

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet

Thursday, 16th May, 2019 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Agenda

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

No. Item

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members are asked to consider any Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests they may have to disclose to the meeting in relation to matters under consideration on the Agenda.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 April 2019 (Pages 1 - 6)

Matters for Decision:

The Leader of the County Council - County Councillor Geoff Driver CBE

4. Request Approval to Commence Procurement Exercises (Pages 7 - 12)

The Deputy Leader of the County Council - County Councillor Albert Atkinson

5. Revised Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans for Forest of Bowland and Arnside and Silverdale Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Pages 13 - 160)

6. Outcome of the Public Consultation on Changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres (Pages 161 - 208)

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport - County Councillor Keith Iddon

7. Hud Hey Road, Haslingden - Shared Use Cycle Track and Waiting Restrictions (Pages 209 - 216)

8. **Skelmersdale Rail Link - Strategic Outline Business Case** (Pages 217 - 220)

9. **Transport Information Centres- Expressions of Interest Progress Report** (Pages 221 - 242)

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Environment and Planning - County Councillor Michael Green

10. **Proposed A585 Windy Harbour to Skippool Improvement Scheme - Local Impact Report** (Pages 243 - 278)

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools - County Councillor Susie Charles

11. **Awarding of Small Grants to Third Sector Groups which are Registered with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, including Grants to Individual Young People** (Pages 279 - 282)

12. **Revision of Foster Care Allowances** (Pages 283 - 286)

13. **The Provision of Additional Primary School Places in North Burnley** (Pages 287 - 292)

Please note that Appendix A to this report is in Part II and appears as item No. 21 on the Agenda.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Cultural Services - County Councillor Peter Buckley

14. **Delegation of Library Function to Preston City Council at the Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library** (Pages 293 - 298)

Matters for Information:

15. **Urgent Decisions taken by the Leader of the County Council and the relevant Cabinet Member(s)**

No urgent decisions have been taken since the last meeting of Cabinet.

16. Urgent Business

An item of urgent business may only be considered under this heading where, by reason of special circumstances to be recorded in the Minutes, the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency. Wherever possible, the Chief Executive should be given advance warning of any Member's intention to raise a matter under this heading.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Cabinet will be held on Thursday 13 June 2019 at 2.00 pm at County Hall, Preston.

18. Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private

No representations have been received.

Click [here](#) to see the published Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private.

19. Exclusion of Press and Public

The Cabinet is asked to consider whether, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it considers that the public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated against the heading to the item.

Part II (Not Open to Press and Public)

The Leader of the County Council - County Councillor Geoff Driver CBE

20. Establishment of an Urban Development Fund for Lancashire (Pages 299 - 310)

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

**The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools - County
Councillor Susie Charles**

21. Appendix A of Item 13 - The Provision of Additional Primary School Places in North Burnley (Pages 311 - 314)

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

22. Overnight Short Breaks Unit East Lancashire (Pages 315 - 318)

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

Angie Ridgwell
Chief Executive and Director of
Resources

County Hall
Preston

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 11th April, 2019 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Geoff Driver CBE Leader of the Council
(in the Chair)

Cabinet Members

County Councillor Albert Atkinson
County Councillor Michael Green
County Councillor Mrs Susie Charles
County Councillor Keith Iddon
County Councillor Peter Buckley
County Councillor Graham Gooch
County Councillor Shaun Turner

County Councillor Azhar Ali and County Councillor John Fillis were also in attendance under the provisions of Standing Order No. C14(2).

Cabinet agreed to take Item 13 as the first substantive item on the agenda, due to interest from members of the public present.

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

County councillor Michael Green declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 21 – An Update on the Lancashire Central – Cuerden Site as a member of South Ribble Borough Council.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 March 2019

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 7 March 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Children and Family Wellbeing Service - Outcome of Second Phase Consultation

Cabinet considered a report presenting the outcomes of a further review of Children and Family Wellbeing service delivery settings, following on from the decision at Cabinet at its meeting on 8 November 2018.

Cabinet noted that the review took into account a range of factors and included a public consultation on the proposals. Cabinet also noted the in-depth analysis in the papers before them, including in relation to the consultation, and thanked officers involved in the production of the report.

Resolved: That:

- i. the findings of the further consideration and consultation as set out in the consultation report be noted
- ii. the revised proposals for the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, as detailed in this report, be implemented with effect from May 2019.

5. Procurement Report - Request Approval to Commence Procurement Exercises

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to commence the following procurement exercises in accordance with the county council's procurement rules:

- i. The provision of mental health employment support, resilience and social recovery services.
- ii. An approved provider list for the supply of care services in supported housing.
- iii. Planned and reactive vehicle parts and repair service.

Resolved: That the commencement of procurement exercises for the following areas be approved:

- i. The provision of mental health employment support, resilience and social recovery services.
- ii. An approved provider list for the supply of care services in supported housing.
- iii. Planned and reactive vehicle parts and repair service.

6. Works to Operational Premises - Condition Led Programme

Cabinet considered a report setting out proposals for the allocation of capital funding to address a phase of high priority building condition repairs and statutory programmes of remedial works to the operational premises portfolio.

It was noted that the details of the programme were included in the Appendix listed at Item 19 in the "Part II" section of the agenda.

Resolved: That the proposed list of maintenance and statutory compliance schemes across operational premises, detailed at Appendix 'A', totalling £9.88m, be approved

7. Proposed 2019/20 Road Safety and Cycling Safety Programmes

Cabinet received a report setting out detailed programmes of work relating to the Road Safety and Cycling Safety programme, delivered as part of the anticipated 2019/20 Integrated Transport grant funding from the Department for Transport.

Resolved: That the proposed 2019/20 New Start Road Safety and Cycling Safety programme funded by the anticipated 2019/20 Integrated Transport Block set out in the report be approved

8. Booth Street, Vale Street and Station Road, Haslingden Cycle Track and Waiting Restrictions

Cabinet received a report outlining proposals to provide a cycle track with right of way on foot along a length of Booth Street, Vale Street and Station Road, Haslingden, which is part of National Cycle Route 6.

Resolved: That the proposed creation of a cycle track with right of way on foot and the implementation of No Waiting at Any Time Restrictions as set out in the report be approved.

9. St Crispin Way, Flip Road and Grane Road, Haslingden Cycle Track and Waiting Restrictions

This report outlines proposals to provide a cycle track with right of way on foot along lengths of St Crispin Way, Flip Road and Grane Road Haslingden, which is part of National Cycle Route 6.

Resolved: That the proposed provision of three cycle track lengths with right of way on foot and the implementation of No Waiting At Any Time Restrictions as set out in the report be approved.

10. Awarding of Small Grants to Third Sector Groups which are Registered with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, including Grants to Individual Young People

Cabinet considered a report setting out the recommendations of District Youth Councils in relation to the award of small grants to third sector groups.

Resolved: That the recommendations of the District Youth Councils on the applications for grants from third sector groups which are registered with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, as set out in the report, be approved.

11. Future of Bleasdale Church of England Primary School

Cabinet received a report on the outcome of a consultation on a proposal to close Bleasdale Church of England, following a request from the governing board and in partnership with the Diocese of Blackburn. It was noted that, under the statutory process, the authority was now required to consider the responses to the stage 1 consultation and decide whether to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal.

Resolved: That

- i. the consultation arrangements that were undertaken and the responses that were received in respect of the authority's proposal be noted.
- ii. the authority publishes a Statutory Notice of its proposal to close Bleasdale Church of England Primary School, with implementation commencing from 31 August 2019.

12. Lancashire Children's Social Care Staying Put Policy 2019-2020 - A Review of Policy, Procedure and Financial Support

Cabinet considered a draft revised "Staying Put policy and procedure that would provide comprehensive information and guidance to young people, foster carers and staff, and which reflected the proposed changes to the financial arrangements.

Resolved: That the updated Lancashire Children's Social Care Staying Put Policy 2019-2020 and the revised funding arrangements, as set out in the report, be approved.

13. Lancashire's Financial Procedures for Care Leavers

Cabinet received a report setting out a revised Care Leavers Financial Entitlements policy reflecting proposed changes to the existing financial arrangements.

Resolved: That the updated Lancashire's Financial Procedures for Care Leavers and the increase in allowances as set out in the report be approved

14. Urgent Decisions taken by the Leader of the County Council and the relevant Cabinet Member(s)

The urgent decisions taken by the Leader and relevant Cabinet Members were noted.

15. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

16. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of Cabinet would be held at 2pm on Thursday 16 May at County Hall, Preston.

17. Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private

Cabinet noted the Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private and that no representations had been received.

18. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated against the heading to the item.

19. Appendix A of Item 5 - Works to Operational Premises - Condition Led Programme

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the

case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

The appendix was noted.

20. Civil Parking Enforcement

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

Cabinet considered a report on the arrangements for the civil parking enforcement contract in Lancashire.

Resolved: That the recommendation set out in the report be approved.

21. An Update on the Lancashire Central - Cuerden Site

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

Cabinet considered an update on the Lancashire Central – Cuerden site.

Resolved: That the recommendations set out in the report, as amended, be approved.

22. An Update on the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

Cabinet considered an update on the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone

Resolved: That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

23. Educational Provision in Burnley

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

Cabinet considered a report on proposals to provide additional school places in Burnley.

Resolved: That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

24. Proposals Relating to Libraries - Chatburn

(Not for Publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information)

Cabinet considered a report relating to the re-instatement of library services in Chatburn.

Resolved: That the recommendation as set out in the report be approved.

Angie Ridgwell
Chief Executive and
Director of Resources

County Hall
Preston

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Procurement**Part I**

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Request Approval to Commence Procurement Exercises

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Rachel Tanner, Tel: (01772) 534904, Head of Service - Procurement
rachel.tanner@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

In line with the county council's procurement rules this report sets out a recommendation to approve the commencement of the following procurement exercises:

- (i) Provision of fresh meat products (Non-Halal)
- (ii) Provision of Extra Care Services in Lighthouse View, Fleetwood and Oakbrook Gardens, Dovedale, Preston.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the commencement of the procurement exercises as set out in Appendix 'A' for the areas identified above.

Background and Advice

Appendix 'A' sets out the detail of the individual procurement exercises and the basis upon which it is proposed to carry out the processes including:

- The description of the supplies/services being procured
- The procurement route proposed
- The estimated annual contract value
- The proposed basis for the evaluation of the tender submissions.

Where approval has been received from the Cabinet to undertake a tender process which is deemed to be a Key Decision, the subsequent award of the contract on the satisfactory completion of the tender exercise shall not be deemed a Key Decision and can be approved by the relevant head of service or director.

On conclusion of the procurement exercises, the award of the contracts will be made under the county council's scheme of delegation to heads of service, and in accordance with the council's procurement rules.

Consultations

Relevant heads of service and key operational staff have been consulted in drawing up the proposals to undertake the procurement exercises included within this report.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

The estimated value of the contracts will be contained within the funding arrangements as set out in Appendix 'A' for each individual procurement exercise. If significant variations should result from this position a further report to Cabinet will be required.

Legal

Failure to take steps to lawfully procure new contracts and continuing with the current arrangements where applicable would contravene the council's procurement rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015. Furthermore, failure to award the contracts may result in the county council facing difficulties in delivering services.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Procurement Title

The Provision of Fresh Meat Products (Non-Halal)

Procurement Option

OJEU – Open Tender Procedure

The use of an external 3rd party framework has been discounted as an independent tender allows the Council to set the terms and conditions of the contract in its entirety including stringent specifications (in terms of product and service quality,) flexible price reviews and full share of retrospective rebates. In addition the strategy will place a high emphasis on social value promoting the benefits of localised supply, healthy eating and supporting local employment. A 3rd party framework restricts the potential number of suppliers who are able to bid for these contracts and in the majority of cases, are limited to large-scale national suppliers.

New or Existing Provision

Existing

Estimated Contract Value and Funding Arrangements

Approximately £860,000 per annum. Estimated Total Contract Value: £3,440,000

Approximately 90% will be funded by Traded Services (Start-Well), 10% across the rest of the county council including but not limited to: Facilities Management Services, CYP and ACS.

Contract Duration

Initial period of two years with an option to extend the contract beyond the initial term, by any number of agreed periods, to a maximum of a further 2 years.

Lotting

Lot	Description	Customer(s)	Approx Value	Annual
1	Delivery into LCC's contracted food and drink distributor.	Primary schools	£635,000	
2	Direct delivery (Supplier to Customer)	All other LCC units including secondary schools	£225,000	

Evaluation – Applicable to each Lot

Quality Criteria 40%

Financial Criteria 60%

Social Value will account for 10% of the quality criteria focusing on environmental sustainability, supporting themed events in schools, promoting healthy eating in schools, and promoting training and employment opportunities for the people of Lancashire, particularly, those from vulnerable groups i.e. looked after children.

Contract Detail

The current contract(s) for Fresh Meat (Non-Halal) have been in place since 1st September 2018 and are due to expire on the 31st August 2019.

The procurement will provide a renewal of existing provisions.

LOT 1

In September 2018, Cabinet approved the commencement of a procurement exercise to identify a single provider to operate a food distribution network. This contract is due to commence on the 1st May 2019. In addition to this, separate report(s) are to be submitted outlining the procurement approach for the supply of individual food contracts into the nominated distributor as and when required. In this instance the requirement is for a provider to supply fresh non-halal meat products (from the 01st September 2019) into the county council's distributor who will deliver the products to over 400 primary schools across Lancashire.

LOT 2

The successful supplier for Lot 2, will be responsible for the supply and distribution of fresh non-halal meat products into over 60 council units, the majority of these being secondary schools and care homes.

Procurement Title

Provision of Extra Care Services in Lighthouse View, Fleetwood and Oakbrook Gardens, Dovedale, Preston

Procurement Option

OJEU – Open Tender Procedure

New or Existing Provision

The Extra Care Schemes, Lighthouse View, Fleetwood and Oakbrook Gardens, Preston are new Extra Care services, consequently there is no existing contract in place.

Estimated Contract Value and Funding Arrangements

The following figures are based on the maximum contract length of 4 years.

Lighthouse View, Fleetwood - up to £4,500,000

Oakbrook Gardens, Dovedale, Preston – up to £4,500,000

Annual spend for each service will be up to £1,125,000 funded from the adult social care budget.

Contract Duration

The initial period of 2 years with an option to extend the contract beyond the initial term for any period(s) up to a maximum of a further 2 years.

Lotting

The procurement will be split in to lots according to the two Extra Care schemes which are located in different areas of the county:

Lot 1 Lighthouse View, Fleetwood

Lot 2 Oakbrook Gardens, Dovedale, Preston

Contract Detail

Extra Care Housing offers a real alternative to residential care by providing self-contained flats, communal facilities and on site domiciliary care and support which is available to all tenants. Extra Care Housing offers independent living by providing services and support that are tailored to be flexible and responsive to people's changing needs. Lighthouse View, Fleetwood and Oakbrook Gardens, Dovedale, Preston are new Extra Care schemes which will provide services for older people. The schemes are due to open around November 2019.

The Council recognises the unique nature of Extra Care Housing and the need to ensure that there is a 24 hour staff presence on site. This will be provided via a core/background service which is available to all individuals. This service is intended to be flexible and able to respond to the unplanned needs of tenants, to contribute to meeting wider wellbeing needs and to develop the community aspects of the scheme.

Service Users in the Extra Care Scheme will also have individual eligible care needs which will be met via a planned care service.

We are proposing to procure a single provider for each of the Extra Care Schemes, who will become the "onsite provider" to deliver care services at Fleetwood and Dovedale, Preston. The budgetary spend for the new contracts will pay for two elements of services:

- Background care and support and emergency response
- Spot packages of commissioned care to deliver additional planned care as and when required. It should be noted that service users are able to choose any provider to deliver their planned care.

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Planning and Environment**Part I**

Electoral Divisions affected:
 Lancaster Rural East;
 Lancaster Rural North;
 Longridge with Bowland;
 Pendle Hill; Pendle Rural;
 Preston Rural; Ribble Valley
 North East; Ribble Valley
 South West; Wyre Rural East;

Revised Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans for Forest of Bowland and Arnside and Silverdale Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 (Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contact for further information:

Elliott Lorimer, Tel: (01772) 533979, Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Manager,
 elliot.lorimer@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The Council, along with other relevant local authorities, has a duty as set out in Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to jointly prepare and review Management Plans for Areas of Outstanding Beauty that are located within Lancashire. This work is delivered on the council's behalf by the relevant Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnerships and associated staff units.

The Management Plans for both the Forest of Bowland and Arnside & Silverdale have recently been reviewed and revised to guide the management of these designated landscapes for the period 2019 – 2024. The council needs to formally adopt Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans to continue to meet its statutory duties.

This report summarises the scope and content of the Management Plans, the public consultations carried out and the 'strategic fit' between the Plans' objectives and the Council's Corporate Strategy.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve and adopt the revised Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and the Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.

Background and Advice

1. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are statutory landscape designations made under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The primary purpose of designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape.
2. In pursuing the primary purpose, the following secondary purposes should also be taken into account:
 - i) the sustainable social and economic development of the area (where such activity is consistent with the primary purpose)
 - ii) recreation and enjoyment of the area, where it is consistent with the first two purposes.
3. The County Council is jointly responsible for two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which lie partly within its administrative boundaries – the Forest of Bowland and Arnside & Silverdale.
4. Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 places a duty on local authorities to act jointly to produce and review, on a five yearly basis, management plans for the area within their administrative boundaries. In Lancashire this duty is performed by the two Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnerships – the Forest of Bowland's Joint Advisory Committee and Arnside & Silverdale's Executive Committee. The county council is represented by nominated County Councillors on each of these bodies.
5. A staff unit for each Partnership consists of a small team of officers employed by the host local authority (the County Council for the Forest of Bowland and Lancaster City Council for Arnside & Silverdale) to co-ordinate and implement the delivery of the Management Plans for these Partnerships. Each Partnership also has an Officers' Group which is attended by local authority officers to support the delivery of the Management Plan and the work of the staff unit. Core funding is received from the relevant local authorities and the Department for Environmental, Food and Rural Affairs to support these staff units and implement the Management Plans.
6. The first statutory Management Plans for Arnside & Silverdale and the Forest of Bowland were published in 2004 and have been reviewed and revised in 2009 and 2014, covering the period up to 2019.
7. Council officers have been involved in the review and preparation of the draft Management Plans through attendance of the Officers' Groups from January 2018 to date. County Councillors have contributed through attendance of the Joint Advisory Committee or Executive Committee meetings where progress of the review was reported and draft plans circulated.
8. The revised Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan was agreed at its Joint Advisory Committee meeting on 1st March 2019. The Revised Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Management Plan was agreed at its Executive Committee meeting on 20th March 2019.

9. Both Management Plans are similar in their approach in setting objectives for fulfilling the requirement to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the respective areas. The Management Plans provide a framework all partners and stakeholders and the respective staff units to refer to when planning their own work within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. They set out a range of objectives, desired outcomes and requirements for land management and project delivery within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to achieve these outcomes. Some of the actions would be led by the staff unit and included in their own team plans. Others would be led by other partner organisations and stakeholders, including the County Council, with support from the staff unit where required.

Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan

10. Full details of the pre-adoption version of the Management Plan can be found at: <https://www.forestofbowland.com/review-forest-bowland-aonb-management-plan>

The Plan sets out a long term vision for the area with three key outcomes: 'an outstanding landscape rich in natural and cultural heritage'; 'resilient and sustainable communities'; and 'a strong connection between people and the landscape'. To achieve this a range of objectives, actions and outcomes are outlined in the delivery plan section of the Management Plan.

Arnsdale & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan

11. Full details of the pre-adoption version of the Management Plan is available at: <https://www.arnsidesilverdaleaonb.org.uk/what-we-do/the-management-plan/> and is set out at Appendix 'B'.

The Plan sets out a long term vision for the area with three key outcomes: 'an outstanding landscape rich in natural and cultural heritage'; 'vibrant and sustainable communities'; and 'a strong connection between people and the landscape'. To achieve this a range of objectives, outcomes and requirements for land management and project delivery are detailed in the Plan. These are set out in the summary table that accompanies the draft Management Plan.

Strategic Fit with the County Council Corporate Strategy

12. Both Management Plans contribute to all five of the Council's corporate objectives for Lancashire.
 - i. ***Lancashire will be the place to live:*** management and maintenance of public rights of way and countryside sites, provision of outdoor learning opportunities; encouraging recreation in- and engagement with the natural environment and landscape; volunteering, events and activities to engage

diverse communities, including black and minority ethnic communities, people with mental health and social isolation issues and dementia-sufferers and their carers.

- ii. **Lancashire will be the place to work:** supporting and funding local employers to take on apprentices and graduate trainees, developing careers in the natural environment, heritage and land management sectors.
- iii. **Lancashire will be the place to prosper:** supporting the rural economy by providing advice, guidance and support for business in the visitor economy to grow sustainably; whilst working closely with the farming and land management sector to help it to prosper.
- iv. **Lancashire will be the place to visit:** conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of the County's most outstanding landscapes, whilst also promoting and supporting sustainable tourism businesses and activities in the area
- v. **Lancashire will be the place everyone acts responsibly:** working in close partnership to ensure stewardship of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and that important natural heritage and landscape assets are conserved and enhanced.

Consultations

13. An initial public survey was carried out in April/May 2018 to gather ideas, thoughts and comments on what people most valued about the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and also what they would like to see improved.
14. A public consultation on the draft Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan was held between from 26th November 2018 and 18th January 2019.
15. Following this consultation, amendments were made which included:
 - Amendment to the Plan vision to reflect the breadth of the Plan Objectives
 - Additional section added on the Partnership's 'core principles'
 - Additional section on monitoring of the Plan
16. The public consultation on the draft Arnsdale & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan was held between from 22nd October and 3rd December 2018. A final amended version was produced incorporating amendments. More significant changes made included:
 - Emphasis on the importance of farming and land management in conserving and enhancing natural beauty
 - Emphasis on the need for collaboration and co-operation to help sustain the area's landscape

- Additional information on how objectives were derived and issues and challenges identified

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

The Council makes an annual contribution to the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership of £40,800 and to the Arnsdale and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership of £8,275. Provision for these contributions is currently made from the Council's Planning and Environment service budget.

The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnerships receive grant from Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for up to 75% of costs. This funding is contingent on the Partnerships receiving at least 25% in matched funds from local authority partners. The current Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs grant settlement runs until the 31st March 2020. Beyond this date, the Partnerships are awaiting details from the Department of the new funding settlement for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which will follow Government's Comprehensive Spending Review later in 2019.

Legal

The Council has a statutory duty under Section 89 (5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to review the Management Plans before the end of the period of 5 years, beginning with the date on which the initial Management Plan was first published and then, after the first Review, at intervals of not more than 5 years.

Risk management

A decision not to adopt the Management Plans would mean the Council would fail in its statutory duty to jointly prepare and review Management Plans for the areas within its administrative boundaries.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		

Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019 – 2024

(Pre-adoption version)

Prepared by the Forest of Bowland AONB Unit, April 2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of England's finest landscapes and is internationally important area for its heather moorland, blanket bog and rare upland birds. The AONB is managed by a partnership of local councils, government agencies, landowners, farmers, local businesses and wildlife and recreation interest groups, who work to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of this special landscape.

The purpose of the AONB Management Plan is to provide a positive and pro-active management framework for the AONB Partnership; highlighting the special qualities of the designated area, the importance of the relevant landscape features and identifying those features which are vulnerable to change. The Plan also seeks to outline an integrated vision for the future of the AONB; alongside objectives and actions for delivery by the AONB Partnership, based on a high level of shared aspirations for the area.

The Forest of Bowland AONB is situated in North West England, covering 803 square kilometres of countryside in the counties of Lancashire (730 sq.km) and North Yorkshire (73 sq.km). The area is bounded to the north and south by the Rivers Lune and Ribble respectively. To the west is the Fylde plain, while the eastern side of the AONB boundary matches the Yorkshire Dales National Park for a short distance, with Ribblesdale bordering the remainder. On its south-eastern edge, Pendle Hill (557m) forms a discrete landscape feature, which is geologically linked to the rest of the AONB, but separated from the main area by the Ribble valley. The Rivers Brock, Calder, Conder, Hindburn, Hodder, Loud, Roeburn, Wenning and Wyre all originate in the upland core of the Bowland Fells. The highest point of this upland core being Ward's Stone at 561m (or 1,841ft.), alongside other notable landmarks such as Fairsnape Fell at 510m and Hawthornthwaite Fell at 479m.

The AONB lacks large settlements and has an estimated population of approximately 16,000 people. Its boundaries include parts of six district council areas, namely: Craven, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley and Wyre. The urban centres of Preston, Lancaster, Blackburn, Blackpool and Burnley are in close proximity to the AONB, with over one million people living within a 30-minute journey of the area. Furthermore, the AONB is within a 90-minute journey from the major conurbations of Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds.

To discover more about the AONB visit: <https://forestofbowland.com/Understanding>

What is an AONB?

An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a special landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them.

The 46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland cover approximately 1/8th of the land surface.

The distinctive character and natural beauty of AONBs make them some of the most special and cherished places in England. AONBs are also living, working landscapes that contribute some £16bn every year to the national economy. Although home to less than half a million people (under 2% of England's population), over two thirds of England's population live within half an hour's drive of an AONB and around 150 million people visit English AONBs every year, spending in excess of £2bn.

Together with National Parks, AONBs represent our most outstanding landscapes; unique and irreplaceable national assets, each with such distinctive character and natural beauty that they are recognised internationally as part of the global Protected Areas Family (IUCN Category 5); to be managed in the interest of everyone – local residents, businesses, visitors, and the wider public - and protected for future generations.

The Legislative Framework for AONBs

AONBs exist within a legal framework which has been progressively strengthened since the first AONBs came into existence after the Second World War.

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) first established the AONB designation, provided AONBs with protection under planning law against inappropriate development and gave local authorities permissive powers to take action for '*preserving and enhancing natural beauty*' in them. Since the first AONBs came into existence in the 1950s, the legal framework has been progressively strengthened under the following Government legislation, including the Countryside Act (1968), the Environment Act (1995), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) and the Natural Environment and Communities Act (2006).

Perhaps paramount within this legislative framework is the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000). This subsumed and strengthened the AONB provisions of the 1949 Act. It confirmed the purpose and significance of AONBs, clarified the procedure for their designation, and created a firm legislative basis for their designation, protection and management. In particular

- Section 82 reaffirmed the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty;
- Section 83 established the procedure for designating or revising the boundaries of an AONB, including Natural England's duty to consult with local authorities and to facilitate public engagement;
- Section 84 confirmed the powers of a local authorities to take '*all such action as appears to them expedient*' to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of an AONB, and sets consultation and advice on development planning and on public access on the same basis as National Parks in the 1949 Act;
- Section 85 placed a statutory duty on all 'relevant authorities' to '*have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty*' of AONBs when coming to any decisions or carrying out activities relating to or affecting land within these areas. 'Relevant authorities' include all public bodies (including county, borough, district, parish and community councils, joint planning boards and other statutory committees); statutory undertakers (such as energy and water utilities, licensed telecommunications companies, nationalised companies such as Network Rail and other

bodies established under statute responsible for railways, roads and canals); government ministers and civil servants. Activities and developments outside the boundaries of AONBs that have an impact within the designated area are also covered by the 'duty of regard';

- Sections 86 to 88 allows for the establishment in an AONB of a Conservation Board to which the AONB functions of the local authority (including development planning) can be transferred. Conservation Boards have the additional but secondary function of seeking to increase public understanding and enjoyment of the AONB's special qualities. They also have an obligation to '*seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities*' in co-operation with local authorities and other public bodies;
- Sections 89 and 90 create a statutory duty on all AONB partnerships (local authorities and Conservation Boards) to prepare a Management Plan '*which formulates their policy for the management of their area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it*', and thereafter to review adopted and published Plans at intervals of not more than five years. Where an AONB involves more than one local authority they are required to do this '*acting jointly*';
- Section 92 makes clear that the conservation of natural beauty includes the conservation of '*flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features*.'

The International Context

IUCN Protected Areas

English AONBs are part of the international Protected Area Family. As cultural landscapes, produced through the interaction of humans with nature over time, they have a special significance (together with UK National Parks) as being recognised by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as '*Category V - Protected Landscapes*'.

Category V Protected Landscapes are defined by IUCN as: '*A protected area where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.*'

European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is the first international convention to focus specifically on landscape. Created by the Council of Europe, the convention promotes landscape protection, management and planning, and European co-operation on landscape issues. The ELC came into force in the UK on 1 March 2007. It applies to all landscapes, towns and villages, as well as open countryside, the coast and inland areas, and ordinary or even degraded landscapes, as well as those that are afforded protection.

The ELC defines landscape as: *“An area as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”* (Council of Europe 2000). It highlights the importance of developing landscape policies dedicated to the protection and management of landscapes and establishing procedures for the general public and other stakeholders to participate in policy creation and implementation.

Responsibility for AONBs

The formal legal responsibility for both planning and development and for management of AONBs (including the duty to prepare an AONB Management Plan) lies with the local authorities in whose area(s) the AONB exists. In addition, the duty, for all public bodies and statutory undertakers, to ‘have regard’ places an obligation on a wide range of organisations not just to consider any detrimental impacts of their policies and activities outside as well as within the boundaries of any AONB, but to consider positively how they might benefit the AONBs special qualities.

What is ‘natural beauty’?

‘Natural Beauty’ is not just an aesthetic concept, and ‘Landscape’ means more than just ‘scenery’. The natural beauty of AONBs is partly due to nature, and is partly the product of many centuries of human modification of ‘natural’ features. Landscape encompasses everything – ‘natural’ and human – that makes an area distinctive: geology, climate, soil, plants, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings, the people who live in it, past and present, and perceptions of those who visit it.

Landscapes are a product of constant change, including those designated due to their ‘natural beauty’. The purposes of AONB designation reflect this process of change, encouraging activities that conserve and enhance the special qualities of the area and minimising activities that present a threat to the unique character of the landscape.

The term ‘natural beauty’ first gained currency in a legislative context in a 1907 Act, which gave legal status to the National Trust (‘for Places of Historic Interest and Natural Beauty’). It has been the basis for the designation of both AONBs and National Parks since the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Government confirmed that AONBs and National Parks are of equal status with regard to landscape quality and that they share the same level of protection. In the same year, the CRoW Act formally stated that natural beauty includes conservation of *‘flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features.’*

WHY IS THE FOREST OF BOWLAND AONB SPECIAL?

The Forest of Bowland was formally designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) by Government on 10th February 1964. The area was designated as a landscape of national significance, primarily, due to the following key characteristics:

- The grandeur and isolation of the upland core
- The steep escarpments of the moorland hills
- The undulating lowlands
- The serenity and tranquillity of the area
- The distinctive pattern of settlements
- The wildlife of the area
- The landscape's historic and cultural associations

Natural beauty is at the heart of what makes the Forest of Bowland AONB special: it is the reason the Bowland landscape is designated for its national and international importance; and of course, it's also a key factor in attracting visitors. This natural beauty is derived from the area's largely unspoilt countryside, combined with a number special qualities that contribute to the area's unique character or 'sense of place'. The special qualities of the Forest of Bowland AONB are numerous and varied, but in general terms they can be summarised as follows:

1. An Outstanding Landscape
2. Wild Open Spaces
3. A Special Place for Wildlife
4. A Landscape Rich in Heritage
5. A Living Landscape
6. Delicious Local Food and Drink
7. A Place to Enjoy and Keep Special

Most of these special qualities were identified as part of work undertaken in the mid-2000s exploring the AONB's 'sense of place' - that being the area's unique feel and appearance, or what constitutes the area's identity and makes it different from neighbouring areas. The headings are not intended to be exclusive or exhaustive - rather, they provide a framework by which the distinctive and special qualities of the AONB can be understood and communicated among relevant stakeholders, including visitors.

An Outstanding Landscape

The Forest of Bowland is an outstanding landscape and has been designated as an AONB due its national significance. The high quality and outstanding natural beauty of the landscape sets the AONB apart from the wider countryside and is the reason for its designation.

The area can be characterised as a complex interplay of many different landscape types, all intrinsic to its overall landscape character; from the dominant and wide open, moorland vistas of the high fells, to the more subtle, but no less important, lower-lying landscapes such as the rolling, pastoral farmland, woodlands, parkland, reservoirs, river valleys and floodplains. The area's distinctive character is determined not simply by the presence of particular natural elements or their rarity value, but also by the way in which they combine to form a mosaic of landscape types and reflect a rich history and cultural heritage.

Wild Open Spaces

Over one third of the AONB is moorland, making up the wild open spaces and remoteness that are so characteristic of the Forest of Bowland; a truly unique quality of the area and core to the AONB's identity, as well as one of the principal reasons that the Forest of Bowland was designated.

Across much of the AONB the landscape appears largely treeless, yet historically the fells were once cloaked in woodland and through a combination of changes in climate and woodland clearances by Bronze Age farmers they have become largely treeless today. The resulting open views and fells give the impression that this is a wilderness, an untouched natural landscape, but it is in fact the result of many human influences. Today, the predominant land uses for these upland areas are sheep and beef farming enterprises, alongside management of moorland for grouse shooting.

The fells are largely intact and extensive in area, crossed by only a few minor, unfenced roads. The Trough of Bowland is perhaps the most famous, following a narrow valley that once carried melting ice from the glaciers covering the fell tops.

A Special Place for Wildlife

The Forest of Bowland AONB supports many important habitats and species, which contribute significantly to the area's landscape character and 'sense of place'.

The Bowland fells support rare and endangered species associated with a very rare mosaic of upland habitats comprising over 12,500 ha. of blanket bog and almost 9,000 ha. of upland heath. At lower levels the ancient woodlands contain an array of colourful flowers; whilst the few remaining traditionally managed pastures and meadows are an oasis for wildflowers and insects. A myriad of rivers and smaller watercourses provide habitats for salmon, brown and sea trout, as well as birds such as kingfisher, dipper, grey wagtail, common sandpiper and oystercatcher. Otters are also present along several of the rivers in Bowland.

Other attractive features are more unlikely such as roadside verges and more recently formed sites, such as reservoirs and old quarries, providing new refuges for wildlife. Similarly, the quarries and rock exposures reveal important geodiversity.

Bowland is an internationally important area for conservation. Nearly one fifth of the AONB is designated as the Bowland Fells Special Protection Area (under the European Birds Directive) for hen harrier and merlin. The fells are also home to one of the country's largest colonies of lesser black-backed gulls. The Forest of Bowland also contains two Special Areas of Conservation (Calf Hill and Cragg Wood & North Pennine Dales Meadows) and 20% of the land area is designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under UK legislation.

In addition, there are 456 local wildlife sites covering around 10% of the AONB, which form part of a national network of non-statutory designated sites that are recognised for their ecological value. In the Lancashire part of the AONB, they are called Biological Heritage Sites (BHS); whilst in the North Yorkshire part of the AONB they are known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

This flora and fauna of the area provide a significant attraction for visitors to the AONB – wildlife enthusiasts visit Bowland to catch a glimpse of the rare hen harrier, the area's iconic bird of prey, which breeds in only a few other places in England. Or to see the wading birds that arrive in spring to nest and rear their young on the open farmland and areas of rough grazing, such as lapwing, snipe, curlew and redshank.

A Landscape Rich in Heritage

In the Forest of Bowland AONB, the past exists very much in the present. It is the subtle interplay between the fascinating physical remains of the past, often sublime landscape patterns, and the mysteries of the essentially unknowable, that gives the AONB's archaeological and historic landscapes their much appreciated and yet often intangible special qualities.

Visually the predominant historic patterns which are readily perceived in the Bowland landscape are medieval in date, demonstrating remarkably strong continuity in landownership, community and management over the centuries. This manifests in present day land uses such as expanses of open moorland or contrasting small stone walled pastures, as well as the distribution and form of settlement, local vernacular and place names. For example, the word 'Bu' (in 'Bolland' or Bowland) is Old Norse for cattle, and 'Pen' in Pendle means hill.

There is evident contrast in the villages in Bowland – some are typical estate villages while others are more haphazard farming settlements or industrial hamlets. The large country estates had a controlling and significant influence over the nature of building and development within the AONB in the past. For example the private estates were responsible for building the distinctive villages of Slaidburn, Downham and Abbeystead, which are valued for their intactness, strong physical form and characteristic vernacular architecture.

There are notable grand halls, parks and houses at Browsholme, Leagram and Quernmore. Remains of motte and bailey castles can be found in the Lune Valley and the ruins of a Cistercian abbey are preserved at Sawley.

Overall, the area holds almost 900 listed buildings and designated heritage assets (818 Listed Buildings, 48 Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, 20 Scheduled Monuments and one Registered Park and Garden), of which none are currently on Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' register. Collectively these historic and cultural elements of the environment serve to enrich the landscape's scenic quality, meaning and value.

A Living Landscape

The landscape of the Forest of Bowland has been managed by generations of farmers and landowners. Sheep and beef farming dominate the upland areas, while dairy farming remains a significant land use in the valleys.

In the past some land management practices have caused damage to important wildlife areas and/or landscape features – for example, the draining of moorland and meadows has caused a loss of species; and the fertilising and early harvesting of meadows has reduced the number of wildflowers. Today, however, stronger regulations are in place to help ensure that land management can improve habitats for wildlife, and management of features such as hedgerows and stone walls, rather than causing damage. Some farmers and land managers in Bowland have also become much more environmentally aware over the last 30 years and operate within agri-environment support schemes to conserve and enhance habitats for wildlife and manage important landscape features on their land. Some farmers have also adopted more sustainable and efficient farming practices, whilst remaining sympathetic to the environment; particularly through initiatives such as Natural England's Catchment Sensitive Farming.

Extensive areas of moorland are managed specifically for grouse shooting. Management can include predator control and annual heather burning to help maintain the heather moorland and red grouse populations. Much of Bowland's upland core also provides water for thousands of homes and businesses in Lancashire and the North West of England. The water utility company, United Utilities owns and manages significant landholdings within the AONB as water catchment land. In recent decades, they and other moorland estates have been working with the AONB Partnership and other conservation partners to help restore and manage important blanket bog and other moorland habitats across the Bowland Fells.

Many village communities were once reliant on manufacturing (such as cheese making), as well as local industry associated with lead mining and lime production. Nowadays, however, communities rely on a greater diversity of activities, in particular employment within the tourism sector.

Delicious Local Food and Drink

Delicious local food and drink is a special quality of the Forest of Bowland AONB - not only because it supports the economy, but also because it is an important factor in the area's unique sense of place. The traditional farming methods have helped to shape the AONB's landscape over time, including areas of rough grazing and open moorland, patterns of pastoral fields enclosed by distinctive dry stone-walls and hedgerows, farmsteads, barns and working villages. The complexity of this landscape provides for a wide variety of farm production systems. This complexity is reflected in the local food offer.

As you would expect in a sheep and beef farming area, you can find delicious local lamb and beef, as well as pork and even wild boar. The area also offers classic and modern varieties of Lancashire cheeses, milk and ice cream and supports several organic farms and market gardens. There are also several farmers' markets around Bowland where you can meet the producers and taste and buy their local produce. By supporting those farmers who

choose high nature value farming, whilst continuing to produce food, the AONB aims to help protect the Bowland landscape for this and future generations.

A Place to Enjoy and Keep Special

The purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, whilst having regard to the social and economic needs of the landowners, farmers and communities. The AONB also has a responsibility to meet the demands for recreation and tourism, but only if this is consistent with protecting the natural beauty of the area. It is for this reason that the AONB Partnership has promoted the concept of sustainable tourism within the Forest of Bowland: tourism that is dependent upon the area's environment, and which seeks to conserve and enhance that environment, not detract from it.

The AONB is a popular visitor destination for the surrounding urban settlements of Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and West Yorkshire. Its relatively 'undiscovered' character is highly valued and generates loyalty amongst local people, day visitors and increasingly staying visitors. It is the combination of open moorland, and the ever-changing geography along the lower lying river valleys that not only gives the area its very own character, but also makes it a great destination for walkers, cyclists and wildlife enthusiasts. Although walking is the main activity pursued within the area, there are opportunities to enjoy other activities such as mountain biking, horse riding, fishing, canoeing, gliding and paragliding.

Over recent years, the AONB Partnership has led the way in helping to develop sustainable tourism that takes account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts.

THE AONB PARTNERSHIP

Much of the land in the Forest of Bowland AONB is privately owned and primarily used for farming, game shooting and water supply. Nevertheless, the use of the area for recreation and tourism has become increasingly important over recent decades. The co-operation of those involved in land management, tourism and development management is therefore vital to the successful management of the AONB.

Joint Advisory Committee (JAC)

Delivery of the AONB Management Plan is encouraged through effective partnership working, rather than through enforcement. Since it was constituted in 1986, the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) has been responsible for strategic liaison and decision-making between the wide range of partner organisations and interests within the AONB.

The AONB JAC objectives are to:

- Protect, conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the Forest of Bowland AONB
- Promote the sustainable social and economic development of the area, particularly where such activity conserves and enhances the environment
- Encourage enjoyment of the area where it is consistent with the first two objectives

The current JAC membership comprises the following organisations:

- Lancashire County Council
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Craven District Council
- Lancaster City Council
- Pendle Borough Council

- Preston City Council
- Ribble Valley Borough Council
- Wyre Council
- Lancashire Association of Local Councils (*representing Parish Councils*)
- Yorkshire Local Councils Association (*representing Parish Councils*)
- Natural England
- United Utilities plc
- Environment Agency
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Ramblers Association
- Moorland Association
- Bowland Land Managers Forum
- Bowland Sustainable Tourism Network
- Champion Bowland (*A registered charity, supporting the aims and objectives of the AONB*)
- Friends of Bowland (*'Friends' group to support volunteering in the AONB*)

AONB Unit

The Forest of Bowland AONB benefits from dedicated staff, who are responsible for co-ordinating and delivering many AONB projects and activities which make a significant contribution to the delivery of the AONB Management Plan. This dedicated staff team is known collectively as the AONB Unit. The responsibility of the AONB Unit includes:

- Coordination and management of the AONB Partnership and the review of the AONB Management Plan
- Develop and manage key projects and activities to support delivery of the AONB Management Plan
- Raise funds to support the delivery of the AONB Management Plan
- Raise awareness about the importance of the AONB

- Working closely with local communities and businesses to increase involvement in the work of the AONB Partnership

The AONB Unit produces a rolling three-year business plan (agreed by the AONB Joint Advisory Committee) with detailed objectives and actions to guide the Unit's day-to-day activities.

Partnership Funders Group (PFG)

A Partnership Funders Group (PFG) primarily comprises officers from the key funding partners (local authorities, United Utilities, Natural England and the Environment Agency), which meets quarterly to help guide the work of the AONB Unit. The PFG considers key Partnership policy and budget issues, and also provides technical and professional advice and assistance to the JAC in fulfilling its obligations.

Other Partnership support

The AONB also benefits from other, additional personnel who work in support of the AONB Partnership. These include:

- Staff and volunteer rangers from both Lancashire Countryside Service and Wyre Coast and Countryside Service working in the AONB. These services focus primarily on access and visitor management in the AONB's gateways, country parks and other "honeypot" sites
- Parish Lengthsman Schemes (supported by the AONB Partnership) operate within the parishes of Barley-w-Wheatley Booth, Blacko, Bolton-by-Bowland and Gisburn Forest, Downham, Goldshaw Booth, Higham-w-West Close Booth, Lawkland, Newton-in-Bowland, Pendleton, Roughlee Booth, Sabden, Sawley and Wiswell. The parish lengthsman carry out small-scale environmental improvement and maintenance tasks on behalf of, and working with, the local community
- Other key AONB partner organisations involved in the delivery of Management Plan actions including Natural England; the Environment Agency; United Utilities; the Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester & North Merseyside; RSPB; Rivers Trusts, landowners and farmers; tourism businesses; community and voluntary groups and parish councils

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The purpose of the plan

As a nationally important landscape, the Forest of Bowland AONB experiences a variety of management pressures on its landscape, such as changing demands on agricultural land, telecommunication and energy infrastructure, tourism facilities and the need to develop a sustainable rural economy. The Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan seeks to provide a strategic context within which the problems and opportunities that these pressures present are addressed and guided in a way that safeguards the national importance of this special landscape.

The purpose of the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan is to provide a positive and pro-active management framework; highlighting the special qualities of the designated area, the importance of the relevant landscape features and identifying those features which are vulnerable to change.

The Management Plan outlines an integrated vision for future development of the AONB, based on a high level of shared aspirations for the area, taking into account relevant international, national, regional and local policies. It presents objectives specific to the AONB that will enable this vision to be pursued effectively and allocates responsibility for each objective and related actions to relevant partners.

All Management Plan objectives also have regard to the external context of the AONB - that is to say objectives are not solely 'inward looking' and wherever possible aim to take account of the relevant landscapes, communities and key issues outside of the AONB boundary.

Core principles

A number of core principles underpin the Management Plan:

Supporting sustainable land management

Farmers and land managers have played a significant role in creating the landscape as we see it today and are continuing to maintain many of its special qualities. Supporting the retention of viable and sustainable farming and active woodland management, maintaining the rural economy and retaining traditional rural skills are vital factors in keeping the area special.

Sustainable development

This means ensuring that development is sound in environmental, social and economic terms, without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same. Within a nationally protected landscape such as the AONB, the landscape and special qualities must be given special consideration in order to achieve sustainable development.

Landscape change

Change in the landscape is inevitable and need not be unwelcome. In the context of AONB designation and the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, the challenge is to manage change in an integrated way, so that it can make a positive contribution both to the social and economic needs of local communities and to the natural beauty and special qualities of the landscape.

Adopting a natural capital and ecosystems approach

By bringing together the three principles of the 'ecosystems approach', we can ensure that the benefits we derive from the natural environment (ecosystem services) are safeguarded and enhanced. The principles are:

- The natural systems that operate within the AONB are complex and dynamic, and their healthy functioning should not be taken for granted
- Those that live and work in and visit the AONB benefit from services provided by the natural environment. These services underpin social and economic wellbeing and have a value – both monetary and non-monetary

- Those that benefit from the services provided by the AONB and those who are involved in the management of them should play a central role in making decisions about them.

Using the ecosystem approach is how the AONB Partnership will work to deliver ‘bigger, better and more joined up’ biodiversity, with greater ecological connectivity and enhanced landscapes that benefit wildlife and people.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation

In responding to climate change, there is a need to understand and adapt to the impacts this change is likely to have on the landscape and to seek ways in which carbon emissions can be reduced. Ensuring that adaptation and mitigation measures do not adversely affect natural beauty and maximising opportunities to improve landscape resilience, such as improving habitat condition and enhancing connectivity are a priority.

How the draft plan was produced

The first Management Plan for the AONB was published in 1995 and the first statutory plan was published in 2004. This draft revised Management Plan 2019 -2024 was published in March 2019. The draft revised Plan is the product of a series of targeted consultation exercises, together with a literature review.

Consultation

Whilst the Management Plan has been reviewed at a time of more limited resources, the AONB Partnership remains committed to offering community involvement and stakeholder engagement in the Review process.

Consultation during the Review process has been carried out both online (via public survey, emails, press releases and social media), face-to-face meetings and correspondence with key AONB partners and formal consultation. Summary reports have been produced and published on the AONB website, documenting comments received during the various stages of consultation during the Review process.

Literature review

The revised Management Plan incorporates the results of a literature review of relevant plans, strategies and policies, and has sought to integrate these

where appropriate. The literature review and subsequent review of the Management Plan was undertaken by the AONB Unit. See Appendix 1 for a list of documents included in the literature review.

The important focus of the AONB Management Plan - and what differentiates it from these other plans and strategies - is its purpose of namely to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Forest of Bowland. However, the AONB Partnership recognises that this can only be achieved by complementing other partners' plans and strategies within the context of the AONB as a whole.

Assessments

The revised Management Plan has been the subject of a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) and screening for the Habitats Regulations. An Environmental Report (for the SEA process) has been produced and consulted upon. In addition, a screening report for the Habitat Regulation Assessment has been produced in consultation with Natural England, the statutory consultee for Habitat Regulations Assessment

POLICY CONTEXT FOR THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan

In January 2018, the Government published 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Environment Plan for the Future'. The Plan sets out the Government's goals for improving the environment, within a generation, and leaving it in a better state than we found it. The Plan forms the culmination of over two years of work and consultation with environmental bodies, including close work with AONB Partnerships via the National Association for AONBs.

The Plan refers specifically to AONBs in Chapter 2 under 'Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes', in which it states:

"...the creation of designated landscapes – which also include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONBs – has been among the outstanding environmental achievements of the past 100 years. They provide a patchwork of stunning, and protected, landscapes. In England, a quarter of our landscape is designated in this way, around 10% as National Parks and 15% as AONBs. We will make sure they continue to be conserved and enhanced, while recognising that they are living landscapes that support rural communities."

Under Section 2 'Conserving and enhancing natural beauty', the Plan also states that:

"Over the next 25 years we want to make sure they [AONBs and National Parks] are not only conserved but enhanced. Many of the policies set out in the rest of the Plan will contribute to making all areas more beautiful..."

Furthermore, the Plan then outlines two specific actions the Government wishes to undertake in relation to AONBs and National Parks, firstly to commission a '21st Century Hobhouse' Review of AONBs and National Parks and secondly, to work with and AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards and National Park Authorities to deliver environmental enhancement, including through demonstrator projects, and engaging with communities through their statutory management plans.

The UK's National Parks and AONBs were created by an Act of Parliament in 1949, following the government's 1947 Hobhouse Report, which remains the basis for most protected landscape designation in England today. Now, 70 years on, the Government has commissioned a review for the 21st Century. The Review, which will complete in autumn 2019, considers coverage of designations, how designated areas deliver their responsibilities, how designated areas are financed, and whether there is scope for expansion. It will also consider opportunities to enhance the environment in existing designations, and expand on the existing plans to connect more people with the natural environment.

Various other actions outlined in the Plan to improve the environment and people's connection with nature are also particularly relevant to AONBs, which include: designing and delivering a new Environmental Land Management Scheme; expanding the use of natural flood management solutions; developing a 'Nature Recovery Network' and connecting people with the environment to improve health and well-being. The objectives and actions outlined in the Management Plan will aim to contribute towards the delivery of these actions.

Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

Natural capital assets are the elements of the natural world from which flow a series of services (or benefits) to society. For example, woodland, species rich grassland, wetlands, peatland and other soils are all aspects of natural capital, whilst carbon storage, clean air and water and opportunities for recreation are some of the ecosystem services which flow from them. These services are also influenced by financial and social capital, but at their root is the natural capital that makes their delivery possible.

The special qualities and natural capital assets of the Forest of Bowland AONB landscape provide a wide range of ecosystem services:

- The AONB supports significant wild species diversity, most notably its blanket bog, species-rich meadows, wet grassland, ancient woodlands and hedgerows. This complex mosaic of habitats provide a rich ecological network. The area is important for breeding birds, especially upland species including hen harrier, peregrine, merlin and ring ouzel; and waders such as lapwing, curlew, redshank and snipe.
- AONB farmers produce predominantly extensive beef and sheep on the fells with more intensive beef, sheep and dairy farming within the valleys and lowland fringes. Hill farming systems concentrate on the production of suckler beef and store lambs. In addition, the western fringes of the AONB also support a number of other enterprises including pig, poultry and horticulture.
- Timber is produced from forestry operations and woodfuel and wood products through small-scale woodland management.

- Upland river catchments of the AONB provide water for thousands of homes and businesses in Lancashire and the North West of England. The sustainable management of catchment land by the water utility company, United Utilities, helps to improve water quality; reducing the need for more costly 'end-of-pipe' water treatment.
- Healthy, functioning blanket bog on the tops of the fells acts as a carbon store and work to restore and re-wet areas of blanket bog will help boost carbon sequestration. In addition, these blanket bogs are also important in helping to mitigate downstream flood risk for communities, both inside and out of the AONB.
- The extensive rights of way network and access land areas within many areas of the AONB, offering access to important wildlife sites and places of historical interest, provides excellent recreational opportunities and supports the health and well-being of both residents and visitors.
- Other benefits provided by the AONB landscape include the dispersal and cycling of nutrients, pollination and, with the appropriate technology in the correct location, a source of renewable energy (such as micro-hydro, small-scale wind, solar and biomass). It is also a source of clean air, tranquillity and freedom from noise and light pollution.

Some products like timber have a known financial value, but in other cases, such as the role of bees in pollinating crops or the storage of carbon in woodland and wetlands, we are only just beginning to fully understand their role and value to society and the economy. A better understanding of the natural capital assets and wide range of public benefits provided by the special landscape such as the AONB; and also their value both in monetary and non-monetary terms, can help us design and plan appropriate management activity to ensure that our natural resources and systems are more effectively supported in the future.

Many of the objectives within the Management Plan will influence the management of land and ecosystems in the AONB, and ensure that effective management is helping to sustain and improve the range and quality of ecosystem services that are provided. A brief analysis of natural capital and ecosystem services provided by the AONB landscape can be found in Appendix 2 to the Plan.

Planning and development in AONBs

Development within and close to AONBs is expected to conform to a high standard of design, to be in keeping with local distinctiveness and, fundamentally, seeks to conserve and enhance the AONB's natural beauty.

AONBs enjoy the same levels of protection in planning terms as those of UK National Parks. Responsibility for planning policy and decision-making in AONBs lies with the relevant local authority (whereas in National Parks it lies with the Park Authority). This means that whilst AONB Management Plans themselves do not form part of any local development plan, they are, nevertheless, vitally important documents in the planning system. They are the basis for identifying those aspects of the AONB which are critical in contributing to its natural beauty and potentially influential in the development of planning policy and a 'material consideration' in the determination of individual planning applications and appeals.

The AONB Partnership (and Unit) is not a statutory consultee for planning applications or the formulation of Local and Neighbourhood Plans. Nevertheless, the AONB Unit does provide advice and guidance for local planning authorities on landscape planning matters on behalf of the AONB Partnership. Natural England is the statutory consultee for landscape-related planning matters (alongside its broader land use planning remit for protection and conservation of the natural environment). The AONB Unit liaises with the Natural England's Land Use Planning team on these and other related matters.

National Planning Policy Framework

In 2018, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government's current planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The Framework states that:

'The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.' and

'...at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development'

The Framework goes on to outline how this can be achieved, within the context of the planning system, through the application of three objectives, namely economic, social and environmental:

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The Framework confirms that local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for their areas within Local Plans and accordingly deliver the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. It also provides specific planning guidance for development planning and decision-making in relation to AONBs, under Paragraph 172:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited.'

The 'great weight test' is significant and it is one of the most stringent legal tests that can be applied under planning law. In specific relation to major development, the Framework goes to state that:

'Planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;

b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and

c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.'

The Framework also confirms that allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value (counting the AONB as high value), that local planning authorities should set evidence and criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting landscape areas will be judged (development affecting AONBs includes impact on their setting) and that planning should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Landscape Characterisation

Landscape character is defined as *“a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse”* (Landscape Character Network). Put simply, landscape character is that which makes an area unique or different from neighbouring areas (in much the same way as we use the word “character” to describe differences between people).

National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision making framework for the natural environment. The AONB is largely contained within two NCAs, 'Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill' (NCA 33) and 'Bowland Fells' (NCA 34). A small area of Pendle Hill also falls within 'Lancashire Valleys' (NCA35). For more useful information on National Character Areas, including Area Profiles and Statements of Environmental Opportunity visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

In addition national landscape character assessment, a number of local landscape character studies have been undertaken to better understand and describe the character of the Forest of Bowland landscape. The most recent and comprehensive of these is the Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment:

Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment

In 2009, the AONB commissioned a detailed landscape character assessment of the AONB. The overall study consists of two principal sections dealing with landscape classification and managing landscape change respectively. In general, the key characteristics of the AONB landscape, as identified by this landscape character assessment, are as follows:

- Grandeur and isolation of the upland core
- Open expanses of moorland
- Cultural landscape of upland farming
- Historic landscape management as royal hunting forest and more recently as sporting estates
- Rural landscape of dry stone-wall enclosed pastures, stone built farms and villages
- Wooded pastoral scenery and parkland
- Steep scarps, deeply incised cloughs and wooded valleys
- Broad river valleys
- Contrasting gritstone/limestone geology

The landscape character assessment also provides analysis on the landscape sensitivity and its capacity to accommodate change, alongside guidelines for planners, developers, land managers and others on managing landscape change, within each of the landscape character types of the AONB. A copy of the AONB Landscape Character Assessment (2009) is available at: <https://forestofbowland.com/Landscape-Character-Assessment>

DELIVERING THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Vision

The delivery of the AONB Management Plan is guided by the following long-term vision of how the AONB will look in the future:

'The Forest of Bowland landscape retains its sense of local distinctiveness, notably the wide open moorland character of the Bowland Fells, undulating lowland farmland, clough woodlands, traditional buildings and the settlement patterns of its villages, hamlets and farmsteads.

It is a landscape valued for the range of services and benefits it provides for society, with a functioning, diverse natural heritage where land management practices allow opportunity for natural processes to develop and flourish; and where partnership-working between land managers, conservation bodies, communities and businesses is focused on delivering more for nature together.

The rich cultural heritage of the area is also better understood and managed; and both the nature and culture of the area help to support a resilient and sustainable local economy.

The Forest of Bowland is a truly outstanding landscape, where it can clearly be demonstrated that the management of the AONB has conserved and enhanced the quality, understanding and enjoyment of the landscape for all.'

