

OUR PARISH – OUR FUTURE – OUR PLAN



**THE CATON-with-LITLEDALE
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN
(2019 to 2031)**

**REGULATION 14
CONSULTATION VERSION**

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	4
1.1	Introduction	4
Map 1	Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Area	5
1.2	What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan and why do we need one for Caton-with-Littledale Parish?	7
Map 2	Caton-with-Littledale Parish in context	11
1.3	Relevant Planning Policy	12
1.4	Evidence	15
1.6	Community Engagement	15
1.7	Structure of the Document	15
2.	Vision and Objectives	17
2.1	Vision	17
2.2	Aim and Objectives	18
3.	Overall landscape and Development Strategy	19
3.1	The Development Strategy	19
3.2	The Landscape Strategy	22
4.	Policy Issues	26
4.1	Housing Provision	26
4.2	Natural Environment	30
4.3	Local Green Space and Area of Separation	34
4.4	Dark Skies	38
4.5	Historic Environment	39
4.6	Design	42
4.7	Economic Development	45
4.8	Community and Recreational Facilities	49
4.9	Supporting Infrastructure for New Development	51
4.10	Managing flood risk and water quality	53
4.11	Energy and Communications	55
5.	Proposed Development Allocations	57
5.1	Site Assessment and Selection	57
5.2	Site Mini Briefs	58
6.	Planning commitments	60
7.	Next Steps	62
7.	Appendices	63

1 Introduction

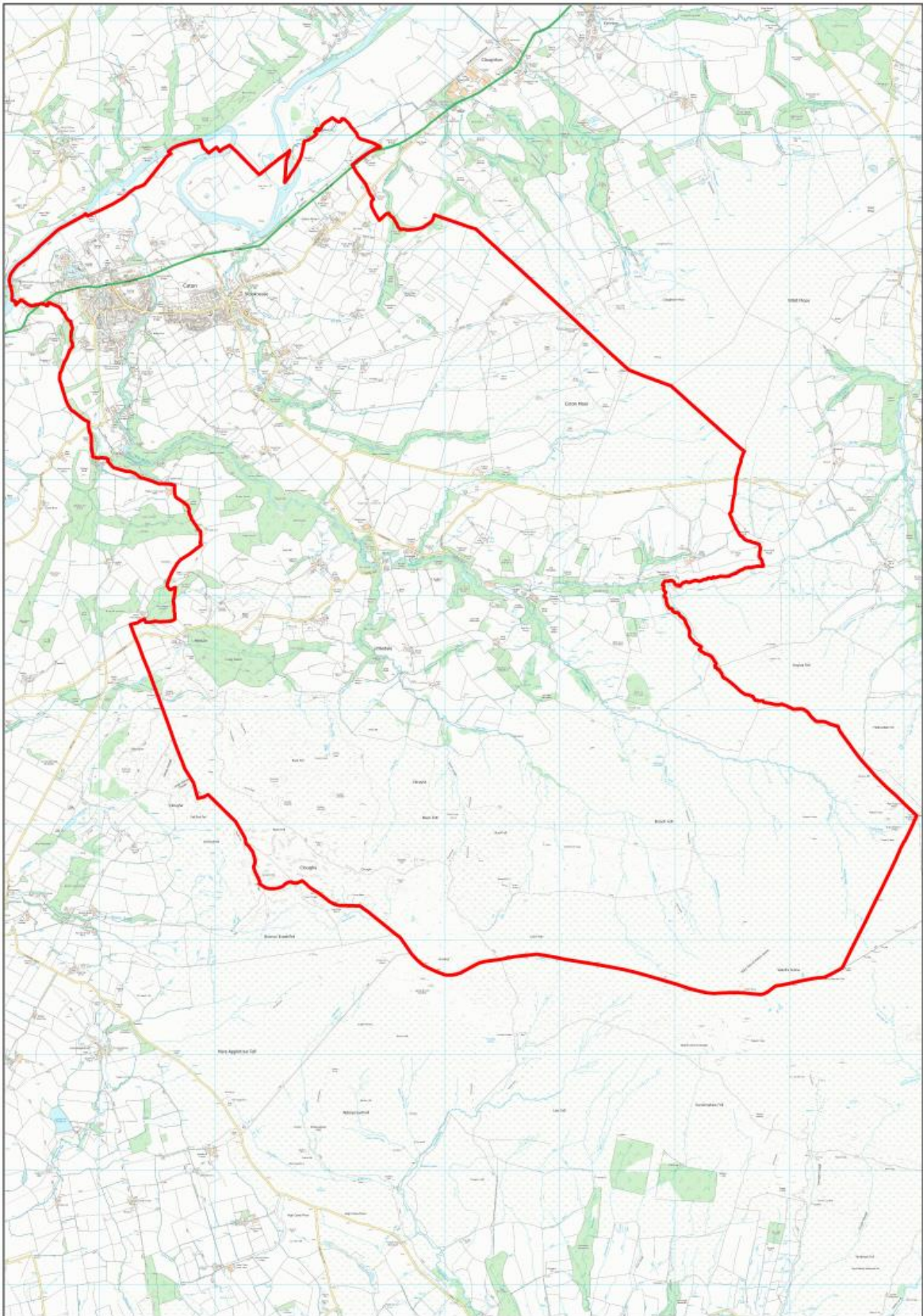
1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Lancaster District Council is a Local Planning Authority who has the statutory responsibility for the preparation of the Local Development Framework for the district and is responsible for determining planning applications in its area¹. A Local Plan sets out what development is needed in an area and contains policies to ensure that those needs are met in a sustainable way. Local Plans are used to determine planning applications and also to influence infrastructure provision and environmental management. Once adopted, a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is part of the statutory Development Framework.
- 1.1.2 As a designated body, Caton Parish Council are preparing an NDP for the Parish of Caton-with-Littledale area. The whole of the Parish lies within the Forest of Bowland area which is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (see Map 1 on page 5) with the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area. This means that the area's landscape has been identified by the Government as being of national importance. Designation as an AONB and the resulting legal powers and statutory obligations arise out of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- 1.1.3 The preparation of the Caton-with-Littledale NDP is being done by the Parish Council in consultation with both Lancaster District Council and the Forest of Bowland AONB. When complete, the NDP will be part of the District Council's Local Plan, prepared under the Planning Acts. It will be the principal planning document for part of the Forest of Bowland AONB (a designation that incorporates land in many parishes of five further local authority areas), but there is no single planning document for the whole AONB. This contrasts with the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB, where a Development Plan Document² has been prepared jointly by Lancaster District Council and South Lakeland District Council.
- 1.1.4 Given the progress made in preparing a Development Plan Document for an entire AONB, part of which also lies within Lancaster district, the Caton with Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan is therefore modelled on the Submission Version of the Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document to provide consistency of approach for similar areas within the Lancaster District Local Plan.
- 1.1.5 All AONBs are also required to produce Management Plans, prepared by the statutory AONB Partnerships under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. Management Plans are not part of the Local Plan for the areas they cover, but their content is a material consideration for Local Planning Authorities in making planning decisions. So, although prepared under different legislation for different purposes, the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan is an important document which is complementary to the NDP, and each document will influence and implement the other.

