



Westmorland
& Furness
Council



Our Place... Our **FUTURE**... Join the conversation

 Westmorland and Furness Local Plan

Parish Council Briefing
Local Plan Early Conversation
27th June 2024

westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk



What is a Local Plan?

- The Spatial Expression of the **Council Plan**
- Sets out **our vision** for how **our places** will change over the next 15 years;
- Should be the vision of the **whole community** – including residents, businesses and the public and private sector bodies who will deliver the vision;
- Sets out how that vision will be **delivered**. This includes
 - **How much** development and **how it will be distributed**
 - Which **sites are allocated** for development and when they will come forward;
 - What **environmental and heritage assets** are safeguarded and enhanced;
 - The **design of new development**
 - Policies containing requirements for **new development**;
 - Ensuring a sufficient **supply of minerals** to support development;
 - How the necessary **infrastructure** to support development will be delivered;



Local Plan Timeline

- Consultation and Engagement at Every stage

- **Early Engagement (July – August 2024) WE ARE HERE**
 - Join the Conversation – Public Drop In Sessions (8th July – 13th September 2024)
- **Developing the Local Plan - Plan Preparation (2025-2026)**
 - Preparation and consultation on Draft Plan
- **Examination (Independent Review) (2026-2027)**
 - Submission consultation
 - Independent examination
 - Inspectors Report
- **Adopting the Plan (2027)**



Some themes

- **Sustainable and inclusive growth** – enabling and getting the most from investment and growth both in Furness and across the whole of Westmorland and Furness
- **The demographic challenge** – growing the economically active population, enabling people to remain active and connected for as long as possible and planning to meet the needs of an aging population
- **Rural futures and sparsity** – enabling people to live and make a living in rural communities
- **Climate Change and Biodiversity** – playing our part in delivering net zero, by influencing the carbon footprint of buildings, transport, land use and energy generation as well as ensuring that we are as resilient as we can be to the impacts of climate change
- **Design** - ensuring that development is well designed in terms of how it looks, how it works and how it feels.
- **Housing** – ensuring that housing is delivered to meet needs including market housing, affordable housing, self-build and custom-built housing and housing to meet specific needs such as extra care, student housing and gypsies and travellers



Communication & Engagement Strategy

- Maintaining **regular communication** is essential to help both the public and stakeholders gain an understanding of and **help to shape the Local Plan**
- To make engagement worthwhile the approach has to be effective for us and for those involved
- Ensuring that **members**, **residents** and **stakeholders** are kept informed in a clear and consistent way
- Maximising opportunities to interact with you as our communities and stakeholders – using existing connections
- Formal and Informal will be appropriate at different stages



What is the role of Parish and Town Councils

- **Statutory consultees** - formal status in the planning system
- **Speaking for communities**, gathering and articulating community views
- **Detailed local knowledge**, important in a larger authority
- **Cascading knowledge** to communities
- **Encouraging people** to participate and have their say
- **Awareness of local design characteristics** and locally important buildings, views and open spaces
- **Neighbourhood Planning** and **Community Planning**;
- **Assets of Community Value**
- **Direct place making** - through management of parks, open spaces, playgrounds, village halls and streetscape



Early Consultation - what are we consulting on

The main focus of the consultation is an early conversation on the Local Plan. However we are consulting on some other issues in parallel

- **Marina Village (Barrow) Supplementary Planning Document** - originally due this month but delayed due to restrictions on publicity during General Election campaigns;
- **Westmorland and Furness Design Code** – early consultation ahead of the preparation of a draft code;
- **Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability draft assessment methodology**
- **Call for sites**; asking developers and landowners for sites to be put forward for consideration as housing and employment allocations



Key Messages - This is about listening

- We are at a **very early stage** in preparing the Local Plan. **Before we put pen to paper** on the new plan, we are starting with an **early conversation** with you about the places you live, work and visit across the Local Plan area.
- We would like your thoughts on a range of topics about our place. Your views will help shape **the vision** for the Local Plan, **the issues** that it needs to address and **how these will be tackled**.
- We hope that everyone who cares about the future of our area will want to be involved. It's important that we **listen to as many people as possible** to understand their point of view as the Local Plan should reflect the views of our diverse communities.
- We want you to think about not just the here and now, but **what is best for the future** of the area – the things that your children or grandchildren will want from future development. The Local Plan will look 20 years and beyond into the future, to the year 2045



