strategy. This means developers and Local Development Frameworks should follow a sequential approach to the location of new development. Not all previously developed land and buildings will be suitable for development. Some greenfield development particularly within, or as an extension of service centres, may be necessary and boundaries should be drawn to include such areas within the settlement. This will enable the re-use of land and buildings and minimise the take up of greenfield land. It will make unused, under-used or derelict land and buildings more attractive to the development industry and enable them to be brought back into beneficial use. It will help upgrade the environment and improve overall investor confidence. Additional measures may be needed such as land reclamation or compulsory purchase to ensure that previously developed land is available for reuse.

2) Ensuring accessibility: In selecting sites for development, it is important that they can be served by a range of transport modes. It means careful planning and

design ensuring that facilities for people arriving on foot, by cycle or public transport are provided and that, wherever possible, connections are provided to existing networks outside the site.

3) Reducing the risk of flooding: Recent experience is that flooding events are becoming worse both in frequency and scale, due to climate change and increased surface run off from built development. Care should therefore be taken in the siting of new development. A search sequence in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 'Development and Flood Risk' should be undertaken to minimise the flood risk associated with the site, and the potential effect development of the site might have elsewhere through increased run off or a reduction in the storage capacity of floodplains. This will need to be balanced with the emphasis to be given to previously developed land and buildings, outlined in criteria 1. To assist this search sequence the Environment Agency's most up to date Flood Map should be used. Unless there is little or no risk then a 'Flood Risk Assessment' should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority with the planning application for the proposed development. In areas of high risk of flooding, development may not be appropriate even if it is previously developed land. Conversely, development may be of sufficient benefit for it to be worth exploring potential mitigation measures. Early discussion on mitigation should take place with the relevant Local Planning Authority and the Environment Agency. To reduce the risk of flooding new development should be designed to allow surface water run off to be controlled as close as possible to its origin. Sustainable Drainage Systems should be considered as a first option. Satisfactory design, discharge permissions, flood prevention, maintenance, ownership and adoption measures will need to be secured. This may require a Legal Agreement.

4) Avoiding the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land: Where the search sequence outlined in criteria 1 results in the need for development of greenfield land, the quality of such land is a factor that will need to be taken into account in assessing overall suitability of the site.

5) Nature conservation: In addition to the guidance set out above, development should take account of the UK and Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plans and the regional targets for habitat maintenance, restoration and expansion. Opportunities should also be taken for re-establishment of habitats and species. Where these may be lost or damaged consideration will be required of replacement in the locality. This will help to achieve no net loss in the value of the biodiversity resource. Where development is proposed attention should be given to preventing and reversing, where appropriate, habitat fragmentation and species isolation and ensuring appropriate management of this resource.

Policy ST3: Principles applying to all new development

All proposals for development including alterations to existing buildings and land use change will be required to:

1. seek locations consistent with policies ST5, ST6, and ST7 which will assist in reducing the need to travel, and then in the following order of priority:
 - a. the appropriate reuse of existing buildings worthy of retention, followed by
 - b. the reuse of previously developed land and only then
 - c. the use of previously undeveloped land,
2. seek sites that are or will be made accessible by public transport, walking or cycling,
3. reduce the risk of flooding within the development and elsewhere by a choice of location in the following order of priority:
 - a. sites with little or no flood risk, followed by
 - b. sites with low or medium flood risk, and only then
 - c. sites in areas of high flood risk.

Design proposals should minimise or mitigate any flood risk and where practicable include sustainable drainage systems,
4. ensure agricultural land of poorer quality is used for development in preference to the best and most versatile agricultural land,
5. avoid the loss of, or damage to, and where possible enhance, restore or re-establish, important nature conservation features,

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6) Protecting built, natural and historic conservation

features: Cumbria has a rich diversity and wealth of natural, environmental and built resources that are irreplaceable. Some are locally important whilst others are internationally recognised. Some are small scale yet others cover wide tracts of land. The value of all need to be recognised and these assets conserved. Development should not harm the value or integrity of these assets and should aim to make a positive contribution. This is especially the case where the existing quality of the asset is degraded and development could be used to enhance it, for instance by restoring or creating new habitats. Local Development Frameworks should set out in more detail how the value of assets and the effect of development will be assessed.