¹ Lancashire County Council is the minerals and waste planning authority for our NDP area. The Council has adopted a Minerals and Waste Local Plan and this must be read in conjunction with this NDP, especially where development is proposed within Minerals Safeguarding Areas.

² <https://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/arnside-and-silverdale-aonb-dpd>

Map 1 Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Area



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- 1.1.6 The purpose of this Second Regulation 14 Consultation Version of the Caton-with-Littledale NDP paper is to show how plan preparation has progressed since our earlier issues and consultations, including the previous Regulation 14 consultation. This includes setting out outcomes of the earlier consultations, how we have responded to the comments made (especially the reasons for changing to a combined Site Allocation and Criteria-based approach), new information we have gathered, and how all these factors have influenced the site selection and assessments and the drafting of policies.
- 1.1.7 In this document we are asking for your comments on our policies and proposed sites for development or protection. We would like to know whether you think the draft policies are fit for purpose and whether the most appropriate sites for development and sites to be protected have been selected. Your responses will be used to inform a final set of policies and sites, which we will submit in early 2020 to Lancaster District Council to consider for a final round of consultation conducted by them (Regulation 16), before the Caton with Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan is submitted for Independent Examination.

How to Comment on this Document

This is the second Draft Regulation 14 Consultation Version of the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The consultation period will run from **** 2018 to **** 2018.

All comments must be received by *** 2018.**

You are invited to give us your views and comment on this document. If you would like to do this, please use a representation form for each separate comment. Please comment electronically where possible.

The document, and representation forms are all available to view and download at the following website address: <http://www.catonvillage.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan>

Hard paper copies of this document and representation forms are available to view at:

Victoria Institute
Brookhouse Road,
Caton,
Lancaster
LA2 9QT

All comments should be returned as follows:

By email to: catonneighbourhoodplan@outlook.com

By post to:

Mrs Mason (Clerk to Caton Parish Council)
23 Maplewood Avenue
Preesall
Poulton-le-Fylde
FY6 OPU

1.2 What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan and why do we need one for Caton-with-Littledale Parish?

- 1.2.1 A brief summary of what an NDP is given in the box. It allows local people to decide what their planning needs are and, once adopted, is a statutory document that **must** be taken into account by Lancaster District Council (LCC) when making decisions about planning in the area of that NDP.

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)?

Neighbourhood planning lets our community decide what our needs are and how we want Caton-with-Littledale Parish to develop during the next 15 years in order to meet those needs. This process includes housing, businesses, services and leisure facilities alongside the landscape we live in. Once adopted, this plan must be taken into account by Lancaster District Council when making decisions about planning matters in the Parish. An NDP therefore carries much greater weight for our Parish in determining future planning outcomes than any existing mechanism - including the previous Parish Plan (2005). An NDP can also complement and strengthen the role of other statutory consultees, such as the Forest of Bowland AONB.

There are some things an NDP **must** be consistent with, some things it **cannot** do, and a lot of things it **can** influence. (*Guidance on Preparing Neighbourhood Plans, Neighbourhood Development Order, and Community Right to Build Orders. Lancaster District Council: Sept 2014.*) The main points are summarised here:

Our NDP

- **must:**
 - have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012),
 - be in general conformity with the Lancaster District adopted Core Strategy (2008) and within their Development Plan Document (2011-2031). *Note: a new Local Development Plan is due to be adopted by the end of 2018.*
 - take account of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan April 2014 – March 2019
- **cannot:**
 - be a “no growth” agenda, nor a “veto” against development taking place.
- **is or can be:**
 - a statutory planning document once adopted and therefore must be used by the local planning authority when deciding planning applications
 - as simple or wide ranging as the community chooses provided this relates to local planning issues
 - the result of a series of community consultations (Section 2.2)
 - able to influence what types of homes are built including the proportion that are affordable, in private ownership or have other tenure arrangements. It can also influence aspects of the style and appearance of housing. Similarly, particular types of business / employment developments may be encouraged both in the built-

up areas and in farms where these enhance sustainability. In some cases, NDPs specify where such developments can occur. Desired leisure developments, enhanced facilities, infrastructure and the preservation of the character of the Parish with its biodiversity and landscape can be emphasised. Where the opportunity arises, funding for such items may be linked to a particular planning development e.g.: for houses.