How are we consulting

- website and **online questionnaire** using Citizen Space
- Briefings for **Members** and **Parish Councils**;
- **15 Manned Drop in sessions** – see below
- **Static display** at deposit locations – Council Offices, Libraries and Leisure Centres
- **Information Packs** for members and Parish Councils
- **Social Media** – Facebook, X, Threads, Instagram
- **Press releases** and traditional media
- **W&F staff communications**



Where and when we are consulting - Drop-ins

- 4 in **Eden** Locality
 - Wednesday 10th July - **Kirkby Stephen** (Masonic Hall) 15:00-19:00
 - Saturday 13th July – **Penrith** (Sainsburys) 10:00-14:00
 - Thursday 18th July – **Appleby** (Public Hall) 15:00-19:00
 - Tuesday 23rd July – **Alston** (Town Hall) 15:00-19:00
- 5 in **South Lakeland** Locality
 - Thursday 11th July - **Ulverston** (Coronation Hall) 15:00-19:00
 - Saturday 13th July – **Kendal** (Westmorland Shopping Centre) 10:00-14:00
 - Wednesday 17th July – **Kirkby Lonsdale** (Lunedale Hall) 15:00-19:00
 - Thursday 25th July – **Grange over Sands** (Victoria Hall) 15:00-19:00
 - Tuesday 30th July – **Milnthorpe** (Christ the King Hall) 15:00-19:00
- 6 in **Furness** Locality
 - Tuesday 16th July – **Barrow-in-Furness** (Forum) 10:00-16:00
 - Friday 19th July – **Lindal-in-Furness** (Buccleugh Hall) 14:30-18:30
 - Saturday 13th July – **Barrow-in-Furness** (Transport Festival) 10:00-14:00
 - Wednesday 24th July – **Askam/Ireleth** (Community Centre) 15:00-19:00
 - Tuesday 30th July – **Walney** (Round House) 10:00-15:00
 - Thursday 1st August – **Dalton-in-Furness** (Drill Hall) 14:30-18:30



Where are we consulting - Static displays

- 7 in **Eden** Locality
 - **Penrith** – Voreda House, Library and Leisure Centre
 - **Kirkby Steven** – Library
 - **Alston** – Library
 - **Appleby** – Library
 - **Shap** – Library
- 7 in **South Lakeland** Locality
 - **Kendal** – Town Hall, Library and Leisure Centre
 - **Grange-over-Sands** - Library
 - **Ulverston** Coronation Hall
 - **Kirkby Lonsdale** – Library
 - **Milnthorpe** – Library
 - (Also documentation but no display at **Arnside** and **Broughton-in-Furness** libraries)
- 8 in **Furness** Locality
 - **Barrow-in-Furness** – Town Hall, Forum, Library, Leisure Centre, Ormsgill Community Hub
 - **Dalton-in-Furness** – Library
 - **Askam/Ireleth** – Library
 - **Walney** - Library



Media and Social Media

- **launch news release** will highlight key messages and publicise
 - drop-in sessions
 - website
 - survey
- The news release will be on the **news section of the council website** and promoted through **the weekly email newsletter to residents** (14,624 subscribers), signposting to webpage and survey.
- Message will be amplified on **social media**:
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Instagram
 - LinkedIn
 - NextDoor
 - TikTok (fun video signposting to survey)
- Social media messages will be visual, focussing on key themes, asking a question for each and signposting to survey.



Some consultation questions – simple open questions linked to themes

TRAVEL AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- What infrastructure improvements do you think the area needs?

HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

- How can we help young people and families to stay here?

PEOPLE AND PLACES

- What do you like about our places and where you live?

ECONOMY

- Where should new employment development be built?

CLIMATE AND NATURE

- How can the plan reduce our carbon emissions?



How you can help

- We want to reach as many people as possible and we need your help
- **Information Packs**
 - Going to Members and Parish Councils
 - Contain consultation materials, posters, instructions on how to respond
 - Will help you with basic information and also if you wish to hold your own discussions and/or events
- **Spread the word via**
 - Community groups, places where people meet and local contacts
 - Parish newsletters, noticeboards, websites
 - Local events
- Encourage people to come to **drop ins**.
- **Let us know about local issues** ahead of drop ins;



How can People respond

- We encourage people to respond using the questionnaire on **Citizen Space** portal;
 - It is the most efficient from the point of view of summarising and taking account of representations;
 - It means that peoples comments are accurately recorded – there is no transcription or summarisation process;
- There will be opportunities to leave comments at the drop-ins through flip-charts, post it notes etc;
- We also make paper forms available on request
- Non-local plan related comments – these will be collected and sent to the appropriate team within the Council
- Deadline for individual responses is **9th September**
- Parish Council responses by **end of September**
- Call for Sites by **end of September**