7) Contributing to the built, natural and historic environment:

Development should be used to enhance the quality of all environments. This is as vital in those areas where the present man made environment is of poor quality as in areas recognised for their high amenity value. A high standard of design will be expected in all development. Innovative and imaginative design should be progressed. Development should relate well to the existing built and natural environment and to the capacity of the landscape to accommodate new development.

8) Promoting ‘people friendly’ design: Design should also take into account the needs of people using buildings and facilities. Safe and secure environments should be provided. Public places and access points should be highly visible. The design of individual buildings should ensure safe and convenient passage into and movement around developments. This should include the needs of vulnerable users including people with restricted mobility or special needs.

9) Safeguarding natural resources: Design should be used to minimise the consumption of resources, for instance, orientating buildings to maximise solar gain, seeking high levels of insulation, installing water saving devices, recycling materials or using materials that are from sustainable sources or consume less energy in their production. In some cases it can also mean utilising non-grid connected renewable energy.

10) Protecting air and water resources: The potential for new development to directly pollute air and water resources must be avoided. Similarly the potential for development to reduce the quantity of existing water resources by creating a need for increased abstraction must be averted. To sustain water resources new development should be designed to include Sustainable Drainage Systems (criterion 3), which help replenish water reserves and water saving devices (criterion 9), both of which minimise the need for abstraction. The location of new development should take into account the Environment Agency’s Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies.

11) Ensuring capacity to meet the demand generated by developments: New development must be accommodated

within environmental, infrastructure and service thresholds. Early discussion with and between Local Planning Authorities, Regulatory Authorities, including the Environment Agency, and service providers will be necessary to ensure sites can be developed, that services can be provided in a timely manner and the mechanisms for doing so are clearly defined. This includes the capacity of foul and surface water drainage systems, sewage treatment facilities, water supply systems, the road network and similar infrastructure facilities. It also includes costs on the community, such as the need for recreation space in housing development or public transport interchange facilities in employment development. Development will not be permitted if it means these thresholds are exceeded unless improvements are programmed by service providers, including those funded through routine developer levies or it is possible to increase capacity at the developer's expense. It is important for service providers to use the Local Development Framework formulation stage to set priorities for their investment strategies. Increased capacity may be accommodated within existing thresholds, through demand management measures, promoting good practice and improved efficiency. Where unacceptable environmental, social or economic costs arise, including deterioration in the service standards, thresholds should not be crossed. New development may be used to break critical infrastructure thresholds in order to encourage new investment to the benefit of existing development and communities. Many service providers will have specific requirements that will need to be satisfied. These requirements may be set out in more detail in Local Development Frameworks, Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and relevant legislation.

12) Minimising levels of light pollution and noise: In considering development proposals it is important that levels of light pollution are kept to the lowest level practicable, taking account of safety considerations. This will aid the sustainable use of energy. In order to ensure a reasonable quality of environment for users and neighbouring uses, noise levels should be minimised and consideration given to restricting operations where levels would be unreasonable at certain times of the day.

2.8 In applying these principles some flexibility will be required. It is not intended that application of the policy should require householder developments and other developments of a similar scale to carry out an examination of alternative sites or alternative schemes. Generally design aspects will weigh more heavily than locational issues when considering proposed extensions of existing buildings for their current use. However, an alternative location may be a preferable solution to a need for more space than the extension of an unsuitably located building. The need to conserve the heritage of some buildings will also have a greater influence on design than for instance the use of recycled materials or energy conservation. For some types of development, including mineral extraction and renewable energy, the search sequence described in criterion 1 will not be appropriate. **Policy ST3.**

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6. avoid the loss of or damage to, and wherever possible, enhance important or distinctive conservation features including landscapes, buildings, archaeological sites, historic parks and gardens and visually important public and private open spaces,
7. ensure high standards of design including siting, scale, use of materials and landscaping which respect and, where possible, enhance the distinctive character of townscape and landscape,
8. promote a safe and secure environment that designs out crime and makes proper provision for people with restricted mobility and people with special needs,
9. promote energy and water efficient design and the use of recycled materials and renewable energy technology,
10. avoid reductions in air quality and the quality and quantity of groundwater and surface waters,
11. ensure development makes efficient use of, and is within, infrastructure, community and service constraints, or that these can be satisfactorily overcome through planned improvements or at the developers expense without an adverse effect on the environment,
12. minimise levels of light pollution and noise.