1.2.2 Caton-with-Littledale Parish is a special place set in the Forest of Bowland AONB. The Parish mainly sits on sandstone, siltstone, gritstone and shale, and it forms an integral part of the landscape that is widely visible from great distance. It is characterised by a complex mosaic of varied moorland heights, wooded brooks, valleys and gorges, rolling drumlin hills and the Lune valley floodplain which contain a network of old stone walls and hedgerows enclosing small to medium sized fields and pastures, scattered farmsteads and distinctive clustered settlements. Reflecting this situation, the Forest of Bowland AONB's key characteristics as stated in the Management Plan 2019-2024 are:

- 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

1.2.3 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

1.2.4 A more complete description and explanation of Caton-with-Littledale Parish and the Special Qualities of the Forest of Bowland AONB can be found in the accompanying background document available on the Parish Council website (<https://www.catonvillage.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan>)

1.2.5 The Forest of Bowland AONB straddles several planning authorities and is not currently developing a Development Plan Document, unlike the Arnside and Silverdale jointly produced Development Plan Document.

1.2.6 Caton with Littledale Parish Council consider that planning and Development should be managed in an equivalent way in the two AONBs, noting in particular that the

District Council (along with other public bodies) has a **statutory duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000** to have regard to the statutory purpose of AONBs in carrying out their functions.

1.2.7 Within the AONB, Government policy requires that councils give great weight to conserving landscape and natural beauty. (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 115). Furthermore, **Sections 88 & 89 of the CRoW Act require publication of a Management Plan for each AONB, which are statutory policy documents of each Local Authority. The fundamental principle underlying this is that any new development within an AONB that has a materially adverse impact can only proceed where it is demonstrated that it satisfies an over-riding national need that cannot be met elsewhere. All development is expected to conform to a very high standard of design, to be in keeping with local distinctiveness, and should seek to conserve and enhance the AONB's natural beauty.**

1.2.8 Management of the AONB is co-ordinated by the **Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership**, which is made up of landowners, farmers, tourism businesses, wildlife groups, local Councils and government agencies. The Partnership adopted an updated **Statutory Management Plan** in 2019, which sets out the overall strategy for managing, conserving and enhancing the AONB. The Management Plan also sets out some key principles for this NDP, some of which are more developed in the Arnside and Silverdale AONB Management Plan and taken forward in [the Arnside and Silverdale AONB DPD](#). The key principles for management and development in [Caton-with Littledale](#) should:

- (I) reflect the national importance of the AONB;
- (II) contain policies to conserve and enhance landscape quality and character, tranquillity, dark skies, local distinctiveness, settlement character, pattern and local vernacular architecture, habitats and species, geo-diversity and the historic environment;
- (III) identify appropriate sites for the delivery of housing to meet local community needs (demonstrated by a rural housing needs survey for the Lower Lune Valley and by Caton-with-Littledale NDP Community Consultations) prioritising affordable housing and use of brownfield sites;
- (IV) identify appropriate sites for the delivery of local employment and business opportunities suitable for the AONB, prioritising brownfield sites;
- (V) support the development and retention of local services and facilities and advocate the need for local services to support community life and the local tourism industry;
- (VI) define and conserve areas of important open green space within settlements;
- (VII) protect the setting of, and conserve the views out from and in to the AONB;
- (VIII) promote appropriate diversification and sensitive re-use of rural buildings; and
- (IX) consider the spatial relationship with surrounding areas, including Hornby, Claughton and Halton.

1.2.9 Therefore, the reasons for preparing this Caton-with-Littledale NDP are:

- (I) Nationally, there is a housing shortage. Additional national planning issues include energy production, resources, transport, infra-structure and flood prevention. The government has required Councils to plan for a large increase in house building. Lancaster District Council (LCC) has to meet these perceived needs and to develop an appropriate local infrastructure for

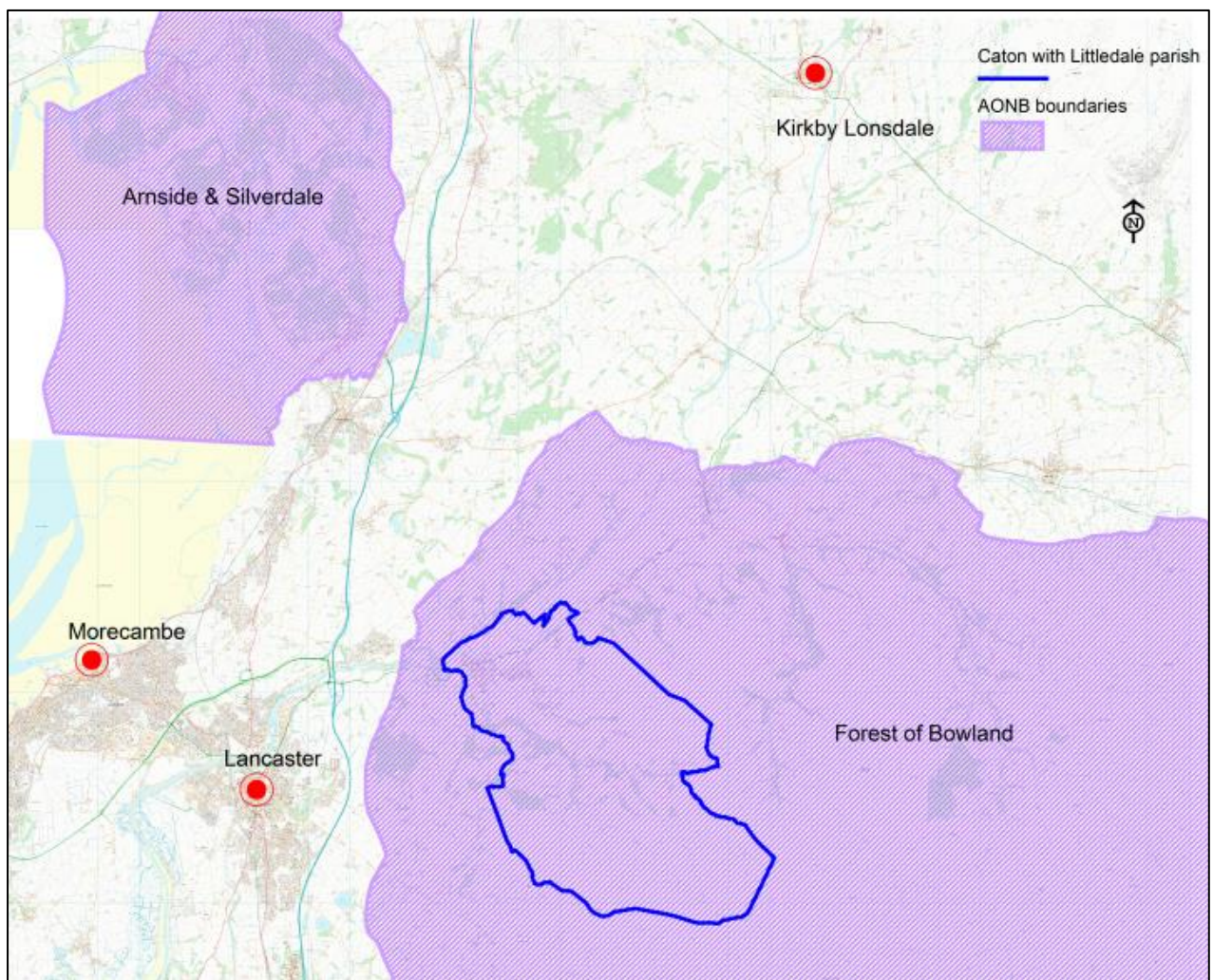
the wider area and economy. Therefore, all Parishes are expected to work within these wider development perspectives. LCC has been up-dating its Local Development Plan Document (Development Plan Document) and is making good progress on the two key elements of the Local Plan - Strategic Policies and Land Allocations Development Plan Document and the Review of the Development Management Development Plan Document. Both documents are currently undergoing examination.