Action Plan

The following action plan section of the Management Plan is organised under three themes:

1. An Outstanding Landscape for Natural and Cultural Heritage
2. Resilient and Sustainable Communities
3. A Strong Connection between People and the Landscape

The action plan outlines information on:

Key issues and forces for change

The key issues affecting the AONB are driven by a number of factors including the profound implications of climate change, uncertainty over the impact of Brexit, development pressure, pursuit of economic growth, demands for recreation and changes in agriculture and the broader economy. These key issues or 'forces for change' outlined are likely to continue to affect the AONB throughout the next plan period. Sections detailing these precede each themed set of objectives and actions. It should be emphasised that they do not discuss these issues at length, but seek to provide an overview and a context within which the Plan will need to operate.

AONB 'Ways of working'

The concept of collaboration and working together with others to achieve success underscores all AONB Partnership work. Most AONB Management Plan delivery needs to be done by encouragement through effective partnership working and not enforcement. Under each outcome, AONB 'ways of working' are detailed; outlining how the AONB Partnership and Unit aims to carry out its day-to-day work.

AONB objectives and actions

AONB Partnership objectives and actions to be delivered during the Plan period are laid out in tabular form and allocate responsibility for these to key partners, alongside the role for the AONB Unit.

1. An Outstanding Landscape of Natural and Cultural Heritage

1.1 Landscape

Apply the guiding principles of the European Landscape Convention, using landscape characterisation as the basis for policy- and decision-making for land and development management, to conserve and enhance natural beauty of the landscape.

Outcome: The landscape is conserved and enhanced, whilst ensuring essential development takes place

1.2 Habitats and Species

Conserve, enhance and restore the AONB's characteristic mosaic of habitats by improving their connectivity, extent and condition; whilst taking targeted action to conserve key species and improving understanding of the biodiversity of the AONB.

Outcome: More and bigger areas of habitat are connected and better managed, with key species conserved

1.3 Historic Environment

Support the conservation, restoration and management of the historic environment and wider cultural landscape.

Outcome: Built and other cultural heritage assets are better understood, conserved and managed

1.4 Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

Seek to better understand and promote the value of the natural capital of the AONB landscape and the public benefits derived from these assets; helping to manage landscape change which conserves and enhances natural beauty.

Outcome: The natural capital of the AONB and the public goods derived from these assets are better understood, valued and promoted

Key Issues and Forces for Change

- International conventions and obligations such as the European Landscape Convention, the Convention on Biodiversity and Climate Change Agreements
- New agricultural policy and support (e.g. 'public money for public goods'), as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union
- New environmental policy and regulatory structures, as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union
- Government ambitions to improve the environment, expressed in 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Environment Plan for the Future', including the development of a 'Nature Recovery Network'
- Increased awareness and recognition of the value of natural capital and the associated ecosystem services that flow from these assets, such as carbon storage and sequestration, water quality, flood alleviation, recreation and people's health and well-being
- Continued persecution and disturbance affecting birds of prey populations
- Limited breeding success of the Hen harrier within the Bowland Fells Special Protection Area
- Continued declines in key species within UK and Ireland (e.g. Curlew)
- Invasive alien species damaging ecosystems (e.g. Signal crayfish in rivers; Himalayan balsam threatening bluebell woodland)
- Lack of woodland management affecting biodiversity, particularly semi-natural clough woodland
- Woodland cover still well below national average (currently covering 8.3% of the AONB), with continued low levels of new woodland creation
- Small, fragmented patches of habitat are vulnerable to loss of biodiversity due isolation and climate changes
- Roadside verge management regimes adversely affecting verges with special biodiversity interest
- Agricultural specialisation, intensification and farm amalgamation is resulting in a loss of semi-natural habitats and historic features, poor soil management and loss of traditional boundaries
- Diffuse and point-source pollution of watercourses from both agricultural and non-agricultural sources
- Intensive fertiliser use and diffuse pollution continues in some areas leading to loss of biodiversity both on and off agricultural land (e.g. roadside verges), as well as affecting water quality
- Potential change to cropping patterns and types of crops, in response to climate change, altering the character of the landscape
- Potential for more hot, dry summers leading to reduced ground water and drying out of moorland habitats, increasing fire risk and release carbon into the atmosphere

- Potential for more intense rainfall events causing flooding within- and downstream of the AONB
- Natural flood management within river catchments increasingly seen as a tool for mitigation of flood risk for downstream communities
- Changes to the planning system, following the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework e.g. more major development proposals in the AONB
- Pressure for new development and building conversion in open or exposed landscapes, which can be more visually intrusive
- Increased demand for locally, affordable homes
- Traditional agricultural buildings becoming redundant and replaced with large, modern buildings
- Construction of new tracks in open countryside for farming, forestry and moorland management purposes
- Potential development of unconventional gas exploitation (i.e. hydraulic fracturing or 'fracking') infrastructure within the AONB setting
- Small-scale, cumulative development (e.g. building extensions, residential boundary treatment, roadside concrete curbing and signage) resulting in erosion of integrity and quality of the landscape
- Increasing role of neighbourhood planning
- Development, traffic and lighting within- and beyond the boundary of the AONB increasingly affecting its tranquility
- Lack of awareness of geodiversity value of the AONB
- Loss of traditional skills reducing the ability to effectively manage the traditional landscape features and buildings of the AONB

AONB 'Ways of Working'

Landscape

- Participate in a range of fora and networks to represent landscape interests and encourage the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONB

Habitats and Species

- Encourage habitat creation, restoration and the buffering of existing habitats in line with 25 Year Environment Plan objectives (and appropriate to landscape character), aiming to create more, bigger and more connected habitats
- Commitment to applying a 'Natural Capital and Ecosystems Approach' to management of the AONB landscape

- Collaborate with Natural England, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission and other national, sub-regional and local environmental organisations and interests through a range of fora, to co-ordinate actions for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity within the AONB
- Promote, encourage and facilitate 'High Nature Value' farming through provision of advice and guidance to land managers on the new Environmental Land Management System, post-Brexit
- Maintain regular communications with Defra and Natural England regarding development of the new Environment Land Management System

AN OUTSTANDING LANDSCAPE OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE			
OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY PARTNER(S)	AONB Unit
[1.1] Landscape Apply the guiding principles of the European Landscape Convention, using landscape characterisation as the basis for policy- and decision-making for land and development management, to conserve and enhance natural beauty of the landscape.	[1.1A] Provide landscape planning advice and guidance for local planning authorities, highway authorities, government agencies, local communities and developers based on the Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment 2009.	Local planning authorities Highway authorities Natural England Environment Agency Forestry Commission Utility companies	Lead & Advise
	[1.1B] Influence planning and development policy-making at a local, county and national level by responding to consultations for relevant plans and strategies, e.g. neighbourhood plans, local plans and national planning policy guidance.	Local planning authorities Parish Councils Neighbourhood planning groups Natural England Environment Agency	Lead & Encourage
	[1.1C] Carry out a 'refresh' of the AONB Landscape Character Assessment, focusing on new and emerging forces for change affecting the AONB.	Natural England Local planning authorities	Lead
	[1.1D] Develop and review bespoke policy statements and guidance on current landscape planning issues affecting the AONB landscape, including statements on AONB development principles, renewable energy, lighting and design guidance notes (e.g. building design, moorland tracks, fencing).	Natural England Local planning authorities	Lead & Support
	[1.1E] Develop an AONB Woodland Strategy to conserve and enhance existing woodlands, promote the creation of new native and mixed woodlands and address the impact of tree health issues.	Woodland owners Forestry Commission Woodland Trust Rivers Trusts YDMT	Lead

	[1.1F] Continue to deliver 'Traditional Boundaries' programmes (via both the AONB and Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership), supporting training and competitions to help manage traditional boundaries and promote traditional rural skills.	Lancashire and Westmorland Hedgelaying Association Drystone Walling Association Farmers and landowners Natural England	Lead & Support
	[1.1G] Continue to work with Electricity North West Limited (ENWL) on the 'Undergrounding for Visual Amenity' programme to remove overhead powerlines in 'landscape-sensitive' locations within and close to the AONB.	ENWL OFGEM R110-ED1 Parish Councils	Support & Advise
	[1.1H] Develop and deliver a 'landscape enhancement' project (focusing on management of traditional boundaries and woodland creation) to address the impacts of National Grid's high-voltage, overhead power lines in the AONB and its setting, with a view to submitting a bid to National Grid's Landscape Enhancement Initiative.	Local authorities Rivers Trusts Parish Councils Farmers and landowners Local flood forums Lancashire and Westmorland Hedgelaying Association Drystone Walling Association	Lead & Support
	[1.1I] Work with geodiversity partnerships to increase awareness and understanding of importance of geodiversity in the AONB landscape, seeking to build it into AONB Partnership activity or projects, wherever relevant.	GeoLancashire North Yorkshire Geodiversity Partnerships Quarrying companies	Support & Encourage
[1.2] Habitats and Species Conserve, enhance and restore the AONB's characteristic mosaic of habitats by improving their connectivity, extent and condition; whilst taking targeted action to conserve key species and improving	[1.2A] Support farmers and landowners to conserve, enhance and restore land in nationally and internationally important wildlife sites, ensuring that at least 95% of SSSIs in the AONB are in favourable or recovering condition and at least 50% in favourable condition by 2024.	Farmers and landowners Natural England	Support, Advise & Encourage
	[1.2B] Support farmers and landowners to conserve, enhance and restore priority habitats outside SSSIs, focusing on local wildlife sites.	Farmers and landowners LERN NEYEDC Rivers Trusts	Support, Advise & Encourage
	[1.2C] Develop a pilot nature recovery area within the AONB, as part of the Government's proposals for 'Nature Recovery Network', outlined in its '25 Year Environment Plan'.	Defra Natural England	Lead & Support

understanding of the biodiversity of the AONB.		Environment Agency Forestry Commission Rivers Trusts NUC LNP	
	[1.2D] Work with moorland owners to develop long-term moorland management plans in the AONB, with a focus on features of the Bowland Fells SSSI being on a path to favourable condition (see 1.2A).	Moorland owners Natural England	Support, Advise & Encourage
	[1.2E] Work with moorland owners to deliver landscape-scale projects to restore and re-wet at least 250 ha. of blanket bog habitat, including: Pennine Peat LIFE Project; Northern England Peat Project, Ribble Life and United Utilities PR19.	Moorland owners Defra Lancashire Peat Partnership Natural England Environment Agency United Utilities Rivers Trusts LWT	Lead & Support
	[1.2F] Work with farmers, landowners and local communities to deliver projects to conserve, enhance and restore at least 15ha. of species-rich grassland habitat; including Bowland Haytime & Bee Together.	Farmers and landowners Local community groups Smallholders Natural England YDMT	Support, Advise & Encourage
	[1.2G] Support the creation and establishment of at least 200 ha. of new native and mixed woodland that enhances the AONB landscape, with priority given to projects that conserve and enhance existing key habitats and species, increase carbon storage, keep rivers cool and help reduce flooding.	Farmers and landowners Woodland agents Forestry Commission Natural England Woodland Trust YDMT Rivers Trusts	Support, Advise & Encourage
	[1.2H] Support woodland owners to actively manage existing woodlands to conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity, whilst identifying opportunities for sustainable timber production and woodland products.	Woodland owners & agents Forestry Commission	Support, Advise & Encourage
	[1.2I] Influence, test and trial the development of the Government's proposed 'Environmental Land Management System' to offer support for farmers and landowners to conserve, enhance and restore priority habitats in the AONB, including species-rich grassland, wet grassland, peatland and woodland.	Defra Natural England Environment Agency RSPB Rivers Trusts	Lead, Support & Advise

		LWT	
[1.2J] Support a catchment-based approach to the delivery of projects to conserve, enhance and restore riparian habitat; including Ribble Life Together, Pendle WINNS.		Catchment Partnerships Rivers Trusts Environment Agency Natural England	Support & Advise
[1.2K] Work with farmers and landowners to improve the condition of the Lune, Ribble and Wyre, so that at least 90% of all rivers achieve 'good ecological status' by 2027.		Farmers and landowners Catchment Partnerships Rivers Trusts Environment Agency Natural England	Support & Encourage
[1.2L] Support 'Restoring Sustainable Abstraction' (RSA) Programme being delivered by the relevant authorities and United Utilities on Wyre and Calder (Wyre) catchments		Environment Agency United Utilities Rivers Trusts	Support & Encourage
[1.2M] Devise and deliver local species recovery plans for threatened or priority species either locally or nationally; ensuring synergy with national species recovery plans, where these exist or are under development; including curlew, hen harrier, black grouse and threatened or locally important plant species.		Farmers and landowners Natural England RSPB GWCT NUC LNP	Lead, Advise, Encourage
[1.2N] Work with moorland managers and other key partners to implement a local approach to combat and eradicate illegal persecution of raptors, including survey work, satellite tagging and monitoring, co-ordinated hen harrier nest protection and winter roost site monitoring.		Moorland managers Defra Natural England Raptor Persecution Priority Deliver Group Police RSPB Moorland Association	Lead, Support & Encourage
[1.2O] Support key partners to address invasive non-native species (INNS) where these impact on the AONB, including coordination of surveying, volunteer tasks days and specialist work via contractors		Local authorities LWT Rivers Trusts EA Forestry Commission Friends of Bowland Pendle Hill Volunteer Group	Lead, Support & Encourage
[1.2P] Support research and monitoring of habitat extent/condition and priority species (both S41 and local priority species) for the AONB, including blanket bog, species-rich grassland, birds of prey, waders, aquatic species, pollinators.		Natural England LWT Rivers Trusts YDMT	Lead, Support & Advise

		LERN NEYEDC NUC LNP	
[1.3] Historic Environment Support the conservation, restoration and management of the historic environment and wider cultural landscape	[1.3A] Work with statutory agencies to monitor, manage and conserve designated heritage assets; identifying any which become 'at risk' and developing management plans to remove assets from the 'Heritage at Risk' register (HAR).	Historic England Natural England Lancashire Archaeological Advisory Service Local history groups	Support & Advise
	[1.3B] Develop and deliver landscape-scale projects and activity which celebrate, conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape, cultural heritage and special qualities of the AONB; including Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership and Ribble Life Together.	Local authorities Parish Councils Pendle Hill LP Local history groups Friends of Bowland Ribble Rivers Trust Tourism businesses UCLan Archaeology Champion Bowland Heritage Lottery Fund Arts organisations	Lead, Support & Encourage
	[1.3C] Support community-based projects to conserve, enhance and restore historic landscape features; to help increase access to- and understanding of the historic environment and cultural heritage.	Pendle Hill LP Historic England Friends of Bowland Local history groups Slaidburn Archive Champion Bowland Heritage Lottery Fund UCLan Archaeology Arts organisations	Support & Advise
	[1.3D] Develop and improve information to raise awareness and understanding of the wider historic environment of the AONB, using print and digital media and appropriate on-site interpretation.	Pendle Hill LP English Heritage Local history groups Slaidburn Archive Champion Bowland Ribble Rivers Trust Historic Houses Association Tourism businesses	Lead, Support & Advise
[1.4] Natural Capital and Ecosystems Services	[1.4A] Carry out research into the value of natural capital and ecosystems services provided by the natural environment of the AONB and disseminate to a wider audience;	Natural England Environment Agency Pendle Hill LP	Lead & Support

<p>Seek to better understand and promote the value of the natural capital of the landscape and the public benefits derived from these assets; guiding land and development management decision-making to increase the natural capital of the AONB.</p>	<p>including Pendle Hill LP's 'What's A Hill Worth' and Upper River Wyre Natural Flood Management scoping research.</p>	<p>Rivers Trusts Ecosystems Knowledge Network</p>	
	<p>[1.4B] Develop a more detailed local evidence base on the natural capital assets and ecosystem services for the AONB; using GIS to map these assets and services.</p>	<p>Environment Agency Natural England Rivers Trusts LWT LERN NEYEDC NUC LNP</p>	<p>Lead & Support</p>
	<p>[1.4C] Carry out a more in-depth 'Ecosystems Approach' self-assessment of the AONB Partnership and its activities, helping to deliver outcomes outlined in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan</p>	<p>Natural England NAAONB</p>	<p>Lead</p>
	<p>[1.4D] Use the developing evidence base on natural capital and ecosystems services to influence and shape local delivery of the Government's proposed 'Environmental Land Management System', which prioritises support for the supply of public goods such as biodiversity, carbon, natural flood management, water quality and access to the countryside.</p>	<p>Defra Environment Agency Natural England Farmer and landowners Rivers Trusts LWT LERN NEYEDC NUC LNP</p>	<p>Lead & Support</p>
	<p>[1.4E] Investigate and trial local delivery of potential mechanisms for investment in natural capital, such as Peatland Code, Woodland Carbon Code and Net Gain for Nature.</p>	<p>Local planning authorities NUC LNP Rivers Trusts IUCN Peatland Programme Forestry Commission</p>	<p>Lead, Support & Encourage</p>

2. Resilient and Sustainable Communities

2.1 Farming and Land Management

Encourage, promote and support farming and land management practices that help to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

Outcome: The farming and land management of the AONB delivers more for nature, farmers, land managers, and the public

2.2 Sustainable Tourism

Develop, co-ordinate and promote sustainable tourism activity within and close to the AONB.

Outcome: The local economy benefits from the promotion and development of sustainable tourism in the AONB

2.3 Local Economy and Rural Services

Promote and support rural services and the socio-economic development of the area, particularly where such activity helps to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

Outcome: The AONB is not disadvantaged due to its rurality, in particular access to services and utilities, business support, training and skills

2.4 Community Engagement and Volunteering

Support local communities and businesses to become more involved in activities and projects to conserve, enhance and celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of the AONB.

Outcome: Local communities and businesses are supported to become involved in activities and projects to conserve, enhance and celebrate nature, culture and landscape

Key Issues and forces for change

- New trade agreements, agricultural policy and support for farmers due to the UK leaving the EU, creating uncertainty and increased pressures on livestock farming.
- Centralisation of processing facilities has reduced the ability of producers to supply local markets
- Potential impact on the rural economy of the UK leaving the EU, including uncertainty around future of rural development funding from Government
- Increasing competition from other countryside destinations and the need to retain tourism market share
- Lack of public transport and reliance on the private car
- Loss of services in rural settlements due to economies of scale, changes in Government policy and reduced funding for public services, and changing purchasing habits leading to reduction in rural sustainability and negative impacts on those without a car
- Limited access to full time jobs locally
- Lack of affordable housing for people working in the AONB
- Roll-out of superfast broadband is patchy and has still not reached the more remote areas of the AONB
- Reduced opportunities for rural businesses to capitalise on latest information and communication technology (ICT) due to inconsistent broadband coverage
- Increased risk and frequency of flooding in lowland areas/river valleys where most settlements are situated
- Ageing farm workforce with fewer younger farmers to replace those that are retiring. This can lead to: i) fewer people to look after the land; ii) conversion of farm units into small gentrified hamlets; iii) increased commuting into neighbouring towns, resulting in more traffic on minor roads
- Ageing population in general, leading to fewer young families and younger people living in the AONB, this in turn could result in a loss of skills, knowledge and engagement with the AONB landscape

AONB 'Ways of Working'

Farming and Land Management

- Work closely with farmers, landowners and land managers (via farmer networks and groups) to liaise with- and involve the land management sector in AONB projects and activity
- Work closely with farmers, landowners and land managers to ensure effective communications within the AONB Partnership and with government agencies relating to land management decisions affecting the area
- AONB partners and government agencies to engage, consult and respond to the reasonable concerns of land owners, managers and farmers prior to making decisions which affect their interests, rights and responsibilities

Sustainable Tourism

- Support and encourage tourism businesses to sign up to AONB Sustainable Tourism Charter and adopt environmentally and landscape sensitive practices e.g. energy efficiency and use, waste management, lighting, etc.
- Actively recruit and support sustainable tourism partners and green tourism accredited businesses to the Bowland Sustainable Tourism Network
- Encourage businesses and partners to support and promote AONB publications and leaflets
- Collaborate with Marketing Lancashire, Welcome to Yorkshire and local authority tourism officers to promote the AONB as a sustainable tourism destination
- Ensure consistent use of AONB and Pendle Hill LP branding on website, print, communications, mobile apps and social media

Local Economy and Rural Services

- Support housing and workspace proposals within the area, where the development meets local housing, employment and business needs and where it will also conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB landscape
- Review and remain up-to-date with current rural growth and development funding mechanisms, raising awareness as appropriate
- Wherever possible, support and promote local businesses, products and services in the delivery of AONB projects and activity

Community Engagement and Volunteering

- Work with local communities throughout the AONB
- Ensure local communities are fully informed, consulted and involved with regard to AONB planning and activities, wherever possible seeking to include a diverse range of people (e.g. age, ethnicity, ability and interests)

- Support communities in identifying and celebrating their local distinctiveness
- Continue to work alongside Champion Bowland, as a local registered charity with its aim to support the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the AONB
- Incorporate volunteering into the delivery of AONB projects, wherever possible.
- Seek to remove barriers to participation when developing AONB projects and activities

RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY PARTNER(S)	AONB Unit
[2.1] Farming and Land Management Encourage, promote and support farming and land management practices that help to conserve and enhance natural beauty.	[2.1A] Promote and provide advice on land management practices which to help conserve and enhance the landscape, based on within the Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment, e.g. woodland management plans, felling licence applications, agri-environment scheme agreements.	Farmers and landowners Natural England Environment Agency Forestry Commission Rivers Trusts Moorland Association	Advise & Encourage
	[2.1B] Develop and support farmer networks and forums within the AONB, to help advocate for- and promote 'high nature value' (HNV) farming in the uplands, at both a local and national level.	Pendle Hill Farmers Network Loud Catchment Farmers Group Long Preston Floodplain Farmers Group Abbeystead Farmers Group Bowland Land Managers Forum Northern Hill Farmers Panel NUC LNP	Lead, Support & Advise
	[2.1C] Co-ordinate and provide training and knowledge transfer opportunities to promote good practice in HNV farming, e.g. catchment sensitive farming, rush management, natural flood management measures, soil health and farming for waders.	Pendle Hill Farmers Network Loud Catchment Farmers Group Long Preston Floodplain Farmers Group Abbeystead Farmers Group Rivers Trusts YDMT RSPB Yorkshire Dales National Park	Lead, Support & Advise

	[2.1D] Influence, test and trial new approaches to the Government's proposed Environmental Land Management System, using the AONB Management Plan as the basis for the priorities of new schemes in the AONB and proposing the area as a testbed, where appropriate and when opportunity arises.	Pendle Hill Farmers Network Loud Catchment Farmers Group Long Preston Floodplain Farmers Group Abbeystead Farmers Group Bowland Land Managers Forum Northern Hill Farmers Panel NUC LNP Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority	Lead, Support & Advise
	[2.1E] Pilot the Foundation for Common Land's 'Hill Farmer Training Scheme' in the AONB, to allow environmental and countryside advisors and practitioners the opportunity to gain an understanding of the unique challenges, benefits and opportunities of farming in the uplands.	Farmers and landowners Foundation for Common Land NUC LNP Northern Hill Farmers Panel Northumberland National Park Authority	Support, Advise & Encourage
	[2.1F] Provide opportunities for both employers and trainees to benefit from apprenticeships in countryside and land management and traditional rural skills; including Upskilling Lancashire, Pendle Hill LP and Green Futures.	Myerscough College Other FE Colleges Ribble Rivers Trust YDMT Young Farmers Groups	Lead & Support
	[2.1G] Support the development of a local woodland economy linked to more active woodland management, identifying opportunities for sustainable timber production and woodland products.	Woodland owners and agents Forestry Commission Woodland Trust Arnsdale and Silverdale AONB	Lead, Advise & Encourage
[2.2] Sustainable Tourism Develop, co-ordinate and promote sustainable tourism activity within and close to the AONB.	[2.2A] Continue to support the Bowland Sustainable Tourism Network (BSTN), working with a network steering group drawn from the business members to lead new sustainable tourism activity in the AONB.	BSTN members BSTN steering group Local authority tourism officers Marketing Lancashire Welcome to Yorkshire	Lead, Support & Encourage
	[2.2B] Provide advice, support, networking and business mentoring opportunities for sustainable tourism businesses in the AONB	BSTN members BSTN steering group	Lead & support

	[2.2C] Work with BSTN steering group to establish new 'Sustainable Tourism Partner' criteria linked to positive actions by the participating businesses.	BSTN members BSTN steering group	Lead, Support & Advise
	[2.2D] Develop and promote an AONB 'Sustainable Tourism Partner' branding similar to the Pendle LP locator logos.	BSTN steering group Pendle Hill LP Local authority tourism officers Marketing Lancashire Welcome to Yorkshire	Lead & Encourage
	[2.2E] Support and advise tourism businesses, helping to identify and promote 'year-round', sustainable tourism opportunities in the AONB e.g. seasonal activities, local produce, easy access trails, environmental activity-based breaks, visiting via public transport and car-free itineraries and an electric car charging network.	BSTN members New tourism businesses	Lead & Support
	[2.2F] Co-ordinate and promote training opportunities for tourism businesses to help conserve, enhance and celebrate the AONB landscape, e.g. 'Know Your AONB' and Sense of Place, green accreditation and dark skies tourism.	BSTN members BSTN steering group Local authority tourism officers	Lead & Support
	[2.2G] Refresh the AONB Sense of Place Toolkit for use by businesses to promote the special qualities of the AONB, alongside the development of a new 'Discover Pendle Hill' Toolkit.	BSTN members BSTN steering group Pendle Hill LP Local authority tourism officers Marketing Lancashire Welcome to Yorkshire	Lead & Support
	[2.2H] Develop opportunities for 'visitor-giving' linked with tourism businesses e.g. the 'Landmark Trees' scheme supporting establishment of new trees outside woodlands	Champion Bowland BSTN members BSTN steering group Tourism businesses	Lead, Support & Advise
[2.3] Local Economy and Rural Services Promote and support rural services and the socio-	[2.3A] Work with local authorities and service providers to retain access to services (e.g. health centres, post offices, schools, shops, public transport, public toilets and parking) within local communities of the AONB and resist developments which would result in their loss	Local authorities Parish Councils NHS service providers	Support & Advise

economic development of the area, particularly where such activity helps to conserve and enhance natural beauty.	[2.3B] Work with key partners and service providers to support the delivery of 'landscape-sensitive' delivery of super and hyper-fast broadband and mobile telecommunication networks throughout the AONB.	Local authorities Parish Councils Telecommunications service providers Broadband UK	Advise & Encourage
	[2.3C] Support and liaise with key partners seeking to develop initiatives to address issues of rural crime, e.g. theft of livestock and plant machinery, wildlife crime, sheep worrying and fly-tipping.	Police Local authorities Lancashire Partners Against Crime Farmers and landowners Pendle Hill Farmers Network	Support & Encourage
	[2.3D] Continue to support parish lengthsman schemes within the AONB to assist in conserving and enhancing the local environment of AONB parishes.	Parish Councils	Support & Advise
	[2.3E] Advise and encourage local communities and businesses to engage with- and access future rural growth and development funding programmes	Local authorities Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Defra Bowland Sustainable Tourism Network Bowland Land Managers Forum	Advise & Encourage
	[2.3F] Provide opportunities for both employers and trainees to benefit from apprenticeships in the wider rural economy (e.g. tourism sector and creative industries)	FE Colleges and Universities Bowland Sustainable Tourism Network Tourism businesses Arts organisations	Lead & Support
	[2.3G] Work with estate landowners and local planning authorities to pilot the development of estate-wide masterplans, to address local housing needs and maintain or enhance the vitality of the local community.	Local planning authorities Landowners Parish Councils	Encourage & Advise
	[2.4A] Coordinate activities to raise awareness of the AONB designation and the work of the AONB Partnership within local communities.	AONB Joint Advisory Committee Members AONB partner organisations	Lead & Encourage

<p>[2.4] Community Engagement and Volunteering</p> <p>Support local communities and businesses to become more involved in activities and projects to conserve, enhance and celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of the AONB.</p>	<p>[2.4B] Provide support and advice for community-based projects and activities, which help to conserve, enhance and celebrate the nature, culture and landscape of the AONB.</p>	<p>AONB partner organisations</p>	<p>Lead & Advise</p>
	<p>[2.4C] Support Champion Bowland to continue to offer small grants for community-based projects and activities which conserve, enhance and celebrate the nature, culture and landscape of the AONB.</p>	<p>Champion Bowland</p>	<p>Support</p>
	<p>[2.4D] Deliver and support community engagement through the arts and other creative industries, particularly via Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership, which includes the Gatherings, Pendle Radicals and Pendlefolk.</p>	<p>Pendle Hill LP In Situ Mid Pennine Arts Pendlefolk volunteer group</p>	<p>Lead & Support</p>
	<p>[2.4E] Support and promote volunteering activities, involving a diverse range of people, which help deliver the AONB Management Plan objectives and conserve, enhance and celebrate the nature, culture and landscape of the AONB.</p>	<p>Friends of Bowland Other site-based 'Friends' Groups Pendle Hill Volunteers Wyre Coast and Countryside Service Ribble Rivers Trust</p>	<p>Lead, Support & Encourage</p>
	<p>[2.4F] Support volunteer groups involved in the management of countryside sites, recreational facilities in and around the AONB, e.g. Bowland Visitor Centre at Beacon Fell, Spring Wood, Crook o' Lune & Hermitage Field and Gisburn Forest and Stocks.</p>	<p>Lancashire County Council Countryside Service Wyre Council Coast and Countryside Service Other local authority countryside staff Friends of Bowland United Utilities Forestry Commission</p>	<p>Lead, Support & Advise</p>

3. A Strong Connection between People and the Landscape

3.1 Countryside Access

Maintain and improve access to the countryside in a sustainable way for a diverse range of people and that promotes responsible, safe and quiet enjoyment.

Outcome: Access to the countryside is maintained and improved for more- and a wider range of people

3.2 Visitor Management and Information

Provide high quality visitor facilities, information, events and activities to enable people to enjoy, understand and celebrate the AONB's special qualities.

Outcome: Visitor information and interpretation engages a wide audience and supports the visitor economy

3.3 Discovering and Learning

Provide opportunities to discover and learn about the special qualities of the AONB by connecting people with nature, culture and the landscape

Outcome: More and a wider range of people benefit from opportunities to discover, learn about and engage with the natural and cultural heritage of the AONB and the work of those who look after it

3.4 Health and Well-being

Provide opportunities for people to improve their health and wellbeing by connecting with nature, culture and the landscape

Outcome: The natural and cultural heritage of the AONB provides opportunities to improve people's health and well-being

Key Issues and forces for change

- Pressure on popular 'honeypot' destinations resulting in erosion and potential loss of habitat, tranquillity, damage to archaeological sites and diminished visitor experience
- Management and maintenance of Public Rights of Way (and AONB 'Promoted Routes') when public services remain under significant budgetary pressure
- Significant reductions in countryside service staff 'on the ground' at key countryside sites (e.g. Bowland Visitor Centre and Beacon Fell Country Park)
- Existing bridleway network remains fragmented
- Low density of footpaths in some areas of the AONB (e.g. Lune valley)
- Illegal use of motorcycles and 4x4 vehicles on public rights of way, access land and designated conservation sites
- Rising visitor numbers increasing the use of private cars to popular visitor sites, thus detracting from the visitor experience
- Increased incidence of inconsiderate, road-side parking, particularly at and adjacent to popular visitor sites
- Localised problems of litter and fly-tipping
- Increased risk of moorland fires in upland areas, started either accidentally or deliberately
- Increased demand for organised recreational events within the AONB (including through SSSI land) which have the potential to damage habitats or disturb wildlife
- Lower public awareness and understanding of the AONB designation (in comparison to National Parks)
- Increased awareness of the benefits accessing the natural environment to improve people's health and well-being
- Low participation in AONB and Festival Bowland events by younger people, low-income families and BAME communities
- Managing the competing demand for both traditional print media and on-line, digital media when creating interpretation and publicity

AONB 'Ways of Working'

Countryside Access

- Consider and address the landscape impacts of access improvements, particularly on moorland and fells and seek to improve well used routes on Access Land, where possible
- Consider opportunities to facilitate discussions with landowners about dedication of land for public access (including public rights of way), where appropriate
- Promote and encourage the use of high quality materials for PRoW 'furniture' that are in keeping with the local landscape (e.g. wooden footpath signs), wherever possible
- Continue to work closely with Natural England, Local Access Forums and landowners in relation to management of access land, particularly to assist with any planned review of Access Land maps

Visitor Management and Information

- Promote attractions away from 'honeypot' sites in order to attract visitors to less visited parts of the AONB
- Continue to work closely with local authority countryside services to help maintain effective management of countryside sites (e.g. country parks, picnic sites, car parks and lay-bys) in the AONB
- Encourage sustainable development and management of new visitor destinations in the AONB (e.g. Stephen Park in Gisburn Forest)
- Regularly review AONB print media to update and reprint where cost effective.
- Continue to work with and support tourism businesses to promote the area's recreational, wildlife and cultural heritage offer in a sustainable way
- Maintain the AONB and Pendle Hill LP websites as hubs for visitor information and resources for partner organisations
- Make regular use of social media to communicate with AONB partners, visitors and communities

Health and Well-being

- Share research and best practice in the role of landscape and the natural environment to improve people's health and well-being at a local and national level

A STRONG CONNECTION BETWEEN PEOPLE AND THE LANDSCAPE

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	KEY PARTNER(S)	AONB Unit
<p>[3.1] Countryside Access Maintain and improve access to the countryside in a sustainable way for a diverse range of people and that promotes responsible, safe and quiet enjoyment.</p>	<p>[3.1A] Maintain and improve the Public Rights of Way network and signage, making necessary repairs and improvements to AONB 'Promoted Routes' and strategic routes/links in and around the AONB.</p>	Lancashire County Council PRow North Yorkshire County Council PRow Farmers and landowners Promoted Routes Volunteers Lancashire Local Access Forum Ramblers Association British Horse Society Bridleways Groups	Lead & Support
	<p>[3.1B] Develop and promote countryside access opportunities for all, seeking to meet the needs of a diverse range of users; considering use of least restrictive access furniture, appropriate surfacing and special signage.</p>	Pendle Hill LP Farmers and landowners Forestry Commission Disabled Ramblers Bentham Community Rail Partnership British Horse Society Bridleways Groups	Lead & Support
	<p>[3.1C] Support the development and delivery of new multi-use, strategic routes, particularly those linking visitor gateways and communities to the wider PRow network in and around the AONB, e.g. Pendle Hill LP 'Access for All' and Settle to Gisburn Forest off-road link..</p>	Lancashire County Council North Yorkshire County Council Farmers and landowners YDMT Lancashire Local Access Forum Ramblers Association British Horse Society Bridleways Groups	Lead & Support
	<p>[3.1D] Support volunteers to help survey and maintain the PRow network, particularly focusing on AONB 'Promoted Routes'.</p>	'Promoted Routes' volunteers Wyre Council Coast and Countryside Service	Lead & Support

	[3.1E] Work with landowners to assist with management of 'Access Land', in particular dissemination of information on restrictions or closures for land management purposes or wildfire risk.	Farmers and landowners Commons Associations & Graziers Groups Lancashire County Council North Yorkshire County Council Lancashire Fire Operations Group	Support & Advise
	[3.1F] Review and renew signage and information boards at important and well-used access points to 'Access Land' in the AONB, using the Pendle Hill LP 'Access for All' project to pilot this review and renewal.	Farmers and landowners Commons Associations & Graziers Groups Lancashire County Council North Yorkshire County Council Pendle Hill LP Ramblers Association Lancashire Local Access Forum	Lead
	[3.1G] Maintain concessionary routes and countryside access created via agri-environment schemes, where these are important or valued links in the wider countryside access network.	Farmers and landowners Lancashire County Council North Yorkshire County Council Ramblers Association Lancashire Local Access Forum	Support & Advise
	[3.1H] Investigate the potential for creation of new countryside access via the Government's proposed new Environmental Land Management Schemes	Defra Natural England	Lead
[3.2] Visitor Management and Information Provide high quality visitor facilities and information to enable people to understand	[3.2A] Facilitate meetings/fora between key partners on access and visitor management issues for popular visitor sites and hubs e.g. Pendle Hill, Gisburn Forest and Stocks and Beacon Fell Country Park.	Lancashire County Council Countryside Service Wyre Council Coast and Countryside Service Local authorities United Utilities Forestry Commission Pendle Hill Advisory Group	Lead & Support

and enjoy the special qualities of the AONB	[3.2B] Promote responsible and safe access for visitors to the countryside (e.g. Countryside Code and advice on walking with dogs) via all media channels and on-site information and signage.	Farmers and landowners Local authorities Pendle Hill LP	Lead & Encourage
	[3.2C] Work with Lancashire County Council Countryside Service to develop plans for sustainable, future management arrangements for key LCC countryside sites in the AONB, e.g. Beacon Fell Country Park & Bowland Visitor Centre, Carwags Picnic Site, Spring Wood and Crook o' Lune.	Lancashire County Council Friends Groups	Support & Advise
	[3.2D] Play an active role in the Lancashire Fire Operations Group (FOG), helping to maintain up-to-date fire plans for moorland areas and raise awareness of the risk and impacts of wildfire in the AONB.	Moorland owners Moorland Association Lancashire Fire Service Natural England Local authorities	Support, Advise & Encourage
	[3.2E] Manage, improve and, where appropriate, create new visitor interpretation and information, using both print and digital media to raise awareness of the special qualities of the AONB landscape, e.g. Pendle Hill LP 'Access for All' project.	Pendle Hill LP AONB partner organisations	Lead, Support & Advise
	[3.2F] Produce an annual AONB Discovery Guide, including event listings for Festival Bowland.	AONB partner organisations Tourism businesses Festival Bowland steering group	Lead
	[3.2G] Review and rationalise AONB visitor leaflets, and where resources allow, re-print existing- and produce new leaflets.	Tourism businesses Local authority tourism officers Marketing Lancashire	Lead
	[3.2H] Work with Community Rail Partnerships to promote the AONB to rail users via visitor information at stations, promotions and other AONB-related project activity	Community Rail Partnerships Northern Rail Tourism businesses	Support & Encourage
	[3.2I] Re-instate, replace or renovate AONB boundary signs on key routes into the AONB, as required and where funding allows.	Parish Councils	Lead

<p>[3.3] Discovering and Learning</p> <p>Provide opportunities to discover and learn about the special qualities of the AONB by connecting people with nature, culture and the landscape</p>	<p>[3.3A] Organise, support and promote an annual Festival Bowland programme of AONB and partner-led events for both visitors and local communities</p>	<p>AONB partner organisations Festival Bowland steering group Marketing Lancashire</p>	<p>Lead & Support</p>
	<p>[3.3B] Support and promote other externally-organised events that raise awareness of the special qualities of the AONB</p>	<p>Communities and businesses Marketing Lancashire</p>	<p>Support</p>
	<p>[3.3C] Work with Ernest Cook Trust to develop and deliver outdoor learning opportunities alongside the Pendle Hill LP for the LP area and surrounding communities, e.g. 'Little Saplings' pre-school groups, family activities, school visits.</p>	<p>Ernest Cook Trust Pendle Hill LP LWT Ribble Rivers Trust Schools Colleges Pre-school groups Youth groups Scouts Young farmers</p>	<p>Lead & Support</p>
	<p>[3.3D] Investigate and develop opportunities to extend outdoor learning to other areas of the AONB</p>	<p>Ernest Cook Trust LWT Rivers Trusts Burnley FC in the Community (Whitehough Education Centre) Schools Colleges Pre-school groups Youth groups Scouts Young farmers</p>	<p>Lead & Support</p>
	<p>[3.3E] Work with Champion Bowland to support the 'AONB Farm Visit Transport Fund' for farms with educational access in the AONB, whilst investigating the opportunities to extend the scope of the Fund to include other countryside and outdoor learning venues.</p>	<p>Champion Bowland Ernest Cook Trust Schools Colleges Pre-school groups Youth groups Scouts Young farmers</p>	<p>Lead & Support</p>

	[3.3F] Deliver 'outreach' activities to encourage a more diverse range of people to learn about, engage with- and visit the AONB, particularly through Pendle Hill LP projects and activity.	Pendle Hill LP In Situ Mid Pennine Arts Burnley FC in the Community (Whitehough Education Centre) YDMT	Lead & Support
[3.4] Health and Well-being Provide opportunities for people to improve their health and wellbeing by connecting with nature, culture and the landscape	[3.4A] Develop and strengthen links within the health sector to promote the importance of landscape and the natural environment in improving people's health and well-being.	Lancashire County Council Lancashire Health and Well-being Board Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust Clinical Commissioning Groups	Lead & Encourage
	[3.4B] Deliver projects and activities in the AONB that deliver health and well-being outcomes, including the 'People Enjoying Nature' project, easy access trails, dementia-friendly trails and activities, active volunteering and inclusive events.	Pendle Hill LP Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust Burnley FC in the Community (Whitehough Education Centre) Bentham Community Rail Partnership Disabled Ramblers AONB partner organisations	Lead & Support
	[3.4C] Carry out research to assess the importance and value of landscape and the natural environment in improving people's health and wellbeing, via the Pendle Hill LP project 'What's A Hill Worth'.	Pendle Hill LP Natural England Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust	Lead

Monitoring

The Management Plan is not an end in itself. Monitoring is required in order to identify whether or not the Plan is achieving the purpose of designation – to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.

Monitoring has been undertaken in the form of State of the AONB Reports (in 2016 and 2018). These provide some of the evidence on which this Management Plan is based and forms a baseline for monitoring over the next 5 years. The next State of the AONB Report will be produced in 2020.

Future monitoring will take two forms:

- Monitoring performance: to establish how well the AONB Partnership is progressing in delivering the Plan's objectives and actions; and
- Monitoring condition: to establish whether the special qualities/features of the AONB are in favourable condition, potentially showing improvements, no change or deterioration and hence whether the aim of conserving and enhancing the AONB is being achieved.

Monitoring performance will involve collecting data (where this available) from partners to demonstrate delivery. Performance will also be monitored by reviewing progress on actions in the AONB Unit Business Plan. An AONB Annual Report will also be produced detailing progress with implementation of the Plan and summarising achievements of the AONB Partnership.

Monitoring condition will make the best use of data collected by a range of organisations and interest groups. It is important that changes in condition are monitored against a baseline set of evidence, and a number of indicators for which data is readily and easily available are used for this process. As new issues present themselves, new indicators may be needed and an initial baseline will need to be established.

APPENDIX 1 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Directive, plan, strategy
INTERNATIONAL
Agenda 21 (1992)
Convention on Biodiversity (1993)
The Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2016)
Convention on Biodiversity, Aichi Targets (2010)
UNESCO World Heritage Convention (1972)
EUROPEAN
European Landscape Convention (2000, with UK adoption 2007)
The Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), (1979)
The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), (1992)
Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020, European Commission, 2011
The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)
The Waste Framework Directive, (2008/98/EC)
The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC)
EC Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information, (2003)
The European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (Valetta Convention)
The Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention)
The Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC)
NATIONAL
Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended), (1981)
Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW), (2000)
Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006)
Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)
Sustainable Energy Act (2003)
Secure and Sustainable Buildings Act (2004)
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, (1979)

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act, (1990)
Climate Change Act (2008)
Localism Act (2011)
Growth and Infrastructure Act (2013)
Water Act (2014)
Energy Act (2016)
Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017)
'The Natural Choice', the Natural Environment White Paper (Defra, 2012)
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (HM Government 2018)
Water for Life, the Water White Paper (Defra, 2011)
Local Transport White Paper 2011
Revised National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2018)
The Agriculture Bill (2018)
Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (Defra 2011)
Natural England Designations Strategy, July 2012
The Great Britain Invasive Non Native Species Strategy, Defra, Scottish & Welsh Governments (2015)
Natural Capital Committee's State of Natural Capital Report (2017)
State of the Nature Report (2016)
UK Geodiversity Action Plan (2009)
Historic England Corporate Plan 2018 -2021
Conservation Principle, Policy and Guidance, English Heritage (2008)
The UK Industrial Strategy (2016)
UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009)
Securing the Future – Delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy (Defra, 2011)
Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (Defra 2011)
Draft Clean Air Strategy (HM Government 2018)
Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement (Forestry Commission 2013)
A Tourism Action Plan (DCMS 2016)
Public Health England Strategic Plan (2016)
A Sporting Future – A New Strategy for a Sporting Nation (DCMS 2015)

LOCAL
Craven District Council Local Plan (adopted 1999)
Craven Local Plan (Submission Draft, 2018)
Lancaster District Local Plan (adopted 2004)
Lancaster District Core Strategy (adopted 2008)
Replacement Pendle Local Plan 2001 – 2016 (adopted 2001)
Pendle Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (adopted 2015)
Preston Local Plan 2012 – 2026 (adopted 2015)
Central Lancashire Core Strategy for Preston, South Ribble and Chorley (adopted 2012)
Central Lancashire Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2012)
Central Lancashire Design Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2012)
Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (adopted 1998)
Ribble Valley Core Strategy (adopted 2014)
Wyre Local Plan (Submission Draft 2018)
Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Development Framework (2009)
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan for North Yorkshire, North York Moors National Park and City of York (Submission Draft, 2017)
A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire, Lancashire County Council Environment Directorate, 2000
Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill National Character Area 33 Profile (2012)
Bowland Fells National Character Area 34 Profile (2012)
Lancashire GAP 2010, GeoLancashire
Lancashire Historic Landscape Characterisation Programme (2000)
Planning guidance for renewable energy – Lancashire (2011)
Lancashire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2015 - 2025
North Yorkshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2015 - 2025
Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Strategy (Lancashire County Council/NHS)
Lancashire Visitor Economy Strategy and Destination Management Plan 2016 - 2020
Welcome to Yorkshire, Our five year strategy for the Yorkshire Brand 2012 - 2017
Lancashire's Strategic Economic Plan 2015 -2025
York, North Yorkshire and the East Riding Strategic Economic Plan 2015 - 2021
North West River Basin Management Plan 2015

Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan 2019 - 2024 (Pre-adoption version)

North West River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2015 - 2021
Lune & Wyre catchment abstraction management strategy (2013)
Ribble, Douglas & Crossens catchment abstraction management strategy (2013)
Local Transport Plan 2011- 2021 - A Strategy for Lancashire
North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, 2016 - 2045
Lune Catchment Flood Management Plan, Summary Report December 2009
Ribble Catchment Flood Management Plan, Summary Report December 2009
Wyre Catchment Flood Management Plan, Summary Report December 2009
Lancashire Climate Change Strategy 2009-2020,

APPENDIX 2 – ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN THE FOREST OF BOWLAND AONB

Ecosystem Services are the benefits which the environment provides to society. In the Forest of Bowland the obvious benefits are the natural resources such as food, fuel and water; however there are many others too, see the table below. The aim behind identifying ecosystem services is to attempt to attach a value to these services provided by the landscape, in order to assess its importance to society. Services are divided into four categories:

Provisioning Services: natural resources provided by the landscape, for example via farming and forestry: food, wood, water and fuel are included

Regulating Services: systems within the landscape which regulate the wider environment, for example via the water cycle and pollination: these include clean air and water, fertile and stable soils and climate regulation

Cultural Services: non-material opportunities created by the landscape to enable people to enjoy and benefit from the environment: these include recreation, a sense of place and heritage, tranquillity, education and tourism

Supporting Services: these are the basic services which make up the infrastructure of the environment, the wildlife and habitats, geodiversity, soil development, and water and nutrient cycling

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN THE FOREST OF BOWLAND AONB		
Provisioning Services	RELEVANT OBJECTIVES	MP
Food: farmers produce predominantly extensive beef and sheep on the fells with more intensive beef, sheep and dairy farming within the valleys and lowland fringes. Hill farming systems concentrate on the production of suckler beef and store lambs. In addition, the western fringes of the AONB also support a number of other enterprises including pig, poultry and horticulture. Locally produced meat and dairy products contribute to the area's economy and this also contributes to the attraction of tourists to the area. The area also produces game (red grouse, pheasant and partridge) and is a rich fishing ground (notably for salmon and trout) on both still-waters and on the rivers	1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3	
Water: Bowland is a water gathering area. United Utilities owns approximately one third of the upland core as catchment, but nearly all of the upland core is used as a source for drinking water, as well as some of the fringing farmland. UU abstract both from streams on the moorland, on the edge of the moorland, as well as from some of the lower stretches on rivers such as the Wyre and Lune. Some of this water goes direct to WTW at Lancaster and	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1	

Garstang, in other places water is stored in reservoirs at places such as Stocks, Barnacre, Barley, Longridge and Blackburn. Populations across North Lancashire, Bowland, Fylde, Preston and the Ribble Valley areas receive their water supply either wholly, or in part, from the Bowland Fells.	
Timber: there are a number of coniferous plantations in the AONB which are managed sustainably for timber production, notably at Gisburn Forest. There are also good opportunities for increased extraction of timber from broadleaved woodlands: providing fuel and timber for local use	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1
Energy: the AONB offers a significant resource for the production of renewable energy generation, particularly small-scale wind, solar and hydro, woodfuel and biomass	1.1, 1.4, 2.1
Rock and minerals: Historically, the AONB has seen lime extraction industries up until late 19 th century and lead mining operations also in the 19 th century. Today, there are a number of active quarries within the AONB providing various stone, aggregate and clay brick products	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.3
Supporting Services	
Wildlife habitats and species: The AONB contains over 16,000 ha of nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (covering 20% of the AONB), much of it being blanket bog and heather moorland, covering the high fells – but also notable upland hay meadows and ancient woodlands. The complex mosaic of habitats including grasslands, woodland, hedgerows and moorland provide a rich ecological network. The area is important for breeding birds especially upland species including hen harrier, peregrine, merlin and ring ouzel; and waders such as lapwing, curlew, redshank and snipe. This international importance for birds is recognised by the designation of the Bowland Fells (approx. 16,000 ha) as a Special Protection Area (SPA). In addition, numerous rivers and watercourses provide habitats for salmon, brown and sea trout, as well as birds such as kingfisher, dipper, grey wagtail, common sandpiper and oystercatcher. Otters are also present along rivers on the northern side of the Bowland Fells. This biodiversity is vital to sustaining the ecosystems and to providing an attractive natural environment for people to enjoy	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4
Geodiversity: underlying limestones, gritstones and shales create the AONB's basic landforms. These were modified by glaciations and the resulting wide river valleys, meltwater troughs and moraines add to the area's character. River erosion and deposition also create important features such as fans and channel erosion; and a number of quarries exist for small and large scale extraction of building stone and aggregates, and for cement production. There are both nationally and locally important sites designated for their geological importance within the AONB	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.3, 3.4
Nutrient cycling: plants and animals are responsible for cycling and re-cycling nutrients within natural systems, e.g. for breaking down of decayed matter and for enabling natural fertilisers to enrich the farmland. If inputs are increased artificially to this system then it can be thrown off balance and result in over enriched soils and eutrophication of water bodies	1.2, 1.4, 2.1
Cultural Services	
Sense of place: the Forest of Bowland AONB has a distinctive sense of place drawn from its contrasting and complementary landscapes: with a mixture of pastures, parkland and hedgerows in the lowlands and large expanses of moorland used for sheep grazing and grouse shooting on the higher fells. Settlements are small and dotted around the foothills, river valleys are often steep and wooded. This distinctive character lends a feeling of 'a step back in time' to the area and adds to its attraction for visitors	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1
Heritage: the area holds almost 900 listed buildings and designated heritage assets (818 Listed Buildings, 48 Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, 20 Scheduled Monuments and one Registered Park and Garden), ranging from Bronze Age and Roman through medieval and Tudor. The area's distinctive dry stone walls reflect the parliamentary enclosure acts of the 18 th and 19 th centuries, and the former hunting Forests date from Norman times. Village and farm	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1

settlements illustrate the influence of Norse invaders right through to small scale 18 th and 19 th century industries. The area's history adds to its tourism and education offer	
Tranquillity: whilst over 99% of the Bowland Fells can be classed as undisturbed, this falls to 76% in the fringe area due to the impact of traffic noise in the M6/A6 corridor and along other main roads and around the larger settlements outside the AONB boundaries. The Bowland Fells also offer some of the darkest skies in England with low levels of pollution. Tranquillity and 'dark skies' can add to the tourism offer of the area as well as to residents' health and well-being.	1.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2
Recreation: the Forest of Bowland has a very good network of public rights of way in many parts and over 25,000 ha of open access land. This attracts a large number of walkers and increasing participation by horse riders and cyclists, both on and off-road. There are also good opportunities for less mobile country-lovers with a network of easy access trails; and for birdwatchers, anglers and shooting parties. The area's food and drink offer is of a very high quality and attractive pubs and teashops provide a clear link between locally produced food and drink and the visiting public. Beacon Fell country park is managed by Lancashire County Council and attracts approximately 200,000 visits a year	2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4
Tourism: The AONB was awarded the European Charter for sustainable tourism in protected areas in both 2005 and 2010. It co-ordinates and encourages tourism businesses in the area to trade in a sustainable and sympathetic manner, promoting the AONB as a 'green tourism' destination. The landscape and natural beauty of the area, together with its wildlife and history, is seen as the key draw for visitors: and therefore contributes directly to the local economy	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2
Knowledge and education: The AONB partnership offers a large number of opportunities for both formal and informal education – including school visits to farms, arts workshops and performances, bird watching safari's, field studies for students; and opportunities for volunteering in traditional countryside skills. The Festival Bowland programme regularly offers over 120 events and attracts in excess of 1200 participants	2.1, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4
Health & wellbeing: Visits to the countryside provide excellent opportunities for gentle walking and relaxing days out. These can contribute to individual's health and wellbeing, at a minimal cost	2.3, 3.4
Regulating Services	
Regulating climate change: carbon dioxide is absorbed by farmland and woodland and perhaps most importantly by blanket bog. Restoring blanket bog and eroding peat so that it can become an active carbon store is a vital contribution to mitigating against climate change. Adapting to climate change can also be achieved through the AONB environment, especially when considering flood management (see below)	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3
Regulating soil erosion: the risk of soil erosion in the AONB is high; due to the high peat content, steep slopes and high rainfall of the area. Increasing drought may also lead to soil erosion. Improving vegetation cover, reducing over grazing, and controlling burning and recreational pressures can all help to reduce soil erosion in a sustainable manner	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2
Regulating soil quality: soil compaction and loss of organic matter can be reduced if soil is managed sustainably by reducing stock and human pressure; and by reducing the impact of flash flooding	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1
Regulating water quality: reducing water colouration by managing the uplands in a sustainable manner has already shown, via the United Utilities SCaMP programme in Bowland, that land management can have economic benefits. Likewise water quality can be improved using natural processes, such as filtering and decomposition. Water quality tends to be good in the headwaters of the AONB, falling to moderate downstream	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1

<p>Flood control: re-wetting of the moorlands to store carbon also helps the blanket bog habitat to retain heavy rain downpours and to reduce flash flooding, run off, erosion and the flooding of downstream communities, particularly larger urban populations outside the AONB. Additional works such as enabling floodplains to absorb high river levels and floodwater (as at Long Preston on the Ribble), can also help to reduce flood risk in downstream areas</p>	<p>1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1</p>
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APPENDIX 3 - LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BHS	Biological Heritage Site
BLMF	Bowland Land Managers Forum
CPRE	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England
CRoW	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
CSF	Catchment Sensitive Farming
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
ELC	European Landscape Convention
ENWL	Electricity North West Limited
FOG	Fire Operations Group
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
AONB JAC	AONB Joint Advisory Committee
LAF	Local Access Forum
LCC	Lancashire County Council
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LERN	Lancashire Environmental Records Network
NUC LNP	Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LWT	The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Greater Manchester and North Merseyside
NAAONB	National Association for AONBs
NE	Natural England
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
NEYEDC	North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NYCC	North Yorkshire County Council

Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan 2019 - 2024 (Pre-adoption version)

Ofgem	Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
Pendle WINNS	Pendle Woodland and Invasive Non-Native Species Project
PFG	AONB Partnership Funders Group
PR19	Ofwat (Water Services Regulation Authority) Price Review 19
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
RIIO-ED1	Revenue = Incentive + Innovations + Outputs Electricity Distribution Round 1
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SINC	Site of Interest for Nature Conservation
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TIC	Tourist Information Centre
UCLan	University of Central Lancashire
UVA	Undergrounding for Visual Amenity
YDMT	Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust

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Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024 (Pre-adoption Version)

Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership, April 2019

Ministerial Foreword

I am fortunate that England's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are part of my Ministerial responsibilities. Whether it be rolling hills, sweeping coastline or a tranquil village, spending time in an AONB can stir the heart and lift the spirit.

This is a pivotal moment for all AONBs. The Government has set its ambition in the 25 Year Environment Plan which states clearly the importance of natural beauty as part of our green future, while AONBs retain the highest status of protection for landscape through national planning policy. Leaving the EU brings with it an opportunity to develop a better system for supporting our farmers and land managers, who play such a vital role as stewards of the landscape. And the Review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty led by Julian Glover - the first of its kind for generations - will make recommendations to make sure our designated landscapes can flourish in the years ahead.

In my visits to AONBs around the country, I have been struck by the passion of many people - farmers, volunteers, and hard-working staff - for the beautiful places they live and work. In this spirit I am delighted to welcome publication of this Statutory Management Plan for Arnside & Silverdale AONB. It is significant that this plan will be delivered in partnership by those who value Arnside & Silverdale AONB. I would like to thank all those involved in preparation of this document, and wish you the best of success in bringing it to fruition.

Lord Gardiner

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Chairman's Foreword

The Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is an extraordinary place, a place that is loved and valued by many people from all over the world and nationally designated for its natural beauty - stunning views and distinctive and diverse landscape, geology, wildlife and history.

