



# A Local Plan for Westmorland and Furness

Eden Locality Board – 24th April 2024

Dan Hudson – Interim Senior Manager, Planning Policy  
Helen Houston – Head of Regeneration & Planning Policy

[westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk](http://westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk)



## What we are hoping to get from today

To brief you about

- Our proposals for a **Westmorland and Furness Local Plan**;
- Our **timetable and process** for delivering the plan
- **engagement**;

*This is the beginning of a process – there will be much more to follow*



## New Council, New Vision, New Opportunity

- Westmorland and Furness came into being in April 2023;
- Combined the best of four councils into one – new leadership and direction
- Adopted **Council Plan** ahead of Vesting Day
- Followed by **Council Plan Delivery Framework**

### The Challenge

- To enable a **globally significant investment**;
- To transform how our **place looks, works and feels**;
- To **transform** the **lives** of those who need it;
- To bring **proud**, highly skilled **communities** with us



## 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



## Our Challenge

- To combine the plans of four **very different legacy authorities** into a single vision, a single plan and a consistent policy approach across the whole area;
- To do so in the context of **significant and imminent growth** needs driven by the Aukus submarine building programme focused on BAE in Barrow;
- To do so in the context of **environmental sensitivities** including nationally important landscape, coastal and flood management issues and nutrient neutrality;
- To do so in the context of a **new regime for preparing local plans** including a requirement that plans be prepared in thirty months;
- To do so in the context of an **imminent general election** and potentially a change of government



## A new plan and a new way of planning

- Our **new local plans team** is ready for the **green light** to prepare one of the very first **new generation local plans** in thirty months;
- We're **tooling up** with the **people**, the **programme** and the **evidence**. The whole Council is behind us. Our **members** embrace the need for growth;
- We're working hand in hand with **Government** and **Planning Advisory Service**;
- So we're ready to **move** and **move fast**;
- The plan will give;
  - the **vision**, the **strategy** and the **sites**;
  - the path to **infrastructure delivery** (strong experience of CIL);
  - the **development management tools** to get the best (Design Code)

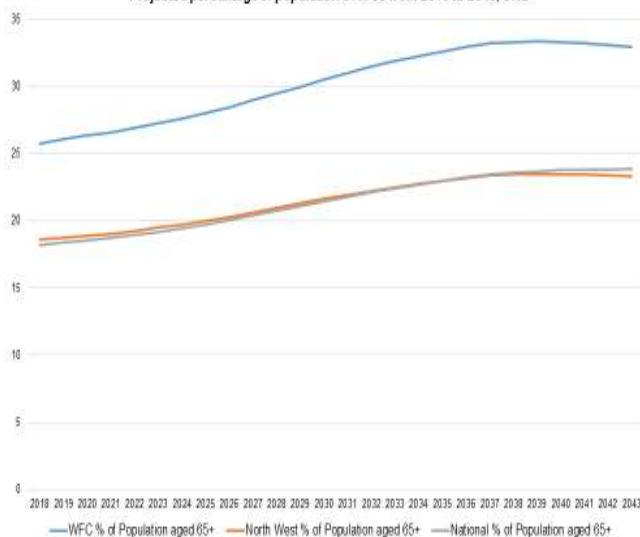


## Introducing Aukus

- Barrow builds **most of the UK's submarines**;
- Currently completing 7 Astute Class and 4 Dreadnought class for the **Royal Navy**;
- **Aukus** – trilateral security partnership between **Australia**, the **UK** and the **US**;
- Will involve the construction of a new class of submarine at Barrow for the Royal Navy and the Australian Navy;
- Expansion of the workforce from **10,000** to **17,000** to complete Dreadnought and Aukus programme;
- Downstream **impacts** on supply chain.
- Needs for **housing**, **employment** space, **infrastructure** and place-making
- Training and upskilling;



Projected percentage of population over 65 from 2018 to 2043, ONS



### If current trends continue, by 2043 there will be

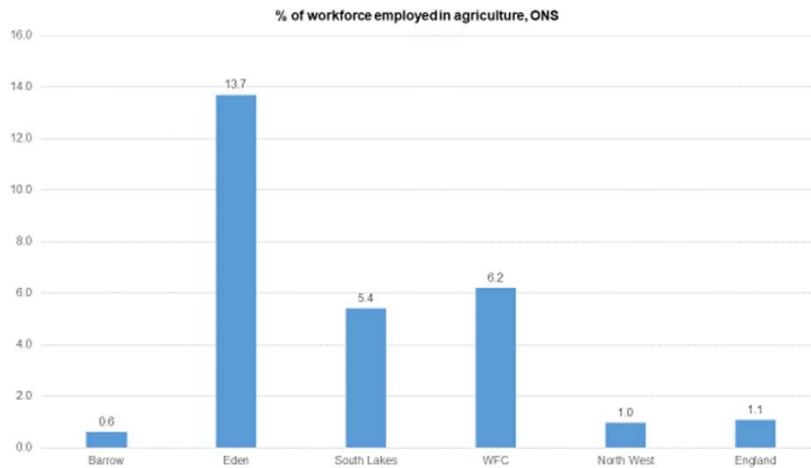
- **2700** more people overall.
- An **increase** of **1.2%**;
- **15,800** more people over 65.
- An **increase** of **26.7%**;
- **10,400** fewer people between 16 and 64
- A **decrease** of **7.9%**;