- (II) Private land owners and developers are also involved. There have been a number of recent developments and planning applications in the Parish including Moor Platt, the area off Sycamore Road and the Bargh TNT Garages site on the A683. Local people have expressed mixed views about these developments, but currently have had relatively little influence on the outcomes.
- (III) While the Parish of Caton-with-Littledale lies entirely within the Forest of Bowland AONB and is therefore an area of national landscape importance, there is no AONB Development Plan Document for it. This means that the District-wide Local Plan for Lancaster would not have the AONB or the particular interests of Caton-with-Littledale in this setting as its main focus.
- (IV) Further planning and development applications will continue to arise so that a better method of assessing them against local needs and landscape impact on a statutory basis is needed.
- (V) A Caton-with-Littledale NDP:
 - a. will be an important means of bringing the wishes and needs of the Parish to the fore when deciding planning matters, and enable the community to be involved in shaping its future
 - b. can focus on its place in the AONB and have its conservation and enhancement at its heart
 - c. will give statutory development plan policy weight to some of the NDP issues and policies when planning applications are considered.
- (VI) The NDP will also be a complementary and important way of helping implement the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan within the Parish (in the absence of an AONB Development Plan Document) by giving statutory development plan policy weight to some of the principles of the management plan when planning applications are considered.
- (VII) The special character of the Parish within the AONB requires a different approach to local planning to that outside nationally important landscapes.
- (VIII) Policies and decisions need to be consistent for similar areas in respect of the conservation significances and the response to development pressures; and this should be the case for the two AONBs within the LCC District.

1.2.10 The Caton-with-Littledale NDP is therefore modelled on the structure of the Arnsdale and Silverdale Development Plan Document in order to give consistency of documentation as well as approach and decision-making processes in these areas.

1.2.11 Caton-with-Littledale Parish covers approximately 8000 acres and has a population (2011 census) of 2738. The main settlements are Caton, Brookhouse, Caton Green, Forge Mill, and Littledale. Around 70 small businesses operate within the Parish, which predominantly employ people living within the Parish or nearby. Farming and land management are important. Other prominent sectors include education and health services. The Parish has close links to Lancaster, Morecambe and Kirby Lonsdale for employment and for services such as supermarkets and secondary education.

Map 2 Caton-with-Littledale Parish in context



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1.3 Relevant Planning Policy

- 1.3.1 The Caton with Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan is one of a number of existing and plans and strategies affecting the Parish including the National Planning Policy Framework, Lancaster District Local Plan documents and the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan.

National Planning Policy

- 1.3.2 Neighbourhood Plans must take account of national planning policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Revised February 2019). The central theme of the NPPF is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which states that local authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet development needs in their area and meet objectively assessed development needs unless adverse impacts would significantly outweigh the benefits. It also states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection, and that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in these areas. Major development should be refused in AONBs except in exceptional circumstances. The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), which accompanies the NPPF, re-iterates local authorities' statutory duties in relation to AONBs and the need to have regard to AONB management plans, including their contribution to setting the strategic context for development by providing evidence and principles.
- 1.3.3 The NPPF offers guidance in paragraph 11 on the need for Local Authorities to base their plans and policies around sustainable development:

Plans and decisions should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:

For plan-making this means that:

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas⁵, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area⁶; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 1.3.4 However, footnote 6, which relates to the above paragraph, states: "The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 176) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green

Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 63); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.”

1.3.5 Footnote 6 means that the objectively assessed needs of the District do not necessarily need to be delivered within AONBs, where other NPPF policies apply.

1.3.6 Paragraph 172 of the NPPF states:

Great weight should be given to conserving 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 all 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. Planning permission should be refused for major development⁵⁵ 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.

Footnote 55: For the purposes of paragraphs 172 and 173, whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

Lancaster Planning Policy

1.3.7 A strategic approach to development including policies is set out in some detail at a district level. The most relevant parts of the Lancaster Local Plan are:

- The **Lancaster District Core Strategy (2008)**, which sets out the overall development strategy and vision for the District. It identifies the AONBs as key elements of the District’s environmental capital and identifies Caton and Brookhouse as settlements which should contribute to meeting local development needs.
- The **Lancaster District Development Management Policies Document (2014)**, which sets out policies used to help determine planning applications in Lancaster District. It identifies Caton and Brookhouse as sustainable settlements in which it is appropriate for some development to take place.
- Saved policies of the **Lancaster District Local Plan (2004)**.