The AONB Management Plan has been reviewed taking into account the results of consultations carried out throughout 2018. This Management Plan sets out proposals for delivering the AONB purpose over the period 2019-24.

The AONB Partnership has reviewed the AONB Management Plan on behalf of Lancaster City Council, Lancashire County Council, South Lakeland District Council and Cumbria County Council, with the support of Defra, the National Association for AONBs and many partner organisations, local groups and individuals. Thank you for your support and contributions!

Together and with collaboration, cooperation and good relationships we are well placed to meet the challenges, and make the most of the opportunities, that lie ahead, not least through the current independent national Designated Landscapes Review. Everyone has a role to play in looking after the Arnside & Silverdale AONB, from local communities, landowners and farmers to businesses and individuals. Working together we can make a real difference for the area and its future.

Thank you for your support, contributions and interest.

Cllr Dr Brian C Meakin

Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership Chair

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Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019-2024 (Pre-adoption Version)

1 Introduction

1.1 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are particularly special landscapes whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so precious that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them. AONBs are unique and irreplaceable national assets and along with National Parks represent our finest countryside. There are 46 AONBs throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland, covering 18% of the land area.

The primary purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area¹. 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. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment. Promoting opportunities for recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.

AONBs were brought into being by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 confirmed the significance of AONBs and created improved arrangements for their management, placing a statutory duty on all 'relevant authorities' to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty when discharging any function affecting land in AONBs and placing a statutory duty on local planning authorities to act jointly to produce a Management Plan for each AONB within their administrative area, and review it every five years. This is done through the establishment and management of a joint AONB partnership.

AONBs are recognised internationally by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as being within a worldwide category of protected areas, Category V – Protected Landscapes/Seascapes – '*protected areas where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value*'.

AONBs offer a wealth of opportunities for both people and wildlife to benefit from our countryside; as vibrant living landscapes they underpin the economy and the health and wellbeing of our society.

ADD UP TO DATE NATIONAL MAP IN FINAL VERSION

1.2 Natural beauty

Natural beauty remains largely undefined in legislation, despite being central to the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Since then, qualifications and amendments to the

¹ National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; confirmed by Section 82 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

legislation make it clear that natural beauty includes wildlife, geological features and cultural heritage while not being restricted to them. Government guidance relating to AONBs provides a useful nontechnical definition: 'Natural beauty is not just the look of the landscape, but includes landform and geology, plants and animals, landscape features and the rich history of human settlement over the centuries'. More recently the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 clarified that land used for agriculture, woodlands, parkland, or with physiographical features partly the product of human intervention in the landscape, is not prevented from being treated as an area of 'natural beauty'.

The natural beauty of an AONB landscape is therefore partly due to nature and partly the product of many centuries of human modification and management. It encompasses natural and human factors that together make an area distinctive and special: geology, climate, soil, plants, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings, settlements, historic features, culture, people and the perceptions of those who live here or visit.

Importantly, landscape beauty is not limited to visual amenity but includes all aspects which underpin and contribute to the landscape's character. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife, built heritage and cultural heritage is integral to the conservation of landscape and its natural beauty.

1.3 The National Association for AONBs

AONB partnerships from across the country work together through the National Association for AONBs to collaborate, share experience and promote good practice.

The National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) is a registered charity with a vision that 'the natural beauty of AONBs is valued and secure' and with a mission 'to support and develop a network of ambitious AONB partnerships with a strong collective voice'. Their strategic objectives are to:

- support policies for conserving and enhancing natural beauty;
- develop an understanding of AONBs and the issues they face;
- improve the way in which AONB partnerships and the NAAONB work together; and
- secure and manage resources.

1.4 Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Arnside & Silverdale AONB was designated in 1972 and covers an area of approximately 75km² in south Cumbria and north Lancashire, including around 30km² of intertidal sand and mudflats in the Kent estuary and Morecambe Bay.

Arnside & Silverdale AONB is especially celebrated for its distinctive limestone landscape, magnificent views and extraordinary diversity of wildlife. Low limestone hills, limestone pavements, ancient woodlands, mosses, orchards, meadows and pastures and an impressive coastline, along with a rich cultural history, make this a truly special place.

The intricate nature of many parts of the area and an exceptional variety of special features occurring in such a small place, creates a sense of intimacy and discovery. This fine-grained landscape character then contrasts in every way with the vast openness of adjacent Morecambe Bay.

ADD UP TO DATE MAP OF AONB LOCATION AND BOUNDARY IN FINAL VERSION

1.5 Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership

Effective joint working is needed to conserve and enhance the AONB for future generations.

The four responsible local authorities – Cumbria County Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council – deliver their statutory duties and obligations arising from Part IV of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 in relation to the AONB through the operation and management of a statutory AONB Partnership and the publishing, reviewing, monitoring and implementation of the statutory AONB Management Plan. The AONB Partnership aims to conserve and enhance the AONB and is made up of the local authorities, statutory agencies, landowners, conservation organisations, local communities and interest groups, working together. Each partner nominates a representative to sit on the formal AONB Executive Committee. A full list of AONB Partnership members is shown in Appendix 1.

The partnership structure of the AONB is a particular strength and enables communication and understanding between many different interested parties and the delivery of sustainable, shared solutions.

A staff team is employed for, and on behalf of, the AONB Partnership by Lancaster City Council as host local authority. The Executive Committee formally oversees and monitors the work of the AONB staff team and their responsibilities include:

- managing the AONB Partnership
- coordinating action to conserve and enhance the AONB at both a local and strategic level
- developing, reviewing and publishing the AONB Management Plan
- securing funding and resources
- developing and delivering projects to implement the Management Plan
- advising upon, facilitating and co-ordinating implementation by others
- providing landscape related planning advice
- involving local communities in managing and conserving the area
- raising awareness of the national importance of the area and its special qualities
- promoting understanding and enjoyment of the area
- working with local businesses to support an environment-based local economy
- developing education resources and running events
- facilitating research about the area
- running an active volunteer programme
- monitoring and reporting on progress
- working at a national level through the National Association for AONBs

There are two voluntary bodies dedicated to supporting the purposes of the AONB: the AONB Landscape Trust, a charity with over 1000 members and the Bittern Countryside Community Interest Company, a social enterprise. Both contribute to delivery of the AONB Management Plan and are represented on the AONB Executive Committee.

The Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership is a member of the NAAONB contributing to and participating in national initiatives.

2 The Arnside & Silverdale AONB Management Plan

2.1 What is the Management Plan for?

The AONB Management Plan is just that – a plan for the AONB area. It provides a strategic framework to guide all activities that might affect the AONB.

The AONB Management Plan is a statutory plan which sets out a shared long-term Vision for the area. It describes the broad range of issues facing this area and a framework for action to conserve and enhance the area for future generations.

In order to achieve effective conservation and enhancement of the area, working together in partnership is crucial; local authorities, communities, organisations, landowners/managers and businesses must work jointly to successfully implement the Plan.

The aims of the Management Plan, which reflect the AONB purposes, are to:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB
- promote and support sustainable agriculture, forestry and other rural industries
- promote the social and economic wellbeing of people living within the AONB
- increase public understanding and enjoyment of the AONB
- meet the recreational needs of local residents and visitors alike - where these are compatible with the purpose of AONB designation.

2.2 Who is the Management Plan for?

The Management Plan forms a key part of the strategic framework for action by the many organisations working in and around the AONB.

Its audiences include:

- AONB Partnership organisations and delivery partner organisations – these organisations will have a key role in delivering and championing the Management Plan.
- Relevant authorities – all public bodies and statutory undertakers have a duty to have regard to the primary purpose of the AONB; this Management Plan will guide them in fulfilling their statutory duties.
- Key strategic partnerships such as Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership and Cumbria and Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- Landowners, farmers and land managers – those who own and/or manage land in the AONB have a vital role to play; the plan aims to guide, support and attract resources for sensitive management of the AONB.
- Local communities – all of us that live and work in the AONB can play an active role in caring for the Arnside & Silverdale AONB; the plan identifies some of the priorities for action and ways to get involved.

2.3 How the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Management Plan has been produced

This Management Plan has been produced by the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Partnership on behalf of the four principal local authorities: Cumbria County Council, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council according to an approved Project Plan

and following national guidance. A Review Working Group comprising representatives from the four local authorities, Natural England, the AONB Team and the AONB Executive Committee supported and oversaw this process. The Management Plan has been informed by public and stakeholder consultation including a public online survey in early 2018, a variety of stakeholder workshops held during 2017/18 and a full public consultation on the Draft Plan in late 2018.

The Management Plan has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

2.4 Policy context

In January 2018, the Government published 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'² which set out an approach to improving the environment within a generation.

The Plan refers specifically to AONBs in Chapter 2 under 'Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes', in which it states:

"...the creation of designated landscapes – which also include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONBs – has been among the outstanding environmental achievements of the past 100 years. They provide a patchwork of stunning, and protected, landscapes. In England, a quarter of our landscape is designated in this way, around 10% as National Parks and 15% as AONBs. We will make sure they continue to be conserved and enhanced, while recognising that they are living landscapes that support rural communities."

Under Section 2 'Conserving and enhancing natural beauty', the Plan also states that:

"Over the next 25 years we want to make sure they [AONBs and National Parks] are not only conserved but enhanced. Many of the policies set out in the rest of the Plan will contribute to making all areas more beautiful..."

Furthermore, the Plan then outlines two specific actions the Government wishes to undertake in relation to AONBs and National Parks, firstly to commission a Review of AONBs and National Parks and secondly, to work with and AONB Partnerships and Conservation Boards and National Park Authorities to deliver environmental enhancement, including through demonstrator projects, and engaging with communities through their statutory management plans.

The UK's National Parks and AONBs were created by an Act of Parliament in 1949, following the government's 1947 Hobhouse Report, which remains the basis for most protected landscape designation in England today. Now, 70 years on, the Government has commissioned a review for the 21st Century. The Review, which will complete in autumn 2019, considers coverage of designations, how designated areas deliver their responsibilities, how designated areas are financed, and whether there is scope for expansion. It will also consider opportunities to enhance the environment in existing designations, and expand on the existing plans to connect more people with the natural environment. The outcome of the review will have a profound effect on the future of our designated landscapes for many years to come.

Various other actions outlined in the Plan to improve the environment and people's connection with nature are also particularly relevant to AONBs, which include: designing and delivering a new Environmental Land Management Scheme; expanding the use of natural flood management solutions; developing a 'Nature Recovery Network' and connecting people with the environment to

² A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, HM Government (Defra), 2018

improve health and well-being. The objectives and actions outlined in this Management Plan will aim to contribute towards the delivery of these actions.

A full review of the current national and local policy context has been undertaken as part of the Management Plan review process³.

2.5 Management Plan Core Principles

The following core principles underpin all the different elements of this Management Plan:

Landscape approach

The landscape approach and an understanding of landscape character guide the AONB Partnership's work. Conservation and enhancement of the beauty, character and quality of the AONB landscape lie at the heart of all the chapters in this Management Plan. The AONB Partnership aims to work in an integrated and sustainable way to create a landscape that is more resilient to pressures. This will often mean taking a 'landscape-scale' approach working across numerous different sites and interests. A landscape approach, embracing both natural and cultural influences and the way people perceive them, is essential to the integrated delivery of a healthy natural environment that delivers the ecosystem goods and services that society needs.

Sustainable land management

Landowners and managers have played a significant role in creating the beautiful landscape we see today. Encouraging and supporting farming, land- and woodland management practices that help to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, landscape and seascape character and special qualities of the AONB is essential in delivering the purpose of designation. Maintaining viable land management businesses and rural livelihoods are vital factors in keeping the area special.

Sustainable development

This means ensuring that development is sound in environmental, social and economic terms, without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same. Within a nationally protected landscape, the landscape and special qualities must be given special consideration in order to achieve sustainable development.

Natural capital and ecosystems approach

By bringing together three principles of the ecosystem approach, we can ensure that the public benefits we derive from the natural environment (ecosystem services) are safeguarded and enhanced. The principles are:

- The natural systems that operate within the AONB are complex and dynamic, and their healthy functioning should not be taken for granted.
- Those that live and work in and visit the AONB benefit from services provided by the natural environment. These services underpin social and economic wellbeing and have a value – both monetary and non-monetary.
- Those that benefit from the services provided by the AONB and those who are involved in the management of them should play a central role in making decisions about them.

Using the ecosystem approach helps to deliver 'bigger, better, more, joined up'⁴ biodiversity, with greater ecological connectivity and enhanced landscapes that benefit wildlife and people.

³ Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Environment Report (2019)

⁴ Making Space for Nature, Lawton, 2010

Climate change adaptation and mitigation

In responding to climate change, there is a need to understand and adapt to the impacts such change is likely to have on the landscape and to seek ways in which CO₂ emissions can be reduced. Ensuring that adaptation and mitigation measures do not adversely affect natural beauty and maximising opportunities to improve landscape resilience such as improving habitat condition and enhancing connectivity will be a priority.

Community involvement and engagement

Local people are at the heart of the AONB and are encouraged and supported to become engaged in its management through decision-making, volunteering and developing projects and initiatives that help to conserve and raise awareness of natural beauty. This involvement is highly valued and an important factor in securing the area's future.

Accessible to all

There should be equality of opportunity for everyone to enjoy what this area has to offer. Barriers such as access to public transport, the need for better information or better infrastructure remain and need to be better understood. Enhancing intellectual and physical access to the AONB should be supported wherever possible.

3 What is special about Arnside & Silverdale AONB?

Arnside & Silverdale AONB is an extraordinary place. From the simple beauty of the Lady's-slipper Orchid to the wild sweep of Arnside Knott and the shining sands of Morecambe Bay, the area is simply awe-inspiring - full of natural spectacles, stunning views and a surprise to be discovered around every corner.

We need to be clear about what makes the area particularly special so that we can put in place effective management to conserve and enhance these qualities for the future.

Together, the special qualities define what 'natural beauty' means in the context of Arnside & Silverdale AONB⁵ and therefore what makes the area nationally important.

3.1 ***Outstanding landscape and spectacular views - a highly diverse and intimate mosaic of limestone hills, woodlands, wetlands, pastures and parklands, with spectacular views and an impressive setting***

Arnside & Silverdale AONB is a unique landscape defined by the underlying Carboniferous Limestone and coastal setting of Morecambe Bay. The area is a rich mosaic of species-rich limestone grasslands, limestone pavements, extensively wooded limestone hills, agricultural pastures, parklands, freshwater mosses, salt marsh, inter-tidal sand and mudflats, and distinctive settlements. The area is a living working rural landscape.

The high quality and outstanding natural beauty of the landscape and seascape sets the AONB apart from the wider countryside and is the reason for its national designation. The area's distinctive character is determined not simply by the presence of particular natural features or their rarity value, but also by a rich history and cultural heritage, and the ways in which all these elements combine to form a mosaic of landscape types. The landscape and seascape character of the area is described more fully in Chapter 4.

A series of low extensively wooded limestone hills interspersed with steep-sided valleys characterise the landscape of the AONB with iconic views seen from these highpoints; Warton Crag is the highest point at 163m rising just above Arnside Knott, Beetham Fell and King William's Hill. This glaciated landscape has a complex range of features and landforms including limestone pavement, ridges, scree slopes, escarpments and erratics.

Woodland is a key component of the AONB landscape often associated with the hills and pavements and covering about a third⁶ of the terrestrial AONB. Much of the woodland is broadleaved dominated by oak and ash and includes 652ha⁷ of Ancient Woodland, 488ha of Ancient and Semi Natural Woodland and 164ha of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). Active woodland management has increased by 54% since 2013 and 73%⁸ of the woodland is now in active management. Coppicing plays an important role as a traditional management practice.

Farming has been a principal influence on the development of the AONB landscape and limestone grasslands (both improved/semi-improved for agriculture and unimproved) cover a large part of the area, forming pastures and parklands. Grazing by livestock is a traditional land use. The Defra

⁵ The special qualities are described in more detail in a supporting report 'What is special about Arnside & Silverdale AONB?'

⁶ © Forestry Commission copyright (2017), 2015 data

⁷ April 2017, © Natural England copyright. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2017

⁸ © Forestry Commission copyright (2017)

Agricultural Survey⁹ show that 56% of the AONB was registered as agricultural land in 2016 with the large majority of this being pasture for livestock grazing. Sheep are the main livestock type (82% of stock) while dairy and beef cattle make up around 18%. Between 2010 and 2016 there was an overall decrease in sheep numbers of 1% and cattle numbers of 12%. Over the same period the number of horses has decreased but poultry numbers have risen. Management of land under environmental land management schemes, management plans and other appropriate mechanisms offer opportunities to promote and financially support sensitive management to enhance the landscape and protect natural capital such e.g. soils.

Many of the area's distinctive landscape features are associated with farming such as hedgerows, drystone walls, farmsteads and field barns. There are several ancient trees and numerous veteran and notable trees throughout the area occurring in open fields, within boundaries, within areas of woodland, and as part of designed landscapes and settlements.

Overall the AONB is a relatively dry landscape as a consequence of its limestone geology. Water is nevertheless an important feature of the landscape. Freshwater wetlands and mosses occur in the low-lying areas and valleys of the AONB often where natural springs emerge. Hawes Water is a marl lake, a rare type of waterbody that is dominated by stoneworts, a type of large green algae. The associated marl grasslands are formed from mollusc shells and are the largest area of this rare habitat in England, supporting specialised plants and invertebrates. Woodwell is a good example of a marl spring that coats the surrounding plants and stones in a gritty deposit of calcium carbonate (marl). Leighton Moss, managed by the RSPB, is the largest reedbed in northern England. Silverdale Moss and Barrow Scout fields are areas of reedbed that have been established for conservation over recent years. Hale Moss and Arnside Moss were drained in the 18th Century for agricultural improvement. A large project is in the planning stages to deliver a multiple benefit project that aims to alleviate flood risk in Warton village while creating a wet grassland habitat with a primary focus on breeding lapwing at Warton Mires.

The two principal rivers in the area, River Bela and River Keer form part of the AONB boundary, to the north east and the south respectively. Leighton Beck, Quicksand Pool and Black Dyke are smaller water courses. The deepest water body is Hawes Water, the largest area of open water is present at Leighton Moss and there is a small lake at Haverbrack. There are numerous springs and small ponds across the area which form distinctive features and are historically important having been a key factor in the location of settlement, in particular strongly influencing the dispersed pattern of Silverdale village.

The landscape is an intricate mosaic with an exceptional variety of features occurring in a small area, which creates a sense of intimacy and discovery. This fine-grained landscape character than contrasts in every way with the vast openness of Morecambe Bay.

3.2 *Stunning coast and seascape* – coastal cliffs, shingle beaches and extensive intertidal flats and saltmarshes create a distinctive transition between land and sea, supporting thousands of breeding waders and wildfowl

About 37% of the AONB is covered by the tidal waters of the Kent Estuary and Morecambe Bay each day.

The AONB has a variety of distinctive coastal features including low limestone cliffs, saltmarshes, coastal woodland and windblown trees, pebble and shingle beaches, and intertidal sand and

⁹ Defra Agricultural Survey, 2016

mudflats. Much of the coastline is undeveloped and has a strong feeling of remoteness. The wide open views over Morecambe Bay are ever changing with the weather and tide, and sunsets over the Bay can be spectacular.

Morecambe Bay is the largest intertidal area in the UK where five estuaries meet in a horseshoe-shaped bay of spectacular scale and grandeur. Coastal saltmarsh and intertidal flats partly lie within the AONB but also extend westwards over a huge area of mud and sand. The combination of the panoramic backdrop of the Bay – a kaleidoscope of water and light; sea and sky; sound, texture and colour - bordered by coastal cliffs, coves and saltmarshes, produces often stunning coastal views.

The coast is dominated by open skies that create an ever-changing backdrop to the scene: clear blue skies; swift-blown clouds on a windy day; blackening clouds before a storm; shafts of light shining through a gap in the cloud cover; or vivid sunsets which fill the sky and reflect on the shallow waters of the mudflats. Shining sandbanks, mudflats and constantly changing channels are alive with the evocative calls of Curlew and flocks of waders and wildfowl keeping time with the ebb and flow of the tide.

On the east and north of the Bay, the intertidal flats are bordered by extensive areas of salt marsh, only covered by the highest tides.

Morecambe Bay is an internationally important wildlife site, with abundant bird life and varied marine habitats. Morecambe Bay is one of the most important sites in Britain for its wader populations, and in particular the Oystercatcher. Morecambe Bay is significant at an international level as a wetland being a Ramsar Site with 37,404 hectares designated.

As well as being a food resource for many thousands of wading birds, the rich cockle beds are well known and have been fished by locals for centuries. Morecambe Bay is also noted for its shrimp fisheries.

Warton Sands cockle bed is located in the south west corner of the AONB. There were active cockle fisheries in Morecambe Bay for most of 2017 but stocks of cockles were not of a commercial quantity at Warton Sands.¹⁰ The fluctuation in cockle recruitment is natural and there can be huge variations over time. The sustainable management of the cockle fishery is very important as over exploitation could impact on the important oystercatcher population within the Bay, which feeds on the cockles in the intertidal area, along with other foods such as mussels and lugworm.

The Bay exerts a moderating maritime influence over the climate of the AONB, producing mild conditions that allow some southern species to survive beyond their normal range which, coupled with some northern species which find a niche at the southern reaches of their range, results in a great diversity of species. Therefore the Bay, merely by its presence, contributes much to the wildlife diversity of the area.

The Bay is famous for its fast-flowing tides, said to move as fast as a galloping horse. The speed of the advancing tide gives rise to a tidal bore which is most noticeable at Arnside.

Coupled with the fast-rising tides, quicksands make the Bay a potentially very dangerous place and many tragedies have occurred over the years. The sands at one time formed the most direct route to the Furness area, with traffic crossing the Bay until the Furness Railway line was connected to the rest of the country with the construction of the viaduct at Arnside in 1857.

The dangers of the route across the sands are the reason that there has been an official royally-appointed Guide to the sands since 1536. The traditional role carries no salary, but includes a rent

¹⁰ North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority, Jan 2018

free residence known as "Guides Cottage", near Grange. Today the Queen's Guide leads Cross-Bay walks, usually to raise money for charity.

In Roman times Milnthorpe had a wharf for cargo and Sandside was a busy port until the mid-19th Century. Building of traditional Morecambe Bay nobby fishing boats took place at Crossfields Boat Yard in Arnside for generations. Pleasure boats sailed regularly to Silverdale and Arnside from Morecambe in the 19th Century.

3.3 Sense of tranquillity, space and place – inspiration, spiritual refreshment, unpolluted air, dark skies, peace and quiet and a place with unique character

The AONB is a place for inspiration, spiritual refreshment, dark skies at night and clear, unpolluted air. People come here to relax, unwind and recharge their batteries, to get close to nature, breathe in the fresh sea air and absorb exhilarating wide open views. Tranquillity and a sense of space are easy to find both in the intimate inland landscape and on the hills and open coast.

A strong sense of tranquillity arises from the peacefulness and calm which can easily be found throughout the AONB. The intimate scale of the inland landscape means that numbers of visitors are easily absorbed and people can enjoy the landscape without any great awareness of others, while recreation activities within the AONB are primarily quiet and non-intrusive, such as walking, bird-watching, cycling and horse-riding; causing little or no disturbance. Even in the busiest parts of the AONB, such as the seaside village of Arnside and the Leighton Moss RSPB Reserve, there is a lack of commercialisation which gives a very traditional and relaxed feel.

The tranquillity of the AONB is one of its key features. According to the Council for Protection of Rural England¹¹, much of the AONB, particularly along the coast, can be regarded as in the context of the wider area as 'most tranquil'.

The AONB has relatively dark skies¹²; the Milky Way and on rare occasions the northern lights can be visible.

The AONB is much-loved by many people from all over the world. The fresh air, stunning views and intimate character has made it a place of artistic inspiration and spiritual refreshment for and gives it a very particular sense of space and place.

The area's distinctive character and unique combination of scenery, history, abundance of wildlife, peace and quiet, and culture make the AONB unique. For many, this very particular sense of place is the primary motivation to visit and creates a strong connection with and love for this landscape.

¹¹ Tranquillity map of England, CPRE, 2007

¹² 'Night Blight: Mapping England's light pollution and dark skies' CPRE, 2016

3.4 *Unique limestone geology* – rare and distinctive Carboniferous limestone geology with extensive areas of limestone pavement, low coastal cliffs, extensive folding and faulting and notable fossil assemblages

The Carboniferous limestone bedrock of the Arnside and Silverdale area underpins the natural beauty of the AONB. The limestone unifies its character and creates the conditions that have allowed such a wide diversity of habitats to develop.

The superficial geology, for example tidal flats, saltmarsh, lacustrine and peat deposits, also contribute to the natural beauty by creating broad areas of flat ground which contrast with and provide a natural setting for the limestone hills. The saltmarsh areas, dynamically changing in their location and extent, provide natural beauty in their contrast with the different colours and textures of the tidal flats beyond. Deposits have contributed to the development of reedbed, fen and mosses.

Key geological elements of the mosaic of landscape characters across the AONB are the limestone hills, open and wooded limestone pavements, limestone scarps and slacks (including 'The Trough' close to Trowbarrow Quarry), the limestone quarries themselves, locally complex geological structures, low coastal cliffs, shingle bays, saltmarshes, tidal flats, former and current lakes, former areas of lowland raised bogs, residual peat bogs and reedbeds, and the shapely rounded low hills known as 'drumlins' which are associated with former ice sheets and glaciers.

However, it is not just the geology (i.e. the characteristics of the rocks, sediments and geological structures), which is important; it is also the 'geodiversity', the sheer variety of geological features, including the fossils, minerals, natural processes, landforms and soils – as well as the rocks – which underlie and determine the physical character of the landscape and the natural environment. Other features of geological interest which also contribute to the landscape character include solution hollows (or dolines) in the limestone, sea caves, scree-covered slopes, erratic boulders, karstic features and Carboniferous limestone fossil assemblages.

The landscape has been shaped primarily by its limestone geology but also by a range of geomorphological processes, which have acted upon it over many millions of years. Current active processes, such as erosion and accretion of saltmarsh and channel shifts across the estuary, lead to continuing changes; this is clearly not a static landscape.

There are two nationally important geological sites within the AONB, designated as SSSIs for their geological interest - Trowbarrow Quarry and Hale Moss Caves. The condition of both these sites remains favourable. While both Gait Barrows and Leighton Moss SSSIs are primarily designated for their biological interest they are also important for their geology. There are 8 Local Geological Sites, all of which are in positive management, and there are 16 Limestone Pavement Orders covering 16% of the AONB area.

Buildings and settlements constructed from local limestone, dating back from Medieval times around 800 years ago, are scattered throughout the AONB and contribute to the character and quality of the landscape and the historic character of the area. Also, limestone wall field boundaries, limestone solution features in boundary walls and buildings, and limekilns are key features.

Geology is also an important aspect of the industrial heritage of the AONB, in particular quarrying and mining. Limestone has long been quarried to provide building stone. Numerous small abandoned quarries contribute to the character of the AONB landscape. Other sites developed into

large-scale extraction industries, such as Middlebarrow and Sandside Quarry, and are highly visible reminders of the past industrial activity.

Historically, limestone was extracted and burnt to create lime powder, used for mortar, limewash and as a soil conditioner after firing in nearby limekilns. There are 36 known limekilns sites in the AONB, most of which are substantial limestone-built structures and form significant landscape and industrial heritage features in the AONB.

A Geology Audit and Assessment was undertaken in 2018 including an AONB-wide audit and research undertaken into the geological evolution of the area. This has provided a robust evidence base of the geodiversity of the AONB for monitoring landscape change and to inform an ecosystems approach to AONB management activity, helping to ensure the landscape is resilient to change and continues to deliver multiple benefits.

3.5 *Rare and precious habitats* – an outstanding number and mix of priority habitats within a small area creating a mosaic that is home to an amazing diversity of wildlife

The AONB supports an exceptionally diverse range of habitats of local, national and international importance, creating a mosaic which is home to an outstanding variety of wildlife and forms a key element of the area's natural beauty.

Priority habitats cover around 70% of the AONB¹³ and include:

- Deciduous woodland
- Upland mixed ashwoods
- Wet woodland
- Wood pastures and parkland
- Lowland calcareous grassland
- Lowland meadows
- Purple moor grass and rush pasture
- Lowland fens
- Reedbeds
- Intertidal mudflats
- Coastal and flood plain grazing marsh
- Coastal saltmarsh
- Maritime cliffs and slopes
- Inland rock outcrop and scree habitats
- Limestone pavements
- Oligo-mesotrophic lakes
- Ponds
- Rivers
- Traditional orchards
- Lowland heathland

A significant proportion of the AONB is designated for its biodiversity with 54% of the area being covered by national Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or international Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) designations, and 11% of the area recognised as Local Wildlife Sites.

¹³ Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Priority Habitat Survey, G Skelcher, 2016

There is one National Nature Reserve in the AONB at Gait Barrows and two Local Nature Reserves at Warton Crag and Trowbarrow.

3.6 Internationally, nationally and locally important species – an amazing diversity of species many of which are uncommon in a national or international context

Over 1,100 notable species have been recorded in the AONB, including over 170 priority species (S41 NERC Act) which are known to be resident or occur regularly within the AONB¹⁴. This represents an extraordinary richness and diversity within a relatively small area. Of particular note are the Bittern, High Brown Fritillary and the Lady's-slipper Orchid.

Restoring, creating and enhancing habitats and improving resilience of ecological networks are key to conserving species alongside taking specifically tailored and targeted action.

In 2016 the AONB Partnership consulted widely to develop a list of characteristic species and/or groups of species that reflected a variety of habitats and taxa and could potentially act as a focus for positive conservation action, management and monitoring¹⁵. These were:

- Limestone butterflies and day-flying moths - High Brown Fritillary, Northern Brown Argus, Pearl-bordered Fritillary and other butterflies and day-flying moths of limestone habitats including Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Dingy Skipper, Grayling, Scotch Argus, Duke of Burgundy, White-spotted Sable, Cistus Forester and Least Minor
- Limestone grassland and pavement plants - Dark Red Helleborine, Blue Moor-grass and other plant species of limestone grasslands and pavement including Spring Sandwort, Rigid Buckler Fern, Limestone Fern and Juniper
- Lady's-slipper Orchid
- Lancashire Whitebeam
- Waxcaps
- Ants - Red Wood Ant and Yellow Meadow Ant (and Shining Guest Ant associated with Red Wood Ant nests)
- Woodland moths - Netted Carpet and Barred Tooth-stripe
- Woodland birds - Marsh Tit, Hawfinch, Bullfinch and other breeding woodland birds
- Reedbed birds - Bittern, Bearded Tit, Marsh Harrier and other nesting reedbed birds
- Coastal birds - Oystercatcher, Redshank, Curlew, Lapwing and other breeding, passage and wintering waterfowl of saltmarsh and mudflats
- Otter
- Swift

Further work is required to establish a more comprehensive and coordinated research and monitoring programme for the area.

¹⁴ Notable and Characteristic Species in the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB, G Skelcher, 2016

¹⁵ Notable and Characteristic Species in the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB, G Skelcher, 2016

3.7 Rich sense of history – archaeological, built and cultural heritage reflecting thousands of years of human occupation creating ‘time-depth’ within the landscape

Historic features, buildings, archaeology and the historic landscape tell the story of the land and people over many generations, an important element of the area’s character and quality.

The historic environment includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including designated and non-designated heritage assets, the potential for unrecorded archaeology and historic landscape character.

Many of the features that make the area distinctive reflect the estate, agricultural or industrial heritage of the AONB such as parkland, field boundaries (drystone walls and hedges), designed landscapes, ancient woodlands, traditionally coppiced woodland, orchards, limekilns and farmsteads. The settlements (the layout, character and appearance of villages and hamlets and the building traditions of the area) contribute strongly to the character and quality of the AONB landscape and are important to the area’s local distinctiveness and sense of place.

There are 695 Historic Environment Records within the AONB including 10 Scheduled Monuments, 115 Listed Buildings, 1 Registered Park and Garden and many non-statutory archaeological sites. There are 3 Conservation Areas – Warton, Beetham and the Yealands. Up to date Conservation Area Appraisals (CAA) are available for Beetham and Warton.

The 10 Scheduled Monuments are:

- Arnside Tower, Arnside
- Beetham Hall (curtain wall and uninhabited portion), Beetham
- Hazelslack Tower, Beetham
- Ringwork in Dallam Park 380m south east of Dallam Tower, Beetham
- Dog Holes Cave, Warton Crag, Warton
- Badger Hole, Barrow Scout, Warton
- Warton Crag Hillfort, Warton
- Old Rectory, Warton
- Round cairn on Summerhouse Hill, Yealand Conyers
- Stone circle on Summerhouse Hill, Yealand Conyers

At Warton Crag a major project has recently been undertaken to research and investigate the ‘hillfort’. The research has resulted in a change in how Historic England interpret the site; what had previously been described as an Iron Age Hillfort is now considered best interpreted as a Bronze Age Hilltop Enclosure, most likely used as a site for significant gatherings, rather than as a defensive structure.

Since 2013 Grade II* listed Slackwood Farm has undergone a full restoration and has now been removed from Historic England’s ‘Heritage At Risk Register’.

South Lakeland District Council and Lancaster City Council are currently preparing lists of local heritage assets within their districts which are not protected by a statutory designation and meet certain criteria. Once these lists are in place, these assets will be more easily managed through the planning system.

There are a wide range of non-designated heritage assets and features that make an important contribution to the historic landscape character of the AONB.

Much of the AONB has been managed for many years as part of private estates. Dallam Tower and Leighton Hall estates remain major landowners and manage large parts of the area for farming, forestry and rural sports. Numerous other smaller estates previously existed and had a strong influence in how the landscape developed in particular historic parkland and designed landscapes and gardens associated with estate houses and lands. The 18th century deer park at Dallam Tower is nationally important and registered. Six undesignated historic designed landscapes were identified to be of exceptional interest and quality and potential national importance in a 2013 research study¹⁶, including the gardens at The Hyning, which were designed by renowned landscape architect Ralph Hancock, those at Hazelwood Hall that were designed by Thomas Mawson and gardens at Greywalls (now Ridgeway Park) in Silverdale.

Agricultural features such as ancient enclosure and other traditional field patterns, such as strip field systems around the Yealands and Warton, traditional stone-built farmsteads, farm buildings and field barns, water troughs, milk churn stands, bee boles, mounting blocks, ponds, springs and wells, traditional boundary walls, hedgerows, historic pathways (such as the Coffin Route), milestones and markers, traditional road and directional signage and ancient and veteran trees and woodland, are important and distinctive features of the historic landscape.

Orchards have also been a feature of the landscape for hundreds of years. There are more than 90 orchards and gardens in the AONB¹⁷, growing a wide range of apple, plum, damson and pear varieties, including a number of rare and unique varieties. While some orchards are well managed, the condition of others is deteriorating and many are in need of concentrated restoration work.

The area has been a thriving industrial as well as agricultural landscape. Features such as limekilns, quarries (both redundant and active), mineral railways, copper/iron mining and processing sites, coppiced woodland and charcoal-making sites, commercial port facilities and shipbuilding tell the story of how the natural resources of the area have been exploited.

Finds such as a Viking Hoard, a collection of over 200 pieces of silver jewellery and coins dating back to 900AD, found buried in 2011, indicate that there is likely to be a significant resource of hidden features and archaeology, which would add to the understanding of the area's history.

Historic Landscape Characterisation Reports for both Lancashire¹⁸ and Cumbria¹⁹ provide valuable tools for understanding the cultural heritage of the AONB.

The area has a long association with the Quaker movement and forms part of '1652 Country', the area of northern England across which founder, George Fox, travelled and gathered many of the first Quakers.

Victorian novelist Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865) regularly holidayed in Silverdale and is said to have written some of her works in the village.

Groups such as the Arnside Archive and the Mourholme Society have contributed a great deal to the research, understanding and recording of local history, cultural associations and collections of photographs, written and documentary records.

¹⁶ Arnside & Silverdale AONB Historic Designed Landscapes Research Report, E. Bennis, 2013

¹⁷ Orchards of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB, 2007

¹⁸ The Lancashire Historic Landscape Characterisation Report, December 2002.

¹⁹ Cumbria Historic Landscape Characterisation – final report, July 2009

3.8 *Distinctive settlement character* – the design, detailing and use of local materials especially limestone in the built environment, and the historic layout, pattern and rural character of settlements

While there is evidence of occupation within the AONB dating back some 12,000 years, it is the stone buildings and settlements created during the last 800 years which contribute so strongly to the character and quality of the landscape today. This contribution lies not only in the strong vernacular traditions of the area but also in the settings of many of the buildings and the character of individual villages and hamlets. This distinctive settlement character of the AONB is integral to its character and includes rural character, pattern, layout, and vernacular design and materials. Limestone underpins the natural beauty and the use of local limestone in buildings and settlements across the AONB makes a major contribution to its special character.

The villages and hamlets of the area each have their own distinctive history and character with limestone buildings forming the traditional vernacular. All the settlements are rural in character and have open spaces and views which link strongly with the surrounding countryside.

Some of the vernacular building style dates back to Medieval times when some of the earliest stone buildings were built. Arnside Tower, Hazelslack Tower and Beetham Hall along with Warton Rectory, churches and older farmsteads represent some of the earliest buildings surviving within the AONB. They have a vernacular style that includes distinctive features such as the presence of date stones, small 'fire windows' and hood mouldings constructed over windows. Together with the 'slobbered masonry' used to weatherproof limestone rubble-wall buildings, these features demonstrate a strong local tradition that continued to be used by later generations, developing a local style of building that remains a key characteristic of the AONB.

Stone buildings utilising the local limestone including characteristic limestone solution features are common across the AONB and make a major contribution to maintaining the special character of the local vernacular. There are 115 Listed Buildings in the AONB.

Certain aspects of settlement character derive from their history, such as village layouts and the shapes of individual plots. The dispersed nature of Silverdale village, the linear pattern of the Yealands, the historic core of Beetham and the medieval layout of the centre of Warton, following old burgage plots, are examples. The density of housing, setting of individual buildings, views and visual amenity are also important elements of settlement character. New development should respect and be in keeping with historic settlement character.

Open green spaces within settlements are an important aspect of settlement character. They can contribute to the setting and appreciation of important buildings and have historical significance in themselves, either as part of historic settlement pattern and form or as an archaeological resource. They can also allow public views in to or out from within the settlement and can provide a recreational resource for the local community. Open spaces add distinctiveness to the character and interest of settlements and the quality of life of their inhabitants and are a key part of the rural character of the AONB's villages.

Three built environment Conservation Areas in the AONB cover parts of Beetham, Warton and the Yealands.

3.9 *Strong community and culture* – vibrant rural communities strongly identified with the AONB and local landscape; rural livelihoods rooted in land management, farming, woodland management and an environment-based visitor economy

Working to conserve and enhance the exceptionally high quality environment of the AONB helps create the conditions for sustainable economic growth and prosperity both locally and across the wider region and creates tangible connections between businesses, communities and nature.

Vibrant communities exist within each of the villages and there is also a shared identity with parishes coming together as part of the AONB, strongly connected to the landscape. The most recent estimate of the population living in the AONB (mid 2016) is 7070, 480 fewer than in 2011²⁰.

Working the land is the foundation of the rural economy; the long-standing cultures of low-intensity pasture management and woodland coppice management have created much of the distinctive landscape character we see today and the area remains very much a living working landscape. Farming and forestry make a major contribution to the landscape. Landowners and farming and forestry tenants actively maintain the natural beauty and distinctiveness of the area. The interdependent relationship between land management, natural beauty, community and the economy is clear. The health and viability of the land management sector, national policy approaches and work of individual landowners, farmers and land managers are all critical to conserving and enhancing the AONB. Maintaining an economically viable and sustainable land management sector will be essential to delivering the AONB purpose into the future.

56% of the AONB was registered as agricultural land in 2016²¹ with the majority of this being pasture for livestock grazing, predominantly beef and dairy cattle and sheep.

The total number of commercial farm holdings in the AONB in 2016 was 48, with most of these being under 20ha. Farms grazing livestock (beef and dairy cattle and sheep) are the predominant farm type, 63%, with 17% being general cropping farms (predominantly silage). There appears to have been an increase in the percentage of larger farms (>100ha) since 2010 along with a continued shift away from small holdings (<5ha)²². Following a period of decline, employment in farming within the AONB increased by 23% between 2010 and 2016. In 2016, 26% of those employed in farming were full time farmers, 35% part time and the remainder full and part time employees and casual workers.²³

Farming within the AONB has diversified over the years to encompass a range of non-agricultural activities including equestrian uses and the provision of holiday accommodation, small-scale campsites and other facilities associated with recreation and rural tourism.

Environmental land management schemes provide funding and support for farmers and land managers to deliver sensitive environmental management on their land. There is significant uptake of Environmental Stewardship and Countryside Stewardship within the AONB, with 24 live agreements in 2018 covering 1314ha. However, overall coverage has decreased over the last 5 years from 2095ha and 33 agreements in 2013.

Managing woodlands produces timber, coppice and woodfuel products and supports jobs. The profitability of forestry is dependent on world market prices and the cost of transport, but increasing interest in the use of woodfuel heating and other wood products is creating the

²⁰ Census, 2011

²¹ Defra Agricultural Survey, 2016

²² Defra Agricultural Survey, 2016

²³ Defra Agricultural Survey, 2016

potential for the development and growth of a successful local woodfuel economy. This also leads to an expansion of managed woodland within the AONB with resulting benefits to biodiversity and provision of ecosystem services. Woodlands also play an important role in recreation and tourism, supporting the visitor economy. Forest Enterprise manage 221ha woodland in the AONB as part of the Public Forest Estate, but the majority of woodlands in the area are owned and managed by private landowners, or organisations such as the National Trust and Woodland Trust.

Rural skills such as hedge laying, drystone walling, coppice management and maintenance of traditional orchards are vital for maintaining the traditional landscape and habitats of the area and regular training sessions and competitions are held with the involvement of local organisations and training providers.

Tourism is a key component of the local economy; around 14%²⁴ of businesses are involved in tourism business activity and tourism accounts for nearly a fifth of total employment within the area. Tourism in the AONB is largely based on the area's nature, culture, special qualities and quiet outdoor recreational opportunities with a growing food and drink offer. The Morecambe Bay Visitor Survey²⁵ found the most popular reasons for people to visit the area were for its beautiful scenery and its peace and tranquillity. Almost 90% of respondents were interested in visiting places where they can see and or experience wildlife. 94% agreed that Morecambe Bay was good for nature and scenery; 70% of visitors agreed that the area was good for culture and heritage.

Key attractions include RSPB Leighton Moss, Leighton Hall, Silverdale Golf Club, Wolf House Tearooms and Gallery, Arnside promenade and Arnside Knott, Warton Crag, Heron Corn Mill and the Cross Bay Walks.

Leighton Moss visitor figures have grown steadily over the last three years from 99,669 in 2015/16 to 114,373 in 2017/18²⁶.

The AONB, with its high quality landscape, clarity of air, spectacular views and diversity of wildlife attracts artists and crafts people who take inspiration from their environment. The Silverdale & Arnside Art and Craft Trail now involves nearly 90 local artists and craftspeople. Educational and knowledge-based businesses and consultancies are increasing.

Consumer interest in foods and products with local provenance is growing. Strong links can be developed between land management, local products and tourism to support the development of valuable short supply chains. Meat (beef, lamb, venison, game), milk, fruit, apple juice, wood products and arts/crafts are all produced in the AONB.

Local services and facilities, including schools, doctors' surgeries, shops, post offices, garages and pubs, all contribute to the quality of life of the AONB's communities and are also important to the visitor economy.

There are thriving primary schools and village/community halls in all of the AONB villages and there are convenience stores/post offices, in all except the Yealands. The largest settlements of Arnside and Silverdale both have medical practices, libraries and a range of other shops and services.

There is regular access to and from the AONB by public transport, principally by rail via the Furness line, which crosses the area with stations at Arnside, Silverdale and nearby Carnforth. This line provides connections with the rest of Morecambe Bay such as Lancaster, Grange, Ulverston and Barrow and the wider region, with direct services to Lancaster and Manchester. Passenger numbers

²⁴ Protected Landscape Monitoring, Source: IDBR, 2009, Local Units

²⁵ Morecambe Bay Visitor Survey, 2013

²⁶ RSPB data, 2018

at all three stations have increased over the past five years – by 1% at Carnforth, 22% at Silverdale and 0.5% at Arnside²⁷.

There is a local bus service linking Carnforth with Warton, the Yealands and Silverdale village including a service to Silverdale railway station. There are limited bus services from Arnside to Kendal.

Community involvement in AONB designation and management

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the six parishes of the AONB played a key role in securing the designation of the area as an AONB, working collectively to seek funding and influence the Government through the Countryside Commission and the two County Councils involved in the designation process – Lancashire and Westmorland (pre 1974 local authority re-organisation). By coming together and working toward the designation of the area, the six parishes helped establish the AONB as a distinct location with an identity in its own right. Encouraging community participation in decision-making offers an opportunity to strengthen involvement and community ownership. Vibrant, active and engaged communities are at the heart of delivering the AONB Management Plan. There is long-standing Parish Council representation on the AONB Executive Committee and good participation in AONB Management Plan consultation process.

Local people also raised money to buy and protect sites such as Trowbarrow Quarry, Arnside Knott and Dobshall Wood resulting in a strong sense of community ownership in some areas.

The Arnside & Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust is a registered charity with over 1000²⁸ members, run entirely by volunteers, and plays an important role in raising awareness of and achieving conservation of the AONB. The Trust owns a network of nature reserves which it manages for conservation, publishes Keer to Kent magazine and organises a popular annual events programme, all of which are instrumental in helping the public understand more about the AONB and its management. The Trust is one of the largest charities in the country that is associated with an AONB.

The Bittern Countryside CIC is a social enterprise, run entirely by volunteers, that seeks to promote a more sustainable future by delivering a programme of community-based sustainable development initiatives with local communities, businesses and organisations active in and around the AONB. For example the CIC has undertaken a community renewables scheme and a project to address fuel poverty.

There are many opportunities within the AONB for people to get involved, learn about and actively participate in the conservation of the area. There are numerous local groups and societies that provide activities based on, and which support interest in, the AONB, such as natural history, local history, ornithology, sustainability and walking groups and societies. There is high community awareness of the area's unique qualities and of its designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

A strong culture of volunteering is reflected in the many thousands of hours that residents contribute to looking after the area by working with local organisations. Habitat and land management at many sites is undertaken by volunteers. There is tremendous scope for local people from the AONB and surrounding areas to take an active role in conserving the character of the AONB and there are many local groups across the AONB which come together as communities of place or interest. Where these are connected to the purposes of the AONB designation, every effort should be made to build capacity of and support for these organisations and to work

²⁷ Office of Rail and Road Data

²⁸ The Landscape Trust had 1083 members in March 2019

collaboratively to develop appropriate initiatives and projects. Further opportunities exist to establish and support community-led volunteer groups to take action to conserve and enhance key sites.

3.10 *Opportunities to enjoy and understand the countryside* – the network of narrow lanes and paths offers wonderful opportunities to enjoy quiet recreation such as walking, running, cycling and wildlife watching, and to improve health and wellbeing, and a wide range of events and activities enable people to learn about and celebrate the area

The AONB is outstanding in the extent and quality of access available, providing wonderful opportunities to enjoy quiet recreation such as walking, running, cycling, wildlife watching and horse riding. The network of narrow lanes and minor highways is one of the delights of the AONB and, along with an intricate web of public rights of way, access land and other paths, provides many opportunities for people to come into close contact with the area's wildlife, geology and history, providing inspiring learning opportunities and engaging visitors with the landscape. This has the potential to have a profound beneficial impact on people's health and well-being and a significant contribution to the local economy.

There is an extensive network of over 110km of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the AONB, including footpaths and bridleways, and there are also numerous permissive paths. Significant areas of the AONB are openly accessible to the public such as the Local and National Nature Reserves and National Trust-owned land. Ranger and wardening services are provided on many of these sites. Footpaths are largely signposted with high quality wooden directional way markers. The England Coastal Path is due to open in this area during the lifetime of this Plan and will establish new access to the coast in certain locations.

The National Cycle Network Route 6, runs through the area, between Warton, Yealand Conyers and Milnthorpe. Parts of the Lancashire and Cumbria Cycleways also run through the AONB along with the Morecambe Bay Cycle Way, Route 700, opened in 2015, which takes the routes closest to the coast. Figures supplied by Morecambe Bay Partnership suggest that The Bay Cycle Way brings over 50,000 cyclists to explore the wider Bay area each year.

Improving opportunities for people with disabilities and/or reduced mobility to enjoy the area is a priority. The AONB Tramper, an all-terrain off road mobility scooter, is currently hosted at RSPB Leighton Moss to enable people with limited mobility to discover the reserve; it used regularly.

The bridleway network for horses has the potential to be extended to improve availability and connectivity of routes.

The development of a footpath and cycleway link from Arnside to Grange across the viaduct would provide a key strategic access link and a significant new visitor attraction, with the potential to bring significant economic and health and wellbeing benefits to the area.

Encouraging enjoyment and improving understanding of the special qualities of the AONB and the benefits provided to society by the landscape generates support and positive action for conservation, contributes to the local economy and improves the quality of people's lives. Information, interpretation and communications raise awareness; events and activities encourage more and a wider range of people to connect deeply to nature, culture and landscape.

The tourism offer within the AONB is based on the area's special qualities. Visitors' experiences are enhanced by good quality information being available about the special qualities, and about how people can experience them and support their conservation. Promotion of opportunities for quiet enjoyment and recreation such as walking, running, cycling and bird watching enables visitors to make the most of what the area has to offer.

We know that many people care passionately about Arnside & Silverdale AONB. An online study carried out in 2016 saw over 100 people placing pins on an online map to describe how and why they valued the landscape. The results clearly showed the AONB is much loved and highly valued particularly for its beauty, views, wildlife, sense of place, tranquillity and recreational opportunities²⁹.

The AONB Partnership produces a variety of high quality online and printed communications and operates a small Information Centre at Arnside station. There were 95,942 unique pageviews on the AONB website in 2017/18 and 1734 face to face enquiries were dealt with at the AONB Information Centre in 2017. In September 2018 the AONB Facebook page had 1611 followers, with 2788 on Twitter and there were 791 subscribers to the AONB e-newsletter.

Events encourage people to enjoy, learn about and celebrate the special qualities of the area, connecting people with nature and encouraging participation and engagement. Partner organisations organise a vibrant programme of events throughout the year for all age groups including walks, talks, activities and festivals.

For example, the AONB Partnership's Go Wild! initiative encourages children and families to get outside and have fun. It brings together a whole series of events for schools and families happening across the area. A Woodland Fun Day held in July 2018 attracted over 100 people to build dens, play games and enjoy the woodland and a series of successful Land Art events promote a deep connection with nature through art.

Over 900 visitors attended the AONB Apple Day in 2017 to celebrate the orchards of the AONB, the wildlife they support and the associated local produce. An AONB Annual Conference is held with a different theme each year; over 60 people attended in 2018.

A broad range of educational activity is delivered including working with local Primary and Secondary schools, hosting work experience placements, supporting University field visits and research, presenting specialist subject talks to local groups and societies and leading guided visits for a range of groups. For example, in 2017 over 25 educational group visits were hosted at Warton Crag Local Nature Reserve and over 2000 school pupils visited RSPB Leighton Moss.

Better health and wellbeing are major social and economic benefits that can be secured through good management of the natural environment. The AONB landscape provides relevant cultural ecosystem services including beauty, sense of place and space, tranquillity, recreation and sense of history; health and wellbeing benefits arise from relaxation and unwinding, exercise, connection to nature, fresh air, inspiration and spiritual refreshment. 95% of people living in the AONB reported that they were in 'very good, good or fair' health in the 2011 Census, slightly above average.

Active outdoor activity such as walking, running, cycling and conservation work has been shown to boost both mental and physical health and wellbeing including enabling people to lead happier more fulfilling lives. Good access to the countryside is key to delivering these benefits and the AONB offers a range of opportunities to enjoy the countryside. For example, over 500 people took part in the AONB Walking Festival in 2012. Volunteering offers valuable opportunities to

²⁹ Natural Capital and Resilient Landscapes in Arnside & Silverdale AONB Report, 2017

participate in active sociable tasks which make a real difference. The wide range of opportunities to enjoy the countryside represents one of the special qualities of the AONB.

There are also proven therapeutic effects of natural beauty and nature and tailored activities can help tackle national health issues such as obesity and social exclusion, or enable people to live well with conditions such as dementia.

The AONB Partnership is well placed to contribute to public health and wellbeing through its work to conserve and enhance the natural environment of the AONB and through the management and promotion of opportunities to access and enjoy it.

3.11 *A highly designated area* – a large number of local, national and international designations for biological, geological and historical interest

The significance and importance of the area and is emphasised by the large number of designations that cover the area.

A measure of how important the area is for its biological, geological and historical interest is provided by the number and extent of designated sites which lie within the AONB. 49% of the AONB area is designated under European directive for its habitat, species or bird interest. A total of 54% of land within the AONB is covered by national Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation while a further 12% of land area has been identified as being of local wildlife value by Lancashire and Cumbria County Councils. There are 16 Limestone Pavement Orders covering 15% of the area and 8 Local Geological Sites. 10 Scheduled Monuments, 114 Listed Buildings, 1 Registered Park and Garden, and 3 Conservation Areas have also been identified for their historic value.

4 Landscape and seascape character

4.1 European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is the first international convention to focus specifically on landscape. Created by the Council of Europe, the convention promotes landscape protection, management and planning, and European co-operation on landscape issues. The ELC came into force in the UK on 1 March 2007. It applies to all landscapes, towns and villages, as well as open countryside, the coast and inland areas, and ordinary or even degraded landscapes, as well as those that are afforded protection.

The ELC defines landscape as: "*an area as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*" (Council of Europe 2000). It highlights the importance of developing landscape policies dedicated to the protection and management of landscapes and establishing procedures for the general public and other stakeholders to participate in policy creation and implementation.

4.2 Landscape and seascape character

Landscape and seascape character are a key element of natural beauty.

'Landscape' and 'seascape' are made up of many different 'layers' interacting together – landforms, views, geology, soils, water, wildlife, land management, buildings, heritage and more – and also how we as people perceive them.

The character of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB landscape has been classified and described at various levels.

On a national scale, the AONB falls largely within the Morecambe Bay Limestones National Character Area (NCA 20), which also covers land to the east of the AONB, including Hutton Roof and Farleton Knott, and much of the south Cumbria coast. A sliver of the southern end of the AONB around the River Keer estuary and floodplain falls within the Morecambe Bay Coast and Lune Estuary National Character Area (NCA 31), which also covers the low lying coastal area bordering east Morecambe Bay.

At the county scale, the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and the Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment both identify two basic landscape types covering the AONB, named 'Estuary and Marsh' and 'Wooded Hills and Pavement' in Cumbria and 'Open Coastal Marsh' and 'Wooded Limestone Hills and Pavements' in Lancashire.

The Arnside & Silverdale AONB Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment (2015) describes in much greater detail the key elements and qualities that make up the landscape and seascape character of the AONB and classifies its distinctive character types and character areas at a smaller scale.

4.3 The Arnside & Silverdale AONB Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment

The landscape/seascape character types that make up Arnside & Silverdale AONB are defined in the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment (2015) as:

- Intertidal flats
- Bay saltmarshes and lagoons
- Lowland moss
- Coastal limestone pasture
- Inland pasture and parkland

- Wooded limestone hills and pavements

Three landscape character types forming part of the setting of the AONB are also defined:

- Drumlin farmland
- Low coastal drumlins
- Lowland valley and coastal margins

4.3.1 Seascapes

Arnside & Silverdale AONB seascapes comprise extensive areas of Morecambe Bay and the River Kent and River Keer estuaries. The dynamic and changing coastline includes intertidal sand and mudflats and saltmarshes, bounded in places by shingle bays, rising to low cliffs with caves. The transition between land and sea is marked by characteristic windswept and stunted oak woodland such as that which hugs the coast south of Arnside.

Intertidal flats

This seascape character type comprises two distinctive parts of the AONB: a large expanse of intertidal flats and skeers (channels) at the north east end of Morecambe Bay, and the Kent Estuary to the north.

These intertidal seascapes, usually underwater at high tide, have an open character and dynamic nature, with ever-changing tides and weather conditions contributing to their distinctive and valued perceptual qualities. Shifting patterns of light, textures and colours change with different seasons, weather and times of day providing spectacular panoramic views; there is a sense of wildness and remoteness and a perception of natural processes at work. The presence of large numbers of birds and their calls are also important to the experience of these areas. The intertidal flats contrast strongly with the wooded limestone hills and pavements and drumlin farmland which rise above them.

Bay saltmarshes and lagoons

This seascape character type is present at Warton Marshes, consisting of intertidal saltmarsh and lagoon areas fringing the intertidal flats of Morecambe Bay.

The saltmarshes and lagoons make up an extensive flat area with open skylines and long views. These are dynamic depositional landscapes of fine sand and silt vegetated with *Spartina*, fine grasses, and salt tolerant species, and drained by winding creeks. They are strongly influenced by the changing state of the tide and longer term cycles of erosion and deposition of the saltmarsh. They are characterised by the sights, sounds and smells of the sea, and birdlife, notably breeding oyster-catchers, lapwing and redshank, and flocks of overwintering waders and wildfowl and pools and channels of water reflecting the light. In places the open saltmarshes are used for grazing livestock.