Policy ST4: Major development proposals

Major development will only be permitted where:

1. the total benefit clearly outweighs the total detrimental effects,
2. the proposal complies with national standards and best practice for environment, safety and security, and where appropriate is independently reviewed; and
3. alternative locations and methods giving rise to less harm have been fully considered and rejected.
4. In addition, in the case of the Lake District National Park and AONBs:
 - a. there are no alternative sites available outside the designated areas,
 - b. the need for the development cannot be met in any other way,
 - c. the development has a proven case in the public interest,
 - d. the development is designed and carried out to cause least practicable harm, and
 - e. the development has no overall adverse impacts on the local economy.

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Major development

- 2.9 From time to time, major development projects of regional or national significance with potentially environmentally damaging effects are proposed. Major development proposals include developments such as prisons, pipelines, oil or gas terminals, energy supply schemes (conventional, nuclear, or large scale renewable - on or off shore), water supply schemes, major mineral workings or proposals for major new waste disposal or management facilities (including those for nuclear waste). Upgrades to the electricity distribution network required as a result of development will be dealt with as major development.
- 2.10 Not all major developments will require planning permission. In some cases it is central government that has the responsibility for determining whether a development should go ahead and in other instances separate licensing or regulatory bodies may decide. In both these situations a decision will involve consultation with Local Planning Authorities.
- 2.11 To help Local Planning Authorities determine planning applications or their response to consultations on major development there is a need to test the benefits of the proposal against the extent of harm. The Government's longstanding objective has been that major development should not take place in the National Parks save in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances include the 'Silkin Test' principles – that the development is absolutely necessary and in the national interest, and that there is no practical alternative. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) have the same level of landscape protection. However, wherever the proposal takes place, it will be necessary to take a wide and considered approach to weighing the benefits and detriments of any proposal. Given their scale or nature, major developments will be subject to a mandatory or agreed Environmental (or Sustainability) Assessment. Local Planning Authorities may, in addition, require an independent review of the proposal to assess local implications and ensure best practice.
- 2.12 Where the national need is seen to be overriding it is necessary to ensure that general harm and adverse local impact (short and long term) is ameliorated. For instance major developments related to the nuclear industry could impact on the special quality of Cumbria, both directly and in terms of public perception. In these cases there would be a clear requirement to ensure full consultation. The developer should also be required to meet any local community needs, reasonably related to the proposed development, where this would help mitigate any adverse effects.

2.13 The potential for nuclear related major developments affecting Sellafield, Drigg or other locations in Cumbria is dependent on developing national policy. This includes energy strategy work by the Cabinet Office, the (ongoing) DEFRA Consultation process on 'Managing Radioactive Waste Safely', and the proposal to reshape the approach to 'Managing the Nuclear Legacy'. The Energy Act 2004 facilitated the setting up of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) with principal functions to operate, decommission and clean-up designated nuclear sites. The NDA is expected to significantly accelerate the pace of decommissioning. The Regional (Economic) Strategy³ and Policy EQ7 of the Regional Spatial Strategy refer to the role of the nuclear industry in Cumbria. A range of situations may give rise to the need for new major development. Additional plant at Sellafield to facilitate management of the local or national nuclear legacy is possible in the medium term. New nuclear power stations (to replace plant such as Calder Hall, meet national energy requirements, ensure diversity of supply, and reduce dependence on fossil fuels) could be proposed. Proposals to develop further Low Level Waste (LLW) management capacity at the Drigg Site, and construct additional LLW, Intermediate and High Level Waste management capacity at Sellafield are thus unlikely to be submitted during the plan period, based on NDA's strategy, which will reflect updated government radioactive waste management policy, expected in 2006. **Policy ST4.**

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Permission will be granted only on condition that:

- I. all possible measures are taken to minimise the adverse effects of development and associated infrastructure,

and where appropriate,

- II. provision is made to meet local community needs,
- III. acceptable measures are secured for decommissioning and site restoration, and
- IV. arrangements are made for suitable local community involvement during the development, decommissioning and restoration.