1.3.8 Lancaster District Council is currently producing a new **Strategic Policies and Land Allocations** Development Plan Document for the whole District along with a review of the existing **Development Management** policies. No allocations have been made in those parishes preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, however it is expected that positive policies are prepared to meet local needs in those areas.

1.3.9 These documents were submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2018 for Examination.

The Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan 2019-24

1.3.10 The statutory AONB Management Plan, prepared by the AONB Partnership on behalf of its constituent local authorities, is a critical document. It describes the Special Qualities of the area which contribute to the national significance of the landscape and identifies the major trends and opportunities for the area. It provides a policy framework and identifies a 5-year programme of actions to help guide the work of the AONB partnership organisations towards achieving the purpose of the plan – to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural beauty of the Forest of Bowland landscape.

1.3.11 The Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan and other Neighbourhood Plans across the AONB will be a key mechanism by which this purpose and the wider vision of the Management Plan will be delivered. The Management Plan itself is not part of the statutory development framework for the area, but it is a material consideration in making planning decisions.

1.3.12 The Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan can be viewed at <https://www.forestofbowland.com/review-forest-bowland-aonb-management-plan>

1.3.13 The ***Planning Policy Assessment and Review of the Evidence Base*** document which identifies all policies and evidence that has guided the development of the policies in this Neighbourhood Development Plan is available on the Parish Council website.

1.4 Evidence

- 1.4.1 In drafting the Caton Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council has drawn upon the existing evidence base for the Local Plan documents.
- 1.4.2 The Parish Council have prepared a document which details the special qualities of the parish to inform the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.4.3 A Local Green Space Assessment has also been undertaken by the Parish Council to inform the allocation of Local Green Spaces.
- 1.4.4 Site Assessments of residential sites have been undertaken by Lancaster District Council. Following this the Parish Council commissioned a *Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* to understand the cumulative landscape changes that might arise from the allocation of one or more sites within the parish. The report also looks at the impacts the sites have on the special qualities and character of the villages and the wider landscape. This work has informed the allocation of sites for housing growth in the village.
- 1.4.5 The above documents are available on the parish council website at <https://www.catonvillage.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan>

1.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 1.5.1 Lancaster District Council have completed a Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Habitats Regulations Assessment. This concludes: **This section to be completed by Kirkwells when Lancaster have finalised it.**

1.6 Community Engagement

- 1.6.1 A significant amount of community engagement has informed the preparation of the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Plan. This will be detailed in the Consultation Statement to accompany the submission version of the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan.

1.7 Structure of the Document

- 1.7.1 This document is split into 7 sections:

Part 1 is this Introduction. It tells you what the DPD is for, the context of the DPD and the stages of preparation of the DPD. It explains how the two Councils have worked together. It also explains the structure of the document.

Part 2 sets out the Vision and Objectives for the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Plan.

Part 3 sets out policies dealing with the overall strategy for development in the Caton-with-Littledale parish

Part 4 sets out development management policies for the parish, which will be applied in addition to other local and national policies as part of the Development Plan for the area.

Part 5 sets out allocations for residential development.

Part 6 explains the next steps for the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Part 7 contains the Appendices.

2. Vision and Objectives

2.1 Vision

- 2.1.1 A Neighbourhood Development Plan is required to have a vision and a clear set of objectives. The vision is a statement of how we want the Parish to be at the end of the Plan period in 2031. As Caton-with-Littledale Parish is in the Forest of Bowland AONB, then the vision has been developed to be consistent with the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan Vision³ and that set out in the Arnside and Silverdale AONB DPD.

The Vision for Caton-with-Littledale Parish is that:

The Parish maintains its character as four (*Caton, Brookhouse, Caton Green, and Littledale*) distinct but inter-dependent communities within the rural setting of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The loved and highly valued Special Qualities and landscape character of the Parish and Forest of Bowland AONB - the grandeur and isolation of the upland core, the steep escarpment of the moorland hills, the undulating lowlands, the serenity and tranquillity of the area, the distinctive pattern of settlements with their historic context, the wildlife of the area, and the landscape's historic and cultural associations^{3,4} - are maintained or enhanced to benefit the well-being, health and sustainability of the local communities and visitors.

The Parish develops to meet its residents' needs ensuring a balanced housing structure for all ages of the community whilst enhancing appropriate local business, landscape, leisure, educational, health and transport facilities so that residents and visitors continue to enjoy the Special Qualities of this area into a prosperous future. All development within the Parish will be managed in harmony with and proportionately to its status in the AONB and to contribute towards meeting the needs of those who live in, work in and visit the area in a way that:

- i. conserves and enhances the landscape, the natural beauty, the historic context and the Special Qualities of the Parish within Forest of Bowland AONB^{3,4}; and
- ii. creates vibrant, diverse and sustainable communities with a strong sense of place; and
- iii. maintains a thriving economy.

³ Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan 2019 – 2024: Page 26;

2.2 Aim and Objectives

Overall Aim:

To maintain the historic context and natural landscape of Caton-with-Littledale Parish, and to promote proportionate, sustainable development up to 2031 commensurate with being part of the Forest of Bowland AONB, in order to enhance the quality of the environment and the well-being of Parish residents and visitors.