4.3.2 Transitional and lowland landscapes

The lowland landscapes of the AONB comprise a diversity of low mosses and wetland landscapes contrasting with enclosed limestone pastures and areas of historic parkland. Evidence of a long and historic land use is seen in the field patterns, such as ridge and furrow exposed when the sunlight is low, with landscape features associated with farming and estate management such as hedgerows, drystone walls and parkland trees along with the historic remains of towers, such as Arnside Tower, which are local landmarks. Features also include Leighton Moss and Hawes Water, where the birds and flora attract visitors.

Lowland moss

There are five main areas of lowland moss: Arnside and Silverdale Mosses; Leighton Moss and Barrow Scout; Hale and White Mosses; Holme/Burton and Hilderstone Mosses; and River Keer/Warton Floodplain.

These are variable depending upon the way in which they have been managed including landscapes of low lying rushy farmland with reeds along ditches, hedges and wet woodland, and some mosses and reedbeds with areas of open water. There are open views, distinctive seasonal variations and a diversity of wildlife.

Coastal limestone pasture

There are four examples of this lowland landscape character type in the AONB at Storth, Far Arnside, Silverdale and Warton.

Limestone pastures enclosed by limestone walls, and sometimes hedgerows, provide a distinctive pattern of small fields, with an intimate character. Gently rolling green landscapes are enclosed by the woodlands of the limestone hills, the interplay between open areas, settlement and woodland are characteristic. Glimpses and views of the intertidal areas give a coastal feel and influence. Key features are the historic villages, buildings and limestone walls, winding narrow lanes and low limestone cliffs and wind-sculpted trees along the coastal fringe.

Inland pasture and parkland

Farmed pastoral landscapes are present across the lower inland parts of the AONB including Leighton Park in the centre of the AONB, the medieval villages and strip fields around the Yealands and Hale and the areas characterised by the parklands of Dallam and the Hyning. Further inland pasture is present along Leighton Beck Valley.

Characteristic well maintained limestone walls and neat hedges divide small often low lying and damp fields, which are used for grazing giving a pastoral feel and atmosphere. Both large and smaller parklands are present, often with visible underlying medieval and post-medieval ridge-and-furrow field systems. Parkland avenues and trees, and railings are features, as are grand 18-19th century houses. The inland farmland is well enclosed with a secluded character and limited views outwards. The soft green backdrop of the wooded limestone hills and pavements forms the setting. Lanes wind through the farmland connecting scattered farmsteads and historic villages, including the distinctive linear villages of the Yealands with their characteristic medieval strip fields.

4.3.3 Woodland Limestone Hills

Wooded limestone hills and pavements rise above the lowland landscapes. Inland woodlands are rich and verdant, characterised by the highly distinctive flat bedding planes of the limestone pavements among which many of them grow. Natural crags and outcrops have been exposed by historic and present day quarrying for limestone, including Trowbarrow, now a Local Nature Reserve, Middlebarrow, no longer in use, and Sandside where extraction continues. Arnside is a Victorian seaside resort on the lower slopes of Arnside Knott, overlooking the distinctive Arnside Viaduct across the Kent Estuary.

Wooded limestone hills and pavements

The wooded limestone hills and pavements of Arnside & Silverdale AONB are a defining feature of the AONB, with hills such as Arnside Knott and Warton Crag being widely visible in the landscape. Lower areas, such as Gait Barrows include classic limestone pavement landscapes, punctuated by stunted yew woodland.

These are: Arnside Knott/Arnside Park; Middlebarrow/Eaves Wood; Heald Brow/Burton Well; Warton Crag/Grisedale Wood; Hyning and Cringlebarrow; Gait Barrows/Thrang End, and Fairy Steps/Whin Scar.

The wooded limestone hills and pavement mosaics are often protected by Limestone Pavement Orders and designated for their nature conservation interest. The limestone hills rise above the farmland and mosses of the AONB, and provide a soft green backdrop to views and a much-loved sense of space and tranquillity. The low limestone cliffs at the coastal edge form an important and distinctive edge to the adjacent sands and marshes.

Although frequently wooded, the hills include contrasting areas of wood pasture and open limestone grassland on hill tops, from which there are expansive panoramic views towards the Lake District, Forest of Bowland and Yorkshire Dales, and across Morecambe Bay. The changing light across the estuary and bay is best appreciated from these elevated locations.

4.3.4 Landscape sensitivity and condition

The landscape and seascape character assessment concludes that the landscape and seascape character in the AONB has a high or very high level of inherent sensitivity with limited or very limited capacity to accommodate change or development. Landscape and seascape condition is assessed as moderate to good, or good.

4.3.5 The setting of the AONB

Arnside & Silverdale AONB is connected to land, ecosystems, people and business beyond its boundaries. The AONB lies within an area known for its outstanding environmental quality. The AONB shares a boundary with the Lake District National Park to the north and the Forest of Bowland AONB and Yorkshire Dales National Park are clearly visible to the south and east. Much of the surrounding countryside, while not covered by landscape designations, is still of extremely high quality, including the Morecambe Bay coast and Hutton Roof and Farleton Fell to the east.

Three landscape character types form the immediate setting of the AONB and are important to the AONB's character:

- Drumlin farmland
- Low coastal drumlins
- Lowland valley and coastal margins

Therefore management of and development in these areas must also take the AONB designation into account.

5 Public Benefits

5.1 Natural capital and ecosystem services

Natural capital assets are the elements of the natural world from which flow a series of services or benefits to society. For example, woodland, species rich grassland, wetlands, and soils are all aspects of natural capital, whilst carbon storage, clean air and water and opportunities for recreation are some of the ecosystem services which flow from them. These services are also influenced by financial and social capital, but at their root is the natural capital that makes their delivery possible.

Natural capital is essential for people and everyday life. By securing and investing in the natural capital of the AONB over the long term we will support a more resilient, better managed landscape that is good for people as well as nature and provides significant public benefits.

As described in Appendix 2, the special qualities and natural capital assets of Arnside & Silverdale AONB provide a wide range of ecosystem services such as food, water, fibre, and fuel, climate regulation, flood protection, recreation, tranquillity, sense of inspiration, education, pollination and biodiversity.

Several studies have been carried out recently to help better understand the natural capital of the AONB and in particular the benefits it provides to people through its *cultural* ecosystem services, those non-material benefits for people, for example beauty, sense of place, or tranquillity. A review³⁰ of these studies shows a strong interrelationship between the areas that people value, and the area's landscape character and priority habitats.

This Management Plan includes the identification of future land management approaches needed to ensure the landscape is resilient to change and can continue delivering multiple benefits for people into the future. Many of the objectives and actions set out in this Plan influence the management of land and natural systems to help sustain and improve the range and quality of benefits or ecosystem services that are provided.

The area's natural capital is complex, resulting in strong connections between many of the ecosystem services. As a result, it is likely that a range of approaches will be necessary for the continued and future management of resilient landscapes. These include improving our understanding of natural capital and ecosystem services, working together at a catchment scale to adapt to climate change, and managing water, woodlands, farmland, habitats and landscapes to support a strong local economy.

³⁰ Natural Capital and Resilient Landscapes in Arnside & Silverdale AONB Report, 2017

6 Planning and development

6.1 Planning and development in AONBs

The fundamental principle underlying planning and development management in AONBs is that, as designated landscapes, AONBs have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. All development is expected to conform to a high standard of design and conserve and enhance the AONB's special qualities.

Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) places a statutory duty on all local planning authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty in carrying out their functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in AONBs. The Act confirms that the landscape qualities of AONBs and National Parks are equivalent. As such, the protection given by the land use planning system to natural beauty in both types of area should also be equivalent.

Planning policies for AONBs are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Local Plans, Mineral and Waste Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. The NPPF provides specific guidance for development planning and decision-making in relation to AONBs. It confirms that *'great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty'* in AONBs and that *'the scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited'* and also that *'planning permission should be refused for major developments in AONBs other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that they are in the public interest'*³¹.

The NPPF confirms that local planning authorities should set out the strategic priorities for their areas within Local Plans that contribute to and enhance the natural environment, by

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils;
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services;
- maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast; and
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.³²

AONB designation and AONB Management Plans are material considerations in the planning process as adopted statutory policy of the local authorities.

6.2 Local Plans and the Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document

The district-wide Local Plans of both South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) and Lancaster City Council (LCiC) contain policies relating to the conservation and enhancement of the Arnside & Silverdale AONB and its setting.

A dedicated Arnside and Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document (AONB DPD) has been prepared jointly by SLDC and LCiC which is part of the two authorities' Local Plans³³. The AONB DPD includes specific development management policies for the AONB to reflect the purposes of AONB designation and relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework³⁴ and a number

³¹ Paragraph 172, National Planning Policy Framework, 2018

³² Paragraph 170, National Planning Policy Framework, 2018

³³ the two authorities' Local Plans both comprise of a number of Development Plan Documents that will be applied in conjunction with the AONB DPD

³⁴ The AONB DPD has been assessed under provisions of National Planning Policy Framework, 2012

of land allocations where housing and employment development has been found to be appropriate. It also designates open spaces within settlements that make a significant contribution to their character as Key Settlement Landscapes, to be protected from development. Public open spaces valued for their recreational importance are also identified and protected.

The AONB DPD sets out a joint planning policy approach to ensure development is planned and managed in a way that conserves and enhances the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. Any new development should seek to deliver enhancements to the landscape, biodiversity and settlement character wherever possible. Robust implementation of the AONB DPD will help to enable the local authorities to fulfil their statutory duty to have regard³⁵ to the AONB purpose in their decision-making with respect to planning matters.

As is the case in many rural areas, within the AONB there is a recognised need for housing to meet local needs, in particular affordable housing. In Arnside & Silverdale AONB there are only a very limited number of sites that are considered appropriate for development (i.e. can be developed without causing harm to the special qualities of the AONB). It is therefore very important to ensure that affordable housing is in fact delivered on the appropriate sites that have been allocated, as well as windfall developments or redevelopments on other sites, otherwise the need and the consequent pressure for development will remain. In order to address this issue, the AONB DPD stipulates that in developments of 2 or more houses, 50% must be affordable.

6.3 The role of the AONB Partnership in planning matters

Planning decisions and enforcement action affecting the AONB will be made by the relevant local planning authority with reference to Local Plans, the AONB DPD and the AONB Management Plan, as a material consideration. The role of the AONB Partnership is to provide landscape-related planning advice to the local authorities to assist this process. The AONB Partnership also liaises with Natural England, the statutory consultee for landscape, on planning matters. The AONB Partnership will also provide advice and consultation responses to other bodies on relevant strategic plans and policies affecting the AONB.

³⁵ Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

7 Vision for the future

7.1 Long-term vision

The shared long-term vision³⁶ for the AONB is:

Arnside & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a landscape of international importance, whose distinctive character is conserved and enhanced for future generations.

It is a place that is much loved and highly valued, for its strong sense of place, unique geology, diverse wildlife and rich heritage and the benefits it provides to society.

Its outstanding landscape - an intimate mosaic of low limestone hills, woodland, wetland, pastures, limestone pavements, intertidal flats, coastal scenery and distinctive settlements - and rich natural and cultural heritage are enjoyed, cherished, conserved and enhanced by those who live in, work in and visit the area.

The high quality and resilient landscape supports and is supported by the area's thriving rural economy and vibrant sustainable local communities. There are many and varied opportunities for people to access, enjoy and understand the area's special qualities, and participate in their conservation and enhancement, creating a strong connection with nature and the landscape.

Challenges and pressures are effectively and sensitively managed in an integrated way through a partnership approach. The area's natural capital and cultural assets are appropriately and sustainably managed to ensure a wide range of public benefits for present and future generations.

To achieve this, the AONB Partnership is aiming for 3 key outcomes which reflect the national objectives of the AONB Family:

- an outstanding landscape rich in natural and cultural heritage
- vibrant and sustainable communities
- a strong connection between people and the landscape

In working to deliver these outcomes, we must consider environmental, economic and social objectives. The challenges faced by the area are many and diverse, some are local in nature while others are national issues. Some can be relatively easily addressed but others are difficult to resolve. We must work together with partners and stakeholders to deliver these outcomes while recognising

³⁶ 94% of respondents to the Management Plan Review Consultation Survey, 2018, agreed with the Vision with the remaining respondents suggesting a small number of positive amendments, which have now been incorporated

that different organisations, groups and individuals have different opinions on and priorities for how best to conserve the features and qualities which make this landscape special.

Sustaining this exceptional landscape is a major challenge and requires collaboration, cooperation and significant resources. We believe that there should be an aspirational approach to working in partnership to source and attract funding and investment to allow landscape enhancement and management across the AONB.

8 What is needed to conserve and enhance Arnside & Silverdale AONB?

This section sets out what is needed to achieve the Vision and key outcomes. A framework of strategic objectives is presented along with identification of key issues and forces for change, outcomes and recommendations for delivery between 2019 and 2024, and beyond, that all authorities, partners, stakeholders, farmers, landowners and communities can work to in order to conserve and enhance the AONB. Actions are to be achieved through decision-making, land management and joint projects. While it is recognised that many partners will contribute – the delivery of the Management Plan is a joint collaborative enterprise – key partners important for delivery are identified.

This section has been strongly influenced by the consultation responses received during the review of the 2014-19 AONB Management Plan.

It is important to note that the Management Plan does not cover everything affecting the Arnside & Silverdale area, rather those matters directly linked to the purposes of AONB designation.

The State of the AONB Report (2019) gives further more detailed information and evidence about the current status of matters relevant to the Management Plan.

All objectives and actions are to be delivered in a way that supports the AONB purpose and causes no harm to Natura 2000 sites.

A framework of strategic objectives for Arnside & Silverdale AONB
Outstanding landscape rich in natural and cultural heritage
Landscape and seascape
Strategic objective 1: Conserve, enhance and improve understanding of the natural beauty, landscape and seascape character, and special qualities of Arnside & Silverdale AONB.
Natural capital and ecosystem services
Strategic objective 2: Conserve, enhance and improve understanding of the natural capital of the AONB and the range and value of the public benefits and ecosystem services that it provides to society.
Geodiversity
Strategic objective 3: Conserve and improve understanding of the geodiversity of the AONB.
Habitats and species
Strategic objective 4: Conserve, enhance and restore the AONB's characteristic mosaic of habitats and improve their connectivity, take targeted action to conserve key species and improve understanding of the biodiversity of the AONB.
Water environment
Strategic objective 5: Improve water quality and condition of watercourses and waterbodies in the AONB and support natural flood management.
Historic and cultural heritage
Strategic objective 6: Conserve, restore and improve understanding of the historic environment of the AONB including heritage assets, historic landscape character and cultural heritage.
Development management
Strategic objective 7: Implement a landscape capacity-led approach to development planning and management, which conserves and enhances the natural beauty, landscape, seascape and special qualities of the AONB and its setting.

Vibrant and sustainable communities
Land management and rural livelihoods
Strategic objective 8: Support landowners and managers to sustainably manage the landscape in ways that conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB and deliver a range of environmental, community and local economic benefits, in particular by encouraging farming, land- and woodland management practices that enhance natural beauty and landscape character.
Sustainable visitor economy
Strategic objective 9: Ensure that the visitor economy is environmentally sustainable and contributes to the conservation and enhancement of the area's special qualities, and enable visitors to have high quality experiences of nature, culture and quiet recreation.
Affordable housing, rural services and local economy
Strategic objective 10: Support delivery of affordable housing and services to help meet local community needs and environmentally sustainable local economic activity that conserves and enhances the special qualities of the AONB.
Community engagement and volunteering
Strategic objective 11: Engage local communities in conserving and enhancing the AONB and encourage active involvement through volunteering.
A strong connection between people and the landscape
Enjoyment and understanding
Strategic objective 12: Provide high quality information, events and activities to enable people to enjoy, learn about and celebrate the AONB's special qualities in a sustainable way.
Access and recreation
Strategic objective 13: Maintain and improve access to the coast and countryside in a sustainable way for a diverse range of people and promote responsible, safe and quiet recreation.
Health and wellbeing
Strategic objective 14: Provide opportunities for people to improve their health and wellbeing by connecting with nature, culture and the landscape.

8.1 An outstanding landscape rich in natural and cultural heritage

8.1.1 Landscape and seascape

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- international conventions and obligations such as the European Landscape Convention, the Convention on Biodiversity and Climate Change Agreements
- changes in and uncertainty about national policies relating to farming, forestry and the environment as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union, in particular new approaches to environmental land management and rural development schemes and other support mechanisms for farmers and landowners
- Government ambitions to improve the environment as set out in 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Environment Plan'

- the landscape and seascape character in Arnside & Silverdale AONB has a high or very high level of inherent sensitivity with limited or very limited capacity to accommodate change or development, as confirmed in the Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment
- incremental changes over time lead to cumulative loss of character and erosion of the special qualities of the AONB
- effects of climate change including extreme weather, storm surges and sea level rise and temperature change
- land use and land management changes, including agricultural change, particularly intensification
- soil erosion, compaction (both machinery and flood compaction) and management
- over or under grazing of limestone grassland
- under management of woodland
- potential for loss and deterioration of key landscape features
- loss and deterioration of traditional boundaries including dry stone walls (and associated features) and species-rich hedgerows (through intensive mechanised cutting), reducing effectiveness to contain stock and value as wildlife corridors
- potential for loss of ancient, veteran, notable and parkland trees
- dynamic cycles of erosion, deposition and accretion of saltmarsh/mud/sand due to natural geomorphological processes within the Kent Estuary
- increased intrusion through noise and light pollution affecting tranquillity, dark skies and sense of place
- loss of key views due to vegetation and tree growth

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 1: Conserve, enhance and improve understanding of the natural beauty, landscape and seascape character, and special qualities of Arnside & Silverdale AONB
Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high quality landscape, seascape and undeveloped coastline where landscape and seascape character, natural beauty and the area's special qualities are conserved and enhanced • A landscape and seascape that is resilient to climate change and other pressures

Actions

- 1a. apply the guiding principles of the European Landscape Convention and use landscape and seascape characterisation as the basis for policy- and decision-making to conserve and enhance landscape and seascape character and natural beauty
- 1b. periodically review and update the AONB Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment and raise awareness of landscape and seascape character
- 1c. take coordinated landscape-scale approaches to conserving and enhancing natural and cultural heritage, developing and facilitating collaboration, partnership projects and innovative approaches and solutions
- 1d. protect undeveloped coastline and conserve and enhance coastal features and seascape character
- 1e. manage the mosaic of landscape and seascape types to conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the AONB and create a resilient landscape

- 1f. promote the importance of good soil management for carbon storage, water quality and flood regulation by establishing and implementing soil management plans
- 1g. support and encourage appropriate and sensitive land and woodland management practices and approaches including uptake of environmental land management schemes or site/farm/woodland management plans
- 1h. achieve appropriate grazing regimes on limestone grassland sites, including conservation grazing regimes where appropriate
- 1i. conserve and restore distinctive landscape boundaries and features such as hedgerows, drystone walls, field barns and other features and assets
- 1j. remove infrastructure that adversely affects the landscape, such as pylons and overhead cables wherever possible such as through the undergrounding for visual amenity project
- 1k. conserve ancient, veteran, notable and parkland trees and ensure succession planting
- 1l. carry out a programme of landscape monitoring and produce a State of the AONB report every 5 years
- 1m. avoid increasing light and noise pollution which would cause adverse impacts on tranquillity or dark skies
- 1n. reinforce the AONB's distinctive sense of place
- 1o. maintain open views from key view points by managing vegetation and tree growth as appropriate

Key partners

Landowners, farmers, land managers, woodland managers
 Local planning authorities
 Highways authorities
 Natural England
 Environment Agency
 Forestry Commission
 Electricity Northwest

8.1.2 Natural capital and ecosystem services

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- need to continue to improve knowledge and awareness of natural capital and ecosystem services and their public benefits and value to society

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 2: Conserve, enhance and improve understanding of the natural capital of the AONB and the range and value of the public benefits and ecosystem services that it provides to society.
Outcome: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The natural capital of the AONB and the ecosystem services and public benefits derived from these assets are understood, valued and promoted

Actions

2a. manage the area based on natural capital and ecosystems services approach to increase landscape resilience especially resilience to climate change

2b. research and improve understanding of the natural capital and ecosystem services that the landscape provides in terms of public benefits and value to society

2c. undertake further evidence gathering and research about the cultural ecosystem services provided by the AONB

Key partners

AONB partners

Natural England

Universities and research institutions

8.1.3 Geodiversity

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- potential for loss of, damage to or under management of geological sites or features
- lower than expected levels of awareness and understanding of the area's geodiversity, its importance and its links to biodiversity and heritage
- ensuring monitoring and positive management of Local Geological Sites and areas covered by Limestone Pavement Orders, and other geological designations
- further research required about certain aspects of the area's geodiversity

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 3: Conserve and improve understanding of the geodiversity of the AONB.
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Outcomes:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Geodiversity is in favourable condition• The area's geodiversity is well researched and understood |
|---|

Actions

3a. develop a local Geodiversity Action Plan for the AONB to provide a framework for conserving, managing and raising awareness of the AONB's geodiversity

3b. conserve and manage geodiversity, including both statutory (Special Areas of Conservation, Limestone Pavement Orders, SSSI) and non-statutory (Local Geological Sites) sites and also non-designated geological features and assets

3c. raise awareness of the importance of geodiversity as part of the landscape character and cultural heritage of the AONB, its importance in providing ecosystem services and its key link to biodiversity

3d. increase awareness and appreciation of geology and the conservation of geodiversity in a sustainable way at key sites, for example through the publication of geotrails and provision of interpretation etc.

3e. carefully manage works to conserve or research historic assets or archaeological sites using a multi-objective approach so that they do not cause harm to geodiversity

3f. build improved links with universities and local geological societies

3g. facilitate geodiversity research projects in the area for example, to aid in understanding the potential complexities of the Silverdale Disturbance and the age and formation of Hale Moss

Caves, and to raise awareness of the Quaternary geomorphological landforms e.g. drumlins, kames, kettleholes, eskers and ongoing coastal processes

Key partners

Landowners and managers
Local authorities
Natural England
Cumbria GeoConservation
Westmorland Geological Society
GeoLancashire
Universities and research institutions

8.1.4 Habitats and species

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- changes in and uncertainty about support mechanisms for farmers and landowners to enable biodiversity enhancements
- effects of climate change including extreme weather, storm surges, sea level rise and temperature change
- loss and deterioration of some characteristic habitats, habitat fragmentation and declining resilience of ecological networks
- loss or decline of characteristic species and species diversity including low genetic diversity of some species that are on the brink of extinction e.g. Teesdale violet
- unfavourable or declining condition of a small number of SSSI sites/units: while 99.1% of the SSSIs are in favourable or recovering condition (64.7% in favourable condition and 34.4% in recovering condition), Middlebarrow unit 3 remains in decline, Hawes Water unit 3 has declined from favourable to declining, Hawes Water unit 12 remains unfavourable no change, and both Gait Barrows (Little Hawes Water) and Warton Crag (Three Brothers allotments) have declined from favourable to unfavourable no change³⁷.
- relatively low level of positive management of Local Wildlife Sites: only 21 of the 64 Local Wildlife Sites have been assessed as being in positive management³⁸.
- a focus on designated sites can make non-designated areas of priority habitat more vulnerable
- scrub encroachment on and nutrient enrichment (through fertiliser, manure or slurry application) of species-rich limestones grassland sites leading to declines in species-richness
- achieving appropriate grazing and management regimes on limestone grassland to enhance their species-richness
- under management of woodland, particularly on sensitive difficult-to-manage sites such as limestone pavement and damage to woodland caused by Grey Squirrels and deer
- dieback of ash caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* is present in the AONB and is likely to significantly affect ash woodlands, the dominant woodland type within the area
- fungus-like pathogens *Phytophthora austrocedrae*, which causes dieback and mortality of juniper and *Phytophthora ramorum* that causes extensive damage and mortality to trees and other plants, are now present in northern England

³⁷ © Natural England copyright. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018.

³⁸ County Wildlife Sites Survey, G Skelcher, 2014/15

- invasive non-native species now present at a small number of locations within the AONB include Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, Himalayan Balsam, Piri-piri Burr and New Zealand Pygmy Weed; Cotoneaster and Buddleia have been recorded at various SSSIs within the AONB and Grey Squirrels are well established, with Mink also present
- high tide salt water incursion into Leighton Moss and other low-lying mosses during storm surges and high tide erosion impacts on saline pools on Warton Marsh
- recreational disturbance of wildlife particularly breeding and overwintering waders and wildfowl on the coast
- potential to cause harm to biodiversity through works to conserve or research historic assets or archaeological sites
- decline in species reliant on the built environment such as swifts and bats
- terrestrial and marine litter
- wildlife crime
- need for further coordination of biodiversity research and monitoring, including up-to-date condition surveys of designated sites, and data collation and analysis

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 4: Conserve, enhance and restore the AONB's characteristic mosaic of habitats and improve their connectivity, take targeted action to conserve key species and improve understanding of the biodiversity of the AONB.

Outcomes:

- Increased area of priority habitats that are well connected and resilient
- Priority habitat condition is favourable or improving
- Key species are being conserved or are recovering
- The area's biodiversity is well researched and monitored leading to a good understanding of the condition and status of habitats and species and appropriate management requirements to ensure resilience for the future

Actions

- 4a. establish a 'Nature Recovery Network' for the area: deliver net gains in biodiversity, developing robust ecological networks that are resilient to climate change through habitat enhancement, expansion, restoration and creation including improving habitat connectivity by establishing buffer zones, linear corridors and 'stepping stones', with a focus on priority habitats and enhancing landscape character
- 4b. take a coordinated and landscape-scale approach to nature conservation within the AONB and across the Morecambe Bay area, including by supporting the work of the Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership
- 4c. strive to ensure that statutory designated sites are adequately protected, prioritise achieving favourable condition status and carry out regular condition monitoring and ensure that any plans or projects do not have a significant adverse effect on the important features of Natura 2000 sites

- 4d. improve understanding of the attributes of healthy, resilient landscapes and how this relates in detail to the AONB – for example, what habitat diversity, patch size and connectivity is needed to build resilience
- 4e. increase the proportion of Local Wildlife Sites that are in positive management
- 4f. encourage high nature-value farming and forestry/woodland management practices, providing bespoke advice and support to landowners, land managers and farmers and facilitate uptake of environment land management schemes or site/farm/woodland management plans
- 4g. retain, improve and expand areas of species-rich calcareous grassland including by clearing scrub and ensuring appropriate grazing regimes, including conservation grazing schemes where appropriate
- 4h. ensure appropriate seasonal cutting of hay meadows
- 4i. facilitate species-rich green hay spreading using appropriate donor and receptor sites
- 4j. create more transitional habitats, such as woodland edge, to blend habitats and form 'ecotones' to enhance the boundaries between high quality habitat and surrounding land
- 4k. prioritise protection and enhancement of ancient semi-natural woodlands
- 4l. sustainably manage woodland through coppicing, selective thinning, creating rides and glades, freeing up veteran trees, retaining deadwood and felling within woodlands, and encourage sensitive low-impact woodland management techniques such as horse-logging, where appropriate
- 4m. manage Grey Squirrels and monitor Red Squirrel sightings in a coordinated way according to an agreed local strategic approach consistent with approved national policy, working through the Arnside and Silverdale Red Squirrel Initiative, coordinated by Westmorland Red Squirrels
- 4n. manage deer in a coordinated way through the Deer Initiative and the Arnside and Burton Deer Management Group
- 4o. install and monitor wildlife boxes in appropriate locations
- 4p. create, restore and enhance wetland habitats in appropriate locations including wet grassland, moss and fenland, and reedbed
- 4q. ensure collaboration and joined-up habitat management at key sites such as Warton Crag
- 4r. raise awareness of, monitor, control, manage, prevent spread and/or eradicate invasive non-native species and diseases including Giant Hogweed, Himalayan Balsam, Piri-piri Burr, Japanese Knotweed, Cotoneaster, dieback of ash, Phytophthora spp. etc. (through Cumbria Freshwater Invasive Non-Native Species, Rapid Response Plans, Tree Health Group, volunteer work parties and focussed projects etc.)
- 4s. take planned targeted action to conserve key species with a focus on S41 priority species including High Brown Fritillary, Lady's-slipper Orchid, Maidenhair Fern, Autumn Lady's Tresses, Teesdale Violet, Bittern etc.
- 4t. implement appropriate species reintroduction working with appropriate bodies and according to IUCN and other appropriate guidelines e.g. floral restoration, dormouse etc. working through the Back on Our Map project
- 4u. tackle wildlife crime in a coordinated way
- 4v. support efforts to conserve swift populations and other species reliant on the built environment
- 4w. conserve, enhance and improve the resilience of pollination as an ecosystem service supporting actions to create pollinator habitat and help pollinating insects
- 4x. encourage sensitive management of roadside margins and verges to enhance their biodiversity value

- 4y. coordinate a collaborative programme of biodiversity monitoring and research and data sharing to inform management decisions
- 4z. carefully manage works to conserve or research historic assets or archaeological sites with a multi-objective approach so that they do not cause harm to biodiversity
- 4aa. Deliver a multi-objective partnership project at Warton Mires to restore wet grassland habitat with a focus on breeding lapwing
- 4bb. Tackle recreational disturbance via education, appropriate signage and awareness raising

Key partners

Landowners, farmers, land and woodland managers
 Defra
 Natural England
 Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership
 RSPB
 National Trust
 Landscape Trust
 Environment Agency
 Woodland Trust
 Wildlife Trusts
 Cumbria Biodiversity Records Centre
 Lancashire Environmental Records Network
 Arnside Natural History Society
 Universities and research institutions
 Parish Councils
 Highways authorities
 University of Cumbria

8.1.5 Water environment

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- diffuse water pollution from agriculture and point source water pollution from private sewage treatment infrastructure and assets [Where water quality monitoring takes place in the AONB it shows that water quality is overall generally good in the rivers and streams and in Hawes Water. At Leighton Moss monitoring indicates levels of phosphorus and nitrate elevated above the level required to ensure that the SSSI is in favourable condition. Agriculture has been identified as the primary reason for the elevated levels. While there is currently little monitoring information to confirm it, there are concerns about groundwater quality in the Silverdale area. Discharges from private sewage treatment infrastructure and assets are the cause of concern here. The vast majority of the area drains to private sewerage treatment infrastructure rather than the public sewerage system]
- lack of comprehensive and coordinated water quality monitoring programme
- effects of climate change including extreme weather, storm surges, sea level rise with increased risk of fluvial, surface water and coastal flooding and also low flows in times of drought
- fluvial and surface water flood management [fluvial flood risk has previously been low within the AONB but in 2015 Storm Desmond resulted in December being the wettest calendar month overall since records began and there was flooding in Warton and Beetham villages and across

the mosses. Surface water flooding can be an issue in Warton, Arnside and Yealand and coastal flooding is a potential risk in certain areas such as Storth and Sandside. The issue of coastal flooding and salt water inundation of the low lying mosses is cross cutting with climatic factors.]

- eutrophication, particularly in the Leighton Moss SSSI, and sedimentation of water courses and water bodies
- modification and loss of natural processes for rivers and wetlands
- increasing and conflicting demands on the coastal zone resulting from coastal squeeze due to sea level rise, enhanced coastal access and land use
- achieving suitable water quality and conditions for migrating and spawning native fish stock
- sustainable management of shellfishery [The intertidal sand and mudflats of Morecambe Bay support a range of shellfish, including cockles. Warton Sands cockle bed is located in the south west corner of the AONB. There were active cockle fisheries in Morecambe Bay for most of 2017 stocks of cockles were not of a commercial quantity at Warton Sands. The fluctuation in cockle recruitment is natural and there can be huge variations over time. The sustainable management of the cockle fishery is very important as over exploitation could impact on the important oystercatcher population within the Bay, which feeds on the cockles in the intertidal area, along with other foods such as mussels and lugworm.]

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 5: Improve water quality and condition of watercourses and waterbodies in the AONB and support natural flood management.
Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High water quality and good condition of water courses and water bodies • Sensitive and sustainable flood risk management

Actions

- 5a. take a coordinated approach to catchment management through Catchment Partnerships, delivering projects to help increase flood resilience and improve the quality of the water environment, supporting delivery of the North West River Basin Management Plan and to meet Water Framework Directive objectives
- 5b. support measures and local action to protect and enhance the water environment, both terrestrial and coastal/estuarine, and improve water quality, working with Environment Agency, South Cumbria Rivers Trust and Lune Rivers Trust
- 5c. support effective delivery of the Leighton Moss and Hawes Water Diffuse Water Pollution Plan
- 5d. promote and implement a comprehensive programme of monitoring water quality in water courses and water bodies if feasible
- 5e. implement catchment sensitive farming initiatives to tackle agricultural diffuse and point source pollution in target areas
- 5f. raise awareness of issues and what action residents can take to improve condition and management of septic tanks through initiatives such as the Love My Beach campaign
- 5g. ensure any new development implements high quality sewerage infrastructure
- 5h. support the creation, restoration and enhancement of wetland habitats and the reinstatement of natural processes, in appropriate locations

- 5i. support appropriate natural flood management schemes to help reduce inland and coastal flood risk wherever appropriate
- 5j. implement sustainable and integrated coastal zone management supporting measures which protect and enhance the coastal and estuarine habitats of the area and protect bathing waters
- 5k. ensure appropriate involvement in marine planning (e.g. Shoreline Management Plan, North West Marine Plan, Coastal Strategies etc.) regarding internationally and nationally important coastal and intertidal wildlife sites, water quality management, the seascape, the coastal historic environment, climate change adaptation and mitigation, coastal change, erosion and flooding, shell fisheries, tourism and recreation (particularly coastal access)
- 5l. reduce marine and coastal litter
- 5m. ensure engagement in the development of any coastal zone management and flood risk strategy for the Kent estuary or coastal defence strategy for outer Kent estuary, including Grange and Arnside or any realignment and habitat creation studies
- 5n. encourage uptake of environmental land management schemes to help deliver multiple benefits including flood risk benefits, supporting restoration of natural floodplain wherever possible
- 5o. sustainably manage Warton Sands shellfishery through flexible permitting byelaw for hand-gathering shellfish
- 5p. ensure that any new development is directed away from areas at highest flood risk, is safe both now and in the future, and does not increase flood risk elsewhere

Key partners

South Cumbria Rivers Trust
 Lune Rivers Trust
 Catchment Partnerships
 Environment Agency
 Natural England
 Flood Authorities
 Local Authorities
 Landowners and managers
 Marine Management Organisation
 Morecambe Bay Partnership
 North West Coastal Forum
 Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority North West

8.1.6 Historic and cultural heritage

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- four scheduled monuments remain on the Historic England Heritage At Risk Register: Arnside Tower, Hazelslack Tower, Beetham Hall (curtain wall and uninhabited portion) and Warton Crag Hillfort
- declining condition of, loss of and under management or poor management of heritage assets and features
- heritage assets and features that contribute to historic landscape character

- the lack of information and research about, and recording and interpretation of, the heritage assets and historic landscape character of the AONB
- the need for greater collaboration between owners, partner organisations and communities to conserve, enhance and improve understanding of the historic and cultural heritage of the AONB
- a focus on designated assets can make non-designated assets more vulnerable to loss, damage or neglect
- non-designated historic assets that are an important part of the historic landscape and are valued by people are not always well described or recognised
- gradual loss or fragmentation of traditional field patterns resulting from the removal and erosion of field boundaries such as drystone walls and hedges
- loss of and deterioration in condition of orchards and loss of traditional fruit varieties
- risk of harm to the archaeological resource and traditional character of settlements and individual buildings through inappropriate development
- increased likelihood of damage to and deterioration of structure and foundations of historic buildings through storm events, heavier and winter waterlogging due to climate change
- damage to or loss of chimney and associated structures at Jenny Brown's Point due to erosion of salt marsh and sea level rise
- potential to cause harm to historic assets or archaeology through works to conserve or enhance biodiversity
- while some projects have been undertaken, information on social and cultural history of the AONB such as land management practices, local history and development of the villages is at risk of being lost as people get older and if it is not formally recorded in some way

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic Objective 6:

Conserve, restore and improve understanding of the historic environment of the AONB including heritage assets, historic landscape character and cultural heritage.

Outcomes:

- Historic landscape character is conserved
- Key heritage assets and features are retained and sensitively restored where appropriate
- The area's heritage, including cultural heritage, is well researched and understood

Actions

- 6a. establish an historic environment working group to ensure a coordinated AONB-wide approach to conserving, enhancing and improving understanding of historic and cultural heritage
- 6b. take targeted action through projects or other mechanisms where feasible to reduce the number of scheduled monuments and other heritage assets that remain on the Historic England Heritage At Risk Register
- 6c. conserve and enhance heritage assets and features and their settings including taking targeted action to research, record and protect heritage assets at risk of damage due to climate change or other factors, including the chimney at Jenny Brown's Point likely currently at risk due to erosion of saltmarsh and sea level rise

- 6d. monitor condition of heritage assets and use this to inform future management and/or restoration
- 6e. improve knowledge and understanding of heritage and culture through surveys, research and interpretation
- 6f. maintain and improve the Historic Environment Record for the area
- 6g. provide signposting, advice, guidance and support for owners
- 6h. manage orchards in need of restoration work
- 6i. undertake surveys to record historical interest before conversion of historic buildings such as farmsteads and barns to new uses
- 6j. research and record oral history and cultural heritage
- 6k. support local authorities in preparation of Local Heritage Lists as part of the protective framework for heritage assets through the planning system
- 6l. support local organisations and projects to enhance local capacity, increase awareness of and public involvement in the management of the local historic environment
- 6m. encourage uptake of environment land management schemes to enhance the historic landscape
- 6n. raise the profile of archaeology and support the delivery of archaeology-related projects
- 6o. promote the historic environment so that people can appreciate and enjoy heritage assets
- 6p. research and describe non-designated heritage assets and features
- 6q. carefully manage works to conserve or restore biodiversity or geodiversity using a multi-objective approach so that they do not cause harm to heritage
- 6r. conserve and restore historic designed landscapes and gardens where feasible
- 6s. conserve and ensure positive management of historic springs, ponds and wells such as Bank Well and Wood Well in Silverdale
- 6t. finalise a conservation management plan for Warton Crag scheduled monument to balance the needs of the archaeology of the site with its natural heritage importance and management and carry out further research such as targeted excavation and/or core sampling

Key partners

Site/property owners and managers
 Historic England
 Local authorities
 Museums services
 Mourholme Society
 Arnside Archive
 Morecambe Bay Partnership
 Universities and research agencies

8.1.7 Development management

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- development pressure and inappropriate development were identified as one of the most significant issues affecting the AONB in the Management Plan consultation held in early 2018³⁹.

³⁹ 86% of respondents to the Full AONB Management Plan Review Consultation Survey, 2018, indicated that development pressure was the most important issue affecting the AONB

- inappropriate location, design scale and/or nature of development which causes harm to the area's landscape character, visual amenity or natural and cultural heritage within the AONB or its setting (for example loss of priority habitat, loss of traditional boundaries, impact on heritage features etc.)
- small-scale cumulative development resulting in incremental erosion of landscape integrity and quality over time
- potential pressure for major development within the AONB or its setting including commercial scale energy development such as wind, tidal schemes, overhead wires and pylons or the winning of shale gas by hydraulic fracturing (fracking)
- loss of character and/or features due to insensitive conversion or modification of traditional vernacular buildings e.g. barns, farmsteads
- significant pressure for new housing development leading to potential loss of open spaces within settlements which contribute to rural, landscape and settlement character or encroachment into the countryside
- urbanisation of villages and rural lanes and roads
- achieving 'net gain' and securing enhancements through sensitive development
- lack of mains sewerage systems in large parts of the AONB, particularly Silverdale
- if affordable or other local needs are not met on sites which may be suitable for development in the AONB, those needs will remain unmet potentially putting pressure on more sensitive sites
- development just outside the AONB such as large scale holiday complexes and further commercial development along the A6/M6 corridor, has the potential to adversely affect the setting and views out from the AONB, particularly on the eastern margins

Strategic objective and outcomes

<p>Strategic Objective 7: Implement a landscape capacity-led approach to development planning and management, which conserves and enhances the natural beauty, landscape, seascape and special qualities of the AONB and its setting.</p>
<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of a landscape-capacity led approach to development policy and management consistent with the approach set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and AONB DPD • All development is appropriate and sensitive, conserves and enhances the natural beauty, landscape and seascape character and special qualities of the AONB, and helps meet identified local needs

Actions

- 7a. ensure all development conserves and enhances the AONB, and avoid major development, consistent with paragraph 172 of the NPPF
- 7b. implement a landscape capacity-led approach to planning and development management as set out in the AONB Development Plan Document (AONB DPD) and the districts' Local Plans

- 7c. ensure all development conserves and enhances the natural beauty and landscape character of the AONB and its setting and prevent development that would cause harm to the natural and cultural heritage and special qualities of the AONB
- 7d. ensure that all development management decisions relating to proposals within the AONB or its setting have regard to the AONB Management Plan, AONB Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment and relevant county landscape character assessments
- 7e. ensure that the national importance of the AONB landscape is recognised and that policies to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the area are included in new and reviewed plans and policies relevant to the area
- 7f. enable the AONB Partnership to provide independent landscape-related planning and policy advice to local authorities, including reviewing and making formal responses to planning applications, according to an agreed Planning Protocol
- 7g. develop bespoke policy statements and guidance on current landscape planning issues affecting the AONB landscape, including design guidance to encourage sensitive design appropriate to the AONB
- 7h. conserve and enhance the landscape and natural beauty of the area, in particular its characteristic features, rural nature, historic character, local distinctiveness, coastal landscape and seascape, visual amenity and views, tranquillity, dark skies and sense of place and space
- 7i. respect local traditional settlement character including pattern, layout, scale, design, vernacular tradition and materials
- 7j. encourage robust landscape and visual amenity impact assessments which take full account of cumulative and incremental impacts to be undertaken
- 7k. deliver housing which closely reflects identified local needs (with affordable housing a high priority) in appropriate and sustainable locations
- 7l. protect and enhance the natural environment in particular biodiversity (including priority habitats, species, local and statutory designated sites), trees and woodland, geodiversity and the robustness, function and value of ecological networks and ecosystem services
- 7m. ensure new development delivers appropriate 'net gains' in biodiversity wherever possible
- 7n. protect public open space and recreational networks
- 7o. support the designation and protection of areas of open space within settlements that make a key contribution to landscape and settlement character as Key Settlement Landscapes
- 7p. protect and enhance the historic environment, including historic buildings, heritage assets and their settings and historic landscape features such as drystone walls, field barns, hedgerows, veteran trees etc.
- 7q. encourage the highest standards of design, construction and landscaping that respond to the character of the landscape and local built environment and reinforce what is special and locally distinctive about the area
- 7r. retain and improve rural services and community facilities in a way that conserves and enhances the special qualities of the AONB
- 7s. ensure economic development supports an environment-based economy, is appropriate and environmentally sustainable and does not harm the natural beauty or special qualities of the AONB
- 7t. require new development to meet the infrastructure needs arising from it and contribute towards new infrastructure in a way that reflects the AONB purpose with high priority being given to green infrastructure and benefiting walking, cycling and public transport

- 7u. restrict new caravan, chalet cabin or lodge style development and ensure tourism development is appropriate and environmentally sustainable and does not harm the natural beauty or special qualities of the AONB
- 7v. improve and deliver new high quality sewerage infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems
- 7w. ensure advertising and signage is appropriate to the AONB implementing restrictions as required
- 7x. ensure sensitive design and management of highway and public realm schemes

Key partners important for delivery

Local planning authorities
 Owners
 Developers
 Parish Councils
 Planning Inspectorate
 Natural England
 Historic England
 Environment Agency
 Highways authorities
 CPRE

8.2 Vibrant and sustainable communities

8.2.1 Land management and rural livelihoods

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- changes in and uncertainty about new trade agreements, national policies relating to farming, forestry and the environment as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union, in particular new approaches rural development schemes and other support mechanisms for farmers and landowners
- an older than average population and loss of young people affects the ability of the area to maintain a vibrant local economy [the AONB has an older than average population with fewer children and young working age people than in Cumbria and Lancashire as a whole]
- lack of economic and business information applicable to the AONB boundary
- sustaining viable rural, farming and forestry businesses and livelihoods
- decline in number and coverage of environmental land management schemes in the AONB and uncertainty about future of such schemes
- loss of expertise in traditional rural skills and land management practices such as hedgelaying, drystone walling, woodland management, coppicing and orchard management
- developing short supply chains for and marketing of local products
- limited access to training, business support and networking

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic Objective 8: Support landowners and managers to sustainably manage the landscape in ways that conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB and deliver a range of environmental, community and local economic benefits, in particular by encouraging farming, land- and woodland management practices that enhance natural beauty and landscape character.

Outcomes:

- Viable high nature-value farming and forestry delivering a wide range of public benefits including conservation and enhancement of natural beauty
- Sustainable land management producing high quality products with short supply chains
- Environmentally-sustainable businesses linked strongly to the nature and culture of the AONB

Actions

- 8a. develop an AONB Land Management Network to liaise with and involve the land management sector, and provide information, knowledge sharing, training and events to support a viable sustainable approach to 'high nature-value' farming and forestry which conserves and enhances natural beauty
- 8b. promote and provide bespoke advice and support to landowners and managers on land management practices which help conserve and enhance the landscape and natural and cultural heritage of the area through a range of mechanisms e.g. woodland/site management plans, felling licences, environmental land management scheme agreements etc.
- 8c. support and implement the Morecambe Bay Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Scheme
- 8d. influence, test and trial new approaches to environmental land management schemes and encourage uptake of any new environmental land management scheme once it is launched
- 8e. develop and support a network of woodland management and woodfuel businesses to make greater use of under-managed woodlands and add value to locally produced wood products
- 8f. support social forestry initiatives including Silverdale District Wood Bank
- 8g. deliver an AONB rural skills programme (competitions, demonstrations and training events)
- 8h. provide apprenticeships / graduate traineeships / internships/ training contracts where possible

Key partners

Landowners, farmers, land- and woodland managers and agents

Local businesses

Defra

Morecambe Bay Local Nature Partnership

Natural England

Forestry Commission

Butterfly Conservation

NFU

CLA

Schools and colleges

Silverdale District Wood Bank

8.2.2 Sustainable visitor economy

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- relatively low level of collaboration between businesses and opportunities to help conserve, enhance, celebrate and benefit from and link directly with the landscape/special qualities of the AONB
- risk of detrimental impacts on landscape character, visual amenity and the coast from tourism development in particular detrimental impacts of caravan development including cumulative impacts, urbanisation of sites, erosion of undeveloped coastline, loss of tranquillity and increased traffic (including regular transportation of static caravans requiring escort vehicles) on narrow lanes of the area
- a sustainable approach to the management of tourism in the AONB is required which takes account of the needs of the environment and does not harm, rather enhances, the special qualities of the AONB
- the number of visitors to the AONB is expected to rise in the future, particularly due to Eden Project North being developed in nearby Morecambe and the forthcoming England Coast Path; managing this increase while protecting the special qualities of the AONB is a key challenge
- limited access to training, business support and networking opportunities

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 9: Ensure that the visitor economy is environmentally sustainable and contributes to the conservation and enhancement of the area's special qualities, and enable visitors to have high quality experiences of nature, culture and quiet recreation.

Outcomes:

- A high quality sustainable tourism offer – quiet recreation, nature, culture, local food/products, arts and crafts – benefitting the local landscape, environment and economy
- A strong collaborative network of local businesses

Actions

- 9a. ensure tourism development is consistent with the AONB purpose of designation and does not cause harm to the AONB's special qualities including encouraging an environmentally responsible tourism industry (e.g. by encouraging steps to improve environmental performance of a business) and managing impacts of tourism growth
- 9b. establish an AONB Business Network providing information, advice, knowledge sharing, familiarisation visits, training and networking events and actively recruit tourism businesses to become sustainable tourism partners to work together to promote the wildlife, cultural and quiet recreational experiences the area has to offer and the AONB Visitor Charter
- 9c. encourage businesses to support, promote and distribute AONB publications and leaflets
- 9d. promote and support Silverdale and Arnside Arts Trail
- 9e. improve understanding of visitor numbers, perceptions and spend within the area by carrying out a business and visitor survey
- 9f. effectively market and promote the area using Morecambe Bay destination branding – a collective approach by local authorities, Cumbria Tourism and Marketing Lancashire and a range of other organisations

- 9g. develop a sustainable 'visitor giving' scheme if feasible
- 9h. manage key visitor sites and gateways and monitor impacts including recreational disturbance
- 9i. deliver local food and products initiatives - support development of short supply chains which link land management, local products and tourism, and promote local food and products

Key partners

Local businesses and accommodation providers
 Local authorities
 Marketing Lancashire
 Cumbria Tourism
 Bay Tourism Association
 Morecambe Bay destination branding partners

8.2.3 Affordable housing, rural services and local economy

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- the need to deliver housing which meets local needs, with affordable housing as a particular priority, without harm to the special qualities of the AONB
- to maintain the vibrancy of local communities retention of local rural services and facilities is vital
- mobile phone and superfast broadband coverage is improving overall but is still limited in some parts of the AONB
- reliance on private cars for travel and under-use of sustainable forms of transport leading to detrimental impact of vehicles and traffic on the AONB's character and tranquillity
- decline in bus and train services and need for improvements to station infrastructure
- lack of car parking and cycling and walking infrastructure provision in some locations
- risk of detrimental impacts on landscape character, visual amenity and the coast from economic activity
- the global need to reduce carbon emissions, reduce consumption of natural resources and adopt sustainable lifestyles

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic Objective 10:

Support delivery of affordable housing and services to help meet local community needs and environmentally sustainable local economic activity that conserves and enhances the special qualities of the AONB.

Outcomes

- Retention/enhancement of rural services and delivery of appropriate affordable housing schemes and facilities to meet local needs and in a way that conserves and enhances the special qualities of the AONB

Actions

- 10a. prioritise delivery of affordable housing in appropriate locations, which do not harm natural beauty or landscape character, and retention of local services and facilities in policy and decision-making
- 10b. ensure any new infrastructure and/or facilities are delivered in a way that conserves and enhances the special qualities of the AONB
- 10c. ensure any local economic activity is consistent with the AONB purpose of designation and does not cause harm to the AONB's special qualities
- 10d. promote use of and improvements in sustainable transport particularly bus/train travel, cycling and walking for both residents and visitors to help retain usage of local services and mitigate against climate change
- 10e. promote the Furness train line as a key transport link supporting improvements and appropriate developments through the activities of the Furness Line Community Rail Partnership (FCRP) including improving station facilities and information so that Arnside and Silverdale stations act as arrival hubs for visitors, and promoting the train journey as part of the experience of visiting the AONB
- 10f. support Broadband 4 the Rural North (B4RN) and other bodies to achieve enhanced super/hyperfast broadband connections and mobile phone signal coverage in a way that does not harm the special qualities of the AONB and avoids new vertical infrastructure in sensitive locations
- 10g. advise and encourage local communities and businesses to engage with- and access future relevant rural growth and development funding programmes

8.2.4 Community engagement and volunteering

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- encouraging effective engagement, participation and representation by local communities in the management of and decision-making about the AONB - putting people at the heart of policy-making
- supporting communities to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB
- maintaining a shared sense of identity linked to the AONB and its special qualities
- maintaining a high level of volunteer involvement

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 11: Engage local communities in conserving and enhancing the AONB and encourage active involvement through volunteering.

Outcomes:

- Communities are actively engaged and involved with caring for the AONB resulting in a range of public benefits
- Volunteering plays an integral role in delivering conservation and enhancement of the AONB

Actions

- 11a. ensure effective inclusive consultation and participation with local communities regarding AONB policy and projects - seek people's views, experiences and ambitions for their environment, in order to understand what environmental features and services people value and how people wish to access the natural environment
- 11b. maintain Parish Council representation on AONB Executive Committee
- 11c. deliver the AONB Grants Fund – a small grants scheme managed by the AONB Partnership and Landscape Trust working together, to enable projects which support AONB Management Plan delivery
- 11d. support and build the capacity of community-led organisations which directly support the conservation of the AONB in particular the AONB Landscape Trust, Bittern Countryside CIC and Silverdale District Wood Bank
- 11e. support and promote practical volunteering programmes via the AONB Partnership, Landscape Trust, National Trust, RSPB, Butterfly Conservation, Natural England etc.
- 11f. support and encourage community initiatives and groups which help to conserve and enhance the area including Friends groups, Arnside District Natural History Society, John Barnes Memorial Trust, Mourholme Society, Arnside Archive etc.
- 11g. run a successful AONB Volunteer Programme providing opportunities to engage in practical conservation management tasks, monitoring, administration and event support
- 11h. work alongside communities, helping them to identify local issues and develop sustainable innovative solutions, while conserving and enhancing the special qualities of the local natural and built environment
- 11i. deliver a programme of litter picks and beach cleans

Key partners

Parish Councils
Landscape Trust
Bittern CIC
Silverdale District Wood Bank
Local clubs and societies
Volunteers
National Trust
Natural England
RSPB
Butterfly Conservation

8.3 A strong connection between people and the landscape

8.3.1 Enjoyment and understanding

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- the need to raise awareness and understanding about the area, its special qualities and opportunities for enjoyment

- maintaining high quality and up to date communications with limited resources including responding to the changing ways people use and consume data and information
- maximising opportunities for lifelong learning
- providing and resourcing a wide range of events and activities to engage with different audiences including those with additional needs
- lack of resources to cover transport costs for school visits
- the national issue of children and young people losing their connection with nature
- a highly competitive environment for attracting funding support
- relatively low awareness nationally of AONB designation

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 12: Provide high quality information, events and activities to enable people to enjoy, learn about and celebrate the AONB's special qualities in a sustainable way.

Outcomes:

- High awareness and understanding of the AONB designation and the special qualities of the AONB
- More and wider range of people connecting deeply to nature and the landscape through opportunities to enjoy and appreciate the special qualities of the AONB

Actions

- 12a. take a strategic approach to communications, providing a variety of high quality online and printed communication, information and interpretation materials with a recognisable and consistent 'AONB identity'
- 12b. provide high quality visitor information and interpretation and promote a range of forms of quiet recreation as ways of enjoying the AONB
- 12c. offer an integrated and coordinated annual AONB programme of events, guided walks, festivals, talks and conferences - including a flagship biennial AONB event (Apple Day or similar) and Annual Conference
- 12d. run and support education programmes for primary and secondary schools (e.g. Forest Schools, John Muir Award, links with urban areas) in particular offering structured educational visits to key sites such as the Local Nature Reserves and RSPB Leighton Moss
- 12e. connect with and work in partnership with Universities to encourage research projects and field studies
- 12f. operate the AONB Information Centre at Arnside Station
- 12g. deliver projects to interpret and celebrate the special qualities of the AONB, in particular by developing arts based activities and projects
- 12h. use AONB events and educational visits to encourage participation and engagement by young people, helping develop their voice in setting future policy for conserving and enhancing the AONB
- 12i. deliver and develop the AONB WILD! Project, a series of events and activities for families

Key partners

Local authorities
Local schools and community groups
Arts organisations
RSPB
National Trust
Universities and research institutions

8.3.2 Access and recreation

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- the need to maintain the Public Rights of Way network to a high standard
- improving public access for a wide range of people often requires the cooperation of many different partners, stakeholders and landowners and ability to attract significant additional resources
- relative lack of bridleway routes for horses in the AONB and off road cycling routes
- maintaining high quality signage for the AONB access network
- irresponsible behaviour in the countryside
- recreation, particularly with dogs, can cause disturbance of wildlife on the coast and other sensitive sites
- the delivery and management of the new England Coast Path is a key challenge
- increasing volume and speed of road traffic
- erosion of paths at key locations
- recreational activity can cause disturbance, damage and other detrimental impacts e.g. jet skis/ motorbikes on the foreshore, mountain bikes on footpaths, use of drones/UAVs
- While the vast majority of people treat the countryside with respect, public access can lead to issues that cause problems for landowners, managers and farmers. Public access particularly with dogs, can disturb grazing livestock or wildlife on sensitive sites. Dog attacks on sheep or cattle cause a significant impact on farmers' livelihoods and their wellbeing. Noise disturbance, cycling on footpaths, damage to infrastructure, litter and dog fouling are all potential issues which need to be managed.
- The coastal area of the AONB can be dangerous, with shifting quicksands and fast incoming tides; Arnside coastguard responded to approximately 50 incidents in 2018. Increased coastal access and the loss of salt marsh along the AONB coast due to natural erosion is likely to lead to increased risk of more people using the intertidal sandflats for recreation.

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 13: Maintain and improve access to the coast and countryside in a sustainable way for a diverse range of people and promote responsible, safe and quiet recreation.