For the purposes of this policy 'major development' is defined as development that has significant environmental effects and is more than local in character.

Promoting a Sustainable Spatial Strategy

2.14 To promote a sustainable pattern of development, the Structure Plan provides a suite of policies that seek to:

- secure an appropriate balance of development between urban and rural communities (Policies ST5, ST6 and ST7), and
- ensure the emphasis and priority of new development supports the differing environmental conditions and economic and social needs of communities in different parts of the county (Policies ST8 to ST12).

The issues and priorities for development to be addressed in particular areas of the county are set out in the sub area policies ST8-ST12 and are reflected in other policies throughout the Plan. This includes the requirement for new employment and housing land to be made available. They also take forward the overall approach set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

2.15 Policy SD3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy identifies Carlisle and Barrow-in-Furness as key towns and cities of regional importance where development should be concentrated.

It also identifies a need for modest development and redevelopment to enable the physical enhancement, regeneration and gradual restructuring of the towns in West Cumbria and Furness including Dalton in Furness, Ulverston, Maryport, Workington, and Whitehaven. Elsewhere it requires most development needs to be met within towns identified by either Structure Plans or Local Development Frameworks as key service centres. Paragraph 3.20 requires housing provision to meet local needs and for economic development of Carlisle, Barrow-in-Furness and towns in West Cumbria not to be constrained below the level of demand, where it can be accommodated within environmental limits.

Key service centres outside the Lake District National Park

2.16 Key service centres⁴ have been identified in Policy ST5 for the area outside the National Park based on the criteria below. These towns are where the focus of new development in the county will take place. Towns were chosen as key service centres where they have the potential for new development and to support and build on the existing level of service provision and provide good public transport links to outlying settlements. As a minimum such towns should have a primary school, secondary school, library, doctors surgery and a town centre function providing at least a post office and 2000 sq m of retail (Use Class A1)⁵ floorspace. Whilst selection was based on service availability it was considered each town also had to have a population of over 1500 residents. This ensured local support for the services and provided an appropriate cut off level within Cumbria. Other towns and villages, where appropriate, will be defined as local service centres through Policy ST7.

Policy ST5: New development and key service centres outside the Lake District National Park

New development will be focused on the key service centres as set out below:

	Development emphasis	Major development of regional towns and cities	Sustained development of large towns	Moderate development appropriate to scale of town
City of Carlisle	Fostering regional role see Policy ST8	Carlisle		
North Cumbria	Sustaining rural services see Policy ST9			Brampton Longtown Wigton
Furness and West Cumbria	Securing regeneration see Policy ST10	Barrow-in-Furness	Maryport Ulverston Whitehaven Workington	Aspatria Cleator Moor Cockermouth Dalton-In-Furness Egremont Silloth Millom
South and East Cumbria	Meeting local needs see Policy ST11		Kendal Penrith	Alston Appleby Grange over Sands Kirkby Lonsdale Kirkby Stephen Milnthorpe

The scale of development should be appropriate to the size and role of each key service centre and reflect the development emphasis of Policies ST8–ST11, but as a minimum requirement provision should be made in each key service centre for:

1. a supply of new housing over the whole plan period,
2. an appropriate supply of readily available land in the Local Employment Site market sector,
3. a high level of transport accessibility, and
4. the ability to connect to high speed communications technology.

To ensure consistency with policies EM13 and H17 it will be the role of Local Planning Authorities to manage the above supply of land, particularly in areas of high demand to avoid over provision of development.