2.2.1 This will be achieved through the following eight objectives, which reflect the objectives set out in the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan, relevant Local Plans, national policy, the evidence gathered and wider context:

Objectives:

- i. To conserve and enhance the outstanding landscape and natural beauty of Caton-with-Littledale Parish, including its landscape character and visual amenity, wildlife and geology, historic context, heritage and settlement character^{3,4};**
- ii. To ensure that all development is appropriate and sustainable in its location and design, and is of high quality;**
- iii. To provide sufficient supply and mix of appropriate types, sizes and tenures of high quality housing to contribute to meeting the needs of Caton-with-Littledale Parishioners and the surrounding AONB, with an emphasis on affordable housing and without adverse impact on the landscape character of the AONB;**
- iv. To support a sustainable local economy, especially rural employment and livelihoods, and tourism;**
- v. To protect and improve local community facilities and services, including for recreation and for sustainable public transport, paths and cycleways;**
- vi. To provide the necessary services and infrastructure to support and improve both existing and new development;**
- vii. To manage and improve flood risk and water quality.**

2.2.2 The proposed Objectives for the NDP state what needs to be achieved in order to make the Vision a reality. They provide a link between the Vision and the proposed Policies for development in the Parish.

3. Overall landscape and Development Strategy

3.1 The Development Strategy

- 3.1.1 This Neighbourhood Development Plan places development more clearly in the context of the primary purpose of an AONB – to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area – and, in the interests of people living and working here, to put this at the heart of planning for this Parish which wholly sits within the Forest of Bowland AONB. Furthermore, it serves to both fulfil the Management Plan of the Forest of Bowland AONB within Caton-with-Littledale Parish and achieve an equivalent strategy and methodology for planning and development between the two AONBs within the Lancaster District (Arnside & Silverdale AONB having developed a DPD in conjunction with LCC amongst others for this purpose) whilst being consistent with the Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD of the Local Plan.
- 3.1.2 The two policies that follow in this section are based on the equivalent section in the Arnside and Silverdale AONB DPD and are designed to ensure that the primary purpose of the AONB is at the heart of the overall approach to development in this Parish, and to better ensure that new development supports the Forest of Bowland AONB’s primary purpose and Special Qualities alongside the interests of Parishioners.

Policy CL1: Development Strategy

A landscape capacity-led approach to development will be taken in the Parish. Great weight will be given to the principle of conserving landscape and natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage in the parish due to its location in the Forest of Bowland AONB.

1. All Development

All development in the Parish of Caton-with-Littledale, located in the Forest of Bowland AONB, should be sustainable, consistent with the primary purpose of AONB designation⁴, and support the Special Qualities of the AONB as set out in the [Forest of Bowland AONB](#) Management Plan. Development must be determined by the capacity of the landscape to hold it and in keeping with the primary purpose of the AONB. [Within](#) the Parish, housing, employment, services, infrastructure and other development should contribute towards meeting the needs of those who live in, work in and visit the area in a way that:

- I. Conserves and enhances the [distinctive](#) landscape, the natural beauty, historic context, and the Special Qualities of the AONB; and
- II. Creates a vibrant, diverse and sustainable community with a strong sense of place; and
- III. Maintains a thriving local economy.

⁴ As set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; confirmed by Section 82 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:

- The primary purpose of the designation is to **conserve and enhance natural beauty**.
- In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and 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**.
- Recreation is not an objective of the designation, but the **demand for recreation should be met insofar as this is consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses**.

Where any development proposal would create conflict between the primary purpose of the AONB and other uses of the AONB within the Parish, greater weight will be attached to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the landscape and natural beauty of the Parish.

2. Development within the Sustainable Settlements of Caton and Brookhouse

To promote vibrant local communities and support services, small scale growth and investment will be supported in the identified Sustainable Settlements of Caton and Brookhouse where it closely reflects identified local needs within the Parish or immediately surrounding areas of the AONB, and conserves and enhances the local landscape and settlement character.

3. Development on the edge of and outside Sustainable settlements

Development proposals on the edge of and outside settlements, including in hamlets and the open countryside, will be treated as exceptions and will be permitted only where they demonstrate that:

- I. there would be no adverse impact on settlement or landscape character; and that
- II. there is an essential need for a rural location; or
- III. it will help to sustain an existing business, including farm diversification schemes; or
- IV. it contributes to the meeting of a proven and essential housing need in that location; or
- V. it represents a sensitive and appropriate reuse, redevelopment or extension of an existing building.

4. Major Development

Proposals for major development will not be permitted in the [Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Area](#), unless the proposal can be demonstrated to be in the public interest and exceptional circumstances exist.

Whether a proposed development constitutes major development will be a matter for the relevant decision taker, taking into account the individual characteristics and circumstances of the proposal and the local context. In determining whether a proposed development constitutes major development the Councils will consider whether by reason of its scale, form, character or nature, the proposal **has the potential** to have a significant adverse impact on the natural beauty of the AONB.

In determining whether exceptional circumstances exist the Councils will consider:

- I. the need for the development, including any national considerations, and the impact of permitting or refusing it upon the local economy; and
- II. the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the [neighbourhood](#) area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- III. any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

The intimate nature of the AONB landscape means that even some smaller-scale proposals may be considered to be major development depending on the local context.

5. Brownfield Land

The categorisation of a site as brownfield does not negate or outweigh the need for the full and careful consideration of the impacts of a development on the AONB against the full range of policy requirements.

- 3.1.3 The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the landscape and natural beauty of the area. It is therefore entirely appropriate that the Development Strategy for the Parish of Caton-with-Littledale identifies a landscape-capacity led and criteria-based approach to development, consistent with this primary purpose and the Forest of Bowland AONB's Special Qualities. A strategy that did not put the conservation and enhancement of the landscape central to the approach to development would compromise the primary purpose and undermine the national designation and the value of the AONB in the national interest.