### This means

- Crudely our economy will need around 10,000 new people to stand still;
- We need homes to attract working people in and to enable our young people to stay;
- Health and care needs – need for places and homes that enable life long well being;



## The rural economy



Agriculture and land based industries are a particular feature of our local economy;

6.2% of the workforce work in agriculture;

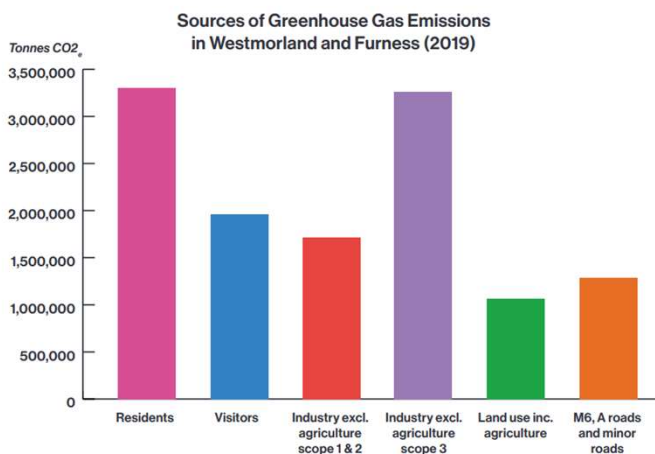
This rises to **13.7% in former Eden** against a national average of 1.1%

To that needs to be added

- mining and quarrying;
- **land-based tourism** and visitor attractions
- Those involved in the provision of services to **land based industries**, machinery, IT and technical support, supplies, sale and transport of produce, business support, professional services etc;
- Other businesses and activities benefiting from a rural location
- All of which is a component of a **modern rural economy**.



## Our Carbon Footprint



In 2019, Westmorland and Furness is emitted of the equivalent of **5.7million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>**;

Emissions have fallen by **around 28%** since 2005;

Through the Council Plan, the Council is working towards being **Carbon Net Zero by 2037**;

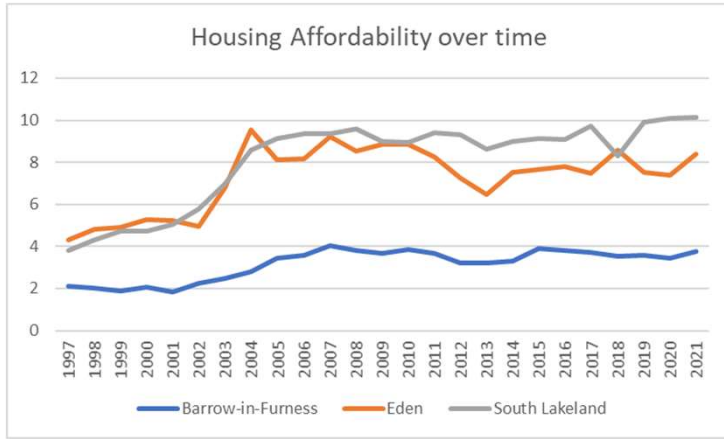
We have a **Climate Action Plan** looking at

- The way we live
- The way we work
- The way we produce energy
- The way we protect nature
- The way we use things
- The way we travel

The Local Plan influences all of these things.