Outcomes:

- A high quality and well managed access network facilitates enjoyment of the AONB for a diverse range of people
- People are enjoying the coast and countryside safely and responsibly

Actions

- 13a. maintain the Public Rights of Way network to a high standard
- 13b. identify opportunities to improve and/or expand public access, engage partners and deliver appropriate schemes, in particular seek to encourage access for all and multi user routes in appropriate locations
- 13c. work in partnership to adopt the section of the England Coast Path through the AONB Habitats Regulations Assessments will aim to ensure no adverse impact on the interest features of Natura 2000 sites
- 13d. continue to make the AONB Tramper available for use at RSPB Leighton Moss and develop the network of Tramper routes through the More to Explore project, with the priority being to provide a new Tramper route linking RSPB Leighton Moss, Trowbarrow Local Nature Reserve, Gait Barrows National Nature Reserve, Challan Hall woodlands and Coldwell reserves
- 13e. improve network and connectivity of bridleways for horses where possible
- 13f. secure agreements for permissive paths at appropriate strategic locations
- 13g. provide high quality and consistent style of path waymarker signposts throughout the area
- 13h. encourage and promote responsible behaviour in the countryside, particularly in relation to dogs, and increase awareness of potential impacts
- 13i. actively promote The Countryside Code
- 13j. work with landowners and managers to address site specific access issues where appropriate
- 13k. widely promote public safety on the sands and the coast and raise awareness of issues around recreational disturbance of wildlife including by promoting a new Coastal Code
- 13l. work towards securing a new footpath/cycleway link to Grange over Sands across Arnside viaduct to provide a key strategic access link and a significant new visitor attraction, with the potential to bring significant economic and health and wellbeing benefits to the area
- 13m. provide a variety of downloadable self-guided routes on the AONB website
- 13n. promote sustainable forms of travel including public transport, walking and cycling (including electric bikes) to contribute to people's wellbeing and mitigate climate change
- 13o. minimise recreational disturbance of sensitive sites wherever possible, restricting access if required, for example at Warton and Kent Estuary saltmarshes

Key partners

Lancashire County Council
Cumbria County Council
Landowners and managers
Ramblers
North Lancashire Bridleways Association
Morecambe Bay Partnership
Natural England
RSPB
Local businesses and information outlets

8.3.3 Health and wellbeing

Key issues, challenges and forces for change

- national public health issues such as obesity and social exclusion

- barriers to accessing nature and the countryside
- low level of collaboration between the environmental and health and wellbeing sectors

Strategic objective and outcomes

Strategic objective 14: Provide opportunities for people to improve their health and wellbeing by connecting with nature, culture and the landscape.

Outcomes:

a wide range of opportunities to improve people's health and wellbeing by accessing and engaging with the natural and cultural heritage of the AONB

Actions

- 14a. offer a programme of therapeutic walks / outdoor experiences for people living with dementia and their carers and other 'walking for health'-style initiatives
- 14b. promote the network of footpaths and public rights of way, quiet recreational activities and regular and meaningful physical activity to help to increase participation, improve mental health and wellbeing and tackle social exclusion
- 14c. offer opportunities for schools from nearby urban areas to access and discover the AONB
- 14d. build new partnerships between the environmental and health and wellbeing sectors and develop new initiatives and project

9 Delivering the Plan

9.1 Delivery

Delivery of the AONB Management Plan is a joint combined effort. Delivery will be achieved in a variety of different ways and will be undertaken by many partner organisations, landowners and managers, businesses, individuals and groups. We know that the mechanisms for delivery are likely to change during the lifetime of the AONB Management Plan.

However, the Plan will act as a framework so that land management, decision-making and projects deliver conservation and enhancement of the AONB, support vibrant sustainable communities and connect people with the landscape, whatever changes occur and whatever the political and funding context.

All delivery will be carried out in a way that supports the AONB purpose and causes no harm to Natura 2000 sites.

9.2 A dynamic and successful partnership

Dynamic and successful partnership working is critical to enable delivery of the Management Plan and to create a strong and resilient AONB Partnership. The AONB Team plays an essential role in this process: providing management and leadership; making things happen on the ground, translating vision and national policy into local action; stimulating collaboration and delivering results; and providing value for money by accessing funding and resources.

Partners believe that:

- the long-term resourcing of the AONB staff team is a critical success factor in the delivery of this Management Plan
- AONB management structures should be strongly supported by partners and relevant authorities
- the statutory requirement to produce Management Plans provides an important opportunity to strengthen partnerships and achieve better outcomes
- security and flexibility of funding for AONBs will deliver better outcomes
- training and skills development is an important element in delivering the Management Plan

Implementation of this AONB Management Plan will need the support and involvement of many organisations and individuals who play an important role in the future of the area. There are likely to be opportunities for sharing resources and collaborating to provide value for money.

Sustaining the exceptional landscape of Arnside & Silverdale AONB is a major challenge and requires significant investment. In order to successfully deliver many of the actions, additional resources will need to be secured. It will therefore be a key priority for the AONB staff team to secure additional funding from a range of external sources and to collaborate and work together with partners to bid for funding and resources and develop innovative solutions to income generation.

10 Monitoring

It is important that the AONB Partnership is aware of the effects and impacts of its work and background trends in relation to the special qualities of the AONB to be able to adapt management both in terms of geographic targeting and thematic approaches.

Monitoring has been undertaken in response to previous AONB Management Plans and this data provides the evidence on which this Management Plan is based and forms a baseline for monitoring over the next 5 years. This information is presented in the State of the AONB Report 2019, which includes a wide range of indicators, and sits alongside this Management Plan.

Monitoring will take two forms:

- monitoring performance: to establish how well the Partnership is progressing in delivering the Plan's objectives and actions; and
- monitoring landscape condition/status : to establish whether the special qualities/features of the AONB are in favourable condition, showing no change or deteriorating and to analyse trends.

Monitoring performance will involve collecting data from partners to demonstrate delivery. Performance will also be monitored by reviewing progress on actions in the AONB Business Plan. An AONB Annual Report will be produced detailing and evaluating progress with implementing the Plan and summarising achievements of the AONB Partnership. It is also important that the collective impact of the work of the AONB network is reported to Government, and this will be done in the form of Key Performance Indicators agreed with Defra.

Monitoring landscape condition/status will make the best use of data collected by a range of organisations and interest groups. It is important that changes in condition/status are monitored against a baseline set of evidence, and a range of indicators for which data is available will be used for this process. As new issues present themselves, new indicators may be needed and an initial baseline will need to be established.

11 Glossary of terms

AONB

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are areas of high scenic quality that have statutory protection in order to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of their landscapes. AONBs are designated solely for their landscape qualities, for the purpose of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty (which includes landform, geology, plants, animals, landscape features and the history of human settlement over time).

Appropriate

Within the AONB Management Plan the word "appropriate" is generally used to mean "appropriate to the AONB statutory purpose and designation and the AONB's special qualities" unless it is being quoted from another source, document or policy statement etc.

Biodiversity

The variability among living organisms from all sources including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems

Buffer zone

Areas between core protected areas and the surrounding landscape or seascape which protect the network from potentially damaging external influences and which are essentially transitional areas.

Calcareous

Mostly or partly composed of calcium carbonate, calcium or limestone.

Carbon sequestration

The process of capture and long-term storage of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂).

Carboniferous period

Geological time period dated 385 - 300 million years before present.

Carboniferous limestone

Sedimentary rock laid down in a warm tropical sea some 340 - 320 million years ago.

Conservation Area (building)

Conservation Areas are places of special architectural or historic interest where it is desirable to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of such areas.

Corridor

Way of maintaining physical linkages between core areas for vital ecological or environmental connectivity.

Ecosystem

A dynamic complex of plant, animal and microorganism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.

Ecosystem services

The benefits people obtain from ecosystems. These include provisioning services such as food and water; regulating services such as regulation of floods, drought, land degradation, and disease; supporting services such as soil formation and nutrient cycling; and cultural services such as recreational, spiritual, religious and other non-material benefits.

Favourable condition

Favourable condition means that the SSSI land is being adequately conserved and is meeting its 'conservation objectives'; however, there is scope for the enhancement of these sites. Unfavourable **recovering condition** is often known simply as 'recovering'. SSSI units are not yet fully conserved but all the necessary management measures are in place. Provided that the recovery work is sustained, the SSSI will reach favourable condition in time. The condition of the SSSI land in England is assessed by Natural England, using categories agreed across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland through the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Geodiversity

The diversity of minerals, rocks (whether “solid” or “drift”), fossils, landforms, sediments and soils, together with the natural processes that constitute the Earth’s topography, landscape and the underlying structure.

Geology

Science of the Earth (and other planets), including origin, structure, composition, development and history (including the development of life), and the processes that have given rise to their present state.

Glacial processes

The processes of erosion and deposition of land arising from the presence and/or movement of an ice mass on a landscape

Karst

Water-worn limestone scenery, where erosion has principally occurred through the percolation of ground water and underground streams rather than surface run-off and typically includes the development of limestone pavements and cave systems. Paleokarst is the general term for ancient karst features that have been fossilised or preserved.

Limestone pavement

Continuous areas of exposed limestone consisting of rock blocks (clints) interspersed with cracks/clefts (grikes).

Local Nature Reserve

Land owned by a local authority can be established as a Local Nature Reserve by that local authority in consultation with Natural England.

Local Geological Sites

Non-statutory geology sites, protected through the planning system. They are designated for their inherent geology, education, aesthetic and cultural values.

Local Wildlife Sites

Commonly known as Biological Heritage Sites in Lancashire and as County Wildlife Sites in Cumbria, these sites are of local or regional importance for biodiversity. These sites do not enjoy direct statutory protection but are the subject of specific Local Plan policies aimed at ensuring their wellbeing.

Marl

A lime-rich mud laid down in freshwater conditions, which has high levels of carbonate material, usually calcium carbonate (calcite) that precipitates out, giving a gritty coating over substrates.

National Nature Reserve

Established to protect some of the country’s most important habitats, species and geology and to provide outdoor ‘laboratories for research. About two thirds of England’s NNRs are managed by Natural England, as is the case for GAIT Barrows within the AONB.

Natura 2000

An European network of nature protection areas established under the 1992 Habitats Directive. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe’s most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It is comprised of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive, and also incorporates Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the 1979 Birds Directive and Ramsar sites, wetland sites of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

Priority habitats and species

UK BAP priority species and habitats were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). The original list of UK BAP priority species was created between 1995 and 1999. In 2007, however, a revised list was produced, following a 2-year review of UK BAP processes and priorities, which included a review of the priority species and habitats lists. As a result of new drivers and requirements, the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework', published in July 2012, has now succeeded the UK BAP. The UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats remain, however, important and valuable reference sources. Notably, they have been used to help draw up statutory lists of priorities in England. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 41

(S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

Resilience

In the field of ecology, resilience means building the capacity of a system to withstand shocks and to rebuild and respond to change, particularly unanticipated change. The Resilience Alliance defines resilience as the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance, undergo change and still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity and feedbacks. **Climate change resilience** is the capacity of an individual, community or institution to respond dynamically and effectively to shifting climate impacts circumstances while continuing to function at an acceptable level. Simply put it is the ability to survive and recover from the effects of climate change. It includes the ability to understand potential impacts and to take appropriate action before, during and after a particular consequence to minimise negative impacts and maintain the ability to respond to changing conditions.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Sites of national importance for their plants, animals, or geological or physiographical features designated for statutory protection by Natural England

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

Areas of European importance that are protected under the EC Habitats Directive. They are sites of community importance for habitats or species listed under the Directive where a 'favourable conservation status' is to be maintained or restored.

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

Areas of European Importance that are protected under the EC Birds Directive 1979 for vulnerable species listed on Annex1 of the Directive and also regularly occurring migratory species.

Stakeholders

Those individuals or organisations which are vital to the success or failure of an organisation or project. Primary stakeholders are those needed for permission, approval, implementation and financial support and also those who are directly affected by the activities of the organisation or project. Secondary stakeholders are those who are indirectly involved or affected.

Sustainable Development

A widely accepted definition is: 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

Sustainability

The ability to maintain a certain process or state. It is now most frequently used in connection with biological and human systems. In an ecological context, sustainability can be defined as the ability of an ecosystem to maintain ecological processes, functions, biodiversity and productivity into the future.

APPENDIX 1 Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Partnership Executive Committee members

Cumbria County Council
Lancashire County Council
Lancaster City Council
South Lakeland District Council
Environment Agency
Natural England
Arnsdale Parish Council
Beetham Parish Council
Silverdale Parish Council
Warton Parish Council
Yealand Conyers Parish Council
Yealand Redmayne Parish Council
Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Country Land and Business Association
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
National Farmers Union
National Trust
Wildlife Trusts
Ramblers
North Lancashire Bridleway Association
Farming/landowner representative
Business/tourism representatives x2

**APPENDIX 2 Ecosystem Services provided by the natural capital of Arnsdale & Silverdale
AONB**

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE NATURAL CAPITAL OF ARNSIDE & SILVERDALE AONB	
Provisioning Services: provided by natural resources	Relevant Objectives
<p>Food provision (e.g. crops, livestock, fish, game) AONB farmers produce food through the breeding of store lambs, suckled calves and, increasingly, finished lamb and beef and a limited quantity of dairy products. Wild venison, wildfowl and pheasant is sourced within the AONB and marketed locally by licensed butchers and game dealers. Within the intertidal zone of Morecambe Bay, some traditional tidal fishing (flounder in particular) takes place. When commercial stocks of cockles are available, cockle fishing takes place under byelaw permit on the Warton Sands cockle bed and at other locations in Morecambe Bay. Apples, plums, damsons and pears are grown non-commercially in the numerous orchards and honey is also produced on a small scale at some locations.</p>	1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 14
<p>Woodfuel Local woodlands have a long history of providing woodfuel and charcoal supplies, both for domestic and industrial activity. Coppicing once widespread declined during the 20th Century but has increased more recently providing a reliable source of local woodfuel and charcoal. There is considerable scope for further development of this sustainable resource.</p>	1, 2, 3, 8,11
<p>Genetic diversity Rare breed species, particularly cattle, are a feature of the management regime of some areas of semi-natural habitat. Local orchards contain many rare historic varieties of fruits, significantly adding to the gene pool of fruit varieties. There are significant areas of species-rich limestone grassland in the AONB and well over a third of the flowering plant species of the British Isles are known to occur here. This makes the AONB a significant 'seed bank' for the surrounding areas for seed dispersal to increase biodiversity of suitable habitats within the Morecambe Bay Limestones NCA. Similarly opportunities also exist for invertebrate species to spread to suitable habitats outside the AONB. There are many rare and threatened species of both flora and fauna. Presence of unique species: The Lancaster Whitebeam is only found naturally within the Morecambe Bay area.</p>	1, 2, 3, 8, 11
<p>Fibre (e.g. timber, arable crops, wool) Historically, the AONB was an important producer of wool, timber and woodland products. Some areas of woodland are managed as part of the active coppice industry that has been successfully rejuvenated over the last 20 years. There are now new opportunities to develop local markets for wood products. There are a number of commercial forestry holdings which are managed for timber production.</p>	1, 2, 3, 8,

<p>Water Supply Natural springs occur and historically dictated the pattern of settlement prior to the introduction of mains water supplies. Some of these natural springs are important for aquatic habitats. Some areas of wildlife interest that are managed in part by conservation grazing require rainwater water storage tanks for animal welfare as the sites are remote from mains water or natural springs.</p>	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 14
<p>Rock and mineral resources Until the mid-20th century the AONB hosted an extensive limestone extraction industry. Mineral operations, particularly iron ore quarrying and smelting, also took place up to the late 19th century. Today, there remains one active quarry within the AONB providing various stone, aggregate and tarmac products.</p>	1, 2, 4, 8
<p>Regulating Services: provided by the regulation effects of natural systems and processes</p>	Relevant Objectives in Management Plan
<p>Climate regulation and carbon storage Carbon is absorbed from the atmosphere in farmland, woodlands and coastal habitats, particularly salt marsh and an important carbon store is provided in the soils. Woodlands and functioning mossland in and around the AONB are active carbon stores and work to re-wet areas of moss and manage woodlands will help boost carbon sequestration.</p>	1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 14
<p>Water quality Ecosystems can help in the filtering out and decomposition of organic wastes introduced into water bodies and can also assimilate and detoxify compounds through soil and sub-soil processes, improving water quality.</p>	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14
<p>Water flow and flood regulation Permeable limestone geology, extensive areas of woodland and a mosaic of varied soil types, including peat mosses in the low lying, undeveloped floodplains, help to regulate water flow and alleviate flooding in times of low and high rainfall. Saltmarsh also provides a buffer against coastal flooding.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 14
<p>Soil quality Extensive farming systems used to manage permanent pasture, particularly on species rich limestone grassland provides effective erosion control, often on vulnerable sites where the depth of soil is very shallow and over limestone, making it prone to drought. Limestone grassland species are more resistant to drought stress than ryegrass dominated pasture helping protect soil quality and reducing erosion.</p>	1, 2, 3, 5, 8
<p>Pollination Although the agricultural sector is currently predominantly pastoral, pollination of fruit trees is important for the area's orchards. Most wildflowers are also dependent on insect pollination, yet the numbers of wild and managed pollinators, such as bees, are in decline. The considerable areas of unimproved grassland and wetlands provide key habitat for insect communities, important for both pollination and pest control.</p>	1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 14
<p>Disease and pest regulation A healthy and diverse ecosystem is less vulnerable to pests and disease.</p>	1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 14

Cultural Services: the non-material benefits people gain from ecosystems	Relevant Objectives
<p>Beauty – landscape and seascape, views, wildlife and habitats, variety and contrast</p> <p>The area is nationally designated for its outstanding natural beauty. The landscape, seascape and outstanding views create a unique and distinctive place which is much loved and highly valued by people from all over the world. The area is especially celebrated for its wealth of plants, birds and butterflies. The intricate nature of many parts of the area, an exceptional variety of features occurring in such a small place creates a sense of intimacy and discovery. This fine grained landscape character then contrasts in every way with the vast openness of the coast and the Bay.</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>Sense of place – uniqueness, distinctiveness, inspiration, spiritual refreshment</p> <p>The special qualities of the AONB, together, give the area a strong sense of place. The AONB is a place for inspiration, spiritual and mental refreshment, dark skies at night and clear, unpolluted air. People come here to relax, unwind and recharge their batteries, to get close to nature, breathe in the fresh sea air and absorb exhilarating wide open views. The area’s distinctive character and combination of scenery, history, settlement character and patterns, abundance of wildlife, peace and quiet, and culture make the AONB unique. Strong village communities and community activities contribute to the sense of place.</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>Tranquillity – sense of space, peace and quiet, dark skies, connection to nature</p> <p>Tranquillity and a sense of space are easy to find both in the intimate inland landscape and on the hills and open coast. Much of the AONB is distant from the noise of road traffic and other urban and industrial activities – a quality which is increasingly hard to find. Light pollution is low resulting in dark skies where the milky way is visible and even occasionally the Northern Lights. The landscape and wildlife provide a strong connection to and enrichment from nature.</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>Recreation – opportunities for quiet enjoyment, walking, cycling and horse riding</p> <p>There is a well-developed Public Rights of Way Network within the AONB, which gives access to important wildlife sites and places of historical interest. A network of country lanes, areas of open access land, Local and National Nature Reserves, extensive areas of National Trust land and the coast provide further opportunities to engage in a range of quiet recreational activities such as walking, cycling, wildlife watching and horse riding. Access to the natural environment can improve mental and physical health and wellbeing. The value of recreation to the local visitor economy based on the AONB landscape and special qualities is high.</p>	<p>1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>Sense of history – heritage buildings and features, historic landscape, villages, culture</p> <p>Heritage can be thought of as ‘memories’ in the landscape from past cultural activity. Human influence within the area can be traced back more than 5,000 years. The heritage of the area includes scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, historic parkland, settlement pattern, character and form, field boundaries, industrial features and a wealth of other archaeological and historic features. Heritage also incorporates various traditional practices and rural skills such as drystone walling, coppicing and hedgelaying, and the cultural history of the area’s communities.</p>	<p>1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>Visitor economy – sustainable tourism destination, contribution to local economy</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14</p>

<p>The landscape and natural beauty of the area, together with its wildlife, history and tranquillity, are key attractions for visitors and therefore contribute directly to the local economy by supporting a network of tourism businesses and accommodation providers. Many visitors come to the area to enjoy quiet recreation, particularly walking and cycling and wildlife watching. Key visitor attractions include Leighton Hall, RSPB Leighton Moss, National Trust land properties.</p>	
<p>Health and wellbeing – relaxation, exercise, connection to nature, fresh air, volunteering, benefits to mental and physical health Visits to the countryside provide excellent opportunities for walking, relaxing days out and other forms of quiet recreation. These can contribute to an individual's health and wellbeing, at a minimal cost. There are numerous opportunities to take part in active countryside management work at a range of sites, as part of a volunteer team. Evidence suggests that taking part in environmental volunteering has very positive impacts on both physical and mental health and wellbeing. Air quality is generally very high, due to a lack of sources of pollution locally and the predominant maritime climate with prevailing Atlantic airflows. The high landscape quality, extensive views, quality of light and the AONB's special qualities provide a sense of spiritual inspiration which benefits mental health and gives many people a stronger sense of health and wellbeing through relaxation, unwinding and enjoying the peaceful nature of the area.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>Knowledge and education – opportunities for formal and informal learning, research, training The AONB provides a location for both formal and informal learning and education. The value for education and research is enhanced by ease of accessibility to many high-value sites with rare or notable habits and species. There are many and varied opportunities for people to learn about and experience the area's special qualities through events, site visits, festivals and interpretation materials including an interactive website. It is also a place for scientific monitoring and research, and training in rural skills.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13</p>
<p>Supporting Services: necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services</p>	<p>Relevant Objectives</p>
<p>Biodiversity The AONB contains a high diversity of important and rare habitats and species and their conservation is vital to sustaining the ecosystems that deliver the range of services set out above. Two thirds of the area are designated in some way for wildlife interests, 54% of the AONB is covered by Site of Special Scientific Interest designations with a further 11% designated as Local Wildlife Sites.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>Geodiversity Limestone bedrock underlies the AONB and unifies its character. Limestone outcrops and cliffs are important features, particularly the extensive pavements and exposures of complex faulting and folding. Exposures in disused quarries display depositional and tectonic features. Some localities are important scientific study sites including shelf complexes and fossiliferous beds. Many sites display clear evidence of glacial and post-glacial processes. There are a number of small cave systems. Peat-forming bogs and the intertidal environment are both examples of dynamic geomorphological processes.</p>	<p>1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14</p>
<p>Nutrient and water cycling The wide diversity of plants, animals, micro-organisms and fungi, and the landscape, play a crucial role in the cycling of nutrients (e.g. breaking down decayed vegetation in to basic nutrients) and water essential for the delivery of ecosystem benefits.</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8</p>

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Waste**Part I**Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);**Outcome of the Public Consultation on Changes to Household Waste Recycling Centres**

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contact for further information:

Steve Scott, Tel: (01772) 533755, Head of Service - Waste,
steve.scott@lancashire.gov.uk**Executive Summary**

In December 2018 Cabinet agreed to consult on proposals to change opening hours and days at Household Waste Recycling Centres across Lancashire.

The outcome of the consultation and responses to issues raised are contained in this report. Following consideration of the consultation responses, it is recommended that the changes proposed are implemented with the exception that Skelmersdale recycling centre remains open seven days a week.

In addition, all recycling centres should open on Bank Holidays even if a facility's normal closure day is Monday.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve:

- (i) That the opening hours of all recycling centres be changed to 9am – 5pm all year round.
- (ii) That six of the council's 15 household waste recycling centres are changed to open five days per week; and
- (iii) That the Waste service takes all necessary steps to implement the changes with a targeted implementation date of 1 October 2019.

Background and Advice

In December 2018 Cabinet agreed to consult on proposals to change opening hours and days at Household Waste Recycling Centres. The specific proposals being:

1. To change the opening hours of all recycling centres from 9am to 5pm all year round.
2. To reduce the number of days seven of the council's 15 recycling centres are open; from seven days per week to five days per week. The seven recycling centres being:

- Barnoldswick
- Burscough
- Carnforth
- Clitheroe
- Haslingden
- Longridge
- Skelmersdale

A public consultation took place between 28 January 2019 and 25 March 2019. 1,219 responses were received. Full details of the consultation responses are provided in the report at Appendix 'A', with the key findings of the consultation set out in Section 1.

Proposal to change opening hours to 9am – 5pm

39% of respondents agreed with the proposal, 51% of respondents disagreed with the proposal and 10% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Those that disagreed with the proposal did so mainly because it will be less convenient to visit the centres due to work commitments, because they will struggle or won't be able to visit the centres during these hours, that they won't be able to go as often as they need and that the reduced hours would potentially increase fly tipping.

Some respondents suggested that consideration be given to opening late one night a week or opening longer hours in summer and shorter in winter.

Proposal to open seven recycling centres five days per week

31% of respondents agreed with the proposal, 50% of respondents disagreed with the proposal and 19% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Those that disagreed did so mainly because it would be inconvenient, may reduce recycling rates and that the changes would potentially increase fly tipping.

A specific concern was raised in relation to the reduction of days at Skelmersdale recycling centre. 70% of respondents who use the Skelmersdale facility cited traffic as a concern. In addition it was noted that of the seven centres proposed

Skelmersdale is significantly busier in terms of the tonnage it receives than the other six.

Consideration of consultation responses

Fly tipping

It is understandable that fly tipping is a concern for the many respondents. Fly tipping is a problem nationally as well as throughout Lancashire. However, there is no evidence that links fly tipping to recycling centres or that fly-tipping increases when recycling centres are closed.

The recycling centres are currently open 11 hours a day, 7 days a week over summer and fly tipping still occurs across the county. This is because most fly tipping is carried out by unscrupulous businesses who do not want to pay for their waste to be disposed of properly. Our recycling centres only accept household waste. We do not accept business waste and it is in fact illegal to deposit business waste at our facilities. As such the main fly tipping culprits will not be affected by Household Waste Recycling Centre changes.

The majority of residents care for their local environment and would not fly tip as a result of a change in operational hours. Fly tipping carries an unlimited fine and up to 5 years in prison; and, whilst the changes may be inconvenient, it is not considered that the vast majority of householders would risk such penalties by fly tipping when they will still be able to take their rubbish to a recycling centre free of charge.

There is evidence from past recycling centre closures within Lancashire that such events did not result in any discernible increase in fly tipping. It is expected that in the immediate period following changes some waste may be left at the facility gates, mainly by customers who hadn't realised the facility was not open. Initially, staff will be able to collect this waste at the start of each day and as customers become accustomed to the changes this will diminish.

It is not considered therefore that respondents' concerns regarding fly tipping are likely to materialise; and consequently they should not impact on the proposed changes.

Accessibility

A number of issues were raised around accessibility of the centres following the proposed changes.

In the first instance it must be remembered that all Lancashire residents receive a comprehensive doorstep waste collection for the majority of wastes produced day to day in the home. This should be the main method for managing household wastes.

The recycling centres are provided primarily for those items not collected at the doorstep. Waste streams like wood, metal, plastics, bulky items, large packaging or generally when larger than usual quantities of wastes are produced. In most cases these waste types are generated infrequently or on specific occasions. The majority

of householders do not visit a recycling centre on a frequent basis. Indeed if they do, it should be questioned why they are generating so much waste. Many authorities restrict the number of visits residents can make to a recycling centre.

In considering suggestions to have a late night opening or open longer hours in summer, the primary consideration must be the facility staff. Staff are currently asked to work 11 hour shifts over summer and the majority feedback that the late hours in summer significantly affects both their health and family life. To have a consistent working pattern is beneficial to both these issues. In addition, existing traffic data does not support the need for late opening or extended summer hours.

83% of respondents want to be able to visit their recycling centre on Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 9am – 5pm; and this opportunity will be provided. As such it is considered that the days and times that recycling centres are proposed to be open is sufficient to provide convenient access to the facilities for the majority of residents.

One issue that was raised during consultation is the accessibility of facilities on Bank Holidays. It had been considered that the days facilities are open should be staggered to provide wider availability; and this may mean that some facilities would normally be closed on Mondays. Where this is the case, it is therefore recommended that such facilities are opened on Bank Holidays to allow maximum accessibility and closed on an alternative day during Bank Holiday weeks.

Recycling rates

It is not considered that recycling rates will be impacted by five day opening. Generally, customers actively separate their waste during visits to the recycling centre, and there is no reason why this should change as a result of changes to the days a facility is open.

Those facilities opening five days will naturally be a bit busier on those days but overall visitor numbers are likely to remain the same. Our busier facilities across the county manage to achieve good recycling rates despite having much higher visitor numbers than those quieter centres that will move to a five day operation.

Skelmersdale recycling centre

Skelmersdale recycling centre was included in the proposal to reduce to five days a week opening on the basis that West Lancashire has two recycling centres whereas most districts only have one. It is not considered that the distance between the two facilities is prohibitive in this respect and many residents in Lancashire have to travel similar distances to their recycling centre.

However, Skelmersdale is significantly busier than those other facilities proposed for five day opening. It receives over 2100 tonnes per year more than the busiest of the other six sites and more than double the tonnage received at Longridge and Barnoldswick. As a result, the impact on visitor numbers in consequence of a change to five day opening would be much more significant than at the other six centres.

Access to the centre is from a very short road immediately off a roundabout on the public highway. During skip exchanges the gates must be closed to ensure the safety of visitors; and this immediately impacts on the highway. Given the increased amount of waste that would be deposited over fewer days at the facility and the potential impact during skip exchanges, respondents' concerns regarding traffic are accepted.

On this basis, and given the greater amount of waste received at the facility in comparison to the other facilities proposed, it is recommended that the Skelmersdale recycling centre remains open seven days per week.

Summary

The responses to the consultation were mixed with support for, or indifference to, the proposed changes being roughly equal to those opposing them. The main concern relates to a potential increase fly tipping; and whilst it is accepted that fly tipping is a widespread problem, it is not anticipated that it will increase as a result of the proposed changes. Fly tipping levels across Lancashire will continue to be closely monitored.

As such, it is recommended that the council proceeds to make the changes to opening hours and days in line with the proposals, with the exception of Skelmersdale recycling centre which should continue to offer a seven day service. In addition, all facilities should be available on Bank Holidays even if the usual day a facility is closed is a Monday.

An equality impact assessment for the proposals is provided at Appendix 'B'.

Consultations

Public, staff and partner organisations have been consulted.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

The original proposals were forecast to deliver a financial saving of £0.734m per annum. If the recommendation is accepted that Skelmersdale remains a seven day facility it will result in a savings shortfall of c£0.030m per annum, which it is thought can be managed within the wider waste services budget. This will be closely monitored throughout 2019/20.

Risk management

Personnel

Delivery of the proposed changes will require a restructure of the waste service. Many recycling centre staff transferred to the council under TUPE regulations and

are still on terms and conditions of employment of their former employer. All posts in the revised structure will be on county council terms and conditions. Implementation of the revised structure will be in line with the council's Restructure and Reorganisation Policy and subject to staff and union consultation.

There is the potential for redundancies within the service as a result of the proposal being implemented.

Legal

The county council is under a statutory obligation to provide household waste recycling facilities for the residents of Lancashire in accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and it is not considered that the implementation of the proposed changes would result in the county council failing to meet these requirements.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		



Appendix A
Lancashire County Council's household
waste recycling centres
Consultation report – 2019



**Melissa Sherliker, Mike Walker, Mick Edwardson
and Stephanie Windross**

April 2019

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1. Executive summary

This report summarises the response to Lancashire County Council's consultation on the Lancashire household waste recycling centre's service (HWRC).

For this consultation, we asked the public, staff and partner organisations to give their views. We promoted the consultation with posters and banners displayed at the recycling centres, press releases, social media and panels on relevant pages of the county council website. The consultation was also promoted internally to staff and county councillors via the intranet and C-First (the councillors' portal).

Paper copies of the consultation questionnaire were available on request and an electronic version of the consultation questionnaire was available online at www.lancashire.gov.uk.

The fieldwork ran for eight weeks between 28 January 2019 and 25 March 2019. In total, 1,219 completed questionnaires were returned (15 paper questionnaire responses and 1,204 online questionnaire responses).

1.1 Key findings

1.1.1 Findings from service users and general public consultation

1.1.1.1 Use of the Lancashire household waste recycling centres (HWRC)

- The household waste recycling centres that respondents were most likely to say they had used in the last two years were Carnforth (181), Longridge (178) and Barnoldswick (168).
- About a fifth of respondents (21%) said that they visit household waste recycling centres weekly, less than half of respondents (45%) said that they use them monthly and a quarter of respondents (25%) said that they use them every three months.
- Over four-fifths of respondents (83%) said that they generally want to be able to visit their local household waste recycling centre between 9am-5pm on Friday, Saturday or Sunday.
- Only about a tenth of respondents (9%) said that they would generally want to be able to visit their local household waste recycling centre outside of the proposed opening hours of 9am-5pm.

1.1.1.2 The proposal to change the opening hours to 9am-5pm

- Almost two-fifths of respondents (39%) said that they agree with the proposal **to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year** and about half of respondents (51%) said that they disagree.
- Those respondents who agreed with the proposal to **change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year were most likely to say** they agree because the proposals are a good way of saving money with better hours (51%) and people can find a way to fit in the new proposed hours (15%).
- Those respondents that agreed with the proposal said it wouldn't affect them (68%) and they will manage to fit it in their daily life (21%).
- Those respondents that disagreed with the proposal to **change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year were most likely to disagree because some workers will struggle or won't be able to visit the centres during these hours** (59%), that closure will increase fly tipping (26%).
- Those respondents that disagreed with the proposal were most likely to say it would affect them because work commitments would mean it would be harder to visit the centres (29%) and inconvenience as they wouldn't be able to go as often as they needed (27%).

1.1.1.3 The proposal to open seven household waste recycling centres on five days a week

- Almost one-third (31%) of respondents said that they agree with the proposal to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week. However, half of respondents (50%) said that they disagree with the proposal to open the seven household waste recycling centres on five days a week.
- Those respondents that agreed with the proposal to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week were most likely to say they agree with the proposal because they seem sensible (49%).
- Those respondents that disagreed with the proposal to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week were most likely to say they disagree because fly tipping will increase (33%) and it will reduce recycling rates (27%).
- When asked how the proposal to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week would affect them if it happened, those

respondents who agreed were most likely to say this because it wouldn't have a large impact (50%), they would try and work around the new hours (38%).

- When asked how the proposal to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week would affect them if it happened, those respondents who disagreed were most likely to say this because it would be inconvenient (28%) and there would be a reduction in efforts to recycle (24%).
- The most common response when asked if there is anything else we need to consider or that we could do differently when thinking about our proposals to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year or to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days were various suggestions for opening hours (17%) and fly tipping concerns (17%).

1.1.2 Findings from the consultation with partner organisations

- 27 out of 40 respondents said that they disagree with the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year.
- The most common responses when asked why they agree or disagree with the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year were that currently times are when most working people can use the sites (19) and it will increase fly-tipping (16).
- The most common response when asked how it would affect their organisation if the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year happened was concern about increased fly-tipping (19).
- 12 out of 28 respondents said that they disagree with the proposal to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week.
- The most common response when asked why they agree or disagree with the proposal to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week was that it will increase fly-tipping (8).
- The most common response when asked how it would affect their organisation if the proposal to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week happened was concern about fly tipping (10).
- The most common response when asked whether there is anything we need to consider or that we could do differently when thinking about our proposals to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year or to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week were to stagger the opening times to help people who work (9).

1.1.3 Other responses to the consultation

- We received three emails/letters from organisations during the consultation period.
- One of these emails from Lancashire Teaching Hospitals trusts said that there was no impact on trust services identified.
- One email from Dalton Parish Council had no objection to making the opening hours the same across all recycling centres, 9 – 5, all year round, however, does object to reducing the days Skelmersdale household waste recycling centre opens to five because Skelmersdale exceeds the tonnage for reducing the opening days, and whilst there are two household waste recycling centres in West Lancashire (Burscough): the distance between them is six miles. They say that people who use Skelmersdale household waste recycling centre are from outside of West Lancashire, because Wigan household waste recycling centre is on the opposite side of their borough and people from Shevington, Standish, Appley Bridge and the west of Wigan come to Skelmersdale centre as it is closer and that they probably don't even know there is a household waste recycling centre in Burscough, never mind know how to find it. They express concern of increase of instances of fly tipping and says this is false economy by Lancashire County Council, as it's simply transferring the problem and costs to West Lancashire Borough Council and West Lancashire's tax payers.
- One email from Lancaster City Council says that members have suggested that it may be more advantageous for the centres to be open 7 days a week, but with reduced opening hours, as opposed to opening 5 days a week for longer opening hours.

2. Introduction

Lancashire County Council, like many councils across the country, is going through financially challenging times. This is as a result of funding not keeping pace with the increasing demand and cost of services being delivered. We need to continue to look at ways of reducing costs to help balance the books for future years. This means that we have to consider changes to some of the services we currently provide, as we do not have the resources to continue to deliver what we have done in the past. These changes were considered by our county councillors and we are now looking to consult on what impact the proposals may have.

Timescales

3 December 2018 - Cabinet agreed to consult on proposals

28 January to 25 March 2019 - consultation with the public and partner organisations

16 May 2019 - report the consultation outcomes to Cabinet

20 May 2019 - consultation with employees

From October 2019 – new opening times proposed to begin

Opening hours

Lancashire County Council's household waste recycling centres currently have different opening hours during the summer (1 April to 30 September) and during the winter (1 October to 31 March). The summer opening hours are 8am to 7pm and the winter opening hours are 8am to 5pm.

Opening hours proposal

We are proposing to change the opening hours for all our household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year (2 January to 31 December).

Background to the opening hours proposal

Our analysis shows that

- during the summer about nine out of ten visits to our household waste recycling centres happen from 9am-5pm
- during the winter 19 out of 20 visits happen between these times

During the summer, staff currently work 11-hour shifts, four days a week. During the winter, they work nine-hour shifts, four days a week. Managing these working arrangements is more costly than managing staff working a traditional set working week. We are proposing that our staff will work eight-hour shifts, five days a week all year round. This would mean that they will spend less hours working when our centres are least used, therefore providing better value for money.

Opening days

All 15 of Lancashire County Council's household waste recycling centres are currently open seven days a week (excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day).

Opening days proposal

We are proposing to open the following seven household waste recycling centres on five days a week

- Barnoldswick
- Burscough
- Carnforth
- Clitheroe
- Haslingden
- Longridge
- Skelmersdale

All these centres will be open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The two days they close will either be Monday and Tuesday or Wednesday and Thursday. The days the centres close will be based on usage data and the availability of alternative facilities.

Background to the opening days proposal

We are proposing that centres that handle less than 5,000 tonnes a year open five days a week. The average annual tonnage of household waste delivered to each of our centres is

<i>0 to 5,000 tonnes</i>		<i>5,000 to 9,000 tonnes</i>		<i>9,000 tonnes to 14,000</i>	
	Annual tonnage		Annual tonnage		Annual tonnage
Longridge	2,859	Altham	6,491	Preston	9,697
Barnoldswick	2,995	Skelmersdale	6,678	Chorley	10,579
Clitheroe	3,440	Lytham	8,242	Burnley	11,148
Burscough	4,507	Fleetwood	8,369	Lancaster	11,768
Carnforth	4,527			Farington	13,116
Haslingden	4,536				

We are also proposing that the centre in Skelmersdale opens five day a week, because there are two household waste recycling centres in West Lancashire district.

The majority of Lancashire's districts have only one centre. Three districts each have two: West Lancashire (Burscough and Skelmersdale); Ribble Valley (Longridge and Clitheroe); and Lancaster (Lancaster and Carnforth). By staggering the days that each centre is open in both West Lancashire and Ribble Valley, a seven days a week household waste recycling centre service will still be maintained in each of these districts.

Pendle and Rossendale will be the only districts without a seven day service. In Pendle many residents already use the Burnley household waste recycling centre due to the location of Barnoldswick. However, Barnoldswick's opening days would also be staggered with Clitheroe's opening days to provide a second alternative. In Rossendale, if households can't hold onto their waste until their local household

waste recycling centre is open, the nearest alternative centres are Burnley or Altham.

Where centres are open seven days a week it increases the overall number of staff required to deliver the service. If staff work five days a week extra staff are required to cover the two additional days. To open our household waste recycling centres five days a week provides the most efficient and cost effective means of delivering the service.

3. Methodology

For this consultation, we asked the public, staff and partner organisations to give their views. We promoted the consultation with posters and banners displayed at the recycling centres, press releases, social media and panels on relevant pages of the county council website. The consultation was also promoted internally to staff and county councillors via the intranet and C-First (the councillors' portal).

Paper copies of the consultation questionnaire were available on request and an electronic version of the consultation questionnaire was available online at www.lancashire.gov.uk.

The fieldwork ran for eight weeks between 28 January 2019 and 25 March 2019. In total, 1,219 completed questionnaires were returned (15 paper questionnaire responses and 1,204 online questionnaire responses).

The service users/general public questionnaire covered two proposals: the first proposal was to change the opening times for all Lancashire's household waste recycling centres and the second proposal was to change opening days for seven of the centres. The questionnaire introduced the consultation by outlining the current opening hours and days, explained the proposed changes and provided the rationale behind the proposals.

The main section of this questionnaire included ten questions, which covered respondents' use of household waste recycling centres and their views on the proposals. The questions that covered respondents' use of the centres asked them which sites they visit, how often they visit them and what times and days they want to be able to visit them. The questions that covered respondents' views on the proposals asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the proposals, why they agree or disagree with the proposals, how the proposals would affect them and if they think there is anything else that we need to consider or that we could do differently.

The remaining questions asked respondents for information about themselves. For example, if they are a deaf person or have a disability. This information is presented in appendix 1.

The questionnaire for organisations introduced the consultation by outlining the current opening hours and days, explained the proposed changes and provided the rationale behind the proposals.

Respondents were first asked which organisation they were responding on behalf of and what their role is within their organisation. The main section of this questionnaire included seven questions, which covered how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the proposals, why they agree or disagree with the proposals, how the proposals would affect their organisation and if they think there is anything else that we need to consider or that we could do differently.

In this report respondents' responses to the open questions have been classified against a coding frame to quantify the qualitative data. Coding is the process of

combining the issues, themes and ideas in qualitative open responses into a set of codes. The codes are given meaningful names that relate to the issue, so that during close reading of responses it can be seen when similar issues relate to a similar code. As the analysis process continues the coding frame is added to and refined as new issues are raised by respondents. All responses to open questions are then coded against the coding frame, and can be subsequently analysed as quantitative data.

1.2 Limitations

The findings presented in this report are not representative of the views of people who use Lancashire household waste recycling centres. Neither are they representative of the population of Lancashire. They should only be taken to reflect the views of people who were made aware of the consultation, and had the opportunity and felt compelled to respond.

In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.

4. Main findings

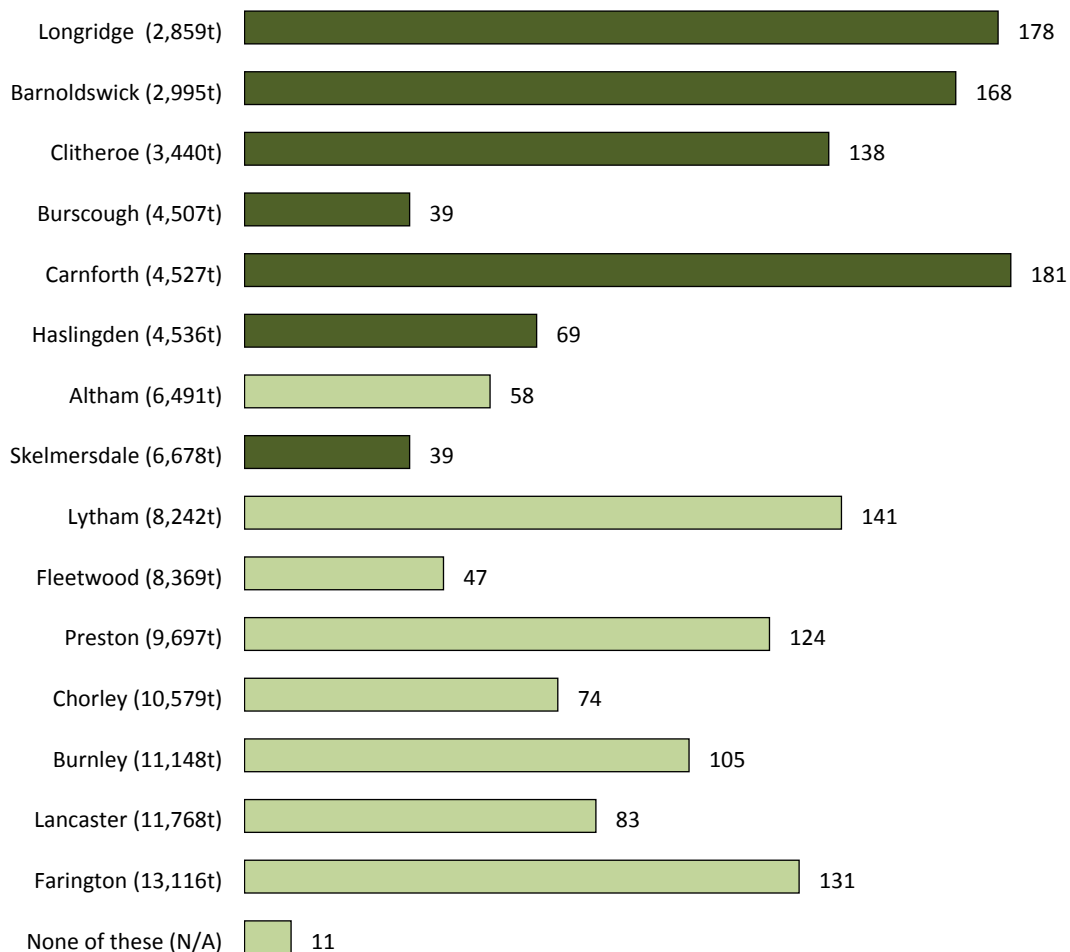
4.1 Use of the household waste recycling centres

Respondents were first asked which of Lancashire's household waste recycling centres they have used in the last two years.

Chart one shows the number of respondents who said that they had used each centre in the last two years. The centres are ordered by the average annual tonnage (from small to large, top to bottom) for each site and the centres highlighted in dark green are those that we are proposing to open on five days a week.

Despite these sites having a low annual tonnage, respondents were most likely to say the centres they had used in the last two years were Carnforth (181), Longridge (178) and Barnoldswick (168). This suggests that for these sites, as well as Clitheroe (138), respondents have responded to the consultation because of the proposal to reduce the number of days these centres are open.

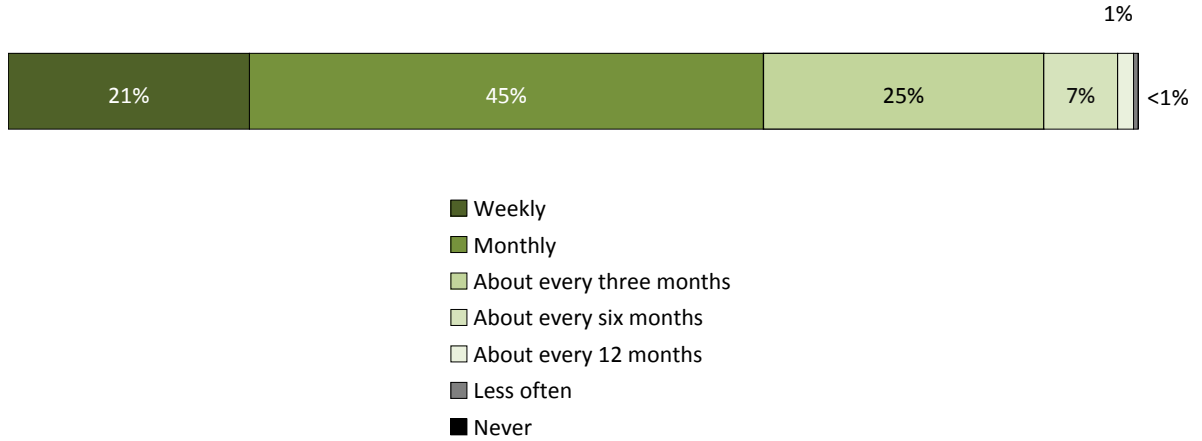
Chart 1 - Which of the following household waste recycling centres have you used in the last two years?



Base: all respondents (1, 219)

Respondents were then asked how often they visited household waste recycling centres in Lancashire. About a fifth of respondents (21%) said that they use them weekly, less than half of respondents (45%) said that they use them monthly and a quarter of respondents (25%) said that they use them every three months.

Chart 2 - Generally, how often do you visit household waste recycling centres in Lancashire?



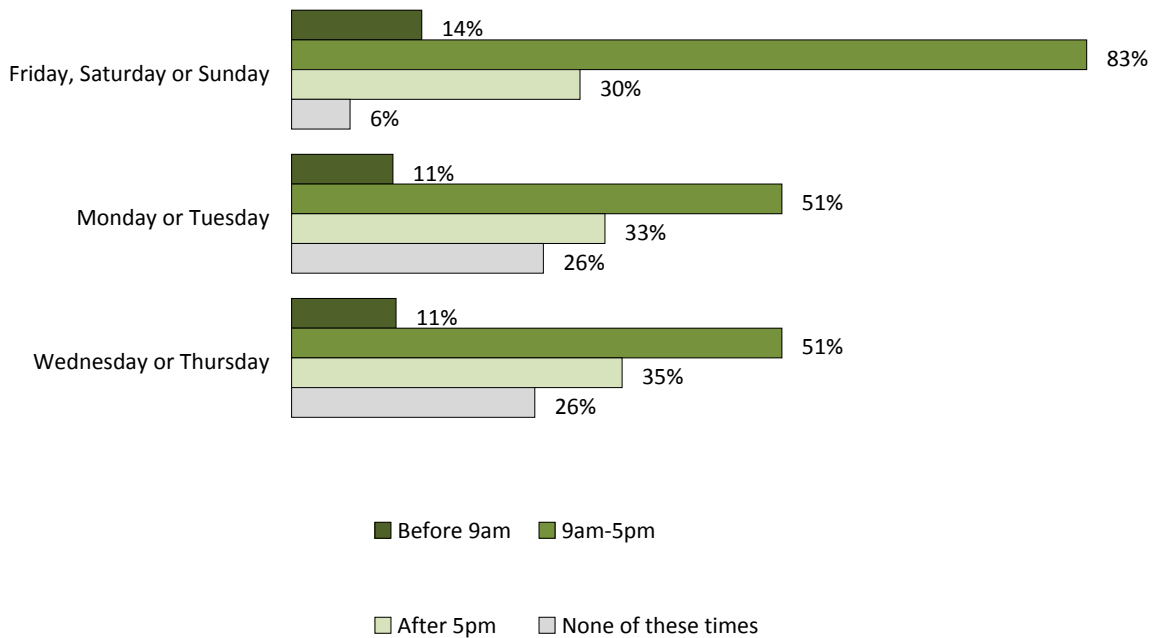
Base: all respondents (1, 209)

Respondents were then asked when they want to be able to visit their local household waste recycling centre.

Over four-fifths of respondents (83%) said that they generally want to be able to visit their local household waste recycling centre between 9am-5pm on Friday, Saturday or Sunday.

Only about a tenth of respondents (9%) said that they would generally want to be able to visit their local household waste recycling centre outside of the proposed opening hours of 9am-5pm.

Chart 3 - Generally, when do you want to be able to visit your local household waste recycling centre?

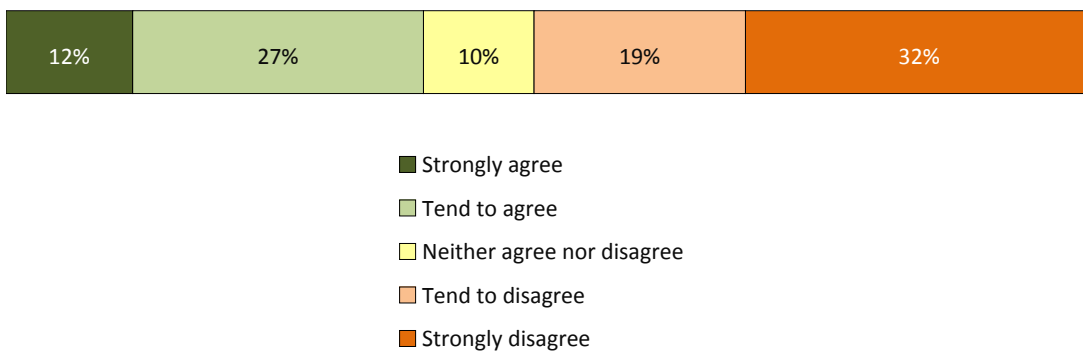


Base: all respondents (1, 223)

4.2 The proposal for Lancashire County Council's household waste recycling centres

Respondents were then asked how strongly they agree or disagree with the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year. Almost two-fifths of respondents (39%) said that they agree with the proposal and about half of respondents (51%) said that they disagree.

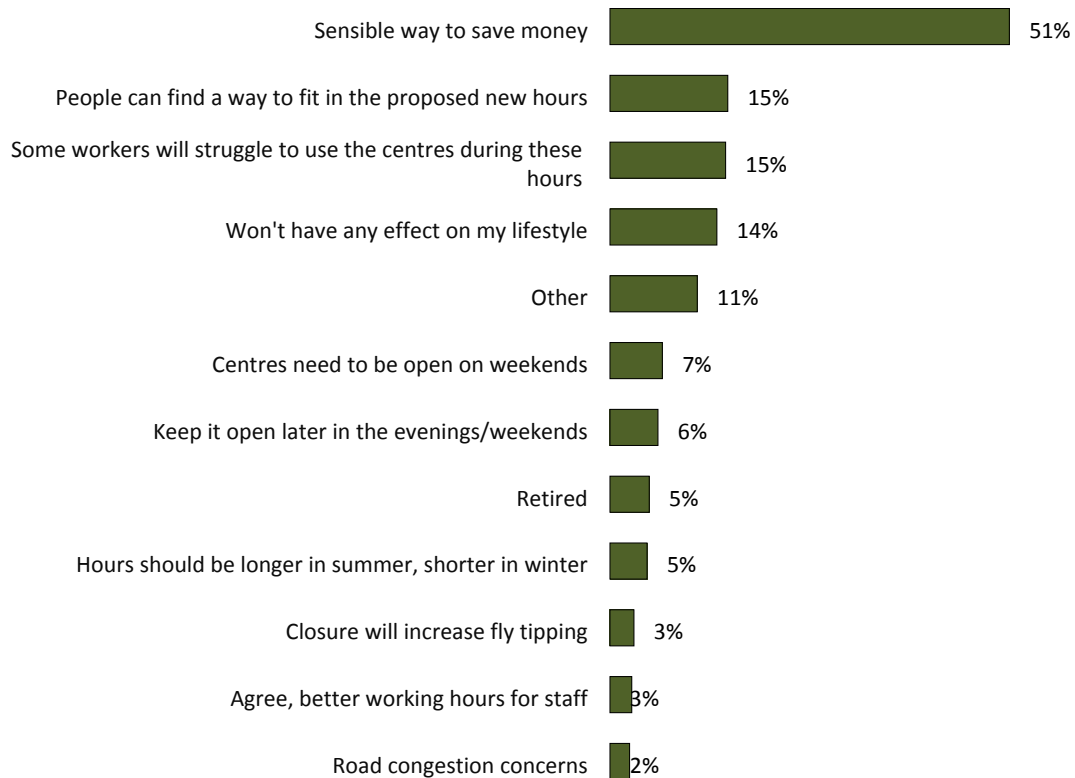
Chart 4 - How strongly do you agree or disagree our proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year?



Base: all respondents (1, 219)

Respondents were then asked why they agree or disagree with the proposal. Of those respondents who agree¹ with the proposal, the most common responses to this question were that the proposals are a sensible way to save money (51%), people can find a way to fit in the new proposed hours (15%) and some workers will struggle to use the centres during these hours (15%).

Chart 5 - Respondents that agree with the proposal – why do you say this?

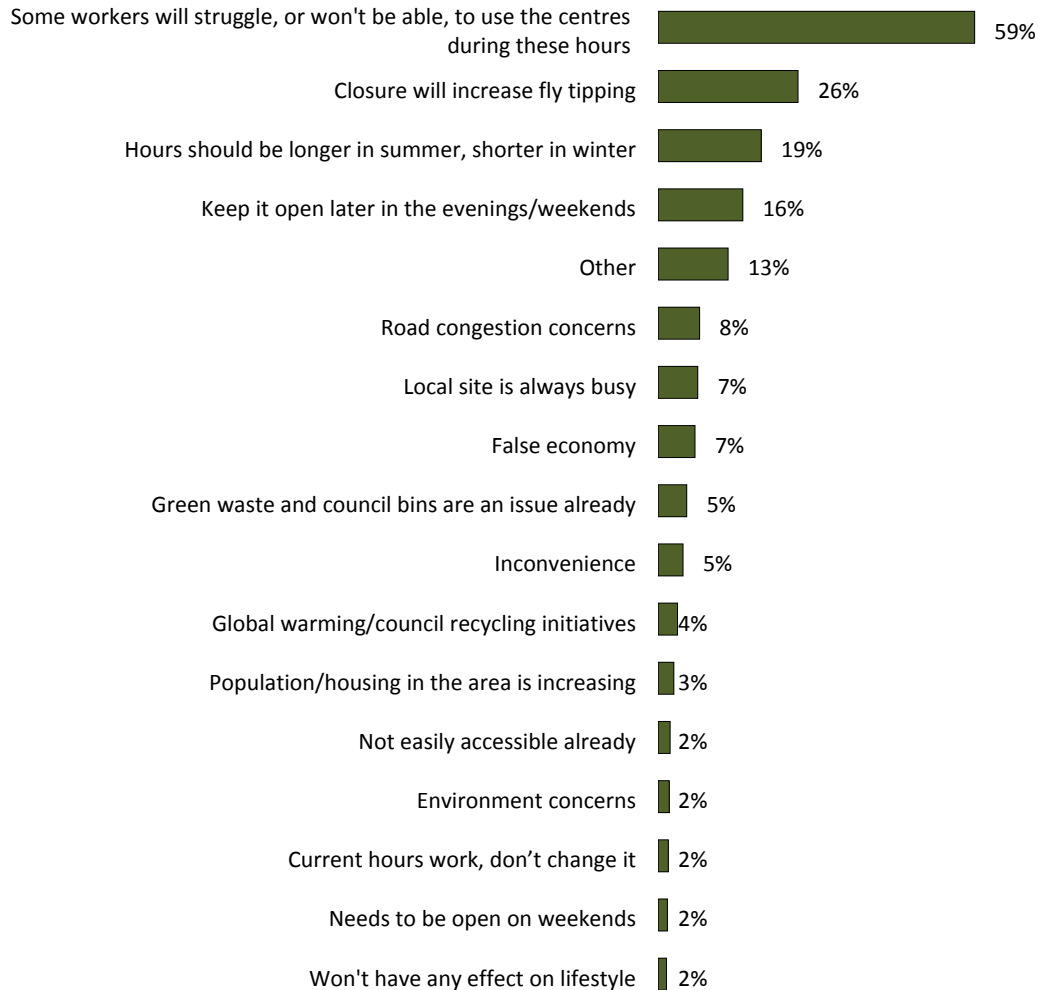


Base: respondents who 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' with the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year (361)

¹ Respondents who 'strongly agree' or 'tend to agree' with our proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year.