Housing Growth in the Parish

- 3.1.4 Lancaster District Council have indicated that an important part of Neighbourhood Plan preparation is ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan supports the Strategic Development needs of the District.
- 3.1.5 Lancaster District Council have carried out a call for sites exercise, for the emerging Strategic policies and Land Allocations DPD. However, where parishes are designated as a Neighbourhood Planning body, the District Council are expecting the Parish Councils to plan positively for housing growth and to bring forward allocations for future housing development through the Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 3.1.6 As the AONB is a protected landscape, sites that are suitable for housing should be developed specifically to help meet local affordable or other locally identified housing or other needs, thereby contributing towards meeting the needs of those who live in, work in and visit the Parish or Lower Lune Valley Ward (which both lie within the AONB). To do otherwise would fail to address these needs, which could then only be met by releasing more sensitive sites, causing harm and compromising the primary purpose of the AONB designation.
- 3.1.7 The process of determining this includes assessing land availability for development, including assessing the suitability of such land for allocation; matching this to locally determined needs; and allocating sites suitable for development. It is accepted that a proportion of the resulting development will be open market housing.
- 3.1.8 The Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) performed by Lancaster District Council (2018) will form the initial assessment of land availability for the Parish, noting the Methodology⁵ which seeks to afford equivalent standards in the Forest of Bowland AONB as has been achieved for the Arnside & Silverdale AONB during preparation of their DPD.
- 3.1.9 An essential and integral report is the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) with recognition of the special qualities of the Parish within this process, using

⁵ <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/evidence-monitoring-and-information>

the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan and its Landscape Character Assessment⁶.

3.1.10 Site Allocation must then be performed on the basis of Landscape Capacity using the assessments described above, and whether the housing development needs of the Parish and surrounding AONB have been met.

3.1.11 From time to time, additional or “windfall” development proposals will be made. These must include a landscape assessment proportionate to the scale of the proposal and the level of impact of the proposed scheme on the landscape. For larger or otherwise more sensitive sites or schemes (including most new development), this will require a LVIA undertaken by a qualified professional to Landscape Institute standards as set out above and showing how impacts may be minimised or mitigated.

3.2 The Landscape Strategy

Policy CL2: Landscape

Within the Parish of Caton-with-Littledale set in the Forest of Bowland AONB, development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they conserve and enhance the landscape, and the natural beauty of the area. Proposals will not be permitted where they would have an adverse effect upon the landscape character or visual amenity of the AONB or its setting.

Development proposals will be supported where they:

- I. take into account the Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment for the Caton-with-Littledale Parish area, and other relevant evidence; and
- II. reflect the rural nature, historic character and local distinctiveness of the area including settlement character and separation, local vernacular traditions and building materials and native vegetation/planting; and
- III. respect the visual amenity, views, tranquillity, dark skies, and the sense of space and place, avoiding the introduction of intrusive elements, or compromise to the skyline or settlement separation; and
- IV. take full account of the cumulative and incremental impacts of development having regard to the effects of existing developments (including unintended impacts and impacts of development that has taken place as a result of Permitted Development Rights, licensing or certification) and the likely further impacts of the proposal in hand; and
- V. include a landscape assessment, the level of detail of which should be proportionate to the scale of the proposal and the level of impact of the proposed development on the landscape. For larger or otherwise more sensitive sites or schemes (including the majority of new developments), this will require a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken by a qualified professional to Landscape Institute Standards, showing how impacts may be minimised or mitigated. An LVIA is unlikely

⁶ <https://www.forestofbowland.com/Landscape-Character-Assessment>

to be needed for modifications to existing buildings unless there is a significant alteration to the scale and/or visual impact of the building.

- 3.2.1 The AONB benefits from the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and natural beauty and great weight will be given to conserving and enhancing natural beauty when considering development proposals.
- 3.2.2 'Natural Beauty' is not just an aesthetic concept, and 'landscape' means more than just scenery. The natural beauty of the AONB is strongly linked with its distinctive landscape character. The landscape of the AONB is largely due to natural features and processes such as geological diversity, landforms, climate, soil, water features, biodiversity, habitats, but is in part the product of many centuries of human modification and management, including communities, settlements, heritage assets, people and perceptions. Many of these elements are recognised as being of national or international importance and are protected by law. The special qualities of the Forest of Bowland AONB, as set out in the Management Plan, define and describe the elements that give the area its natural beauty as well as those human elements that also contribute its unique landscape character.
- 3.2.3 The area was designated as a landscape of national significance due to a variety of factors: the grandeur and isolation of the upland core; the steep escarpments of the Moorland Hills; the undulating lowlands; the visual contrasts between each element of the overall landscape; the serenity and tranquillity of the area; the distinctive pattern of settlements; the wildlife of the area; and the landscape's historic and cultural associations.
- 3.2.4 The AONB forms part of the extensive Pennine Chain, which extends eastwards into the Yorkshire Dales National Park and southwards across Lancashire. The unique landscape character of the Forest of Bowland reflects its historical and present day management for farming and sporting activities, from the royal forest of medieval times, to the sporting estates of the present day. This has had a taming influence on the landscape.
- 3.2.5 It is the unique combination of elements and features (characteristics) in this area that makes the landscape so distinctive, and which creates the highly valued natural beauty of the area, resulting in a strong sense of place. The AONB is part of the cultural and natural heritage of the nation and if these characteristics are damaged, for example by insensitive development, then that will compromise the primary purpose of the AONB and the enjoyment of the area by the public.
- 3.2.6 The Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment has confirmed the diversity of the Forest of Bowland's landscapes, identifying, mapping and describing 14 Landscape Character Types and 82 Landscape Character Areas within only 803 square kilometres. The Assessment seeks to provide a framework for developing a shared understanding of the current character of the Study Area's landscapes and its future management needs.
- 3.2.7 Caton-with-Littledale Parish contains 7 of the Landscape Character types (*Map 2*):
- A. Moorland Plateaux
 - B. Unenclosed Moorland Hills
 - C. Enclosed Moorland Hills
 - D. Moorland Fringe
 - F. Undulating Lowland Farmland with Wooded Brooks

I. Wooded Rural Valleys
J. Valley Floodplain

- 3.2.8 Particularly relevant characteristics of the Caton (F4) Landscape Character Area, which includes the villages of Caton and Brookhouse, are:
- A patchwork of small to medium pasture fields deeply incised by wooded brooks and river gorges;
 - A network of hedgerows and stone walls delineate field boundaries;
 - Scattered farmsteads and clustered villages;
 - Panoramic, open and framed views northwards across the wide floodplain of the River Lune; and
 - To the south, the dramatic rising profile of the moorland hills forms the skyline backdrop to views.
- 3.2.9 In the emerging Lancaster Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (2011-2031), Policy SP7 seeks to maintain Lancaster Districts unique character, and Policy SP8 seeks to protect the Natural Environment. Policy EN4 relates solely to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and states that the landscape and character will be protected conserved and enhanced.