- 2.17 The size and role of key service centres varies considerably across the county. Local Development Frameworks will need to identify the range and scale of development required to support the role of key service centres and ensure that land is brought forward accordingly. In deciding the scale of development required, regard should be had to the capacity of existing services to accommodate development, critical thresholds for new service investment, the size, character and environmental capacity of the existing town and the need to secure regeneration or investor confidence.
- 2.18 To encourage people to live within key service centres, it will be necessary to ensure a choice of housing is available. Local Development Frameworks will need to make sure that the housing requirement outlined in Policy H17 is managed to sustain the long term needs of key service centres. In areas of high demand, or in key service centres where the scale of development is likely to be limited, this means careful phasing to avoid over provision of development. At the same time it will be important that residents, where possible, have opportunities for employment locally. A supply of land for business development should be available in each key service centre with as a minimum there being land for the Local Employment Site Market Sector as defined in Policy EM13.



Workington Town Centre - Photo by Cumbria County Council

2.19 It will also be important that the requirement many employers now have for new technology can be met. High speed connections such as broadband technology are particularly important. Since the majority of employment opportunities are concentrated within key service centres there will be a particular emphasis on ensuring their needs can be secured.

2.20 Concentrating housing and employment development in key service centres will help to minimise journey lengths and provide increased opportunities to improve the overall level and quality of alternative modes of transport to the car. Key service centres will, however, need to remain accessible to their rural hinterlands. In this respect, the scattered nature of settlements in rural areas means use of the private car is likely to continue to be important and will have to be addressed. **Policy ST5.**

Policy ST6: Development within key service centres in the Lake District National Park

Keswick, Ambleside and Windermere/Bowness are key service centres for the Lake District National Park. Development in these centres will be permitted where it:

- Provides a service for the local community; or
- Helps sustain a range of services in the key service centre or supports local businesses; or
- Meets other identifiable needs of the locality.

Development should be of an appropriate scale for what is needed. It must also accord with the requirements of Policy ST12 and be compatible with existing settlement character.

Key service centres within the Lake District National Park

2.21 The three largest settlements within the Lake District National Park have been identified as key service centres. These settlements provide a range of services for both local communities and visitors. Although these settlements are key with regard to the provision of a range of services they do not have the capacity or the requirement for the level of development expected in settlements identified as key service centres outside the National Park.

2.22 The Lake District National Park Local Development Documents will identify settlements, where appropriate, as key and local service centres. Both key and local service centres will accommodate development.



Market at Keswick - Photo by Michael Turner

2.23 The Lake District National Park Local Development Documents will assess the roles and functions of settlements and identify the range and scale of development appropriate to each service centre, having regard to the needs of the locality, the capacity of existing services to accommodate development, and the size, character and environmental capacity of the settlement to accommodate further development. Developers, investors and service providers will need to have regard to these other settlements within the National Park in addition to those defined as key service centres in making investment decisions. **Policy ST6.**

Development in rural areas

- 2.24 A significant number of people live and work outside the key service centres. Their needs must be addressed. Sustaining and revitalising rural areas is necessary, and development should be located where it benefits the wider rural economy and communities. Outside the key service centres new development will be concentrated in rural towns and villages identified in Local Development Frameworks. In identifying these local service centres and the scale of development required regard should be had to the need to support local services and the community's need for further development including rural regeneration and diversification and access to communications technology.
- 2.25 Outside local service centres, land will be considered as open countryside although this may contain isolated buildings, farmsteads, hamlets and villages. Exceptionally new development will be permitted in the open countryside where it: has an essential requirement for a rural location, which can not be accommodated elsewhere (such as mineral extraction); is needed to sustain existing businesses; provides for exceptional needs for affordable housing; is an extension of an existing building; or involves the appropriate change of use of an existing building to business/employment use. **Policy ST7.**

Policy ST7: Development to sustain rural communities

Small scale development to help sustain local services, meet local needs or support rural businesses will be permitted in towns and villages defined as local service centres in Local Development Frameworks. It will be the exception for new development to be located in the open countryside.