Of those respondents that disagree² with the proposal, the most common responses were some workers will struggle, or won't be able, to use the centres during these hours (59%) and that closure will increase fly tipping (26%).

Chart 6 - Respondents that disagree with the proposal – why do you say this?

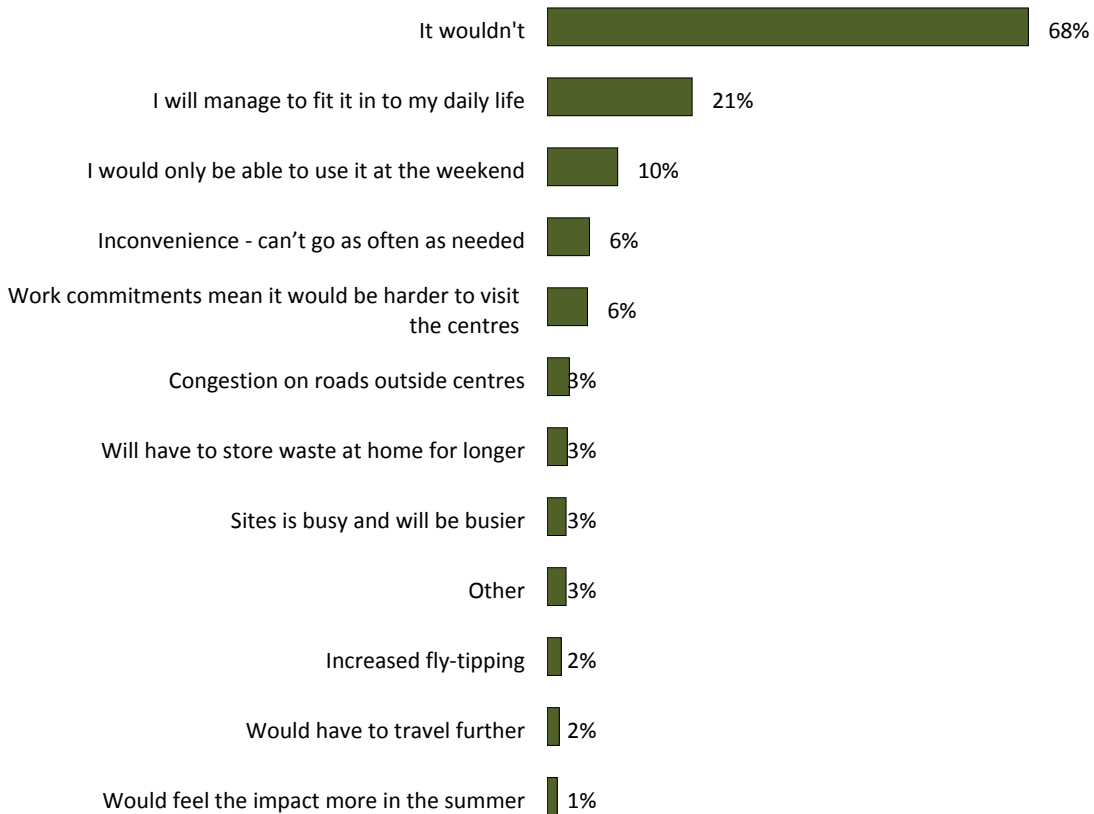


Base: respondents who 'tend to disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year (588)

² Respondents who 'strongly disagree' or 'tend to disagree' with our proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire //year.

Respondents were then asked how it would affect them, if this proposal happened. Of those respondents that agree with the proposal, the most common responses to this question were that it wouldn't affect them (68%) and they will manage to fit in their daily life (21%).

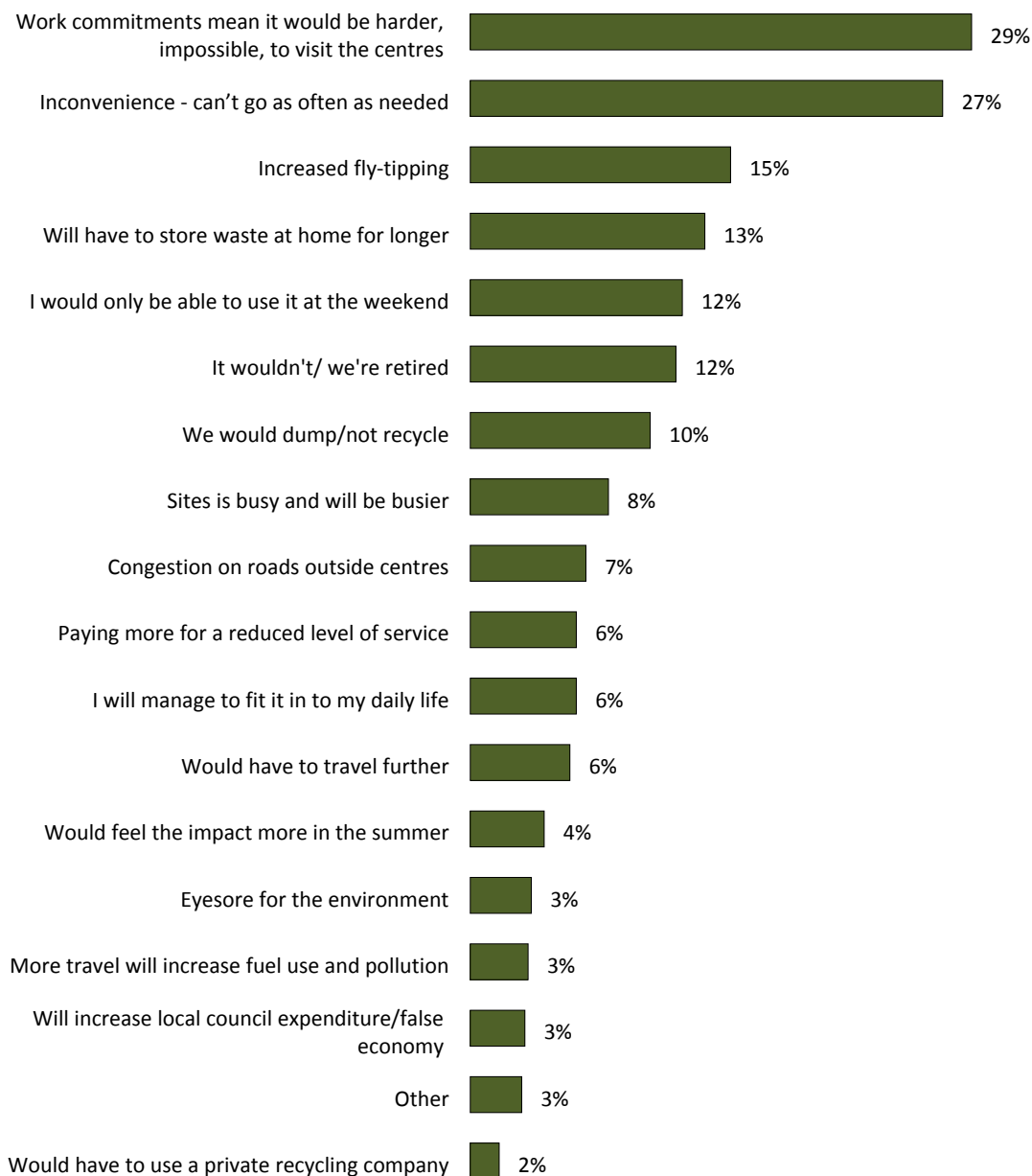
Chart 7 - Respondents that agree with the proposal – if this proposal happened, how would it affect you?



Base: respondents who 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' with the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year (349)

Of those respondents that disagree with the proposal, the most common responses to how it would affect them were that work commitments mean it would be harder, or impossible, to visit the centres (29%) and inconvenience as they wouldn't be able to go as often as needed (27%).

Chart 8 - Respondents that disagree with the proposal – if this proposal happened, how would it affect you?

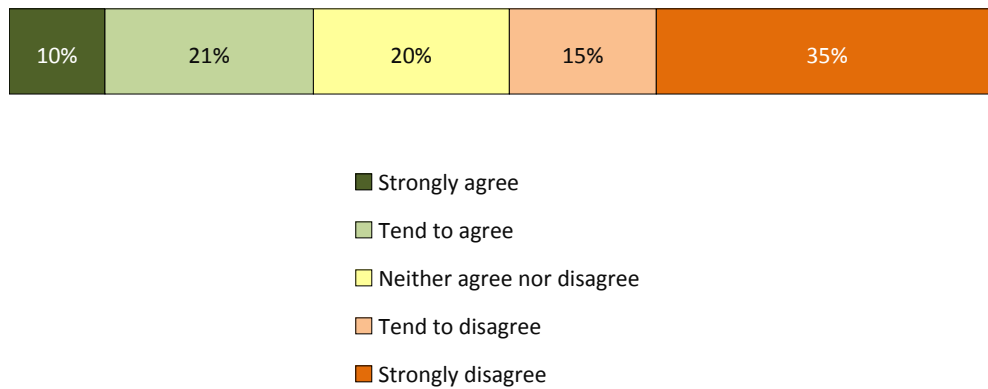


Base: respondents who 'tend to disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year (547)

Respondents were asked about the proposals to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week.

Almost one-third of respondents (31%) said that they agree with the proposal. However, half of respondents (50%) said that they disagree with the proposal.

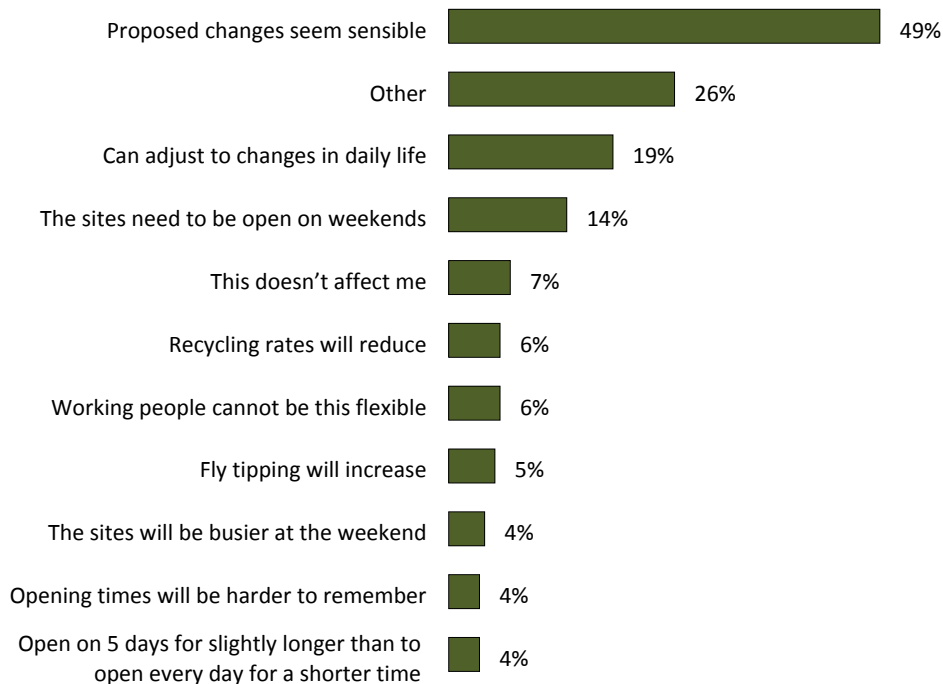
Chart 9 - How strongly do you agree or disagree with our proposal to open five days a week at these seven household waste recycling centres?



Base: all respondents (868)

Respondents were then asked why they agree or disagree with the proposal to open five days a week at the seven household waste recycling centres. Of those respondents that agree with this proposal, the most common response was that proposed changes seem sensible (49%).

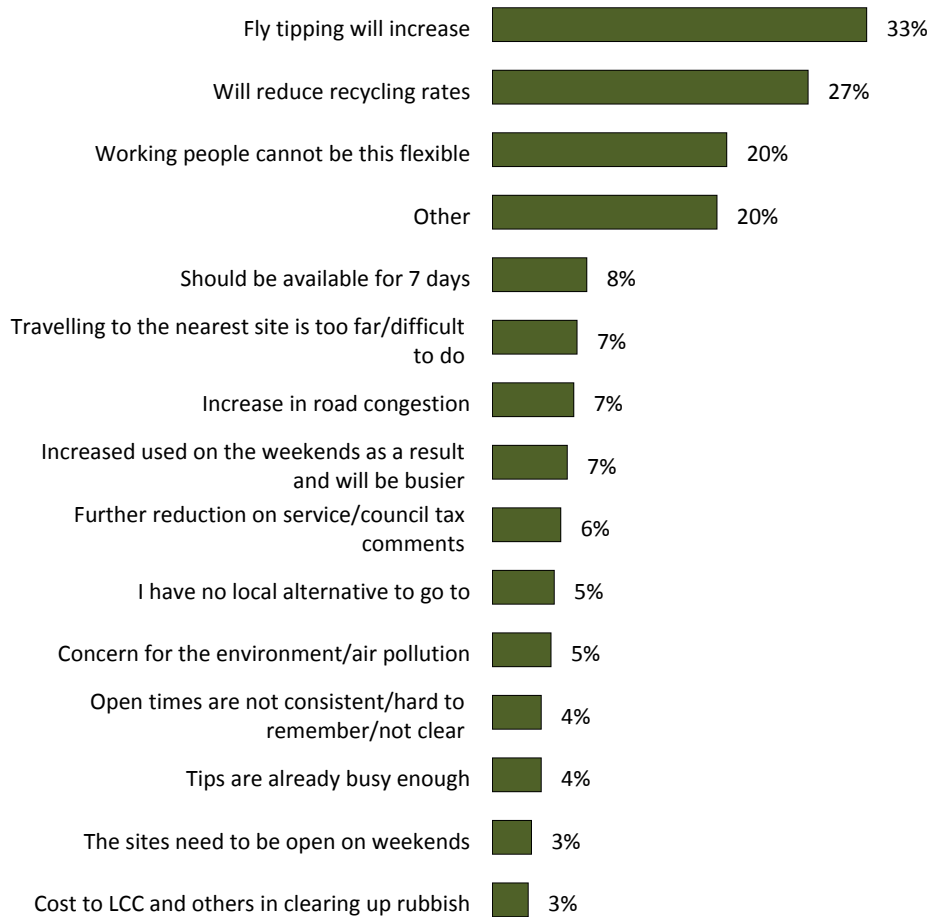
Chart 10 - Respondents that agree with the proposal – why do you say this?



Base: respondents who tend to agree or strongly agree with our proposal to open five days a week at seven household waste recycling centres (170)

Of those respondents that disagree with the proposals, the most common responses were that fly tipping would increase (33%) and that it will reduce recycling rates (27%).

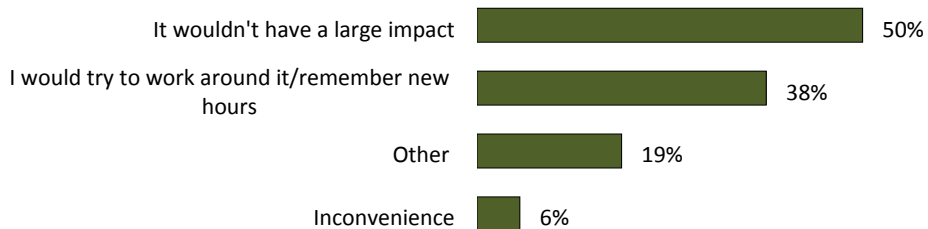
Chart 11 - Respondents that disagree with the proposal – why do you say this?



Base: respondents who tend to disagree or strongly disagree with our proposal to open five days a week at seven household waste recycling centres (345)

Respondents were then asked how the proposal would affect them. Of those respondents that agree with the proposal, the most common responses to this question were that it wouldn't have a large impact (50%) and that they would try and work around it and remember the new hours (38%).

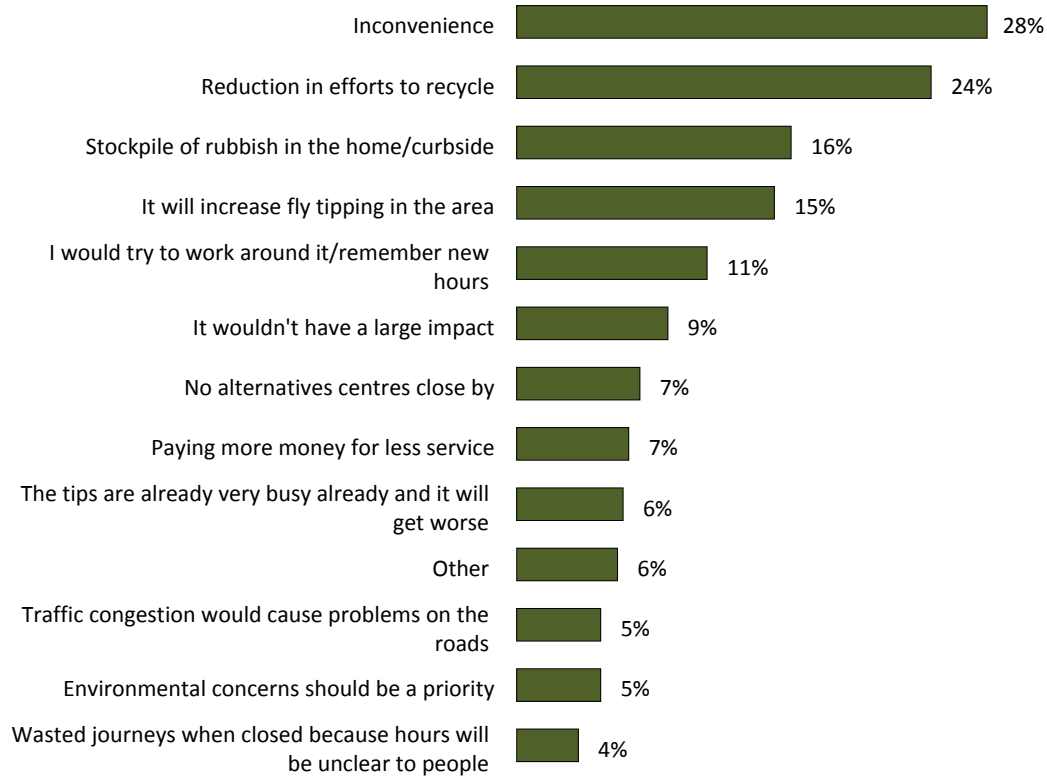
Chart 12 - Respondents that agree with the proposal – if this proposal happened, how would it affect you?



Base: respondents who tend to agree or strongly agree with our proposal to open five days a week at seven household waste recycling centres (143)

Respondents were then asked how the proposal would affect them. Of those respondents that disagree with the proposal, the most common responses to this question were that it would be inconvenient (28%) and that there would be a reduction in efforts to recycle (24%).

Chart 13 - Respondents that agree with the proposal – if this proposal happened, how would it affect you?



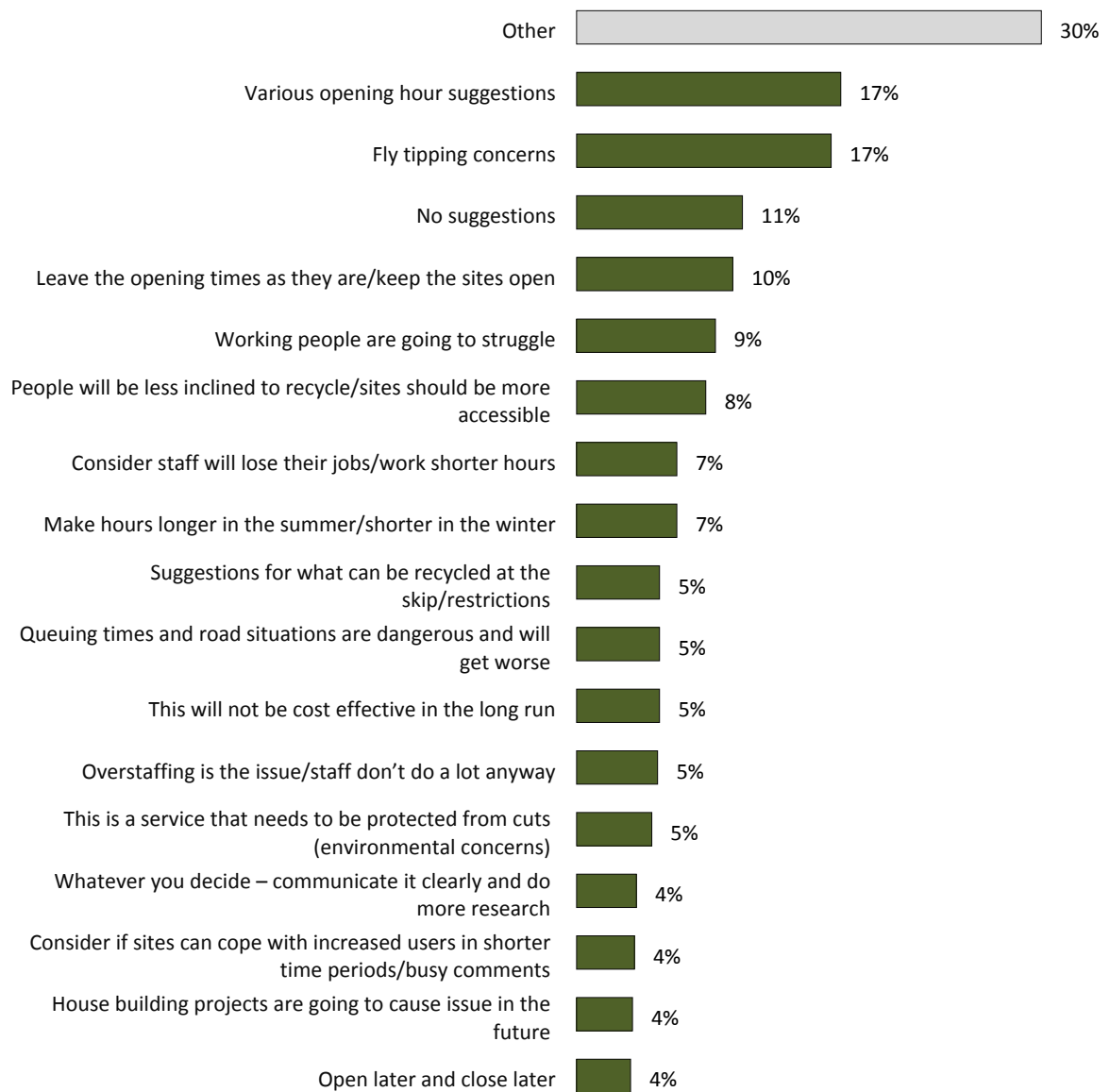
Base: respondents who tend to disagree or strongly disagree with our proposal to open five days a week at seven household waste recycling centres (304)

Finally, respondents were asked whether there is anything we need to consider or that we could do differently.

Three-tenths of respondents (30%) provided a comment that has been coded as 'other'. This is because these responses didn't directly answer the question, or because they occurred with such a low frequency that giving them their own code wasn't justified.

The most common responses that could be coded were various suggestions for opening hours (17%) and fly tipping concerns (17%).

Chart 14 - Thinking about our proposals, is there anything you think we need to consider or that we could do differently?



Base: all respondents (799)

4.3 Partner organisations consultation

Respondents were first asked how strongly they agree or disagree with the proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year. 27 out of 40 respondents said that they disagree with the proposal.

Table 1 - How strongly do you agree or disagree with our proposal to change the opening hours of all household waste recycling centres to 9am-5pm for the entire year?

	%
Strongly agree	3%
Tend to agree	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	8%
Tend to disagree	33%
Strongly disagree	35%

Base: all respondents (40)

Respondents were then asked why they agree or disagree with the proposal. The most common responses to this question were: current times are when most working people can use the sites (19) and it will increase fly-tipping (16).

Table 2 - Why do you say this?

	Count
Currently times are when most people in 9 to 5 jobs can use the sites	19
Increase in fly tipping	16
Stagger opening hours through the week/flexible opening times	12
Summer hours should be extended/Winter hours shortened	7
Support for change in hours/ positive action to lower costs	5
Road usage/congestion concerns	5
No savings will be made	5
Interesting comment	4
Environmental concerns/reducing vehicle movements	4
Other	3
Some areas only have one accessible site	2
Reduce number of staff	2
Don't change the hours	1
Local population/building increase should be considered	1
More travelling to HWRC sites	1
Clear communication about opening hours needed	1
Sites are already not fit for purpose	1
More green waste being produced in the summer	1

Base: all respondents (37)

Respondents were then asked how it would affect their organisation if the proposal happened. The most common response was concern about increased fly-tipping (19).

Table 3 - If this proposal happened, how would it affect your organisation?

	Count
Increased fly tipping	19
Clean up costs of fly tipping wouldn't save LCC any money	6
Other	5
Sites would become even busier	4
It wouldn't	4
Environmental and ecological impacts	3
Customer complaints	3
Offer flexible opening hours to try and accommodate people who work	2
Site closures already had a negative impact	2
As long as weekends are open it might be fine	1

Base: all respondents (31)

Respondents were asked about the proposals to open Barnoldswick, Burscough, Carnforth, Clitheroe, Haslingden, Longridge and Skelmersdale household waste recycling centres on five days a week. 12 out of 28 respondents said that they disagree with the proposal.

Table 4 - How strongly do you agree or disagree with our proposal to open five days per week at these seven household waste recycling centres?

	Count
Strongly agree	1
Tend to agree	5
Neither agree nor disagree	10
Tend to disagree	3
Strongly disagree	9

Base: all respondents (28)

Respondents were then asked why they agree or disagree with the proposal. The most common response to this question was concern about fly-tipping (8).

Table 5 - Why do you say this?

	Count
Fly-tipping	8
Won't be affected	4
Increase of road congestion/travelling resulting in air pollution	4
Concerns for the environment	3
Unclear opening hours on already existing sites	3
Flexible opening hour comments/people working	2
Change in hours preferable to closure	2
Increase in population and house building	2
Sites are already incredibly busy	2
Other	1
Reduce staff	1
More complaints	1
False economy	1
People will be less inclined to use the service	1

Base: all respondents (21)

Respondents were then asked how it would affect their organisation if the proposal happened. The most common response to this question was concern about fly-tipping (10).

Table 6 - If this proposal happened, how would it affect your organisation?

	Count
Fly-tipping	10
Other	3
Won't be affected	3
Increase in population and house building	3
False economy	3
Increase of road congestion/ travelling resulting in air pollution	2
People will be less inclined to use the service	2
Interesting comment	1
More complaints	1
Unclear opening hours on already existing sites	1

Base: all respondents (16)

Finally, respondents were asked whether there is anything we need to consider or that we could do differently. The most common response to this question was to stagger the opening times to help people who work (9).

Table 7 - Thinking about our proposals, is there anything you think that we need to consider or that we could do differently?

	Count
Stagger opening times to help people who work	9
Other	7
Consider needs of people in the area	6
Massive concern for fly tipping	6
Interesting comment	5
Traffic pollution and road concerns	4
Longer hours in the summer	3
Shift system for staff to save money	2
Environmental concerns	1
More information and opportunities about how to recycle needed	1
Clear communication to residents	1
Better to change hours then close altogether	1

Base: all respondents (24)

5. Other responses to the consultation

5.1 Letters and emails from service users

During the consultation period, we received three other responses to our proposals. These responses came from Dalton Parish Council, Lancaster City Council and Lancashire Teaching Hospital Trust. These responses are given in full below.

5.1.1 Dalton Parish Council

Household Waste Recycling Centres Consultation - Skelmersdale & Burscough Sites

Your response form asks for details of use of the HWRC and person details that it is not appropriate for a Parish Council to answer - for example the postcode of the Parish Clerk who lives out of the area of the Parish and number of times the sites are visited are irrelevant. In the absence of a specific form for parish councils asking questions that a corporate body is able to answer, it is requested that you consider these responses below, formed in meeting and resolved as the response from Dalton Parish Council.

Dalton Parish Council has no objection to making the opening hours the same across all recycling centres, so 9 to 5 all year round. However, does object to reducing the days Skelmersdale HWRC opens to five. Skelmersdale exceeds the tonnage for reducing the opening days, and whilst there are two HWRC's in West Lancashire (Burscough): the distance between them is six miles. Nobody is going to get to one Centre realise it's closed, then drive an additional 6 miles to get to the other.

A lot of the people who use Skelmersdale HWRC are from outside of West Lancashire, because the Wigan HWRC is on the opposite side of their borough. So people from Shevington, Standish, Appley Bridge and the west side of Wigan come to Skelmersdale HWRC as its closer. They probably don't even know there is a HWRC in Burscough, never mind know how to find it.

The instances of fly tipping are going to increase, we already have fly tipping incidents at least weekly and that's just in Dalton, given where these happen it can be assumed the majority of it is done by people from outside West Lancashire, so from the places mentioned previously, as the fly tipping typically occurs on the routes to the HWRC through Dalton.

It's false economy by Lancashire County Council, whilst they may reduce their costs, it's simply transferring the problem and costs to West Lancashire Borough Council and us as West Lancashire tax payers.

5.1.2 Lancaster City Council

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on current consultations which have been considered by Lancaster City Council's Council Business Committee at its meeting on Thursday 7th March 2019. To clarify, the Committee has considered seven consultations and is responding on behalf of the City Council regarding the following:

- Break Time
- Wellbeing Service
- Lancashire Waste and Recycling Service Centres
- Integrated Home Improvement Service
- Active Lives Healthy Weight, Health Improvement Service
- Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation, Health Improvement Service
- Stop Smoking Services, Health Improvement Service

The Committee is pleased to hear that the County Council is holding consultation events for Officers, which will provide Officers with a valuable opportunity to submit in depth operational and technical comments.

Council Business Committee Members feel strongly that if the County Council was to cut these services/resources, the need for these services/resources would remain. It is therefore felt that the impact of cutting services might result in higher costs in future, as the need would not diminish and could, as a result, be shifted to other services. For example, if the Lancashire Break Time service were to cease entirely, this may have an impact on social work care and create a demand for more resources in that area. Members feel that for most of the services in the consultations, prevention is always considered better and more cost effective than cure.

Members have considered each consultation in turn, with regard to the: proposed changes to the Household Waste Recycling Centres operational hours, it has been suggested that it may be more advantageous for the centres to be open 7 days a week, but with reduced opening hours, as opposed to opening 5 days a week for longer opening hours.

5.1.3 Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust

No impact on trust services identified.

Appendix 1 - Demographic breakdown

Table 8 - Are you...?

	%
A Lancashire resident	97%
A member of a voluntary or community organisation	9%
An employee of Lancashire County Council	8%
An elected member of a parish or town council in Lancashire	3%
Other	2%
An elected member of a Lancashire district council	<1%
An elected member of Lancashire County Council	<1%

Base: all respondents (1, 213)

Table 9 - Are you...?

	%
Male	43%
Female	53%
Other	<1%
Prefer not to say	4%

Base: all respondents (1, 217)

Table 10 - What was your age last birthday?

	%
Under 16	0%
16-19	<1%
20-34	8%
35-49	28%
50-64	37%
65-74	17%
75+	4%
Prefer not to say	5%

Base: all respondents (1, 211)

Table 11 - Are you a deaf person or do you have a disability?

	%
Yes	8%
No	83%
Prefer not to say	9%

Base: all respondents (1, 195)

Table 12 - Which best describes your ethnic background?

	%
White	88%
Asian or Asian British	1%
Black or black British	0%
Mixed	<1%
Other	<1%
Prefer not to say	11%

Base: all respondents (1, 195)

Table 13 - What is your religion?

	%
No religion	29%
Christian	55%
Buddhist	<1%
Hindu	<1%
Jewish	<1%
Muslim	1%
Sikh	0%
Any other religion	1%
Prefer not to say	15%

Base: all respondents (1,200)

Table 14 - Are there any children or young people in your household aged under 20?

	%
No, but expecting	4%
Yes, aged under 5	8%
Yes, aged 5-11	14%
Yes, aged 12-16	13%
Yes, aged 17-19	8%
No children aged under 20	53%
Prefer not to say	10%

Base: all respondents (1,189)

Table 15 - Do you have access to a car or van in which you could travel?

	%
Yes - as a passenger	6%
Yes - as a driver	86%
No	2%
Don't know	<1%
Prefer not to say	7%

Base: all respondents (1, 205)

Appendix B

Equality

Analysis Toolkit

Opening hour changes at Household Waste
Recycling Centres
For Decision Making Items

Question 1 - What is the nature of and are the key components of the proposal being presented?

In December 2018 Cabinet agreed to consult on proposals to change opening hours and days at Household Waste Recycling Centres. The specific proposals being:

- To change the opening hours of all recycling centres to 9am to 5pm all year round.
- To reduce the number of days that seven of the council's 15 recycling centres are open; from seven days per week to five days per week.

The seven recycling centres being: Barnoldswick, Clitheroe, Burscough, Haslingden, Skelmersdale, Longridge and Carnforth.

A public consultation on this took place between 28 January 2019 and 25 March 2019.

Question 2 - Scope of the Proposal

Is the proposal likely to affect people across the county in a similar way or are specific areas likely to be affected – e.g. are a set number of branches/sites to be affected?

Each District in Lancashire has at least one, and in three cases two, Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). Traffic data was gathered on frequency of use and the times of day that were the busiest, for all HWRCs. This showed how usage reflected the surrounding populations access to sites and indicated a fairly even spread of provision. It is the smaller sites closer to less dense urban areas that it is proposed go from seven to five day opening times.

Question 3 – Protected Characteristics Potentially Affected

Could the proposal have a particular impact on any group of individuals sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people

- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/ethnicity/nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status

And what information is available about these groups in the County's population or as service users/customers?

No significant adverse impact anticipated. However, there may be an adverse impact for those of working age (age protected characteristic) as opportunities to visit sites in the evening will cease.

Question 4 – Engagement/Consultation

How have people/groups been involved in or engaged with in developing this proposal?

The widely publicised (leaflets and posters at HWRCs and in public buildings) consultation ran for eight weeks between 28 January 2019 and 25 March 2019. In total, 1,219 completed questionnaires were returned (15 paper questionnaire responses and 1,204 online questionnaire responses). All district and Parish/Town Councils were also contacted directly and asked to respond.

In regards to the consultation responses:

- 97% of the returns were from Lancashire residents
- It was an even split between male and female respondents
- The majority of respondents were working age (between 35 and 64).
- The proportion of people identifying as having a disability was close to the expected figures and therefore reflective of disability levels county-wide.
- Responses from ethnic populations were low, but as responses were highest from the areas with the lowest numbers identifying their ethnicity as other than white, this was to be expected.
- Outside of those identifying as having no religion, not saying or identifying as Christian, virtually no other religious communities responded. This provides the comfort of assuming that the proposals are unlikely to cause inconvenience to religious communities that could only access sites on or outside of, days of the week sacred to them.
- There was a good balance of respondents with and without children.

Question 5 – Analysing Impact

Could this proposal potentially disadvantage particular groups sharing protected characteristics and if so which groups and in what way? This pays particular attention to the general aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of protected characteristics;
- To advance equality of opportunity for those who share protected characteristics;
- To encourage people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life;
- To contribute to fostering good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not/community cohesion;

HWRC provision is a service for all households across the county, where items not appropriate for doorstep collection can be disposed of. The smaller sites often (though not always) service more rural communities. A reduction in the number of days they are open may have an impact on rural communities access to provision.

A number of consultation comments were received expressing concerns about fly tipping. Whilst the Waste Service do not believe this will be an inevitable outcome of the proposed changes, any increases in fly tipping may adversely impact good relations between communities/community cohesion if assumptions are made about which groups/communities may be responsible for such activities.

Question 6 –Combined/Cumulative Effect

Could the effects of this proposal combine with other factors or decisions taken at local or national level to exacerbate the impact on any groups?

Non anticipated.

Question 7 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis

As a result of the analysis has the original proposal been changed/amended, if so please describe.

Following the consultation, the recommendation for Skelmersdale has now been changed so that it remains open for seven days a week.

The proposal has also changed to include opening on Bank Holidays at the sites which will have 5 day opening, although where this arises an alternative closing day will be arranged and clearly signalled.

Question 8 - Mitigation

Will any steps be taken to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of the proposal?

Traffic flow information, backed up by responses to the consultation, showed weekends are the most popular times for visitors. For those sites moving from seven to five days a week, opening weekends and bank holidays (excluding Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day) will remain, with two of the quieter days during the week seeing the sites closed.

The same will be true for the (9%) of people who indicated that they would like to keep the option of using HWRCs on their way to and from work. With all sites having weekend and bank holiday opening (aside from Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day) protected.

At all sites it will be the case that new signage, reflecting any changes to opening times and days, would be erected, that would also indicate the nearest alternative provision available.

It is noted in the consultation report that usage of HWRCs is largely infrequent, with most visiting once a month or only three-monthly. Coupled with 49% of respondents strongly agreeing, tending to agree or neither agreeing nor disagreeing with this proposal, it suggests that disruption would be limited.

Question 9 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors

This weighs up the reasons for the proposal – e.g. need for budget savings; damaging effects of not taking forward the proposal at this time – against the findings of the analysis.

The Council is committed to finding efficiencies and minimising any service loss. With seven day opening, site crews have to be supplemented with additional officers. This breaks with service consistency and increases costs in a way five day working does not. For larger sites that will stay open seven days but only between 9 am and 5 pm, the busiest times are in the middle of the day. These times see site staff working to capacity. However during the early morning and late afternoon, the quietest times at HWRCs, operatives can be under-used. As operatives need to be staffed up to their full number through-out the day, this is not an effective use of public resources, something this change will even out.

The loss of earlier/later opening will effect around 9% of consultation respondents (reflected in the traffic survey data). This group will not be prohibited from accessing the service, but will have to adjust the times of day or days of the week that they visit HWRCs. This it is not considered a significant inconvenience, nor one that overly penalises a vulnerable group.

Question 10 – Final Proposal

In summary, what is the final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

The proposal remains the same as originally consulted on, with the exception of Skelmersdale, which it is proposed will not move to five day opening, but remain open for seven days a week.

Question 11 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements

What arrangements will be put in place to review and monitor the effects of this proposal?

The traffic count data comes in every month and allows the Waste Service to identify if changes to opening times and days results in a shift in visitor patterns. The service also works closely with district councils and through them will monitor any changes such as increases in fly tipping.

Equality Analysis Prepared By William Maxwell

Position/Role Service Development Manager

Equality Analysis Endorsed by Line Manager and/or Service Head Steve Scott

Decision Signed Off By

Cabinet Member or Director

For further information please contact

Jeanette Binns – Equality & Cohesion Manager

Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Design and Construction**Part I**Electoral Division affected:
Rossendale West;**Hud Hey Road, Haslingden - Shared Use Cycle Track and Waiting Restrictions**
(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Warren Thackeray, Tel: (01772) 535844, Design and Construction

warren.thackeray@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

It is proposed to provide a cycle track with right of way on foot along a length of Hud Hey Road and Rising Bridge Road, Haslingden, forming part of National Cycle Route 6. Proposals for waiting restrictions required in conjunction with the cycle track are also described and decision sought regarding implementation.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the removal of the footway and construction of a cycle track with right of way on foot and the implementation of 'No Waiting at any time Restrictions' as shown in Appendix 'A'.

Background and Advice

The East Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan includes creation of an East Lancashire Strategic Cycleway Network. National Cycle Route 6 (NCR6) forms part of this network, providing a cycle route between Accrington to the north and the Lancashire boundary near Stubbins to the south.

As part of the scheme, Hud Hey Road and Rising Bridge Road, require an existing length of footway to be removed, widened and replaced by a cycle track with public right of way on foot, the width of which will generally be 3m. This additional width will be obtained by narrowing the carriageway, but sufficient carriageway width above minimum design standards will be maintained. A short length of the cycle track will still be below 3m due to land constraints. It is suggested that it is acceptable that short sections are able to be below 3m so long as safety considerations are still met.

The lesser width is 2.3m where it tapers down to this width from an initial 3m over a distance of 37m. Here it is advised that there is sufficient visibility over this length for the lesser width to be acceptable over the short length.

To support the construction of a shared use cycletrack, 'No Waiting at Any Time' restrictions are required to prohibit vehicles obstructing users, and provide appropriate visibility of the proposed uncontrolled crossing.

A review of current parking was undertaken prior to the measures being developed, this indicated that Hud Hey Road was being used for on-street parking by residents with a higher concentration during evenings on the bridge over the A56 bypass. The cycle track and waiting restrictions proposed have been designed to minimise the loss of on-street parking in this area, however, to deliver an appropriate solution, the available space for on street parking will be reduced.

Consultations

Formal advertising of the proposed waiting restrictions was undertaken during December 2018. The objections are summarised below:

1. On street parking space will be lost or reduced with parking displaced to surrounding roads, increasing danger to cyclists and pedestrians. The parked vehicles currently reduce the speed of HGVs travelling along the road and displacement of the parked vehicles will negatively impact on residents.

In response, surveys have indicated a level of on street parking within the proposed restricted areas and the surrounding roads. As these vehicles currently obstruct the footway and/or impair visibility, it is proposed to provide restrictions along the new cycle track to remove this problem. The creation of the cycle track will also reduce the conflict between cyclists and motorists by providing cyclists with a safer alternative to the carriageway. Whilst it is accepted that parking will be displaced, and residents wanting to park may be inconvenienced, the cycle track will provide a safer route for cyclists and pedestrians.

The current parking on Hud Hey Road Bridge is considered to slow traffic down, as drivers must manoeuvre around parked vehicles and negotiate oncoming traffic. However, this causes a potential hazard to motorists, cyclists, and, when vehicles are parked on the footway, to pedestrians and vulnerable users. These proposals widen the current footway and reduce carriageway width, potentially leading to a reduction in traffic speed. Whilst other proposals have been considered, they have not been progressed as they will result in increased congestion and potential safety issues.

2. Hud Hey Road is unsuitable for a cycle path due to the number of HGVs, the safety of pedestrians and cyclists would not be improved by the proposals which don't look out for prams and children needing to walk on the paths. There is not a demand for the cycle route and funds would be better allocated elsewhere such as installing speed cameras which would be more beneficial and address speeding issues.

In response, the route provided on Hud Hey Road will enable cyclists to travel safely on the cycle track rather than directly alongside the HGVs on the busy carriageway. These proposals prohibit vehicles parking on the cycle track thus reducing obstruction; the widening of the cycle track will provide sufficient space for cyclists and pedestrians to use the facility safely.

The East Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan identified a need to develop cycle route NCR6, to link communities with employment and offering the potential for tourism and recreation. Whilst encouraging less journeys by car and increasing cycling and walking opportunities wider benefits of reduced carbon emissions and improved health and wellbeing can also be realised.

Speed cameras may address speeding issues but would not help deliver the cycle route identified within the East Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan.

3. Hud Hey Road is not safe for cyclists as there are many accidents along this road. The existing footway is not wide enough to accommodate both cyclists and pedestrians and increased walking distances travelling from parked cars to residences could be dangerous due to speeding vehicles.

In response, the current accident record within the area is considered low. The records indicate one collision within the last 5 years.

These proposals include the widening of the existing footway to create a wider cycle track that separates the cyclists from the vehicles on the carriageway, thus reducing the risk of accidents.

4. Rising Bridge Road/Hud Hey Road are not built for the traffic being experienced since the introduction of the weight limit on the Grane Road, there is a more suitable cycle route.

It is likely that the roads have seen an increase in the number of larger vehicles following the introduction of the weight limit on the Grane Road. Traffic data shows that 5 – 6% of all vehicles are classed as larger, however, the roads are capable of carrying the number and type of vehicles using them.

The alternative route suggested along the A680 from Rising Bridge Road to Worsley Park, does not link the cycle route to subsequent sections of NCR6 without large land purchases. The route would require cyclists to ride in the carriageway of a busy 'A' road for long lengths, or impact a greater number of residential parking through Acre/Holden Vale, where restrictions of the same nature would also be required due to an interface with parked vehicles.

5. Parking restrictions would not prevent parking on the Hud Hey Road bridge, or reversing manoeuvres in to Rising Bridge Road.

Whilst parking restrictions do not physically stop parking on the bridge, the presence of the restriction will act as a deterrent, and enforcement of the parking restriction will be possible. The parking restriction will have no impact on reversing vehicles,

however drivers must take appropriate due care and attention when undertaking any manoeuvre.

6. Are these proposals an attempt to undermine points raised by Hud Hey residents towards Stage 2 of the Rossendale Local Plan?

These proposals have been developed as a result of the East Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Should the cycle track and waiting restrictions identified in this report not be implemented, cyclists using National Cycle Route 6 will be required to take a more hazardous route with greater potential for conflict with vehicles along Hud Hey Road.

Financial

The estimated cost of the proposals detailed in this report is £100,000. This will be funded as part of the East Lancashire Strategic Cycleway Programme and is included within the existing budget for the programme. The scheme is part funded by the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership under funding awarded for the East Lancashire Strategic Cycle Network project.

Legal

The legal procedures to convert a footway to a cycle track are under Section 66 of the Highways Act to remove the footway and under Section 65 to construct a cycle track, although this may involve little actual physical work.

Under Section 66, the Highway Authority is under a duty to provide proper and sufficient footways by the made-up carriageways where it is considered necessary or desirable for the safety or accommodation of pedestrians. It is considered that discrete footways for pedestrians only are no longer necessary as the proposed cycle tracks will include a right of way for pedestrians wide enough for cyclists and pedestrians to safely share.

A decision to remove footways and replace them with cycle tracks with a right of way on foot should be made with proper consideration of the implications for the safety and accommodation of pedestrians. This report sets out these considerations.

No Waiting at Any Time restrictions are provided under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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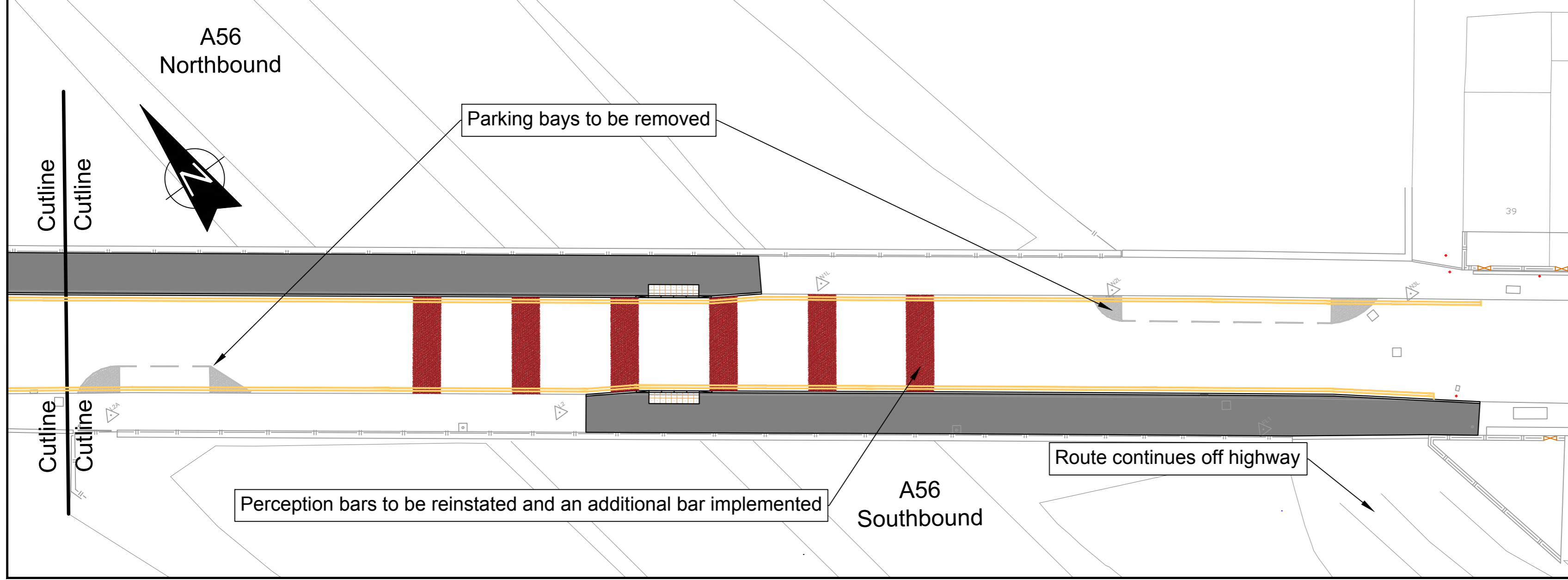
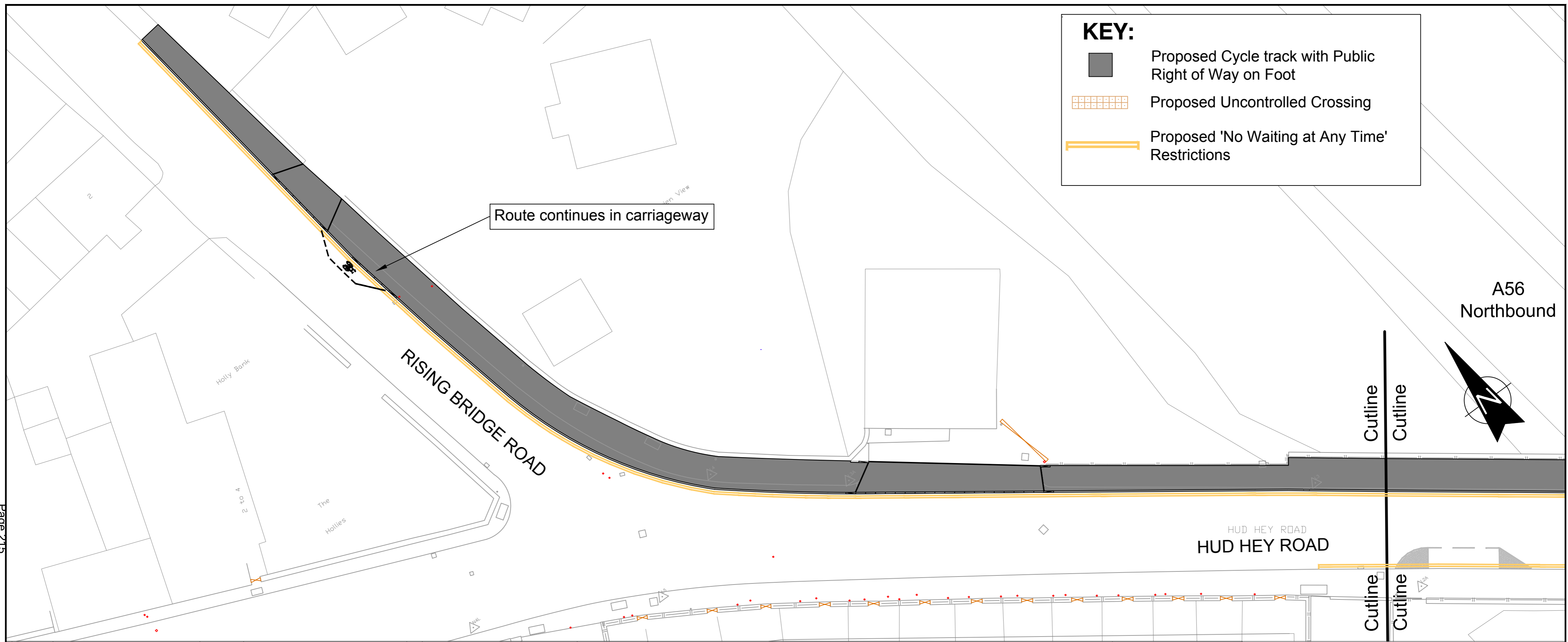
None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

KEY:

- Proposed Cycle track with Public Right of Way on Foot
- Proposed Uncontrolled Crossing
- Proposed 'No Waiting at Any Time' Restrictions



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No.	DATE	AMENDMENT DETAILS	CHECKED BY	DRAWN BY
REVISIONS				

Lancashire County Council Design and Construction

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PROJECT TITLE National Cycle Route 6 Section4 - Hud Hey Road	
DRAWING TITLE Appendix A	
DRAWN BY W Thackeray	CHECKED BY
APPROVED BY	DATE
PROJECT No.	DRAWING No.
SCALE @ A2	SHEET No. 1 of 1. REVISION A
CLIENT No.	ISSUE PURPOSE

Appendix A

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Public and Integrated Transport**Part I**

Electoral Divisions affected:
Skelmersdale Central;
Skelmersdale East;
Skelmersdale West;

Skelmersdale Rail Link - Strategic Outline Business Case

Contact for further information:

Andrew Varley, Tel: (01772) 533336, Public Transport Manager,
andrew.varley@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

In March 2017, having assessed the technical feasibility of constructing a rail link between the Wigan to Kirkby line and Skelmersdale, Network Rail was commissioned to undertake Governance for Railway Investment Projects Stage 2 (GRIP2) refresh and GRIP3A feasibility study by Lancashire County Council and Merseytravel.

To enable a better understanding of overall project cost Network Rail, as part of GRIP 3A process, are to provide an Anticipated Financial Cost Estimate. There is also a requirement to undertake some further high level highways design and impact assessment work to compliment the rail study.

The next stage of the project development would be to complete a strategic outline business case to Department for Transport requirements and submit to Transport for the North for consideration in future statutory advice to the Secretary of State with regard to the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline.

The strategic outline business case will confirm whether or not the project is affordable, including consideration of whole-life cost issues, whether it can be delivered in a reasonable timescale, whether it will provide value for money and, on this basis, whether to proceed to detailed design and implementation.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the commission of a strategic outline business case for the development of the Skelmersdale Rail Link.

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| (ii) Request that officers report to Cabinet in due course with the outcome of the strategic outline business case. |
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Background and Advice

The West Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan, adopted by Lancashire County Council in October 2014, is proposing the wholesale reconfiguration of Skelmersdale's transport networks to meet both current and future needs, not just for local residents and businesses but for West Lancashire as a whole. At its heart is a new rail link and town centre railway station, fully integrated with the bus network and easily accessible on foot or by cycle, and with sufficient car parking provision to function as a 'Parkway' station for the wider West Lancashire area. Work undertaken to date has demonstrated that it is technically feasible to construct a heavy rail link into Skelmersdale town centre in the corridor identified in the masterplan, and that the project could deliver value for money.

In June 2015 the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport agreed to move to the next phase of the development process by initiating a GRIP Stage 3A (Guide to Rail Investment Process - option selection), the main output being that a single option is determined and stakeholder approval to that option secured. It was agreed that the county council would engage with Network Rail to develop a detailed brief for the GRIP Stage 3A work and associated cost.

In July 2016 Network Rail were commissioned to undertake a comparative assessment of potential station locations to enable a decision to be made on the preferred location. The site of the former Glenburn College is the preferred location.

In March 2017, having assessed the technical feasibility of constructing a rail link between the Wigan to Kirkby line and Skelmersdale, Network Rail were commissioned to undertake the GRIP2 refresh and 3A feasibility study by the county council and Merseytravel on a shared cost basis, with the county council contributing 85%.

The cost of the GRIP 2 refresh and the GRIP 3A stage was estimated by Network Rail to be £5.1m with the costs spread over the 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years.

To enable a better understanding of overall project cost, as part of GRIP 3A process, Network Rail are to provide an Anticipated Financial Cost Estimate. This was initially due in March 2019. However the Office of Road and Rail requires additional consideration of the traction power options for the proposed line including a review of third rail, overhead power and battery options and so, as a result of this additional requirement, completion is now expected to be December 2019.

There is also a requirement to undertake some further high level highways design and impact assessment work to complement the rail study.

The next stage of the project development is to complete a strategic outline business case to Department for Transport requirements and submit to Transport for the North for consideration in future statutory advice to the Secretary of State with regard to

the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline. Completion of this then reaches the point where allocated county council funding ends. The scheme is effectively at the 'Determine' phase and, should the Government ultimately agree to progress the scheme to the 'Develop' phase, funding for that next stage of work will be agreed as part of the future decision. However, it is not clear from available guidance what proportion of costs the Department for Transport might be prepared to meet.