Feedback & Questions



Call for Sites and SHEELAA (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Process)

- Looks at what sites are available, deliverable and suitable;
- Starts with '**Call for Sites**' asking developers and landowners to submit sites for consideration. It is important that site promoters do not miss the boat;
- **Assessment methodology** – looking at deliverability and suitability including ownership, constraints, access and services.
- The beginning of a '**narrowing down** process'. Many are called but few are chosen
 - Initial Screening
 - SHEELAA assessment
 - Policy assessment for inclusion in draft plan.
 - Assessment as suitable in a SHEELAA is not allocation in a plan
- Will be doing **call for sites** as part of **early conversation** in July



Call for Sites - some additional points

- As part of this consultation, we are asking people to **submit suggested sites** to be allocated for housing and employment
- The new plan is will also planning for minerals and **waste and recycling sites**;
- People who are promoting sites need to put their suggestions in **early on in the process** so that they can be assessed;
- Where there are **existing site allocations** and these do not have planning permission, their owners will need to re-submit them. Circumstances can change and if sites are no longer available, suitable or deliverable, they cannot be allocated in the new plan;
- When the call for sites is complete, all the **sites that developers and landowners** have submitted will be consulted on. This is so that peoples views can be taken into account when the sites are assessed;
- This will happen in the autumn
- It will look like a lot of sites and people can get alarmed but
 - It is a **long list** that will be whittled down through the assessment process
 - These are sites that are being put forward for development by **developers and landowners** not by the Council
 - Sites will be **excluded** if they are not available, suitable or deliverable;
 - A site which is identified in a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is **not an allocation**



Feedback & Questions



SHELAA (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Process)

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- **Assessment methodology** – looking at deliverability and suitability including ownership, constraints, access and services.
- The beginning of a '**narrowing down** process'. Many are called but few are chosen
 - Initial Screening
 - SHELAA assessment
 - Policy assessment for inclusion in draft plan.
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- Will be doing **call for sites** as part of **early conversation** in July



Design Code for Westmorland and Furness

- Area-wide Design Codes required by NPPF and Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA)
- will apply to all the district, outside the National Parks
- prepared in context of [National Design Guide](#) guided by the [National Model Design Code](#)
- will be adopted as a **supplementary planning document** (SPD) but will also inform the development of design requirements in the new Local Plan
- will provide guidance on the **design and layout of new development** including form, materials, layout, open space, biodiversity net gain;
- will comprise a mix of:
 - **coding** - defined requirements, often numerical, which 'must' be applied and
 - **guidance** – qualitative factors which 'should' be taken into account if possible.
- **Key benefits** include – adding more 'teeth' to design standards; providing more clarity for applicants; and quicker decision-making



Design Code - Process and Timescale

- Being prepared by **Land Use Consultants** (LUC), supported by **PLACED** on engagement and **Mcmullan Studio** on design.
- Stages:
 - One: **Project Inception and Baseline Review & Assessment** May 2024, with **early engagement** by end of August 2024
 - Two: Develop Coding and a **Draft Design Code Document** – December 2024;
 - Three: **Formal Consultation and Engagement** – April 2025
 - Four: **Final Design Code** and **Training** – June 2025
- **Delivery Group** – monthly review, with officers from relevant teams (eg DM, Climate and Natural Environment, Highways, Local Lead Flood Authority)
- **Reference Group** – convening group of external stakeholders
- **Early work** - baseline assessment of existing evidence and guidance; local site visits; and review of design-related Local Plan policies
- **Officer Workshops** – 6 planned in June and July



Design Code - Engagement and Consultation

- **Early Engagement** (July/ August 2022)
 - forms part of Local Plan 'early conversation' with communities, local stakeholders, design code users, developers, town and parish councils, statutory consultees
 - online engagement platform (Citizen Space) hosting Design Code survey questions
 - role of Design Code Reference Group
 - discussion and feedback at events
- **Testing** of Draft Codes and Guidance (autumn 2024)
 - testing by planning officers, based on real-life examples
 - also by Design Code Reference Group and feedback from LPMSG
- **Formal Consultation on Draft Design Code SPD** (6 weeks: February - April 2025)
 - as above, for early engagement above
 - with online engagement and in-person events bespoke to consultation on Design Code
- **Adoption of Design Code** (June 2025)
 - training seminars for staff and external users to maximize effective use of Design Code