Hayton Stores - Photo by Cumbria County Council

Policy ST8: The City of Carlisle

The City of Carlisle's importance will be fostered by the new development that builds on its role as a regional centre for business, commerce, shopping, leisure and tourism. A range of employment opportunities including a Regional Investment Site at Kingmoor will be provided. Opportunities will be taken to strengthen links to employment uses at Kingmoor by all forms of transport. The role of Carlisle airport and its potential for contributing to economic activity within the city will be supported. New housing will be needed to sustain the city's economic potential. The release of land will be phased to minimise vacancies and ensure the refurbishment and redevelopment of the existing housing stock and to give priority to the use of previously developed land. In accommodating new development regard should be had to the city's historic character.

Policy ST9: North Cumbria

The need to sustain services and facilities for rural communities in North Cumbria will be addressed by promoting the role of key service centres and other towns and villages defined in Local Development Frameworks as a focus for new development of an appropriate scale particularly housing, local employment, retailing and community facilities.

The City of Carlisle

2.26 The regional role identified for Carlisle will influence the way this city will develop. This will include a need to address its close functional relationship with Scotland and the North East of England. It will be the location for a significant scale of development that should support and enhance this role and increase the overall attractiveness for private investment. It will be important to ensure that growth is coordinated and satisfies needs, whilst not adversely affecting the area's cultural heritage and environmental quality. Policy SD3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy stresses the need for continual conservation of the city, sensitive integration of new development, and a regard for maintaining and enhancing its setting. Whilst priority will be given to the redevelopment of previously used land, where this is not available or would lead to loss of the city's character, development should take the form of a planned urban expansion consistent with criteria 1 of Policy ST3. **Policy ST8.**



The Courts, Carlisle - Photo by Cumbria County Council

North Cumbria

2.27 Whilst development opportunities in North Cumbria will be focused on Carlisle it is important that the surrounding rural area is sustained through measures that support and diversify the rural economy. This area consists of the rest of Carlisle district along with the adjoining Solway coastal plains. It includes the key service centres of Brampton, Longtown and Wigton, which have important roles in their own right serving the wider rural community. The Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site forms an important and locally distinctive asset to drive regeneration. **Policy ST9.**

Furness and West Cumbria

2.28 Furness and West Cumbria has faced long term economic difficulties brought about by the decline in its traditional manufacturing base and its relative remoteness from regional and national markets. The emphasis of new development will be on regenerating and diversifying the economic base, building on existing economic successes, promoting social inclusion and strengthening transport and communication links. Public and private investment will be required to bring this about. It is important that initiatives are coordinated and underpin wider economic strategies that seek to redress the economic imbalance and sustain and promote employment generation. The area covered is from Silloth down the coast to Ulverston and Barrow-in-Furness. It contains a number of key service centres including Barrow-in-Furness, identified as being of regional significance. These key service centres are closely related socially, economically and physically and together they form one of the county's most important urban areas. They also retain a strong association with the areas coastal heritage. **Policy ST10.**

Policy ST10: Furness and West Cumbria

Within Furness and West Cumbria the highest priority will be given to measures that secure regeneration. Opportunities will be promoted to sustain and enhance employment, secure investment, develop social and community facilities, support the role of town centres and enable refurbishment and environmental improvements.

Development will be concentrated in the regional town of Barrow-in-Furness. In other towns, particularly Maryport, Ulverston, Whitehaven and Workington, there will be a need for further development and re-development to diversify the economic base and improve the quality of life.

Large scale redevelopment will be considered, where necessary, where this secures an improved environment and an appropriate mix of uses. New housing should complement measures to refurbish the existing stock and offer quality and choice in the housing market. Opportunities that build on the areas maritime and naval heritage and secure a coastal renaissance will be encouraged. The distinctive role and opportunities offered by ports and harbours will be fostered. Sea links for passenger and freight services will be promoted.

The provision of new tourism attractions will be encouraged especially where this builds on the heritage of coastal towns. New visitor accommodation will be promoted. Measures will also be taken to secure improved east-west transport communications between Barrow-in-Furness and West Cumbria and the rest of the region and facilitate improvements in ICT.