In order to move the proposal forward to the next stage it is advised that the county council will need to commit to developing the strategic outline business case, along with providing highway design support to plan the highway network around the site and along the line of route. The funding for this was authorised by the county council as part of Grip 3. Network Rail on the authority's behalf has commissioned Mott McDonald to undertake this work and the county council's highways service and design team oversee it.

The business case will ultimately confirm whether or not the project is affordable, including consideration of whole-life cost issues, whether it can be delivered in a reasonable timescale, whether it will provide value for money, and on this basis whether to proceed to detailed design and implementation. The authority will have further decisions to make regarding its further involvement.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Financial

It is expected that the strategic outline business case development can be delivered within the current budget allocation remaining from the Grip 3 study of £2.4m which is supported by agreed borrowing.

Legal

If the strategic outline business case is looked on favourably and the Department for Transport agrees to progress the scheme the county council will have to consider how to properly justify and resource any further role as possible Promoter of a Development Consent Order and the challenges, cost and risks that would bring. Network Rail has indicated that it will support the county council with the management of the Development Consent Order but they have requested the plan for this is fully integral as a critical milestone within the overall delivery programme. Delays to the Development Consent Order will impact the delivery of the future works which is reliant on substantial land acquisition.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
West Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan. Skelmersdale Rail Link	22/05/2015	Andrew Varley/ (01772) 533336
Skelmersdale Rail Link	01/07/2016	Andrew Varley/ (01772) 533336
Skelmersdale Rail Link	31/01/2017	Andrew Varley/ (01772) 533336
Skelmersdale Rail Link, Grip 3 Study	07/03/2017	Andrew Varley/ (01772) 533336
Former Glenburn College, Skelmersdale Rail Link	10/08/2017	Andrew Varley/ (01772) 533336
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Public and Integrated Transport**Part I**

Electoral Divisions affected:
Clitheroe; Lancaster Rural
North; Nelson East; Preston
City;

Transport Information Centres - Expressions of Interest Progress Report
(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Liz McClarty, Tel: (01772) 532423, Transportation Officer,
liz.mcclarty@lancashire.gov.uk**Executive Summary**

At its meeting on 8 February 2018, Full Council approved the closing of transport information centres at Preston Bus Station, Nelson and Clitheroe Interchanges and Carnforth Railway Station, subject to consultation, with the outcome to the consultation to be presented to Cabinet for final approval. On 9 August 2018, Cabinet noted that during the consultation, a number of expressions of interest were received from interested parties to take over the management of some or all of the transport information centres and resolved that officers investigate these and to provide a further update to Cabinet.

This report presents an update on the progress of the assessment undertaken and recommendation to proceed further. An equality analysis is attached at Appendix 'A'.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note the outcomes of the exploration activity undertaken and suitability of the expressions of interest;
- (ii) Approve the ceasing of provision of transport information at Preston Bus Station and Nelson Interchange and commence the staff consultation process;
- (iii) Authorise officers to support the transfer of the services provided at Carnforth Information Centre and Clitheroe Information Centre to each Community Group identified. The Council will maintain the services in the meantime.
- (iv) Approve the negotiation of termination of property interests at Carnforth Information Centre and Clitheroe Information Centre.

- | |
|---|
| (v) Approve the termination of the ticket retail agreements with the train operating company, Northern. |
|---|

Background and Advice

At its meeting on 8 February 2018, Full Council approved the closing of transport information centres at Preston Bus Station, Nelson and Clitheroe Interchanges and Carnforth Railway Station, subject to consultation, with the outcome to the consultation to be presented to Cabinet for final approval.

The results of the consultation were reported to Cabinet on 9 August 2018. During the consultation process, some organisations and an individual expressed interest in taking over all or part of the services provided at the information centres, in the event of ratification of the decision to close. Cabinet authorised officers to investigate these expressions of interest and for the service to continue to be maintained in the interim.

An application pack was sent to those who had expressed interest to help them make an initial submission and allow officers to undertake a basic assessment of the merit of each submission. The written material, process and assessment criteria were based upon those used by the Council previously in similar scenarios.

Initial submissions were received from interested parties as follows:

Community Groups

- Community Rail Lancashire (Clitheroe) for Clitheroe Transport Information Centre
- Leeds-Morecambe Line for Carnforth Information Centre

Commercial Organisation

- TPS Bus/Tanzogo for all information centres

Individual

- An individual to operate Nelson Information Centre

Continuation of the ticket information centres by the interested parties

There is no 'transfer of service' in the true sense because:

- The Council currently has an agreement with the train operating company, Northern, to retail tickets at the Transport Information Centres for which a commission is received. The Council is unable to transfer this arrangement to a third party and will be required to cease this agreement. Any third party taking on the service will be required to negotiate their own agreement directly with Northern;
- there will be no transfer of buildings or equipment, just a lease/licence of space within the existing premises from the landlord (which is not the

Council) which the interested party taking over the Information Centre will need to negotiate themselves;

- The service will cease to be publicly funded with the Council no longer having any future involvement and/or responsibility albeit there may be some costs for terminating the Council's occupation, these costs are not known at this stage.

The information provision is the only other part of the service that is identifiable. Staff at the Transport Information Centres are specialists, trained and experienced in retailing of tickets as well as providing transport and local information. The Council's transfer offer to an interested party that is a commercial entity in nature could result in state aid implications to commercial entities.

As there is no "transfer of service" The Community Right to Challenge (The Community Right to Challenge (Expressions of Interest and Excluded Services) (England) Regulations 2012 ("CRC") does not apply.

Employment/Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE)

Closure of any of the transport information centres would result in redundancy for some or all of 7 staff currently providing the service.

In the event of a potential transfer, where there was some overlap in operation or 'takeover' of the service with the service being the same or similar, then TUPE would be expected to apply, i.e. employment rights and liabilities would transfer to the new provider.

Assessment

With consideration of the items above, initial assessment of applications by officers concluded,

- **A viable application was received from Community Group Community Rail Lancashire (Clitheroe) in relation to Clitheroe Transport Information Centre.** Application provided a comprehensive and well thought out proposal outlining the objectives and vision of the group to maintain the existing service and having taken full consideration of the staffing commitments and risks. In addition the group outlined clearly intended steps for a potential takeover as well as to develop the service further, to identify additional revenue streams and expand current service provision through online tools/complementary services such as continental rail ticketing. The application also outlined the group's objectives to support major employers through the service supported. In addition, the group demonstrated strong evidence of community benefit through extensive work undertaken and further plans to work with vulnerable groups and schools to provide employment support/experience and dementia awareness.
- **A viable application from Community Group Leeds-Morecambe Line for Carnforth Transport Information Centre.** Application provided a

comprehensive and well thought out proposal outlining the objectives and plans of the group to maintain the existing service. The application took full consideration of the risks and staffing commitments required to sustain the service and demonstrated strong community benefit proposals evidenced by award winning community skills and experience. The application outlined clear steps intended for a potential service takeover to maintain the current service and to develop the service further with new initiatives.

- **Application for all centres from a commercial entity.** The overall business case and financial information for a proposal to maintain the service was significantly limited and failed to outline clear objectives or plans to maintain the service or satisfy the requirement to demonstrate community benefit. The proposal did not take consideration of the risk assessment required within the application and under staffing considerations and seeks to negotiate the pension arrangements for staff under TUPE.
- **Application for Nelson transport information centre from an individual.** The overall business case and financial information in relation to maintaining the service was significantly limited and unable to outline clear objectives or plans to maintain the service. The proposal did not take consideration of the risks required within the application and sought incentives requiring some level of financial commitment from the council in order to support the application.

Recommendation

Based on these considerations, it is recommended that the county council proceeds to cease the services provided by the council in line with Cabinet resolutions but supports the transition of current operations to two Community Rail Partnership groups for Clitheroe and Carnforth Transport Information Centres.

The council will be required to terminate the leases and retail agreements currently in place and support a TUPE transfer of staff. It is the intention of the groups interested in providing services at Carnforth and Clitheroe to be in a position to take over the service within three to six months from the date of Cabinet decision. It is anticipated that the council will maintain services up to a period of 6 months from the date of the decision.

In the event that a service transfer is not successful, the council would cease the service. This would result in redundancy of posts, however staff would have access to the council's redeployment process.

Implications

The two Community Rail Partnership submissions for Clitheroe and Carnforth Transport Information Centres will be required to conclude satisfactorily the following items to be able to take over the office(s):

- Negotiate a fresh retail agreement with Northern Rail

- Negotiate a fresh lease agreement with Carnforth Station Trust Limited (Carnforth) and Ribble Valley Borough Council (Clitheroe)
- Lancashire County Council TUPE stipulations

Subject to the agreement of the above, it is the intention of the groups interested in providing services at Carnforth and Clitheroe to be in a position to take over the service within three to six months.

Financial

The saving agreed by Full Council in February 2018 totalled £156,000, with £78,000 removed from the budget in 2018/19 and £78,000 in 2019/20. The delivery of this saving had already been delayed whilst expressions of interest were considered, with the forecast timescales for achievement of the saving revised to assume transfer or closure of the facilities partway through 2019/20. The exact timescales for delivery of the saving will depend upon when the sites are closed or transferred, however any additional pressure caused by the delay will be managed within the public and integrated transport budget.

Legal

The operation of the Transport Information Centres is supported by a number of legal agreements including; lease of Carnforth station; arrangement for occupation of Clitheroe Information Centre; Northern Rail retail agency agreement for the sale of train tickets; utility contracts. These agreements will need to be terminated and the section below "Property Asset Management" further details any implications.

Equality and Cohesion

An Equality Analysis is attached at Appendix 'A'.

The proposal may make travel by public transport more difficult for older people and for people with disabilities because other sources of information and tickets are perceived to be less understandable. Some older and disabled people may be less likely to use digital alternatives to obtain travel information or tickets. Whilst there are no statistics available about usage of the Information Centres by people with protected characteristics both the response rate to the consultation and some of the consultation responses do suggest a disproportionate adverse impact on these groups should the Travel Information Centres cease.

Personnel

Closing the information centres would mean staff redundancies. Total number of staff affected would be up to 7 individuals, 6.5 full time equivalent. Contractual notice periods would be applied and affected staff would be given access to the council's redeployment process during their notice period.

If it is identified that alternative interested parties can take over the management/ownership of the information centres, this could mitigate against redundancies as

staff may transfer to the new employer under Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.

Property Asset Management

Carnforth Railway Station – Leasehold interest with Carnforth Station Trust Limited. The council is currently holding over on a lease for a term of ten years from 3rd December 2002. Clause 8 (a) of the lease prevents assignment and underletting of part of the premises. Clause 8 (b) prevents assignment and underletting of the whole of the premises without the licence in writing of the Landlord. Notice will need to be given to terminate this lease. Dilapidations are not expected for Carnforth given recent works and an outstanding claim the county council has against the landlord for loss of earnings.

Clitheroe Interchange – Leasehold - The freehold interest is registered to Ribble Valley Borough Council. There has been a lease referred to but this documentation has not been identified. Any proposal to either close the office or assign to another provider will need to be negotiated with Ribble Valley Borough Council. Negotiations will need to be entered into with Ribble Valley Borough Council to terminate county council occupation here, there may be costs to this and or notice needed. The council will be liable for potential holding and dilapidation costs at the end of any agreement.

Procurement

The majority of county council staff travel is currently provided through Carnforth Transport information centre (Carnforth Connect). Should the decision be taken to transfer the staff travel element of Carnforth to another provider a procurement exercise may be required for this particular element of the service. This would need to be reviewed in line with the county council's obligation under European Union Procurement Regulations and its own internal Standing Orders as it would be feasible for any of the Expression of Interest organisations to successfully tender for this element of the service. Should there be a requirement for a procurement exercise, consideration of the timescales to conduct this would need to be taken into account and a separate report detailing the procurement approach would be submitted to Cabinet for approval.

A further option may be to retain the staff travel element of the service in-house which would negate the need for any procurement exercise to take place.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Equality Analysis

**Transport
Information Centres**

For Decision Making Items

May 2019

What is the Purpose of the Equality Decision-Making Analysis?

The Analysis is designed to be used where a decision is being made at Cabinet Member or Overview and Scrutiny level or if a decision is being made primarily for budget reasons. The Analysis should be referred to on the decision making template (e.g. E6 form).

When fully followed this process will assist in ensuring that the decision-makers meet the requirement of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need: to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other unlawful conduct under the Act; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard means analysing, at each step of formulating, deciding upon and implementing policy, what the effect of that policy is or may be upon groups who share these protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity – and in some circumstances marriage and civil partnership status.

It is important to bear in mind that "due regard" means the level of scrutiny and evaluation that is reasonable and proportionate in the particular context. That means that different proposals, and different stages of policy development, may require more or less intense analysis. Discretion and common sense are required in the use of this tool.

It is also important to remember that what the law requires is that the duty is fulfilled in substance – not that a particular form is completed in a particular way. It is important to use common sense and to pay attention to the context in using and adapting these tools.

This process should be completed with reference to the most recent, updated version of the Equality Analysis Step by Step Guidance (to be distributed) or EHRC guidance at

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/public-sector-providers/public-sector-equality-duty>

This toolkit is designed to ensure that the section 149 analysis is properly carried out, and that there is a clear record to this effect. The Analysis should be completed in a timely, thorough way and should inform the whole of the decision-making process. It must be considered by the person making the final decision and must be made available with other documents relating to the decision.

The documents should also be retained following any decision as they may be requested as part of enquiries from the Equality and Human Rights Commission or Freedom of Information requests.

Specific advice on completing the Equality Analysis and advice, support and training on the Equality Duty and its implications is available from the County Equality and Cohesion Team by contacting

Jeanette Binns (Equality and Cohesion Manager) at

Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk

Name/Nature of the Decision

Transport Information Centres

What in summary is the proposal being considered?

Closure of transport information centres at Preston Bus Station, Nelson and Clitheroe interchanges and at Carnforth Railway Station.

Is the decision likely to affect people across the county in a similar way or are specific areas likely to be affected – e.g. are a set number of branches/sites to be affected? If so you will need to consider whether there are equality related issues associated with the locations selected – e.g. greater percentage of BME residents in a particular area where a closure is proposed as opposed to an area where a facility is remaining open.

No, but specific locational impacts on people with protected characteristics.

Could the decision have a particular impact on any group of individuals sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/ethnicity/nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status

In considering this question you should identify and record any particular impact on people in a sub-group of any of the above –

e.g. people with a particular disability or from a particular religious or ethnic group.

It is particularly important to consider whether any decision is likely to impact adversely on any group of people sharing protected characteristics to a disproportionate extent. Any such disproportionate impact will need to be objectively justified.

Yes. The services are particularly popular with older people and people with disabilities.

If you have answered "Yes" to this question in relation to any of the above characteristics, – please go to Question 1.

See question 1

If you have answered "No" in relation to all the protected characteristics, please briefly document your reasons below and attach this to the decision-making papers. (It goes without saying that if the lack of impact is obvious, it need only be very briefly noted.)

NA

Question 1 – Background Evidence

What information do you have about the different groups of people who may be affected by this decision – e.g. employees or service users (you could use monitoring data, survey data, etc. to compile this).

As indicated above, the relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment/gender identity
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/Ethnicity/Nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership status (in respect of which the s. 149 requires only that due regard be paid to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation or other conduct which is prohibited by the Act).

In considering this question you should again consider whether the decision under consideration could impact upon specific sub-groups e.g. people of a specific religion or people with a particular disability. You should also consider how the decision is likely to affect those who share two or more of the protected characteristics – for example, older women, disabled, elderly people, and so on.

No specific information but we consider that the services are particularly popular with older people and people with disabilities.

The total number of employees affected is 6.5 at the four transport information centres.

Question 2 – Engagement/Consultation

How have you tried to involve people/groups that are potentially affected by your decision? Please describe what engagement has taken place, with whom and when.

(Please ensure that you retain evidence of the consultation in case of any further enquiries. This includes the results of consultation or data gathering at any stage of the process)

The consultation asked for views on the proposal to close the council's transport information centres at Preston Bus Station, Nelson Interchange, Clitheroe Interchange and Carnforth Railway Station.

The consultation ran for eight weeks between 5 March 2018 and 29 April 2018.

Paper questionnaires were made available at all four transport information centres, as well as Carnforth Library due to Carnforth Information Centre being closed during part of the fieldwork period. Posters were also used at these venues to publicise the consultation.

The consultation questionnaire was also available online at www.lancashire.gov.uk.

At the beginning of the consultation 456 stakeholders were contacted to inform them that the consultation had started and advised them how they could participate. Stakeholders included users, district and parish councillors, interest groups, bus operators and others.

Announcements regarding the consultation were regularly made during the fieldwork period via Twitter and Facebook and a press release was produced for the media.

In total, 877 completed questionnaires were returned (553 paper questionnaire responses and 324 online questionnaire responses).

Respondent profiles:

96% of respondents were Lancashire residents.

40% were male and 54% were female whilst 6% preferred not to say – this is a slightly higher representation of females than in the county's population. 1% of respondents identified as Transgender, similar to the level found in many other service consultations.

51% of respondents were aged 65 and over with a further 35% of respondents aged between 35 and 64 and less than 7% of respondents were under 35, the age profile has a higher percentage of older respondents than a number of service consultations.

15% of respondents considered themselves to have a disability or to be a Deaf person which is comparatively high for a service consultation.

There was a comparatively low response from people from BME communities of less than 4% of respondents which is about half of their representation in the

Lancashire population but the location of the Information Centres will be an influential factor.

The responses from Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual respondents were at broadly similar levels to other County Council service consultations and the religion or belief responses were slightly lower than Census details for all categories but there was quite a high "prefer not to say" level of 16%.

A question is included about the number of children and young people under 20 in respondents' households, 72% of respondents had no children or young people under 20 in their household which given the age profile of respondents was to be expected. However 4% of respondents had no children but were expecting which is double the usual rate of response in County Council service consultations.

Key Consultation Findings Summarised:

- In the last two years, over two-fifths of respondents have used the transport information centres at Carnforth Railway Station (44%) and Clitheroe Interchange (42%). A quarter of respondents have used the transport information centres at Preston Bus Station (25%) and about one in six respondents have used Nelson Interchange (17%).
- Nine in ten respondents (90%) strongly disagree with the proposal to close the transport information centres and about a further one in twenty (4%) tend to disagree with the proposal. About one in twenty respondents (5%) strongly or tend to agree with the proposal.
- When asked why they agree or disagree with the proposal, respondents explained that the transport information centres act as community hubs that offer a useful/necessary public service (35%) and that not everyone has access to the internet, or is IT literate (21%). In relation to protected characteristics significance, 9% of respondents stated "it was easier for some people to deal with a person (e.g. older or disabled people)".
- When asked how the proposal would impact on them, respondents explained that it would be inconvenient (33%) and that they would lose, or have reduced access to, the services provided by the transport information centres (33%). Of specific reference to protected characteristics groups 5% of respondents indicated "Negative impact on those needing extra help (e.g. disabled, OAP, complex queries, no internet)".
- When asked how they would find out about public transport services or buy tickets if this proposal happened, about two-fifths of respondents say they don't know (39%), a quarter of respondents say they would visit another information centre or ticket office (25%) and about a quarter say they would buy tickets online through a website, smartphone app or by telephone (24%).
- Two thirds (65%) of respondents said they would travel less often if the proposal happened.
- In the consultation there was a question included which gave respondents the opportunity to say why they were satisfied or dissatisfied with the service. It is of relevance to the disability protected characteristic to record that 8% of respondents indicated it was "easiest way to deal with complex travel arrangements (e.g. support for wheelchair users, using multiple operators)".

- In the Any Other Comments Section of the consultation, 7% of respondents also commented that "People (particularly the elderly and disabled) rely on the service".

Question 3 – Analysing Impact

Could your proposal potentially disadvantage particular groups sharing any of the protected characteristics and if so which groups and in what way?

It is particularly important in considering this question to get to grips with the actual practical impact on those affected. The decision-makers need to know in clear and specific terms what the impact may be and how serious, or perhaps minor, it may be – will people need to walk a few metres further to catch a bus, or to attend school? Will they be cut off altogether from vital services? The answers to such questions must be fully and frankly documented, for better or for worse, so that they can be properly evaluated when the decision is made.

Could your proposal potentially impact on individuals sharing the protected characteristics in any of the following ways:

- Could it discriminate unlawfully against individuals sharing any of the protected characteristics, whether directly or indirectly; if so, it must be amended. Bear in mind that this may involve taking steps to meet the specific needs of disabled people arising from their disabilities
- Could it advance equality of opportunity for those who share a particular protected characteristic? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so?
- Does it encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so?

- Will the proposal contribute to fostering good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, for example by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so? Please identify any findings and how they might be addressed.

Proposal may make travel by public transport more difficult for older people and for people with disabilities because other sources of information and tickets are less understandable. Older and disabled people are less likely to use digital alternatives to obtain travel information or tickets. Whilst there are no statistics available about usage of the Information Centres by protected characteristics both the response rate to the consultation and some of the consultation responses do suggest a disproportionate adverse impact on these groups should the Travel Information Centres/Interchanges cease. Two thirds (65%) of respondents said they would travel less often if the proposal happened. If significant numbers of people did feel less able to travel arising from the closure of particular Transport Information Centres, this may lead to a possible potential reduction of those people's ability to participate in public life, reducing their equality of opportunity to travel.

It was also anticipated when the consultation was developed, that there may be concerns about personal safety from some members of protected characteristics groups which would emerge. In the event, a small number of respondents commented on this as a concern. It is likely that having a facility available may deter some instances of hate crime or anti-social behaviour and may assist the fostering of good relations between communities/community cohesion, achieve Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) aims or may allow people to wait in a safer environment for a bus or train in some cases.

Question 4 –Combined/Cumulative Effect

Could the effects of your decision combine with other factors or decisions taken at local or national level to exacerbate the impact on any groups?

For example - if the proposal is to impose charges for adult social care, its impact on disabled people might be increased by other decisions within the County Council (e.g. increases in the fares charged for

Community Transport and reductions in respite care) and national proposals (e.g. the availability of some benefits) . Whilst LCC cannot control some of these decisions, they could increase the adverse effect of the proposal. The LCC has a legal duty to consider this aspect, and to evaluate the decision, including mitigation, accordingly.

If Yes – please identify these.

Yes. Public Transport operators (bus and rail) are reducing face to face information and moving towards digital delivery of information and ticketing.
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Question 5 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis

As a result of your analysis have you changed/amended your original proposal?

Please identify how –

For example:

Adjusted the original proposal – briefly outline the adjustments

Continuing with the Original Proposal – briefly explain why

Stopped the Proposal and Revised it - briefly explain

Adjusted original proposal.

During the consultation period there have been expressions of interest to take over the management/ownership of all of the transport information centres. Consideration was to be given to investigating this interest and maintaining the operation of the information centres whilst doing so.

April 2019 – Initial consideration has been given to expressions of interest and the outcomes of this activity are to be presented to be Cabinet with regards to reaching a decision on how to proceed further.

Question 6 - Mitigation

Please set out any steps you will take to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of your decision on those sharing any particular protected characteristic. It is important here to do a genuine and realistic evaluation of the effectiveness of the mitigation contemplated.

Over-optimistic and over-generalised assessments are likely to fall short of the “due regard” requirement.

Also consider if any mitigation might adversely affect any other groups and how this might be managed.

If any of the expressions of interest are assessed as sustainable, there may be an opportunity to maintain these services.

April 2019 – Expressions of interest have been considered with a view to establishing options to sustain the service and mitigate adverse impact as a result of any closure. The outcomes of the initial assessment and consideration of other proposals is being put to Cabinet for a decision on next steps.

Question 7 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors

At this point you need to weigh up the reasons for the proposal – e.g. need for budget savings; damaging effects of not taking forward the proposal at this time – against the findings of your analysis. Please describe this assessment. It is important here to ensure that the assessment of any negative effects upon those sharing protected characteristics is full and frank. The full extent of actual adverse impacts must be acknowledged and taken into account, or the assessment will be inadequate. What is required is an honest evaluation, and not a marketing exercise. Conversely, while adverse effects should be frankly acknowledged, they need not be overstated or exaggerated. Where effects are not serious, this too should be made clear.

The council is in a position where it needs to make substantial budget savings and, whilst this proposal will have a negative impact on people with protected characteristics, it is considered necessary to make this service reduction.

However, if consideration is given to the expressions of interest and there any are considered to be sustainable, there may be an opportunity for this service to continue. Should that not be the case, older and disabled people may be particularly adversely impacted by this proposal.

April 2019 – Full consideration has been given to all expressions received and an initial assessment undertaken with regards to the gravitas and financial viability of the initial proposals. This is to ensure that appropriate assurances are given to the continuation and sustainability of the service through an alternative proposal.

Question 8 – Final Proposal

In summary, what is your final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

Explore expressions of interest so that and consideration can be given to handing over responsibilities to these interested parties.

April 2019 – A recommendation is made to the Cabinet to proceed to cease the services provided by the Council in line with Cabinet resolutions but supports the transition of current operations to two Community Rail Partnership groups for Clitheroe and Carnforth Transport Information Centres.

Question 9 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements

Describe what arrangements you will put in place to review and monitor the effects of your proposal.

Involvement in the expressions of interest process. Further arrangements to be identified.

April 2019 – The service will work closely with any potential party identified to transition services effectively.

Equality Analysis Prepared By Asima Mister

Position/Role Transportation Officer

Equality Analysis Endorsed by Line Manager and/or Service Head

Decision Signed Off By

Cabinet Member or Director

Please remember to ensure the Equality Decision Making Analysis is submitted with the decision-making report and a copy is retained with other papers relating to the decision.

For further information please contact

Jeanette Binns – Equality & Cohesion Manager

Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk

Thank you

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Executive Director for Growth, Environment and Transport**Part I**

Electoral Divisions affected:
Fylde West; Cleveleys South
and Carleton, Poulton le Fylde

Proposed A585 Windy Harbour to Skippool Improvement Scheme - Local Impact Report

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contact for further information:

Jonathan Haine, Tel: (01772) 534130, Team Leader Development Management
jonathan.haine@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

Highways England has made an application to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order for the improvement of the A585 between Skippool and Windy Harbour near Poulton le Fylde. The improvement scheme would comprise of a 4.8km bypass to the south of the existing A585 along Mains Lane. Under section 60 of the Planning Act 2008, the county council as Local Planning Authority, is invited to prepare a written Local Impact Report giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the local area. In determining the application for a Development Consent Order, the Secretary of State has to have regard to the Local Impact Report and it is therefore an important document to aid in the consideration of the project.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the Local Impact Report attached at Appendix 'A' to this report for submission to the Planning Inspectorate as representing the county council's views as Local Planning Authority on the policy implications and local environmental impacts of the project.
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Environment to reply to any formal written questions from the Examining Authority.

Background and Advice

This report relates to a proposal by Highways England for an improvement scheme to the A585 trunk road between Skippool and Windy Harbour near Poulton le Fylde. The improvement scheme would comprise a bypass 4.8km in length to the south of the existing A585 Mains Lane.

The Planning Act 2008 introduced new planning procedures for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects whereby such projects are examined by the Planning Inspectorate rather than subject to planning applications to the Local Planning Authority. Highway related development is a nationally significant infrastructure project where the development is for the construction of a new road and where the Secretary of State is the highway authority for that road. As the A585 is a trunk road where the Secretary of State is the highway authority, the proposed development is a nationally significant infrastructure project.

The procedures set out in the Planning Act 2008 for the determination of Development Order Consent applications for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects are very different from those relating to normal planning applications. In particular, it is the role of the applicant to undertake consultations on their proposed development prior to submitting the application to the Planning Inspectorate. Under various provisions of the Planning Act 2008, the county council as Local Planning Authority has previously been requested to comment on a report detailing the results of the consultation.

Following completion of the consultation stage, the application for Development Order Consent for the project was accepted by the Planning Inspectorate on 26th November 2018. Having accepted the application, the Planning Inspectorate has set out how the project will be examined including the timing of any hearings and inviting the Local Planning Authorities for the area to submit Local Impact Reports. A Local Impact Report is a written report setting out details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the local area. The Planning Inspectorate has advised that any Local Impact Report for the proposal should be submitted by 17th May 2019. It is often the case that the Planning Inspectorate will issue further written questions either prior to, or once the Local Impact Report has been submitted. The timescale to respond to such questions is very short and it is recommended that authority to respond to such questions is delegated to the Head of Planning and Environment.

The content of a Local Impact Report is for a local authority to determine but the Planning Inspectorate has advised that the following topics should normally be included:-

- Site description and surroundings / location
- Details of the proposal
- Relevant planning history
- Relevant Development Plan Policy
- Local area characteristics such as urban and landscape qualities and nature conservation sites including designated sites
- Local transport patterns and issues
- Site and area constraints

- Socio economic and community matters
- Consideration of the impact of the development in respect of the above matters
- Development Consent Order Obligations and their impact on the local authority area

In determining an application for any Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, the Secretary of State must have regard to any Local Impact Report that has been submitted by a Local Planning Authority. The Local Impact Report should be used by local authorities as the means by which their existing body of local knowledge and evidence on local issues can be fully and robustly reported to the Inspectorate to aid in their decision making.

The proposed Local Impact Report for the proposed A585 Improvement scheme is attached as Appendix 'A' to this report. A location map is attached at Appendix 'B' to this report.

Consultations

Consultations have been undertaken with various teams within the county council on this development including transport policy, highways, estates and legal. Their comments have been incorporated into the local impact report. In addition, Lancashire Archaeological Advisory Services were consulted with regards to impacts on the historic environment.

The various representations that have been made direct to the Planning Inspectorate by the Borough Council's, Natural England, Environment Agency and local residents were also accessed via the Planning Inspectorate website to gain an understanding of the other views that have been expressed on this proposal.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

The main risk that is associated with this report relates to where the county council fails to produce a Local Impact Report within the required timescale. The Local Impact Report is an important document in assisting the Planning Inspectorate to understand the local environmental impacts of the proposed development and the county council's interests in terms of transport planning, local highway authority and landowner of parts of the proposed road scheme. Therefore it is important that a sufficiently comprehensive Local Impact Report is produced with the timescale stipulated by the Planning Inspectorate to allow a balanced judgement to be made on the environmental impacts of this development. Ensuring that the Planning Inspectorate is in receipt of the Local Impact Report will ensure that such risks are minimised to acceptable levels.

Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal

There are no significant legal implications for the county council arising from this development.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

**APPLICATION BY HIGHWAYS ENGLAND FOR A DEVELOPMENT
CONSENT ORDER FOR THE A585 IMPROVEMENT SCHEME
BETWEEN WINDY HARBOUR AND SKIPPOOL, NEAR POULTON LE
FYLDE**

**LOCAL IMPACT REPORT BY LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
UNDER SECTION 60 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Highways England has submitted an application for a Development Order Consent Order for an improvement to the A585 trunk road between Windy Harbour and Skippol, Poulton le Fylde. The improvement scheme would consist of a 4.8 km long bypass to the south of the existing A585 Mains Lane. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- 1.2 The application is to be determined by the Secretary of State after consideration by an Inspector appointed by the Planning Inspectorate. This is because the A585 is a trunk road and projects for the construction of new highways for which the Secretary of State is the highway authority fall within the definition of Nationally Significant Infrastructure within the Planning Act 2008. Under the Planning Act 2008, projects for nationally significant infrastructure have to be the subject of an application to the Secretary of State for a Development Consent Order rather than a planning application to the local authority.
- 1.3 Local Authorities in whose areas applications for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects are submitted are invited to produce a Local Impact Report. The Planning Act 2008 requires that the Examining Authority (and Secretary of State) must have regard to the Local Impact Report in determining applications for Development Order Consent. The definition of a Local Impact Report in the Planning Act 2008 is 'a report in writing giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the authority's area (or any part of that area). The content of the Local Impact Report is a matter for the Local Planning Authority concerned but the Planning Inspectorate has published guidance on its content. This report has been written in accordance with that guidance.
- 1.4 The project also lies within Fylde and Wyre Borough Council areas. The Borough Councils have been invited to produce their own Local Impact Reports.

2. Details of the Proposals

- 2.1 The project is to provide a new dual carriageway bypass with a length of 4.8 km between Windy Harbour at the junction of the A585 / A586 in the east to the existing Skippool Junction on the A585 to the west. The new road would run to the south of the existing A585 therefore bypassing the existing section of the A585 along Mains Lane which would be detrunked following completion of the scheme. A plan showing the detail of the proposals is attached to this report.
- 2.2 The new highway would incorporate a number of new junctions with existing highways:
 - At the western end of the route, the existing Skippool Junction (junction of A588 Breck Road and B5412 Skippool Road) would be converted from a roundabout to a traffic light controlled junction.
 - At the junction with the existing A585 on Mains Lane there would be a new three arm signal controlled junction.
 - At the junction with the A586 Garstang Road East there would be a new signal controlled crossroads (named Poulton junction)
 - At the eastern end of the scheme, the new road would merge with the existing A585 at the Windy Harbour junction.

- 2.3 Between the Skippool Bridge Junction and the new Poulton Junction, the new road would be on embankment. Between Poulton Junction to the east of the crossing of Lodge Lane, the new road would be in cutting. The eastern section of the scheme, where it joins the existing A585, would be at grade with the existing road being widened to dual carriageway standard.
- 2.4 Three new structures are proposed including the replacement of the existing Skippool Bridge where the road crosses the Main Dyke, a bridge to allow Lodge Lane to cross the new road and a new footbridge towards the eastern end of the scheme to carry an existing footpath over the new road.
- 2.5 A number of alterations to the existing road network are proposed upon completion of the new road including:-
- Detrunking of the existing A585 between Skippool Bridge and where the new road would intersect the existing Garstang New Road. Garstang New Road would become a cul de sac at this point. The county council would then become highway authority for the detrunked section of road.
 - The speed limit along the existing A585 would be reduced to 30 mph between Skippool Bridge junction and the end of Garstang New Road east of Little Singleton. A combined footway / cycleway would be provide along this section of road.
 - Alteration of Garstang New Road east of Little Singleton to allow restricted access into agricultural fields and to also provide a shared footway / cycleway along this section as far as the Windy Harbour junction.
 - A reduced 30 mph speed limit along Garstang Road East between the proposed Poulton Junction and Little Singleton.
 - Upgrade to existing street lighting along Mains Lane and Garstang Road East.
- 2.6 The road would have a 70 mph speed limit except for the section to the west of the Skippool Bridge Junction where the number of existing access points would dictate a 40 mph speed limit.
- 2.7 One residential property located close to the western end of the scheme would require demolition in order to construct the new Skippool Bridge junction. Another property in the same area may require demolition due to the proximity of the new road.
- 2.8 The new road would incorporate a number of design features to reduce its environmental impacts including;
- Proposed bunds and mounding located adjacent to the highway which would be approximately 2 metres higher than the proposed carriageway level. The purpose of the bunds would be to help screen the road and mitigate its visual impacts and to provide a barrier to road noise.
 - The use of low noise surfacing materials
 - Replacement of the existing culvert where the Main Dyke passes under the A585 with a bridge to remove a restriction to flow to reduce flood risks upstream of the bridge.

- Restriction of new lighting to the section between Skippool Junction and Skippool Bridge Junction, at Poulton junction and Windy Harbour Junction. The lighting would consist of 12 metre high columns with LED lanterns designed to reduce light spill.
- Flood compensation areas on the section of route adjacent to the Main Dyke.
- Various landscaping works to mitigate for impacts on ecology including dedication of an area of land to the north of the western end of the scheme as a mitigation area for birds associated with the nearby Wyre Estuary.

3. Description of the Application Site and Surroundings

- 3.1 The eastern end of the new road would be at the existing A585 /A586 Windy Harbour junction. This junction has recently been improved to increase its capacity by adding new turning lanes and increasing the size of the junction generally. The new road would then follow the existing A585 in a westerly direction with the existing road being widened to a dual carriageway by creating two new lanes on its southern side. Approximately 1km from the Windy Harbour junction the new road would begin to diverge from the existing road onto agricultural land to the south, crossing a public footpath which would be realigned over the new road via a new footbridge.
- 3.2 The road then trends generally south west towards Lodge Lane. To the south of the proposed road at this point is Singleton Hall together with another property called The Manor. Singleton Hall is a hotel complex with surrounding parkland landscape and which includes a grade II listed ice house structure. The Manor is a similarly large property set in landscaped grounds and is approximately 90 metres from the centre line of the road. The road scheme would result in the loss of some woodland in this area parts of which are subject to tree preservation orders. To limit land take in this area, the cutting would use lengths of retaining wall rather than earth embankment.
- 3.3 This section of road would be in cutting up to 8.5 metres deep at its maximum and would run under Lodge Lane. There are a number of isolated properties located off Lodge Lane close to the point at which Lodge Lane would pass over the new road.
- 3.4 After the Lodge Lane crossing, the route would then swing north westwards across agricultural fields divided by hedgerows towards a new junction with Garstang Road East. The scheme provides for two borrow pits to be developed in this area to provide fill materials for use in the construction of embankments and to reduce the need to import materials. Beyond the Garstang Road East junction the road would continue north westwards across further agricultural fields mainly on embankment up to 5 metres above existing ground level. This part of the route is located in a Flood Zone (Zone 3 with the highest risk of flooding) and a series of flood compensation areas would be constructed between the road and Main Dyke to the south of the road alignment. A new housing estate is located on land to the south of the Main Dyke approximately 130 metres from the centre line of the new road.
- 3.5 The road then curves progressively northwards to a junction with the existing A585 Mains Lane at an existing gap between properties located off Mains Lane (each is approximately 25 metres from the road centreline). The existing A585 would be

remodelled and widened to dual carriageway standard with a new bridge being created over the Main Dyke to replace the existing culvert.

3.6 From the Main Dyke crossing to the western terminus of the new road at Skippool Junction, the improvement would be mainly achieved within the footprint of the existing highway. There are a number of residential properties and a hotel located to the south of the existing Breck Road in this area. A section of this part of the route also lies within the Green Belt.

3.7 The proposed alignment is not subject to any other major planning designations or constraints. The Wyre Estuary is a European wildlife site (Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation) and is located to the north of the road alignment (300 metres from road alignment at its closest point)

4. Planning History

4.1 There is no planning history that is relevant to the proposed road scheme.

5. Relevant Planning Policies including policies of the Development Plan

5.1 National Policy Statement: The Government has produced a series of national policy statements against which applications for nationally significant infrastructure will be considered. A National Policy Statement for National Networks was published in December 2014 to guide decisions on proposals relating to the national road and rail networks promoted under the Planning Act 2008.

5.2 The National Policy Statement for National Networks maintains that the national road networks (such as the A585 trunk road) play a significant part in supporting economic growth as well as existing business activity and facilitating passenger, business and leisure journeys across the country. The policy states that there is a critical need to improve the national networks to address road congestion and stimulate and support growth. The Government considers that in their current condition, the national networks will act as a constraint to sustainable economic growth.

5.3 Specifically in relation to roads, the National Policy Statement sets out the pressures on the trunk road network, the delays caused by congestion and the additional pressures that will result from forecasted traffic growth. The Government has therefore concluded that at a strategic level, there is a compelling need for development of the national road network.

5.4 The policy within the National Policy Statement is therefore to bring forward improvements to the strategic road network to address the above needs by:-

- Improving junctions, new slip roads and upgraded technology to address congestion
- Implementing smart motorways to increase capacity and manage performance
- Improve trunk roads in particular by dualling of single carriageway truck roads to increase capacity and improve performance.

5.5 The National Policy Statement sets out that rather than to meet the demands of unconstrained traffic growth through a predict and provide approach, individual schemes will be brought forward to tackle specific issues, including safety.

- 5.6 National Planning Policy Framework: The National Planning Policy Framework does not contain specific policies for nationally significant infrastructure projects. Such projects should be determined in accordance with the decision making framework set out in the Planning Act 2008 and the relevant national policy statement. However, the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework will still be a relevant consideration in the determination of this application for a Development Consent Order. The following paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework are considered relevant and should be taken into account in determination of this application:- 11 (presumption in favour of sustainable development), 80 – 83 (Building a strong competitive economy), 110 (Promoting sustainable transport), 127 (Achieving well designed places), 145 – 146 (Green Belts), 155 – 165 (Flood Risk), 175 – 177 (Ecology), 180 – 181 (Pollution), 189 – 199 (Heritage Assets) and 206 (Mineral Safeguarding).
- 5.7 Lancashire County Council Transport Policy: - A safeguarded route for the construction of a road between the M55 and Norcross has featured in the local transport policy for some time. Three options were contained within a Government White paper published in 1987 and the option linking junction 4 of the M55 to Norcross was subsequently selected as the preferred route and was called the Fylde Coast Easterly Bypass. Following removal of the Scheme from the national trunk road programme in the 1994 review, the county council resolved in 1996 to safeguard the route for development control purposes. Policy 34 of the Lancashire Structure Plan 1991 – 2006 included this road as a scheme which the county council would seek to construct in the period up to 2006. In recognition of this policy, the Fylde Local Plan 2005 safeguarded the land required for the construction of the Fylde Coast Easterly Bypass (Policy TR11).
- 5.8 Lancashire Local Transport Plan: Lancashire County Council has produced a local transport plan which sets out local transport improvement priorities over the period between 2011 and 2021. Improvements to the trunk road network serving Fleetwood are listed as one of the priorities in terms of providing new highway capacity.
- 5.9 The county council has also adopted a series of Highways and Transport Masterplans, the purpose of which is to implement the broad transport priorities set out in the Local Transport Plan. The Masterplans set out major changes to the highways, public transport, and walking / cycling facilities which would bring economic benefits across the county, unlock land for development and provide for the management of traffic. A Masterplan has been adopted (July 2015) for the Fylde Coast which covers the area subject to the current application. See <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/strategies-policies-plans/roads-parking-and-travel/highways-and-transport-masterplans/fylde-coast-highways-and-transport-masterplan/>
- 5.10 The Fylde Coast Masterplan deals in detail with the A585 corridor. It notes that the existing road bypasses all of the main towns along its route but still passes through a number of smaller settlements and the section between Skippool and the M55 has a number of priority junctions with side roads and other minor accesses. It notes that traffic flows on the section of the A585 between Skippool and Windy Harbour are around 28,000 vehicles per day of which almost 1600 are HGVs.

- 5.11 The Masterplan summarises the capacity and safety issues on the existing A585 due to insufficient junction capacity and high flows leading to low average speeds between Norcross and Windy Harbour not only during peak times but increasingly at off peak times and weekends. It notes that these problems create congestion on the network leading to unreliable journey times. The nature of the existing A585 also results in road safety issues and traffic diverting onto less suitable roads in order to avoid congestion at the junctions onto the A585.
- 5.12 The Masterplan also considers the county council's own proposals for highway improvements in the area, in particular the construction of a new road to link the M55 with Norcross (called the Blue route). The Blue Route would involve construction of a new 7.5 kilometre dual carriageway road between the M55 east of Junction 4 at Peel Hill (Blackpool) and the A585 Mains Lane at Skippool and associated on-line widening of approximately 3.5 kilometres of the A585 to dual carriageway from Skippool to Victoria Road, Cleveleys.
- 5.13 Whilst the Masterplan notes the benefits that would be achieved by the Blue Route in terms of reducing congestion and improving safety, the county council concludes that the scheme is not deliverable in the foreseeable future due to a lack of funding and therefore alternative solutions need to be investigated.
- 5.14 Fylde Borough Council adopted a replacement local plan on 22nd October 2018. The replacement local plan includes policies on local transport improvements including those required to address issues on the A585. Fylde Borough Council considers that the Blue Route should be safeguarded until such time as an alternative highway solution is proposed to alleviate congestion on the A585. The whole of the Blue Route between Skippool Bridge and the M55 is therefore safeguarded by Policy T1 of the Local Plan to prevent other development that might prevent the road from being constructed in the future.
- 5.15 Wyre Borough Council adopted a new local plan in February 2019. Although only a very small part of the proposed highway lies within Wyre Borough, the A585 as a main arterial route has an important role to play in the local economy within Wyre. Policy CDMP6 therefore states that land required for transport and highway improvements in the Local Transport Plan, Fylde Coast Highways and Transport Masterplan and any other scheme or strategy by the Highways Authority or Highways England is safeguarded so that they are not compromised.
- 5.16 The county council notes that a number of the chapters of the Environmental Statement make reference to the Lancashire Structure Plan. The Examining Authority should note that the Lancashire Structure Plan no longer forms part of the adopted Development Plan for this area.

6.0 **Commentary on Policy Context**

- 6.1 The National Policy Statement for National Networks establishes the broad policy criteria for considering improvement schemes to trunk roads such as the A585. It sets out the need for undertaking improvements to the network in order to improve reliability and safety and states that there is a compelling need for such improvements to be undertaken.

- 6.2 The A585 trunk road links Fleetwood and the extensive urban areas of North Blackpool, Thornton-Cleveleys and Poulton-le-Fylde with the M55 at Junction 3 north of Kirkham. Although it remains part of the Strategic Road Network, the national role of the A585 as part of an inter-regional route between Great Britain and Northern Ireland through the Port of Fleetwood ceased with the withdrawal of the Ro-Ro ferry service to Larne in December 2010. The route nevertheless remains important to the wider Fylde Coast economy and its continued safe and effective operation is vital to the delivery of Wyre Borough's Local Plan, the regeneration of Fleetwood and the success of the Hillhouse International Enterprise Zone at Thornton. Hillhouse is a prime location for industrial and commercial development and is currently home to several multi-national companies engaged in the manufacture of advanced materials and polymers. Growth in the Irish Sea offshore wind energy sector is a long-term economic opportunity for Fleetwood and the wider Fylde Coast area, with the port well placed to support ongoing operations and maintenance.
- 6.3 The A585 is a single carriageway road of variable standard, and although there are bypasses of all the main towns along the route, it still passes through a number of smaller settlements. Whilst most of the junctions with other main roads are roundabouts or controlled by traffic signals, a significant number of uncontrolled junctions with side roads and other minor accesses remain, particularly on the unimproved section between the M55 and Skippool. Beyond Skippool, the A585 is a modern standard single carriageway. The Dock Street Link in Fleetwood, completed in January 1993, provided improved access to the dock area and former ferry terminal. Traffic flows are consistently above 20,000 vehicles per day throughout the length of the route between the M55 and Cleveleys, peaking at 32,000 vehicles per day on Mains Lane east of Skippool. Use of the A585 by heavy goods vehicles has reduced following closure of the port, but numbers remain significant with around 1,300 HGVs per day on the unimproved section north of the M55.
- 6.4 Congestion is an ongoing issue between the M55 and Cleveleys, principally due to insufficient junction capacity, and is particularly severe at the traffic-signal controlled junctions with the A586 at Little Singleton and the A588 Shard Road. Peak periods have extended in duration, with low average speeds observed between the Norcross and Windy Harbour junctions, and congestion is an increasing problem during off-peak periods and at weekends. This can make journey times unreliable, with consequent implications for local residents, businesses and visitors. The high volume of traffic combined with the sub-standard alignment between the M55 and Skippool results in road safety and operational problems arising from, for example, a lack of right-turning facilities through the settlements of Greenhalgh and Esprick. Diversion of traffic onto less suitable local roads because of capacity problems at junctions remains an issue, with local communities away from the route suffering in terms of poor road safety, noise, air quality and severance. The proposed improvement works to the A585 would assist in addressing some of these issues on the section of trunk road between Windy Harbour and Skippool. The scheme would therefore give rise to a number of the benefits that are referred to in the National Policy Statement and therefore it is considered that the principle of the development is supported by national transport policy.

- 6.5 The adopted Fylde Coast Highways and Transport Masterplan commits the county council to working with Highways England to identify a programme of cost effective, viable improvements to remove the last remaining pinch-points on the route. The county council believes the proposed scheme is a major step forward, addressing the worst remaining bottleneck on the route at the Five Lane Ends traffic-signal controlled junction at Little Singleton and improving the A585 Mains Lane / A588 Shard Road junction. It could also remove rat-running traffic from Singleton and the wider local road network.
- 6.6 The proposed Windy Harbour to Skippool Improvement scheme subject to the Development Consent Order application would not address all of the issues on the A585 between the M55 junction and Skippool and therefore the benefits of the proposed scheme might be less than those that would be achieved through construction of the Blue Route. Notably the proposed scheme would not address any of the deficiencies on the current A585 between Windy Harbour and the M55.
- 6.7 Whilst the Blue Route is safeguarded in the Fylde Local Plan for development control purposes, with an estimated cost of well in excess of £300m, the council does not believe the 'Blue Route' is deliverable as a local major transport scheme. Alternative solutions to what are very real, day-to-day problems in the A585 corridor and its nearby roads therefore need progressing as a matter of urgency.
- 6.8 The proposed scheme does not preclude the construction of the whole 'Blue Route' at a later date so the county council does not consider that there is any conflict with Policy T1 of the Fylde Local Plan. In fact the proposal actually delivers that part of the safeguarded route between Skippool Junction and Garstang Road East.
- 6.9 The county council notes the representations that have been received regarding the predicted effectiveness of the scheme and the issues that would remain on the unimproved part of the A585. An on line improvement of the A585 between Windy Harbour and junction 3 on the M55 would not be possible due the impact on the existing development along this stretch of road. However, it would be possible to bypass this whole length of road, a scheme which the county council is pursuing through Transport for the North as a potential for funding in road period 3 (2025 – 2030). If this funding is forthcoming, it would be possible to abandon the Blue Route as Highways England are unlikely to take this scheme forward and it is beyond the county council's ability to deliver given the scale of funding required and a potential local contribution of at least 15% which would equate to around £45m on a total project cost estimated to be £300m. Although the current proposal would not resolve the issues on the whole route, the county council considers that the current proposal can be viewed as part of an incremental approach to resolving the safety and congestion issues on the section of the A585 between the M55 and Skippool.

7.0 Local Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Development

- 7.1 The application for a Development Consent Order is accompanied by an Environmental Assessment that examines the main environmental impacts of the

proposed development. The Environmental Statement was prepared in accordance with a scoping report issues by the Planning Inspectorate on which the county council has been previously consulted.

- 7.2 The Environmental Statement contains chapters relating to the following issues: Air Quality, Cultural Heritage, Biodiversity, Landscape, People and Communities, Noise and Vibration, Road Drainage, Geology and Contamination, Materials, Climate and Cumulative Effects.
- 7.3 In writing this Local Impact Report, the county council has not undertaken its own consultation (except within its own areas of expertise on highways, flooding, public rights of way, historic environment and legal / property issues). However regard has been given to the relevant representations that have been submitted by local residents, statutory consultees and other interested parties in order to understand the issues that are raised by this proposal.

8. Air Quality Effects

- 8.1 The Environmental Statement examines the impacts of the development during both the construction phase (mainly fugitive dust impacts) and during the operation of the scheme in terms of more general air quality issues such as pollutants and particulates from road traffic.
- 8.2 Air quality impacts have been assessed according to the methodology set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges which takes into account various guidance and objectives for local air quality set out in national and European legislation. Modelling has been undertaken to establish local concentrations of NO² and PM₁₀ (particulates) in 2015 and to predict levels for the same air quality factors in 2022 (with and without the scheme). A regional assessment has also been carried out for the pollutants but also including CO² emissions. The predictions in the assessment have used traffic model data which estimate the traffic levels that would occur on the local highway network over the assessment period. A study area for air quality has been established based upon roads that would see a change of greater than 1000 vehicles in annual average daily flow or in significant changes in speed and therefore covers all of the highways that would experience the most significant changes (both positive and negative) in traffic flows arising from the construction of the scheme.
- 8.3 The Air Quality Directive sets out standards for air quality in terms of NO_x emissions and requires Air Quality Management Areas to be established where there is a failure to reach the stated standards. Air Quality Management Areas are designated by borough councils where annual mean levels of NO² exceed the national objective level of 40µg/m³. There is an Air Quality Management Area within the study area within Poulton le Fylde. Highways England have undertaken their own air quality monitoring close to Windy Harbour junction which indicated that NO² concentrations were well below the national objective level. However, information submitted to the examination by Fylde Borough Council indicates that current NO_x levels are very close to the EU objective level at Singleton Crossroads.

- 8.4 The National Policy Statement for National Networks requires the Secretary of State to give substantial weight to air quality matters where after mitigation there would be substantial air quality impact. The National Policy Statement says that consent should be refused where the scheme would result in air quality standards breaching the levels specified in the Air Quality Directive or would affect the ability of a non compliant area to achieve compliance within the agreed timescales.
- 8.5 It is considered that the assessment of air quality objectives has been undertaken in accordance with recognised guidance and that air quality impacts have been assessed at the relevant receptors in order to understand the likely air quality impacts of the development. There are 41 locations along the line of the scheme and the existing roads that have been used as assessment locations comprised of existing and proposed residential development.
- 8.6 The assessment shows that the largest difference in air quality in 2022 between the 'with scheme' and 'without scheme' is at a residential property located off Mains Lane close to the Singleton Crossroads where there would be a $10\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ improvement in terms of annual mean NO_2 concentrations. There are other residential properties along Mains Lane where there would also be improvements in air quality due to the transfer of traffic flows onto the new road located at further distance from these properties. Out of the 41 assessment locations, there are approximately 18 properties where air quality would be detrimentally affected. However, in all cases the effect is minor and would not result in air quality breaching the objective level. The worst affected properties are located adjacent to the Lodge Lane bridge. The assessment shows that there would be a worsening of air quality within the Air Quality Management Area in Poulton le Fylde in the base year of the assessment but that there would be a small decrease as a result of the scheme. Similar trends are shown for particulates.
- 8.7 In relation to dust emissions during construction, the main issue will be when construction works take place very close to existing properties. This will particularly relevant for certain properties in the Skippool area which are located very close to the proposed new road and those located off Lodge Lane where there will be considerable excavation and earthmoving required to create the proposed cutting. There is a risk of significant dust impacts at these properties if mitigation is not provided. However, it is considered that such impacts could be reduced to acceptable levels provided that mitigation is properly employed. Such measures should be detailed in a Construction Management Plan which should be the subject of a requirement forming part of any Development Consent Order for this scheme.
- 8.8 Calculations have also been undertaken of emissions on a regional level including for CO_2 . CO_2 levels show a marginal increase; whilst the new road would attract and generate more traffic, such increases would be balanced by technological advances including electric vehicles.
- 8.9 The conclusion on air quality is therefore that the scheme would not worsen air quality in their Quality Management Area and would not result in any impact such that any new Air Quality Management Areas would require designation. Overall

there would be improvements in locations currently experiencing air quality impacts from traffic therefore having some public health benefits.

9. Noise

- 9.1 The Environmental Statement contains a chapter to examine the noise impacts of the development. The noise assessment is based upon a survey of existing noise levels in the area to establish background noise levels and to assess the significance of any noise increases or decreases due to construction of the scheme.
- 9.2 Noise impacts have been assessed in accordance with the policy in the National Networks National Policy Statement and the Noise Policy Statement for England together with a range of other legislation and policy. The assessments have been carried out to establish likely noise levels during the construction and operation of the road as a number of noise sensitive properties close to the proposed road and on the existing road network and to establish the need and design of any mitigation measures that might be required to reduce noise to acceptable levels. Noise predictions are made to allow a comparison between the existing noise levels and those that would occur in 2022 and 2037 with, and without, the scheme.
- 9.3 The noise Policy Statement for England requires noise to be assessed in terms of a NOEL (No observed effect level – where there is no observed effect on health or quality of life), LOAEL (Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level – the level above which some adverse effects can be detected) and SOAEL (Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level – the level above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life could occur). There is also a UAEL level (Unacceptable Adverse Effects Level) which is exposure to noise of a level which have such impacts that it should be prevented.
- 9.4 The noise impacts have been assessed at 18 locations, all of which are residential properties. There will be more than 18 properties that are affected by noise but the selected locations are considered to be reasonably representative to allow the noise impacts on all properties to be assessed. The location of these receptors was agreed with Wyre and Fylde Borough Environmental Health officers.
- 9.5 For operational noise, the assessment shows that the most significant noise increases (increase greater than 5dB(A)) occur at receptors located on the southern side of Mains Lane facing onto the scheme, those properties on the Moorfield Park development facing the scheme and those properties within 150 metres of the Lodge Lane underpass. 79 dwellings and four sensitive receptors fall within these locations and would be classified as experiencing major adverse noise impacts. 124 and 2 other sensitive receptors are predicted to experience a 3 to 4 dB(A) increase in traffic noise which would be classified as a moderate adverse effect and which would be experienced on the southern side of Mains Lane, on the Moorfield Park development and approximately 150 metres south of the Lodge Lane underpass. A further 699 dwellings and 5 other sensitive receptors would experience lower level of noise increase (between 1 to 2.9 dB(A) increase) – these properties are again located on the Moorfield park development, south of the A586 in Poulton le Fylde and along Skippool Road. In terms of the properties

located on Mains Lane that are identified as being adversely affected to varying degrees, it is assumed that for some of these properties, the scheme would result in noise being moved from the front of the property to the rear of the property. Therefore, these properties may experience no or little change in overall noise level although there would be a change in the way such properties experience the road noise. For example, the rear gardens would experience greater noise than at present.