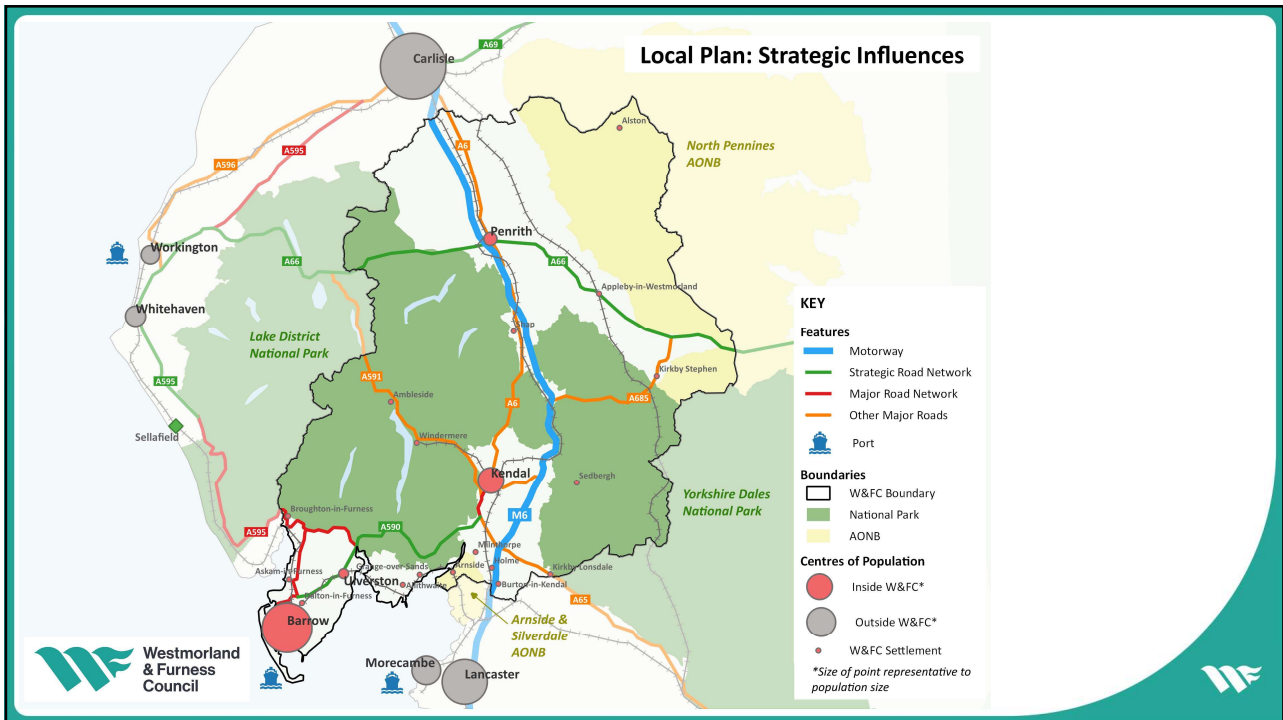


## Housing Affordability



Large parts of Westmorland and Furness have a severe problem with housing affordability;

- House prices are high
- Earnings relatively low
- The situation is worsening over time
- In former South Lakeland average house prices are more than **10.1** times average income.
- The equivalent is **8.4** for former Eden and **3.7** in Barrow
- Although the situation is worst in the National Parks, people struggle to find affordable housing across Westmorland and Furness;
- Significant concentrations of poor quality and energy inefficient housing.



## Communication & Engagement

- 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 both **residents** and **stakeholders** are kept informed in a clear and consistent way
- Maximising opportunities to interact with our communities and stakeholders – using existing connections
- Formal and Informal will be appropriate at different stages



## Communication & Engagement Strategy

- Preparing a Consultation & Engagement Strategy supported by Comms & Engagement Plans for certain workstreams
- This sets out the stakeholders we want to engage with and the range of methods we will use to capture feedback
- Our approach will:
  - Be simple, visual and interactive
  - Break topics down – use local examples
  - Enable as many people as possible to be heard
  - Be inclusive
  - Be **flexible** and **regularly updated**



## Communication & Engagement – Key Messages

- Currently developing a brand
- We will begin an 'early conversation' in Summer 2024
- Key Messages:
  - The Local Plan is about the future - it is an opportunity to shape the place we live & work
  - Addressing challenges such as:
    - growth in some areas and protecting others
    - how our town centres can manage and adapt
    - how new development might respond to the climate crisis
    - how we can reduce flood risk
    - how we can support healthy, happy lives
    - how we can improve education opportunities and transport provision



## Design Code – Supplementary Planning Document

- Design code is progressing ahead of the Local Plan;
- It will provide guidance on the **design and layout of new development** including form, materials, layout, open space, biodiversity net gain;
- Will be **supplementary planning document** in the first instance, but will inform the development of design requirements in the new plan;
- Being prepared by **Land Use Consultants**;
- Stage One: **Project Inception and Baseline Review & Assessment** March 2024 (subject to review, to incorporate early engagement);
- Stage Two: Develop Coding and a **Draft Design Code Document** - November 2024;
- Stage Three: **Formal Consultation and Engagement** – February 2024;
- Stage Four: **Final Design Code** and Training - March 2025





## Furness Master Plan

- The Local Plan is for the whole District, **looks 15 years ahead** and will take some time to finalise;
- There is much that can be done **ahead of the plan** with brown field sites and allocations we already have (Marina Village)
- And the transformation goes **beyond planning** (training and skills) and thinking beyond some of the statutory constraints on local plans;
- So we're doing a Master Plan in partnership with Homes England
  - ❑ To articulate a vision that is specifically for **Barrow and Furness**
  - ❑ To set out **what can be done now** (brownfield, town centre, allocations)
  - ❑ To cover issues such as training, inclusion and wider place-making
  - ❑ To undertake creative spatial visioning on growth ambitions and interventions

Footer area for presentation title or web address



## QUESTIONS

Footer area for presentation title or web address