The Dock Museum - Photo by Cumbria County Council

Policy ST11: South and East Cumbria

The priority for new development in South and East Cumbria will be to ensure that the needs of local people and communities are met. To enable this, the occupancy of new housing required by Policy H17 will be restricted to people with a local connection to the area with at least 50% serving evidenced need for affordable housing. Local Development Frameworks will be expected to set out the circumstances in which flexibility may be necessary to ensure the viability of developing particular sites for housing. The economic and service needs of rural areas will be addressed with rural businesses including tourism supported. The role of key service centres as the focus of retail, leisure and employment opportunities will be promoted.

South and East Cumbria

- 2.29 The priority for the largely rural area of South Lakeland (outside the Furness peninsula) and Eden will be to ensure that the needs of local people are met, consistent with the strategy set out in Policy SD3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy. At the same time it will be important to ensure that development sustains existing facilities and supports rural diversification.
- 2.30 This will mean supporting and developing existing employment sites, opportunities and the local economy, safeguarding existing employment sites and focusing new employment land on indigenous growth.
- 2.31 For new housing it will mean making sure that the current housing allocation is used to full effect by ensuring the needs of local people are given priority. Local Development Frameworks will need to define who is classed as 'local'; this normally includes people with close family associations with the area, people who are employed or about to be employed in the area or who live in the locality. Locality will also need to be defined in a manner that will not prevent beneficial development. For affordable housing this usually begins by reference to people in the immediate village/town or parish and then tiers progressively outwards. For housing to meet general market needs it is more appropriate that such a cascade begins with a wider definition such as the needs within the sub area. Evidence from existing district council surveys⁶ show that overall at least 50% of the new housing requirement would be needed to help meet current affordable needs. Local Development Frameworks will need to assess the level of need on a local basis and how this should be met consistent with the range of options outlined in Policy H19. This will enable flexibility on a site by site basis. Where more up to date local surveys can justify it Local Development Frameworks may require more than 50% of the housing requirement to be for affordable needs.
- 2.32 In the longer term, should a future review of the housing requirement prove more generous, greater flexibility in the operation of the housing market could be sustained. Although the proportion of housing reserved for affordable or 'local need' provision might fall, the numbers provided should continue to meet the level of identified need.

Policy ST11.

Lake District National Park

2.33 The Lake District's landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage are of international significance, recognised by its designation as a National Park and by its inclusion in 1999 on the Government's tentative list of World Heritage Sites. The priority for the National Park will continue to be to ensure that this heritage is conserved, whilst at the same time fostering the economic and social well-being of its local communities. In order to ensure that development in the National Park is compatible with National Park purposes (see para 1.5), the Structure Plan must protect the area from harmful development and recognise the vulnerability of designated sites and features, areas of undeveloped countryside and coast, and particularly sensitive areas such as lake shores and the fells. It will also help provide for public enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities in ways that do not conflict with conservation objectives and the needs of local communities.

2.34 The qualities of, and opportunities within, the National Park bring a continuous demand for development, particularly for housing and tourism. The National Park attracts a large number of visitors, generating considerable recreational traffic. These pressures and demands must be addressed to strike the right balance between the protection of the Park's intrinsic qualities, the needs of local communities, and the desire to provide for visitors' enjoyment of the Park. Where there are irreconcilable conflicts between these different needs, the protection of the Park's natural environment will be paramount. **Policy ST12.**

Policy ST12: Lake District National Park

The highest level of protection will be given to the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park. Development in the National Park must not conflict with national park purposes and should where appropriate foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park. The character of land identified on the Section 3 Conservation Map, lakes and shores, quieter areas, and other sensitive areas will be protected and enhanced. Development which would cause demonstrable harm to the environment, setting or special qualities of the National Park will not be permitted.

Particular priority will be given to development which:

1. secures housing to meet the identified needs of the locality, or
2. widens the economic base, or
3. helps maintain the viability of farming businesses, or
4. reduces the adverse impacts of car use and improves transport choice.



Grasmere - Photo by Charlie Hedley