- 9.6 The applicant states that these impacts have been mitigated to a minimum through use of low noise surfacing materials and specific noise mitigation measures such as bunds and barriers / fences.
- 9.7 The county council as Highways Authority does have experience of using thin surfacing materials and has specified such materials for use on some of its own road building projects in order to reduce noise impacts. However, such materials are relatively new and there is some concern about their durability and long term maintenance costs when compared to hot rolled asphalt. Given these uncertainties, a more robust approach for the noise assessment might have been on the basis that conventional surfacing materials will be used in the event that these materials are eventually used on the road due to concerns about the maintenance costs of using modern thin surfacing materials. The noise assessment undertaken in 2016 for the county council's own Preston Western Distributor Road was conducted on this basis. The Examining Authority may therefore wish to consider requiring a reworking of the noise assessment based upon conventional surfacing materials being used. It is not clear from the Environmental Statement what correction factor has been used in the noise assessment to factor for the use of low noise surfacing materials.
- 9.8 There would also be properties that would experience noise improvements. 95 dwellings and three other sensitive receptors would experience a decrease in excess of 5dB(A). These are along the north side of Mains Lane, those within 130 metres of Garstang New Road and those on the north side of Little Singleton. These improvements are classed as major beneficial. A further 45 dwellings would experience decreases between 3 to 4 dB(A); these properties are also along the north side of Mains Lane and those within 130 to 200 metres of Garstang Road North. A further 154 dwellings and 2 other receptors are predicted to experience lower noise decreases (between 1 – 2.9 dB(A); these are those at 200 metres north of Garstang New Road and east and west of the A588 in Skippool.
- 9.9 In summary, using the applicant's methodology there are predicted to be 1716 dwellings where there would be some increase in road traffic noise. However, in terms of significant noise increase / decrease there are more properties (99) that would experience a decrease in noise above a 'Significant Observed Adverse Effect Level' than those that would experience a similar degree of noise increase (19). However, for those properties that are detrimentally impacted, it will be important to consider the significance of the impact and the design and impact of any mitigation measures.
- 9.10 The noise mitigation measures that are incorporated into the scheme are a combination of use of low noise road surfacing materials, false cuttings, 2 metre

high noise attenuation fencing and also sinking the road in cutting in the Lodge Lane area. These mitigation measures are considered to be generally acceptable with the following comments:

- There is a property called Beeches located off Mains Lane immediately adjacent to the point where the new bypass meets with the existing A585. From the text of the Environmental Statement it appears that a decision has not yet been made whether to demolish this property. If this property is to be retained it is suggested that more noise mitigation needs to be provided than is shown on the Environmental Masterplan drawings as these drawing only show a narrow belt of woodland planting between the road and the property.
- The proposed use of low noise surfacing materials is noted but the Examining Authority is requested to have regard to the county council's comment about such materials at paragraph 8.6 of this report.
- The only property that is likely to be eligible for noise insulation based upon the predicted Increase in noise levels is a property on Lodge Lane called North Lodge. It is not clear why this is the only property that would qualify for such measures given that there are a number of other properties in this area which are located at a similar distance to the proposed highway. North Lodge would also benefit from a 2 metre high noise fence. However, there is also another property located in this area (Larkfield) which does not appear to benefit from the same degree of noise protection. The reason why no mitigation is provided for Larkfield other than planting is not clear.

9.11 The Environmental Statement also assesses the impacts of construction noise. For certain properties very close to the route (such as those located off Mains Lane and Lodge Lane), these impacts are likely to be significant. However, in the main they would be relatively short term. Mitigation measures for such impacts would be required which would need to relate to controls on hours of operation and implementation of specific mitigation measures during certain operational activities. These could be secured through a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

10. Landscape / Visual Impacts

10.1 The Environmental Statement includes a chapter that examines the landscape impact of the proposals. The landscape assessment includes photographic material showing the visual impacts of the scheme from various sensitive receptors along the route alignment. The locations used for the visual impact assessment were previously agreed with Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils and assessment has been carried out in accordance with a recognised methodology for undertaking such studies. A notable absence from the landscape assessment relates to the visual impact on the Grade II listed Ice House structure forming part of Singleton Hall. The absence is due to lack of consent being received to allow the applicant access to the structure to permit photographic material to be obtained. The applicant has obtained other viewpoints from publically accessible locations to allow an assessment of the visual impacts on the Ice House to be made. In general, the assessment methods are considered to be acceptable to allow an assessment of the visual and landscape impacts to be made.

- 10.2 The route of the scheme has been selected to reduce its visual and landscape impacts to a minimum. It does not impact upon any landscapes of national (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) or local importance. However, it would still be a major new highway running through an area of predominately undeveloped countryside and would therefore have a significant visual impact, requiring removal of existing landscape features such as hedgerows, trees (some of which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders) and construction of significant cuttings and embankments. There are also a large number of residential properties that have views over the alignment of the proposed road where there would be visual impacts to a greater or lesser degree.
- 10.3 The main landscape impact of the scheme would be the section of new road between Skippool Bridge junction in the west and the junction with the existing A585 in the east. This is the section of the new road that would run through the existing open countryside. The section between the Skippool Bridge Junction and Lodge Lane is characterised by a number of large agricultural fields divided by low hedgerows. The landscape in this area is predominantly flat with few major features such as mature trees or woodlands. It is considered that the contours of the landscape would limit the longer distant views of the proposed road. However, much of this section of the highway would be on significant embankment, especially the section parallel to the Main Dyke. The embankment would be a significant feature and would represent a major adverse change to the existing landscape. It is accepted that this section of road needs to be raised above flood level but it is not clear why this section of the road needs to be raised on such a significant embankment other than it would permit the road to be constructed without requiring significant off-site disposal of surplus excavated material. This part of the scheme would also have a significant visual impact when seen from properties on the south side of Mains Lane and also the new houses currently being constructed off Garstang Road East northwards towards the scheme. These impacts would be partially mitigated by the use of false cuttings and landscaping on the external faces of the embankment but it would take several years for the landscaping to mature to a condition where the mitigation is effective.
- 10.4 For the section from Lodge Lane eastwards, the main landscape impacts relate to the proposed cutting and the removal of various plantations and trees to the north of Singleton Hall to construct the road through this area. The works through this area would have a major visual impact although the county council accepts that the routing options through this area are limited and the option selected is that which minimises the loss of vegetation and visual impact and avoid the need to demolish existing properties. To reduce the impacts through this area, retaining walls are used to support the sides of the cutting in order to reduce land take and loss of existing vegetation. Even with such mitigation measures, the scheme would still result in the loss of woodland in this area, some of which is protected by tree preservation order and which forms part of the parkland type landscape surrounding Singleton Hall.
- 10.5 Adjacent to the Lodge Lane crossing are a number of individual residential properties (Larkfield, North Lodge and The Manor together with Barnfield Manor which has been divided into a number of units). All of these properties are located

very close to the road alignment (around 30 metres from the cutting in the case of North Lodge). In the case of The Manor and Barnfield Manor it is considered that the route and design of the scheme is such that the visual impact on the properties are minimised as most of the existing vegetation on their northern side is retained thereby retaining their existing setting. New landscaping is proposed to offset the impact of the 2 metre high noise attenuation fencing that is proposed to mitigate noise impacts to these properties. However, it is considered that a continuous hedgerow might be more effective in time to screen the fence than the line of trees that appears to be proposed. For the two properties to the north of the Lodge Lane crossing (Larkfield and North Lodge), some of the existing vegetation to the south of these properties will need to be removed. Some will be retained but particularly in the case of North Lodge, it is considered that there will be a significant impact on the visual amenity and setting of this property. The applicant has prepared photomontage information of this area looking north along Lodge Lane but due to the potential impacts in this area, it is considered that it would have also have been useful to provide information showing the view southwards from North Lodge towards the new bridge.

- 10.6 During the development of the project, the applicant investigated the ability to construct a land bridge in the Lodge Lane area. This would have involved the road to be constructed in a short tunnel. The county council considers that the land bridge would have significantly reduced the visual and noise impacts in this location. However, this option was dismissed due to the costs of construction and does not form part of the current proposal.
- 10.7 In the grounds of Singleton Hall approximately 80 metres east of The Manor is a former ice house which is a listed building (Grade II). It is therefore important to consider the impacts of the new road on the setting of this feature particularly in terms of the guidance in section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The ice house would be approximately 90 metres south of the edge of the cutting. However, the existing woodland immediately surrounding the ice house would be retained and whilst the presence of the new road would have some impacts in this area (in particular through increased noise), the ice house would not be divorced from the remainder of the existing estate buildings and the lakes that may have been the ice source for the building. The significance and setting of the listed building would therefore be maintained. The proposal should therefore be considered against paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework where there is less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset.
- 10.8 The other main landscape impact associated with the eastern end of the scheme relates to the proposal for carrying an existing footpath over the new road. The applicant has included a photomontage of the proposed bridge which would be a large steelwork structure with separate access ramps and staircases which add to its visual impact. The county council considers that the design of this structure is not particularly satisfactory in this rural setting and should be revisited. In particular it should be investigated whether there is scope to divert the footpath alongside the road to the west to where the footpath could cross the proposed cutting via a more simple bridge structure or if an underpass under the new road would be possible. Alternatively, it might be possible to provide some retaining walls against

the sides of the new road to form the abutments of the bridge. Planted embankments could then be formed against the retaining walls to provide a structure more in keeping with this rural location.

- 10.9 At the western end of the new road beyond Skippool Bridge junction, the road improvement scheme would mainly be achieved within the boundaries of the existing A585 where the visual and landscape impacts would be significantly less than the locations further east. However, there would still be very significant visual impacts during the construction phase relating to the remodelling of the existing A585 / A588 roundabout to a traffic light controlled junction, the construction of the new bridge over the Main Dyke and the junction where the new road would meet the existing A585 on Mains Lane.
- 10.10 To conclude on landscape issues, the proposed highway would have major visual and landscape impacts during construction which would only be partially mitigated by landscaping works. The residual impacts would be particularly marked in the Lodge Lane area and are a significant negative impact of the scheme that needs to be considered alongside any benefits that the road would deliver.

11. Ecology / Biodiversity

- 11.1 The Environmental Statement includes a chapter which examines the potential impacts of the proposed highway on ecology / biodiversity. This section of the Environmental Statement is based upon desk top studies of local ecological records together with field studies and surveys for a range of protected species and other ecological interests such as bats, great crested newts, otters, water voles, badgers and over wintering and breeding birds.
- 11.2 The road alignment would not directly affect any international, national or local level ecological designations. However, the Wyre Estuary is located approximately 300 metres from the road at its closest point and forms part of the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Special Protection Area, designated for supporting internationally important populations of wetland and sea birds. The Wyre Estuary is also a Ramsar site designated for similar reasons. The estuary is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest for its ornithological interests and is also proposed to be a marine conservation zone. There are also three local Biological Heritage Sites in the area (River Wyre, Shard Bridge Field Ditch and Skippool Marsh) that are potentially affected by the scheme.
- 11.3 Paragraphs 170 – 177 of the National Planning Policy Framework relate to ecology and require that where significant harm to biodiversity from a development cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. Development on land outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest and which is likely to have an adverse on it should not normally be permitted. Where development would result in the loss of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees), planning permission should be refused unless there are exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. An overall priority is that the planning system should pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

- 11.4 The methods and surveys that have been used to establish the ecological value of the application site are considered to be generally acceptable. However there does not appear to be any attempt to quantify the value of the trees that would be removed beyond an assessment of whether they are covered by tree preservation orders. It is considered that some assessment should be made as to whether any of the trees to be removed would fall within the 'veteran or ancient' categories referred to in paragraph 175 c) of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 11.5 There are various ecological habitats and features that would be affected by the development. This would include the removal of 6.3 km of hedgerow of which 4.2 km would be permanently lost. The scheme would also require the removal of 6,287 m² of deciduous woodland at the eastern end of the scheme in the Lodge Lane area. Three ponds would also be permanently lost, although none of these are used by great crested newts. Two buildings which are confirmed bat roosts would be demolished. A number of other individual trees would be removed some of which have bat roost potential. The footprint of the scheme would also occupy a large area of agricultural farm land. Whilst this is the main intensively managed farmland, the over wintering birds surveys confirm that this land is used by bird species that are associated with the European protected sites in the Wyre Estuary. There are also potential impacts on badgers and otters due to the proximity of the scheme to existing habitats or to works that are required to existing streams and watercourses.
- 11.6 The proposals include mitigation measures for the above impacts. These include new woodland planting along both sides of the dual carriageway, replacement of the hedgerows temporarily removed during construction and new hedgerow planting alongside the road for those hedgerows that would be permanently lost. Whilst a greater amount of new hedgerow and tree plant would be provided compared to that removed, it is not considered that this necessarily translates to an overall ecological gain especially when the new planting would be mainly alongside a dual carriageway where disturbance impacts would be much greater.
- 11.7 A wide range of other mitigation measures for the direct impacts of the development are proposed. These include replacement ponds, landscaping of the road drainage mitigation measures, working methods to protect water courses that would be crossed by the scheme and specific measures to address impacts on species such as otters and badgers which are present in the area. The examining authority should ensure that the mitigation measures are sufficiently developed and in suitable locations to ensure that measurable net gains for biodiversity would be delivered as required by paragraph 174b of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 11.8 The scheme would result in the loss of two confirmed bat roosts. The Examining Authority should therefore assure itself that the tests in the Habitats Regulations are satisfied in relation to the impacts on this particular European Protected Species. In particular there seems to be limited information within section 8.6 of the ecology chapter of the Environmental Statement to demonstrate that the intended mitigation measures for the impacts on bats would be in a suitable location and of suitable design to provide sufficient mitigation for the roosting habitat that would be lost to the scheme. If development consent is granted for the

scheme, it should be subject to a requirement dealing with the provision and design of the mitigation measures for bats.

- 11.9 No part of the scheme would directly affect the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Special Protection Area. However, there is the potential for indirect effects on this site if the scheme would involve loss of habitat that is used by bird species for which the Special Protection Area is designated. Such loss might occur through loss of habitat or by disturbance to areas used for feeding by construction activities.
- 11.10 Under the Habitats Regulations 2017, where a development would have a likely significant effect on the designated interest features of a European Wildlife Site (such as the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Special Protection Area), an assessment (called an Appropriate Assessment) must be carried out of the implications for the protected site arising from the project either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Consent can only be given to a project having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of any European Wildlife Site unless it can be demonstrated that there are no alternatives or if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest why the project should proceed.
- 11.11 As part of this process, Highways England have undertaken a screening exercise to establish if the project would have a likely significant effect on any European site. This assessment used the bird survey information that was collected as part of the environmental assessment of the whole scheme. Several of the bird species for which the Special Protection Area is designated were found within the study area at numbers exceeding 1% of the Special Protection Area populations for these species. In such circumstances, it is generally concluded that there would be a likely significant effect and therefore a full Appropriate Assessment is required. It was also considered that there could be water quality implications such that a likely significant effect could not be ruled out.
- 11.12 Recent case law on the assessment of projects under the Habitats Directive has established that the screening process must be carried out without reference to any mitigation measures that might be employed to address impacts on European wildlife sites. The county council considers that the Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment that has been undertaken by the applicant has not taken into account any mitigation measures and therefore has been undertaken in accordance with the most recent interpretation of the law on such matters.
- 11.13 In view of the findings of the screening exercise, a full Appropriate Assessment of the implications of the project for the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar site has been undertaken relating to disturbance / displacement of birds, loss of foraging / roosting habitat and water quality effects.
- 11.14 Habitats Regulations Assessments are required to take into account other projects or plans to assess if there might be 'in combination' impacts with the proposed development. The list of projects within Appendix 16.1 of the Environmental Statement includes the Preesall Underground Gas Storage Scheme which was granted Development Consent in July 2015 and which is indicated as being within

the cumulative impact assessment due to falling within multiple zones of influence. However, this project does not appear to be included within the list of 'in combination' projects within the Habitats Risk Assessment.

11.15 The Appropriate Assessment concludes that there would be adverse impacts on certain over wintering bird species for which the Special Protection Area is designated. The Assessment indicates that the adverse impacts would mainly be by way of disturbance, particularly during construction works and with a much more limited effect during the operational phase once the noise mitigation and landscaping works become effective. To address impacts during construction, the applicant proposes to establish an ecological mitigation area covering 16.4 ha of agricultural fields to the north of the existing A585. Various management controls would exist on this area over the construction phase so that its value for the relevant bird species is maximised to compensate for that lost to the scheme itself. The Appropriate Assessment concludes that with the mitigation, the proposed development would not prevent the Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Special Protection Area from fulfilling its conservation objectives. The county council generally agrees with the conclusions of the assessment. However, the landscaping alongside the road will take some time to mature to a stage where it provides effective screening for the disturbance impacts of the scheme and a restriction of the management timescale to the duration of construction may not be sufficient to provide adequate compensation. Therefore the Examining Authority should satisfy itself that the management timescale proposed for the mitigation area is appropriate and would be effective. The details of the management works should be the subject of appropriately worded requirements within any Development Consent Order for the scheme or legal agreement.

12. Historic Environment

12.1 The Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the implications of the project for historic environment and cultural heritage issues. The assessment has been based upon a desk top study of various data sources including English Heritage air photographs, information from Lancashire Archives and records from Lancashire Archaeological Advisory Services. The route alignment was also subject to a walkover and further geophysical and geo - archaeological assessments have been undertaken. The scheme was then assessed in relation to the likely impacts on archaeological receptors, historic buildings and historic landscapes.

12.2 Within the draft order limits are two designated cultural heritage assets at Singleton Hall Ice House (60 metres south of the scheme) and Singleton Village conservation area (775 metres south of the scheme). There are no scheduled monuments, world heritage sites, registered battlefields or registered parks and gardens within the draft order limits. There are a further 36 non designated archaeological remains within the order limits, the majority of which are post medieval and of unknown date.

12.3 The county council considers that the overall approach of the assessment is acceptable. However, it is relevant to point out that some additional archaeological fieldwork in this area has been carried out since the archaeological assessment

for the A585 was completed. Fieldwork carried out on a housing development in the Little Poulton area which impacts upon the Romano – British settlement (sites 112 and 193 in the gazetteer) has shown that it is more extensive than previously suspected. The work has also revealed that previous geophysical work has not identified all the elements of the site that have subsequently been revealed by ground excavations. Similar issues have been experienced elsewhere in Lancashire. This means that the findings of the geophysical investigation that has been undertaken for the A585 project are brought into some doubt and strengthens the case for the 'blank areas' with the geophysical survey to be subject to trial excavation prior to main earthworks. It should also be noted that site 12 (possible watermill at Skippool) has been subject to some further desk based assessment and its location now appears to be within the Development Consent Order corridor rather than outside it.

- 12.4 A number of issues were identified with the original scheme of mitigation relating to various sites along the alignment of the scheme. However, it is understood that these issues have now been addressed through further clarification of the scope and likely impact of the scheme. Provided that the updated scheme is subject to a requirement within any Development Consent Order and that the scheme makes provision for further recording should any assets be discovered as part of trial trenching, it is considered that the impact on historic environment assets is acceptable. The potential for impact on as yet unknown assets does not appear sufficient to require a redesign of the scheme or constitute a major objection to the scheme as a whole.

13. Green Belt

- 13.1 A small area of the site at its western end within Wyre Borough lies within the Green Belt. The part of the scheme located within the Green Belt is the new Skippool Junction together with the eastern approach to this junction on the A585. The works undertaken within this area would involve the conversion of the existing Skippool roundabout to a traffic light controlled junction. This would require some widening works into a grass area on the northern side of the existing roundabout. There would also be additional traffic lights and other lighting columns associated with the new junction arrangements.
- 13.2 The National Planning Policy Framework states that building works are inappropriate in the Green Belt unless they are for specified purposes. Certain other forms of development such as engineering operations (which would include the building of roads) and local transport infrastructure are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided that they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. (Paragraph 146 of the National Planning Policy Framework)
- 13.3 The works that are proposed within the Green Belt outside of the existing highway are relatively minor and comprise the widening of the eastbound approach to the existing roundabout and construction of a new slip road to allow traffic on the A585 to access the B5412 Skippool Road. Whilst these works would increase the footprint of highway infrastructure within the Green Belt, they are so closely related to the existing road that there would not be a material impact on the openness of

the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within it. Similarly with the other works to remodel the junction, including any new lighting columns or traffic lights that might be required, it is not considered that these would materially impact upon the openness of the Green Belt. The county council therefore considers that the development is acceptable in relation to the impact on the Green Belt.

14. Drainage and Flood Risk

- 14.1 The Environmental Statement includes a chapter examining the impacts on drainage and flood risk. This includes the effects of the scheme of ground and surface water quality, flooding and the land drainage regime.
- 14.2 Section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework deals with planning and flood risk. It states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (the sequential test). Where development is necessary within such areas, the development should only be permitted where it would provide wider sustainability benefits that outweigh the flood risk and that the development will be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible will reduce flood risk overall.
- 14.3 The scheme area is located within the catchment of the River Wyre. The main surface watercourse located close to the road alignment is the Main Dyke but the scheme crosses a total of seven other water courses or field drains. The scheme crosses land located on the north side of Main Dyke that is at high risk of flooding (flood zone 3). Studies have shown that the main cause of flooding in this area is the twin culvert arrangement where the A585 crosses the Main Dyke and which restricts the flow of water during larger flood events. Flows in the Main Dyke are also influenced by the tidal nature of the River Wyre where high tides can prevent flood waters from flowing out into the estuary.
- 14.4 The part of the scheme aligned through the flood risk area is raised on embankment to ensure that the new road itself will not be at risk of flooding. However, this will result in a loss of flood plain capacity, potentially displacing floodwaters elsewhere, increasing the impact of flooding in existing flood risk areas or displacing water onto areas that do not currently flood.
- 14.5 The application is accompanied by a flood risk assessment. The aim of the sequential test is to steer development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding. However, it is necessary to balance this against the other environmental impacts of the scheme. It may have been possible to reduce the impacts on the flood plain by moving the road further away from Main Dyke. However, the road would then have been closer to the existing houses on Mains Lane leading to potential noise issues. A route to the north of Mains Lane would also reduce impacts on the flood plain but would have been closer to the Wyre Estuary raising potential ecological issues. The proposed alignment is therefore considered to pass the sequential test given the lack of other alternative routes.
- 14.6 Application of the exemption test in paragraph 160 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires demonstration that the development would provide wider

sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk and that the development would be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

- 14.7 To mitigate the impacts of flooding, a series of flood compensation areas would be constructed between the road alignment and Main Dyke. These would provide additional water storage to compensate for that lost due to the construction of the embankments within the flood risk area. However, the scheduling of construction would mean that the embankments would be constructed before these mitigation measures were provided which would lead to an increase in flood risk. To mitigate for this impact an area of land is included in the scheme immediately downstream of the A585 crossing which would be subject to regrading operations to provide floodplain storage to compensate for that lost. The rebuilding of the existing Skippool Bridge where the A585 crosses the Main Dyke would also have some flood benefits by removing the existing restrictions to flow.
- 14.8 Subject to the Environment Agency being satisfied, the county council therefore considers that principles of the scheme are acceptable in terms of flooding. The National Planning Policy Framework requires that development be safe for its lifetime and therefore it is considered important that the modelling of impacts and design of mitigation measures takes account of likely climate change and sea level rise predictions over the longer term. The requirements attached to any Development Consent order should also clearly set out the phasing of the flood mitigation measures that will be provided and also for their design and landscaping. It is not clear from the Environmental Masterplan drawings if the flood compensation areas would be retained in agricultural use or how these areas would be landscaped. The county council considers that there is potential for such features to be designed in such a way to become part of the ecological mitigation for the scheme and therefore contribute towards net ecological gain.
- 14.9 Road drainage would be managed by way of series of wetland features alongside the route. These would discharge into existing watercourse via new and existing outfalls. Attenuation would be provided to restrict rates of discharge and quality of discharged water. These measures are very similar to those which the county council has employed on its own highway developments and are considered acceptable.

15. Mineral Resources

- 15.1 Several parts of the road scheme are located within Mineral Safeguarding Areas. Policy M2 of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan states that within these areas, planning permission will not be supported for any form of development that would prevent the working of the minerals unless it can be demonstrated that the mineral is no longer of any value, the mineral can be extracted satisfactorily prior to the development taking place, that prior extraction would not be feasible due to the depth of deposit would lead to stability problems or where there is an overriding need for the development that outweighs the need to avoid sterilisation of the mineral resource.
- 15.2 The applicant has undertaken a site investigation exercise which includes borehole analysis along the road alignment. This identifies that the superficial

geology along the majority of the route is comprised of silty clays or peat with only very localised occurrences of sand or gravel deposits which could be classified as a mineral resource. The site investigation would therefore appear to demonstrate that the mineral identified is not of any particular economic value.

- 15.3 Nevertheless, the proposals do provide for the creation of two borrow pits along the line of the route to provide bulk fill materials for construction purposes and which would reduce the requirement to import primary aggregate materials to the scheme. The scheme therefore provides for the prior extraction of mineral resources if these are considered to be technically suitable. In either scenario the tests in Policy M2 would therefore be satisfied.

16. Impacts on the Local Highway Network

- 16.1 The proposed new road would change the pattern of vehicle movements on the local highway network. The Environmental Statement includes a Transport Assessment which investigates the impacts on the local highway network including changes in traffic flow. The county council has a number of comments on this assessment as follows:

- The estimation of traffic impacts on local road that would be affected by the scheme has been based on various traffic models. However, the impacts and influences of the proposed highway on the wider road network such as within Poulton le Fylde is not always clear.
- The Transport Assessment is based on various baseline data sources where it is indicated that they are 8 to 10 years old and have subsequently been adjusted to 2015. It is considered that this is a potential weakness in the model and is outside of Department for Transport guidance for transport studies in Web TAG.
- There has been no *LINSIG modelling of the operation of the traffic light controlled junctions which is considered necessary to demonstrate how these junctions would work effectively.
*LINSIG is a software tool that allows traffic engineers to model traffic signals and their impacts on junction capacities)
- Section 5 of the Transport Assessment considers the future performance of the network. However, there is limited information on how some critical parts of the local highway network will operate. For example in the Transport Assessment Appendix A there are a number of diagrams showing how various roads will operate. For the A588 Breck Road (South of A585) in 2022 the AM peak flow is shown as -22% and – 11% in the PM. This suggests that some traffic reductions could be expected through Poulton. However, there is no further detail. For the A585 Garstang Road East (west of junction with proposed scheme) in 2022 AM peak flow is shown as +49% and PM flow +45%. Such increases would result in significant impact on the local highway network but no evaluation appears to have been carried out of the impact of such increases or how they might be mitigated.
- The modelling also shows an 11% increase in traffic during the AM peak in 2022 on Lodge Lane which is unexpected and which needs further explanation.

- On the A585 east of the Windy Harbour junction there would also be an increase in flow of 15% in the AM peak and 10% in the PM peak. There is a need to consider the impact of this increase and any mitigation along the A586 as far as the A6 junction particularly where the road passes through settlements (Great Ecclestone and particularly St Michaels on Wyre)
- There would also be increases in traffic on the A585 south of Windy Harbour in 2020 (AM peak flow of 13% and PM peak flow of 12%). This traffic would impact on the junctions north and south of the M55 particularly the Thistleton crossroads.
- The existing A585 east of the Shard Road junction would experience reductions in traffic in the region of 90%. This raises the question as to whether the traffic lights are still needed at this junction. Would a mini roundabout or some other junction layout be a better solution? The county council would not wish to take on the burden of having to maintain the traffic lights if a more cost effective solution would suffice.

16.2 The county council considers that the traffic modelling data shows that there are a number of locations on the wider highway network where there is a clear increase in traffic and where there is a need for further consideration of mitigation measures or improvement with associated funding provision.

16.3 The reduction in status of the existing A585 would require a review of various traffic regulation orders that apply to the route or require new orders to be implemented. This would include a review of the existing speed limits, prohibition of driving (at the eastern end of Garstang New Road) and parking orders. The cost of such orders and any resigning required to implement them is considered to be small in terms of the overall costs of the scheme. There are also some particular issues with the Orders that will be required which are as follows:-

- The proposed cycle route along the existing Mains Lane – it is expected that this would be advisory. If it were mandatory it would require a specific Order.
- The Environmental Statement indicates that the Mains Lane to Lodge Lane route would be restricted to access only. It is considered that this would be very difficult to enforce as this route provides a means of accessing Singleton, Weeton and a connection to the A585 via the B5269 at Thistleton crossroads. A weight restriction on this route might be a more practicable and enforceable alternative.
- It is expected that there would be a need for traffic calming on the existing Mains Lane to create a self-enforcing 30mph road.

16.4 The county council has also reviewed the designs of the new junctions from a capacity and safety perspective. The following comments are made in relation to the design of the new junctions:-

- Skippool Junction – it is considered that there would be poor alignment for north - south traffic giving rise to a potential safety issue. A safety audit is required to demonstrate that the design of this junction would operate satisfactorily. A swept path analysis and LINSIG modelling is required to demonstrate that the junction operates satisfactorily. It is also considered

that the junction design is potentially confusing for cyclists. There is also a need for further detailed design work in relation to the traffic signal head locations.

- Skippool Bridge Junction: LINSIG modelling of the junction is required.
- Poulton Junction; Again there is no LINSIG modelling of this junction.

- 16.5 It is proposed to establish a shared pedestrian / cycle route along the existing A585. The bypass would not have any cycle provision. The county council notes the representations that have been made by Cycling UK objecting to the lack of dedicated cycling provision along the new road. As a point of general principle, the county council considers that establishing a shared cycle / pedestrian path along the existing A585 is preferable to provision along the new road. Given the reduction in traffic on the route, the existing A585 would be a more pleasant environment for cyclists and would be a shorter route between the eastern and western ends compared to the bypass. The section of the A585 between Singleton junction and Windy Harbour is a very wide road and it is not considered that the issues of mud and encroachment of vegetation would be particular issues for cyclists. Provided that the new shared cycle / pedestrian route is suitably surfaced and incorporates satisfactory and safe crossing facilities across the new road, it is considered that the proposals for cyclist and pedestrian provision are acceptable.
- 16.6 The county council has reviewed the cycle provision and considers that there will be a need for Toucan crossings in the following locations: at the modified Shard Road junction as a minimum on the west side (arising from the traffic flows being higher), on the east side of the proposed Skippool Bridge junction, at the Skippool junction, at Poulton junction on the north side and at the modified Singleton junction.
- 16.7 It is also proposed that the existing A585 would be detrunked after construction of the new road and that responsibility for the road would then transfer to the county council. As part of the scheme, a number of changes are proposed to the existing A585 in recognition of the reduction in traffic levels and changed status of the route. These changes have a number of implications for the county council as highway authority.
- 16.8 Representations have been made in relation to the impacts of the new bypass on bus services that currently serve the settlements that would be bypassed particularly in relation to the Blackpool to Lancaster service. The resident considers that the service operator will not wish to extend the bus journey distance by travelling into Little Singleton and then having to loop back to join the bypass. He considers that the road scheme should incorporate a turning lane / bus gate at its eastern end so buses can continue to use the existing road as at present. If the service no longer serves the communities along the existing A585, the resident considers that this would be a retrograde step when the policy should be to encourage greater use of public transport.
- 16.9 The comments of the resident are noted. However, the county council considers that provision of an additional junction on the bypass to allow buses access onto the existing A585 would add additional delay thereby affecting the economics of the scheme. In relation to the bus services, the county council has discussed this

with the operator involved who has indicated that they would not continue to serve Little Singleton given the extra distance needed to travel to this settlement and then loop back onto the bypass and taking into account the limited number of customers boarding / alighting in the Little Singleton area. However, the existing bus services that serve the western end of Mains Lane and then travel to Knott End along the A588 would continue and there is a possibility that the routes of other existing supported bus services in the area could be modified so that they serve the Little Singleton area. The construction of the bypass would therefore not result in a complete loss of public transport services to this area.

17. Consideration of Alternatives

17.1 The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations require a developer to explain the alternative options that have been investigated during the development of the proposed scheme. The Environmental Statement for the proposed A585 improvement contains details of the alternative options that have been considered prior to the selection of the proposed development as the applicant's favoured option. The alternative options that have been considered are comprised of:-

- Five different options for a bypass south of the existing Mains Lane
- Two options for a bypass north of the existing Mains Lane
- Two options for on line improvement.

A further southern bypass was also proposed by local residents during consultation during 2016 involving a route much further to the south than any of the options proposed by the applicant.

17.2 The southern options studied by the applicant were all variations of the proposed route such as a single carriageway option, a version with an at grade junction with Lodge Lane, an amended link with the existing A585 or combinations of these. These options have all been dismissed by the applicant due to them having reduced safety and economic benefits compared to the proposed scheme.

17.3 The northern bypass options were discounted due to their longer distance and additional junctions required. There would have also been closer to the Wyre Estuary than the proposed scheme therefore raising ecological issues.

17.4 The on line improvement was dismissed as it would not have met the scheme objectives for reducing traffic on the existing Mains Lane and improving journey reliability.

17.5 The southern option proposed by local residents would be significantly longer and would potentially have greater impacts on Singleton village.

17.6 Taking into account these considerations, the county council considers that the proposed development does offer significant advantages over the other alternatives that have been put forward in terms of the potential benefits of the scheme and also minimising environmental impacts.

18. Comments on Draft Development Consent Order

- 18.1 The applicant has included a copy of the draft Development Consent Order which would be made by the Secretary of State should he be minded to grant the application. The draft Development Consent Order deals with a wide range of issues including the various statutory consents that would be required to construct the road, compulsory purchase powers and a list of the Requirements that would be attached to any Order to regulate the development.
- 18.2 The county council notes from the Book of Reference and the Land Plans that a significant number of its land holdings are proposed to be acquired by the developer in order to construct the scheme. In the main these are comprised of existing highway and land adjacent to the highways but also includes a property known as West Winds (plot 1/38a). The county council considers that the right approach has been taken in terms of acquiring the rights to the surface and subsoil of existing highways which equates with the approach that the county council has taken on its own highways schemes. However, the county council does not believe that the right approach has been taken where existing highways cross watercourses. The county council does not consider that ownership of the highway means that it is also riparian owner of half of the water course on adjacent land. The county council is listed as owner in plots 07, 32a and 38a which may not be the case.
- 18.3 Article 34 – Tree and Shrub removal. This article permits the undertaker to remove or fell any tree or shrub within the Order limits unless it is identified as being retained in the Environmental Statement. The county council could not see any evidence within the Environmental Statement on a plan or plans which accurately define the trees and shrubs to be retained and those to be removed. A similar issue applies in relation to Article 37 although here there is no reference to the Environmental Statement.
- 18.4 The county council has the following comments on the wording of the requirements in schedule 2 of the Development Consent Order:-
- Many of the requirements require the applicant to submit further schemes of details for matters such as landscaping, drainage and archaeology. These requirements are worded such that the Secretary of State is responsible for approving these details. The county council does not understand why it is necessary for these details to be submitted to the Secretary of State and why they cannot be 'delegated' to the local planning authority as has been the case with other Development Consent Order applications.
 - Requirement 4 - What is meant by the relevant planning authority? Is this Fylde BC or Lancashire County Council or both authorities. The Construction Environmental Management Plan will contain matters of interest to the county council in terms of a number of issues including highways and flooding and it is therefore considered that the county council should be included within the definition of relevant planning authority.
 - Requirement 5 – this Requirement only seems to deal with tree and hedge planting and there is no requirement to submit details on any other aspect of the landscaping such as pond replacement, design of new ditches, ecological mitigation measures or restoration of the temporary compound areas.

- Requirement 10 – it is assumed that this relates to construction traffic. The requirement might benefit from some more detail so it is more precise in detailing the information that is required.
- The county council considers that there are a number of other matters that should be subject to Requirements. These include tree and hedgerow protection for the vegetation outside of the working area, provision of the temporary bird mitigation land and control of the management works that are to take place within that land, flooding issues in terms of the provision of the mitigation measures and surfacing materials to be used for the road.

19. Conclusions

- 19.1 The county council considers that the National Policy Statement for National Networks establishes the need for targeted improvements to the trunk road network in order to relieve congestion, improve journey time reliability and support economic growth. The proposed development is therefore supported by the National Policy Statement.
- 19.2 The policies of the local development plan, local transport plan and associated documents also support the principle of an improvement to the existing A585 in order to improve connectivity between the motorway network and the Fleetwood peninsula. The county council considers that the proposed improvement scheme would assist in meeting the aspirations of those policies and would not prejudice the future ability to improve the whole of the route should funding be forthcoming for such works.
- 19.3 The route that has been selected is considered to be the best available in terms of maximising the traffic and economic benefits of the route and minimising environmental impacts.
- 19.4 The scheme would give rise to a number of local environmental impacts which is to be expected given the scale of the scheme proposed. There does not appear to be any individual local environmental impact that would be so severe to make the proposed development unacceptable. However, the county council considers that it is important to ensure that the scheme and its associated mitigation is designed in such a way as to minimise its impacts. The Examining Authority should therefore assure itself that the mitigation in relation to landscape impacts, ecology and noise impacts (particularly on local residents close to the route) are sufficient and would be effective in addressing the environmental impacts of the development.

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Children and Family Wellbeing Service**Part I**Electoral Division affected:
All**Awarding of Small Grants to Third Sector Groups which are Registered with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, including Grants to Individual Young People**

Contact for further information:

Sue Parkinson, Tel: (01772) 532428, Business Support Officer,
sue.parkinson@lancashire.gov.uk**Executive Summary**

This report outlines the work of the District Youth Councils in their role in recommending grant monies to third sector organisations which are registered with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to consider and approve the recommendations of the District Youth Councils on the applications for grants from third sector groups which are registered with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, as set out in the report, and determine the awards it wishes to make.

Background and Advice

In Lancashire, there is already a process for third sector groups which are registered with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, to apply for small grants for the development of the organisation, and for the young people within those organisations who may need help to fund a specific project, i.e. funding for a trip or group activity.

Individual young people can also apply for funding, if they are in need of financial support, which will aid their development and learning, i.e. attendance on an educational course and equipment needed. If these grants are £250 or less, the District Youth Council has the authority to approve these. Should any applications be received from individual young people which are for more than £250 then currently the Cabinet is asked to consider these, taking into account the views of the District Youth Council.

The details of recent applications received by the registered third sector groups are as follows:

Organisation	District	Summary of Purpose	Amount applied for (£)	Amount recommended by District Youth Council (£)
Anderton St Joseph's Scout Group	Chorley	Purchase of 2 x 2 man tents and 2 x camping stoves	£794	£794
Positive Action in the Community	Pendle	Youth work staffing and refreshments for a new Youth building	£1,972	£1,972
2376 Squadron RAF Air Cadets	South Ribble	The purchase of a self-build computer to use it as a squadron's flight simulator	£1,848	£1,848
Accrington Sea Cadets	Hyndburn	Purchase a waterproof 2-way radio walkie-talkies	£198	£198
Unknown Explorer Scout Unit	Wyre	Renewal of old equipment that is coming to the end of its working life	£1,985	£1,985
Vision	Rossendale	Security lighting system	£2,000	£0
Setanta Partnership	Fylde	Replacement and installation of an engine/radio equipment and said experience days	£1,890	£1,890
Preston United Youth Development Programme	Preston	Time to Change Project - Workshops and recreational activities for 12 young people from the Asian community who are at high risk of being exploited into organised gangs	£2,000	£2,000
		Total	£12,687	£10,687

The District Youth Councils have met to consider these applications and have recommended approval of the amounts above based on their assessment.

The Rossendale Youth Council has recommended that no funding be granted to Vision (Rossendale), due to the application not meeting the funding criteria of Lancashire County Council for targeted youth work.

The final decision on the amount to be approved lies with Cabinet.

Both sets of grants can be made under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, which states that "Every local authority is to have the power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objectives:

- The promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area
- The promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area, and
- The promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.

Section 2 (4) (b) of the 2000 Act includes a specific power to give financial assistance to any person under the well-being provisions.

A sum of grant funding is made available for registered third sector groups. This is to support individual groups or units not supported financially by the county council, and to support individual young people's learning and development. It is currently administered through the Children and Family Wellbeing Service and the 2018/19 annual amount is £111,000. The funding is divided between 12 districts, and 25% of each district's allocation is ring fenced for individual young people's applications. Of the total funding available of £111,000, £83,250 is available to third sector organisations and £27,750 to individual young people.

The total amounts of awards recommended in this report are as follows:

Grants to Third Sector Organisations: £10,687

Grants to support individual young people: £0. An individual small grant for £435 awarded by Cabinet in March 2019 for transport tickets has been declined by the young person.

If these awards are approved by Cabinet, the total allocation of awards and the balance of funding available will be as follows:

	Total available for 2018-19	Grants Approved to date	Balance available
Grants to Third Sector organisations	£83,250	£49,844	£33,406
Grants to support individual young people	£27,750	£5,908*	£21,842

*Includes previously approved £435 individual grant that was declined.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

If these grants are not approved then work to positively engage young people by the voluntary organisations may be at risk.

Financial

The full amount of the grant money made available by the Children and Family Wellbeing Service in this financial year 2018/19 was £111,000. This is divided between the 12 districts, and 25% of each of the districts' allocation is ring fenced for individual young people's applications.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Fostering and Adoption, Residential, and Youth Offending Services**Part I**

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Revision of Foster Care Allowances

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Barbara Bath, Tel: (01772) 535491, Head of Fostering and Adoption, Residential, and Youth Offending Services,
barbara.bath@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

Proposals for the increase of Foster Care Allowance rates for 2019/20, in line with National Minimum Standards.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the increase in the current scale of Foster Care Allowances, other than where specified, as set out at Appendix 'A'.

Background and Advice

In March 2009, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People approved a fostering strategy, which amongst other things, agreed that the county council's Fostering Allowances should be linked to the Government National Minimum Foster Care Allowances. This requirement is now enshrined in legislation.

In 2011, the Fostering Service introduced a new Tier based payment structure which allows the county council to pay carers a range of different allowances which were dependent upon the level of skill, experience and service the carer was able to offer.

Tier 1 - payments are in line with the recommended National Minimum Standard
Tier 2 - payments provide an enhancement, currently £115 per week above Tier 1
Tier 3 - payments provide an enhancement, currently £230 per week above Tier 1
Tier 3+ - payments are negotiated on a place by place basis depending upon the complexity of the placement.

It is recommended that these payments are not amended for 2019/20 with the exception of Tier 1.

The Government National Minimum Foster Care Allowances have been updated for 2019/20 (Tier 1), and it is proposed that the rates for Lancashire also be updated, to ensure that the requirements of the fostering strategy are maintained, and that the service meets regulatory requirements.

It is recommended that other allowances such as those for Holiday, Birthday, Religious Festivals and discretionary payments covering clothing and school uniform, all remain unchanged for 2019/20.

It is proposed that the enhancement element of the weekly allowances for Tier 2 and Tier 3 payments remain unchanged for 2019/20. Fostering Focus Fees and Specialist Allowances will also remain unchanged as these schemes are being phased out following the introduction of the new scheme.

Details of the above are set out at Appendix 'A'.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

No significant risk management implications have been identified; the estimated cost of this proposal will be met from within the Fostering Service Budget.

Financial

The estimated cost of the proposals is £109,000 which has been provided for within the 2019/20 revenue budget for children's services.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

FOSTERING FOCUS FEE PAID SCHEME

The fee of £305.00 plus the basic allowance is payable to foster carers who were approved to be Fostering Focus carers. It is recommended that this rate should remain unchanged as the scheme is being phased out.

SPECIALIST FOSTER CARERS

An allowance of £162.00 plus the basic allowance, is payable to foster carers who are approved for special placements. It is recommended that this rate should remain unchanged as the scheme is being phased out.

DISCRETIONARY ALLOWANCES

In addition to the basic allowances referred to above, certain other allowances are payable and it is proposed that these also remain the same; these allowances ensure all children coming into care have adequate clothing. It is a one off payment only for those newly entering the care system.

1) Initial clothing

Senior Managers have discretion to make allowances up to the following amounts:

0 - 7 years	£440.00
8 - 10 years	£445.00
11 - 12 years	£585.00
13 - 17 years	£695.00

2) School outfits, tools and protective clothing

Senior Managers have authority to make available to foster carers an allowance of up to £263.00 to assist towards the purchase of a school uniform for a child entering school or transferring to a school where a different uniform is required or to assist a young person taking up employment. This will remain unchanged for 2019/20.

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Asset Management**Part I**

Electoral Divisions affected:
 Burnley Central East,
 Burnley Central West,
 Burnley North East, Burnley
 Rural, Burnley South West

The Provision of Additional Primary School Places in North Burnley

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Steph Rhodes, Tel: (01772) 531957, School Planning Principal
steph.rhodes@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

Lancashire County Council has a statutory duty to ensure that a primary or secondary school place is available for every child of statutory school age living in Lancashire who requests one.

This report outlines the current and projected position in the North Burnley planning area and recommends that additional places be made available at Briercliffe Primary School for 2020, initially through temporary expansion.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve a temporary increase, for one year only, in the Reception intake of Briercliffe Primary School in North Burnley, from 45 to 60 places for September 2020, to be accommodated within the existing building.
- (ii) Approve a permanent increase in Reception intakes for subsequent years to 60 places, through the provision of additional permanent accommodation on the existing school site, subject to obtaining relevant planning permission and Section 77(3) School Standards and Framework Act 1998 consent for the change of use of the land (or meeting the terms of The School Playing Fields General Disposal and Change of Use Consent (No 5) 2014).

(iii) Approve the expenditure listed in Appendix 'A' for the permanent expansion of the school.

Background and Advice

As detailed in the 'School Place Provision Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20' approved by Cabinet in August 2017, after a steady decrease between 1989 and 2001, birth rates across the county have subsequently been rising.

In addition, the changing dynamics of Lancashire's population, influenced by increased births, immigration, housing developments and economic migration, means that the provision of school places must also change in order to meet the changing needs of residents. This can be through provision of additional places, or through the redistribution of existing places within the county.

In dealing with rising numbers resulting from higher birth rates, it is necessary to assess whether or not this is a short term increase or a more sustained trend. Short term increases in demand can often be met by asking schools to co-operate in years of higher demand by taking in higher reception numbers, especially when other year groups are not full and there is sufficient accommodation in the school. However, if the growth is persistent, this is obviously not sustainable. In such cases, permanent additional places must be provided, either by increasing the size of existing schools or establishing new schools. In order to ensure that there is sustainable growth, three years' worth of increased demand will normally need to be evidenced before plans are put in place to permanently increase provision.

Burnley Planning Area had been identified as a hotspot area, but due to the number of schools the area covered (23 primary schools), it was difficult to pinpoint exactly where this shortfall fell. In early 2018, following investigation and appropriate approval, the old Burnley Planning Area was replaced by 3 new Planning Areas known as North Burnley, South Burnley and West Burnley. North Burnley remains to be a popular area with popular schools. Higher birth cohorts for Reception years in 2018 and 2020 are expected to lead to more preferences for admission than the Published Admission Number available. Hotspots show in 2020 and all subsequent years. In addition to a sustained birth need there is also housing development expected to yield an increased intake in the future.

The table below shows demand in the North Burnley area based on the number of recorded births:

	Total Published Admission Number	Forecast intake based on births				
		Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	*Sept 2022
Reception Places	365	366	314	375	373	373

*this is based on an assumption because the birth data is not available for this year yet.

The table shows the expected intakes for the North Burnley primary schools, based on recent admissions to the schools, when compared with the corresponding birth rates 4 years earlier. In this area, 95.9% of pupils attended their local schools but some children have had to travel further afield to access places. All of the primary schools in the North Burnley area have filled or almost filled in Reception year for the last 7 years.

The above figures are based only on birth demand and do not take into account the projected impact of housing development in the area. The table below shows projected demand resulting from live births and housing:

	Total Published Admission Number	Forecast intake (Births and Housing Projections)				
		Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022
Reception Places	365	366	315	377	376	377

The above information demonstrates that there will be sufficient primary school places available for the September 2019 Reception intake. Once the impact from housing and increased birth rate has been taken into account, there is projected to be a shortfall of places from September 2020 onwards.

In order to provide the additional places required, it is recommended to approve a temporary increase for one year only in the Reception intake of Briercliffe Primary School in North Burnley, from 45 to 60 places for September 2020, which can be accommodated within the existing premises. This will then be followed by a permanent increase in the Reception admission number for subsequent years to 60 places. It is proposed that this will be enabled through the provision of additional permanent accommodation on the existing school site (subject to obtaining relevant planning permission and Section 77(3) School Standards and Framework Act 1998 consent for the change of use of the land (or meeting the terms of The School Playing Fields General Disposal and Change of Use Consent (No 5) 2014).

The statutory process would be followed to enlarge premises as set out in the Prescribed Alterations Regulations (see part 5) if:

- the proposed enlargement is permanent (longer than three years) and would increase the capacity of the school by:
 - more than 30 pupils; and
 - 25% or 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser).
- the proposal involves making permanent any temporary enlargement (which was intended to be in place for no more than three years) that meets the above threshold.

As the size of the proposed expansion at Briercliffe Primary School falls below the levels described above, the statutory procedure is not required to be followed.

Rationale for expansion

All schools within the area of growth were contacted in order to seek expressions of interest in expansion, before visits to interested schools then took place.

In an initial assessment of the potential to expand existing schools, the following factors were considered which are contained within the School Place Provision Strategy (<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/strategies-policies-plans/children-education-and-families/school-place-provision-strategy/>)

- The current strength of the school in terms of attainment levels and leadership;
- Parental preference;
- The existing size and layout of the school, and its potential for expansion;
- The existing site and the area available to expand the buildings and maintain adequate play and sports space;
- Access to the site and proximity to the area of growth;
- Any potential joint investment benefits which are immediately obvious.

On application of these criteria, it was decided to propose the expansion of Briercliffe Primary School because it was the only option which:

- expressed an interest to expand,
- fit the criteria above and
- would provide the amount of additional places required for the North Burnley area.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

If additional primary school places are not created, there is a risk that the Authority would fail in its statutory responsibility to make sure that a maintained school place is available to all Lancashire children of the appropriate age range who want one.

Providing additional places increases the overall capacity in the areas and, if birth rates fail to yield the expected number of pupils for 2020 intake, or there is an increased level of outward migration of families from this area, there may be surplus places.

Land and Property

The expansion of Briercliffe Primary School could be accommodated on the existing school site. A feasibility assessment has been carried out for the proposed expansion.

The approval of any physical school expansion will be subject to obtaining relevant planning permission and Section 77(3) consent for the change of use of the land (or

meeting the terms of The School Playing Fields General Disposal and Change of Use Consent (No 5) 2014.)

Legal and Financial Implications

The financial implications are set out at Appendix 'A' and are deemed to be Part II for the reason set out below:

This section of the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

Appendix 'A' is not for publication - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 16 May 2019

Report of the Head of Service - Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registration Services**Part I**Electoral Division affected:
Preston City;**Delegation of Library Function to Preston City Council at the Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library**

Contact for further information:

Steve Lloyd, Tel: 07876 452678, Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registration Services
Manager

steve.lloyd@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The Re-Imagining the Harris project is a partnership between Lancashire County Council and Preston City Council which started in 2015 with the aim of repositioning the Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library. Since the project's inception one of the main priorities has been to develop a shared service in the building to ensure customers receive highest quality and joined up services, delivered in the most efficient manner. To achieve this shared service, this report recommends that the library function at the Harris building is delegated to Preston City Council under a section 101 Local Government Act 1972, delegation of function agreement.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the delegation of the library function at the Harris building under a section 101 agreement;
- (ii) As a consequence of the delegation, approve the transfer of the Lancashire County Council library team of the Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library to Preston City Council, following the principles of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) regulations.

Background and Advice

The Harris is a Grade 1 listed building owned by Preston City Council ("Preston"). Preston run the museum and art gallery within the Harris building.

Lancashire County Council ("Lancashire") occupies approximately 40% of the building to house the largest library in the Lancashire library service.

The current relationship between the two authorities is governed by an agreement (signed in 1997) "for the use and occupation of the Harris building" ("Use and Occupation Agreement"). This Use and Occupation Agreement obliges Lancashire to pay 40% of the building costs and front of house costs, and provide Preston six months' notice if it wishes to vacate the Harris building.

Preston and Lancashire established the 'Re-Imagining the Harris' project in 2015, sharing the costs of a project leader post and securing support from Arts Council England (ACE). One of the project's four priorities was to "prepare a business case to support a new joint staffing structure" within the Harris building.

Cabinet have previously agreed to officers from Lancashire and Preston investigating taking forward a delegation agreement so that a 'single' team within the Harris building can be achieved. As a result a delegation agreement under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 has been drafted (listed under background papers below). The agreement is for the discharge by Preston of Lancashire's library function for the key library service point for the city of Preston and delivered from the Harris building.

The agreement will be for an initial period of twenty-five years from the commencement date and may be extended for further periods up to a maximum of ten years. Either party may dissolve the agreement by giving a minimum of twelve months' written notice to the other party.

In addition to the above, the delegation includes a number of clauses covering such areas such as arrangements for the discharge of the function including the provision of a shared service board; the detail of how the budget provision will be made by Lancashire to Preston; other considerations such as how any savings or redundancies would be dealt with; how the dissolution of the agreement would be dealt with and the consequences of that if that was to come to fruition; the area of data management and the roles and responsibilities of each party in terms Data Protection legislation and other standard clauses applicable in a section 101 delegation agreement.

The delegation agreement also includes several schedules which cover areas such as the detail of the library function that is being delegated (including all the core functions and the expectations against those core functions and how they will be monitored) and how Lancashire staff based at the Harris building will transfer to Preston.

The essence of the delegation is that day to day management control is relinquished, as the library service function would be delegated to (and delivered by) Preston within a framework to ensure consistency with the remainder of the library service county-wide. However Preston would have autonomy with regards to delivering services, with the Shared Service Board (made up of Lancashire and Preston officers) in place to monitor performance.

The completion of the section101 agreement will take place when both Lancashire and Preston have the authority to do so, but the delegation will be deferred until the ICT systems necessary for the delegated functions have been prepared in the coming months.

If the decision is made to agree the delegation, the Lancashire staff in the employment of the library team based within the Harris building will transfer to Preston in a TUPE like manner when the delegation takes place following the implementation of the replacement ICT arrangements.

The public would see no change in terms of the quality of provision if the delegation is agreed. The library at the Harris would be consistent with all other libraries in Lancashire and service delivery would be linked into the Lancashire Library Service and any Lancashire wide initiatives the service was delivering or taking forward.

The Re-imagining Project has been successful in a round one bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and has now been given permission to start up the development phase. At the end of the development phase a round two bid will be made and if successful capital funding would result in significant improvements to the Harris building.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Financial

Under the proposed agreement Lancashire will pay an annual sum to Preston to provide a library service which will be inflated in line with the pay award each year. Lancashire will also continue to pay for 40% of building related costs which includes front of house staff and premises running costs. The estimated annual revenue costs are circa £265,000 for Preston to provide a library service and circa £335,000 for Lancashire's contribution to building related costs (at 2019/20 prices), a total annual revenue cost of circa £600,000. Income currently earned from library services at the Harris building will continue to be retained by Lancashire.

Any savings arising from any future restructures to create a single team (across the front of house team and library service team) will be shared 60:40, Preston: Lancashire and any redundancy costs incurred will also be shared in the same proportion.

The revenue costs of the proposal will initially remain unchanged from those incurred by Lancashire under the current arrangements. Under the current arrangements Lancashire employ and therefore cover the cost of library staff and pay Preston 40% of building related costs.

However, it is anticipated that the creation of a single team will both improve the visitor experience and result in efficiencies and therefore recurring revenue savings. Lancashire does not currently contribute towards the cost of museum/curatorial staff and under the proposed agreement will not do so in the future.

Human Resources

The delegation of the service requires the transfer of library service employees from Lancashire to Preston pursuant to the Cabinet Office, Staff Transfers in the Public Sector, Statement of Practice January 2000 (Revised December 2013). The statement of practice sets out a framework for Public Sector Staff Transfers, which is founded on the provisions of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/246) (TUPE). The transfer will therefore be managed as a TUPE transfer in conjunction with Lancashire and Preston's obligations in line with the TUPE regulations.

Risk Management

If external funding for the capital aspect of the re-imagined project is received, it is likely that those funders will expect the delegation to be agreed and would continue so that the single team operation is maintained. If after receiving funding the delegation agreement was to cease there would be the question of whether 'claw back' would apply but this would only be a risk if the two authorities ceased working together and the Harris building stopped working in the innovative and effective way envisaged by the concept of a single team providing a 'blended' offer. 'Claw back' is standard to any external funding grant of the nature that is being applied for and the risk of it being taken forward is unlikely.

Legal

Preston are taking a similar decision regarding the library function delegation to their June Cabinet and the delegation being signed with a deferred delegation date, is therefore subject to both Cabinets agreeing to the delegation. Lancashire has considered various options on how to implement the shared service and concluded that a delegation of function under section 101 is the most appropriate route.

Property

Lancashire's occupation of the building is covered by an agreement which commenced in 1997 between Lancashire and Preston (the then Preston Borough Council). The agreement was a right to use and occupy ("Use and Occupation Agreement") prescribed parts of the building for library use, subject to a 40% contribution to the buildings costs and front of house staff, which equated to circa £325,000 per annum. As the proposal is to upgrade and use the building in a much more flexible and integrated way with the combined services, the Use and Occupation Agreement would require amending to reflect and protect Lancashire's rights going forward. Lancashire's 40% contribution to current costs have been accepted as a commitment by the library service to fund its share of the overall proposal and joint funding bid promoted by the two authorities.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
Section101 agreement for the discharge by Preston City Council of Lancashire County Council's library function for the key library service point for the city of Preston and delivered from the Harris Building	24 April 2019	Steve Lloyd 07876 452678

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Document is Restricted

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Document is Restricted

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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Document is Restricted