Local Evidence

- 3.2.10 Appreciation of and protection for the natural environment has been a strong feature of all previous reports in all age groups. Thus, the Parish Plan (2005) noted: *“that residents appreciated the special character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the central principle must always be borne in mind that our countryside, its plants and animals and the complex relationships they have with one another, are fragile and need particular care in their preservation.”*
- 3.2.11 Enhancing environmental issues was clearly thought to be important for both the built up and rural parts of the Parish: 67% of 1287 responses (*Parish Appraisal survey, 1992*) thought there should be special nature reserves in the village / Parish for wild flowers and animals. There were strong responses in favour of maintaining or extending hedges and for protecting small woods and lone trees. Requests for more trees, cleaning water ways and producing a village pond were suggested. In 2002, there was significant concern for the loss of wild flowers and birds.
- 3.2.12 The environment was mentioned spontaneously during early NDP public meetings despite primarily discussing development issues, e.g.: need for good environmental planning with any development; keep the village rural, protect the countryside; ensure wildlife is protected; and Crook o’ Lune [valued].
- 3.2.13 The November 2016-January 2017 Residents’ Surveys confirmed very strong support for maintaining and enhancing the natural environment and for the Forest of Bowland AONB.

Q5 *“What do you like about your village?”* very strongly advocated the rural location and beautiful scenery / countryside including access to it from a village with friendly community spirit.

For Q 16 94.9% rated the countryside around the village very important, 4.7% quite important and just 2 replies not at all important or “dependant on location, not that important if on outskirts”.

- 3.2.14 In “Any other comments on the Forest of Bowland, landscape and countryside?” one comment seemed to sum up the many: “*We are undoubtedly privileged to live in such a beautiful landscape including moorland, farmland, sloping valley sides, wooded tributary valleys of the Lune and the Lune floodplain itself. Walking and cycling are very important local pastimes and the Parish has an excellent network of paths and bridleways that local people (and visitors) clearly value enormously. Birdlife is abundant. Therefore, maintaining the rural environment in a manner that reflects the special statutes given to the AONBs is critical to the landscape legacy we leave to younger and future generations.*” There were many calls to preserve it, to protect green fields from development, use brownfield sites, to keep the dark starry skies at night, to enhance the wildlife areas and keep the “*wonderful patchwork of varied habitats*” including woodland. Some commentators also wanted to get rid of the windmills.
- 3.2.15 The extensive list of favourite views with comments volunteered (Q 15) also support the value attached to this landscape.
- 3.2.16 The March 2017 informal consultation involved proposing options for inclusion in future Neighbourhood Plan policies relating to protecting the landscape and natural environment of the Parish and how the Neighbourhood Plan would seek to do this. The responses received indicate that 94.6% of respondents agree with the proposed approach for protecting the landscape and natural environment.

4. Policy Issues

4.1 Housing Provision

- 4.1.1 As the Forest of Bowland AONB, within which Caton with Littledale parish is located, is a protected landscape, sites that are suitable for housing should be developed specifically to help meet local affordable or other locally identified housing needs.
- 4.1.2 To do otherwise would fail to address these needs, which could then only be met by releasing more sensitive sites, causing harm and compromising the primary purpose of the AONB designation. This policy seeks to ensure that the approach to housing delivery in the AONB reflects the local needs within the AONB and better ensures that new development supports the AONB's primary purpose and Special Qualities.

Policy CL³: Housing Provision

Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, the number, size, types and tenures of all homes provided should closely reflect identified local needs in accordance with current parish/AONB housing needs evidence at the time of the application.

Proposals for new housing development of two or more properties will be supported where they deliver no less than 50% affordable housing. Only where this is demonstrably unachievable will a lower percentage be acceptable. In assessing the level and type of affordable housing provision on each site, regard will be had to site viability, individual site costs, other scheme requirements, and the guidance on affordable housing provision set out in Appendix 4.

Meeting the affordable housing requirement by commuted sums rather than by the provision of housing on site will be exceptional and require justification on a case-by-case basis.

Priority will be given to the delivery of affordable housing and maximising the potential for meeting identified local needs and local affordable needs from appropriate individual development opportunities. Proposals will be expected to demonstrate that densities make best and efficient use of land and reflect local settlement character.

NOTE: This is just copied from the A & S AONB DPD I need to check this against the rural housing needs survey done by Lancaster – will try to do before the meeting

- 4.1.3 The provision of new housing, especially affordable housing and starter homes, is one of the highest government priorities. Paragraphs 47-55 of the NPPF set this out in some detail, beginning with the requirement that Local Planning Authorities will use their evidence base to ensure that their district-wide Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing, including identifying key sites for development. The Parish Council will work with Housing Associations and other providers to achieve supported types.
- 4.1.4 New housing developments should offer a range of housing sizes, types and tenures to meet identified local needs, including provision for vulnerable communities such as older people and people with disabilities.

- 4.1.5 How to meet local housing needs is perhaps the most significant issue for the Neighbourhood Development Plan to address. The results of the Neighbourhood Development Plan consultations so far show that housing is one of the most important issues for residents.
- 4.1.6 The key challenge for the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan is to determine how best to achieve sustainable development to meet local needs in an appropriate way for the Parish, taking fully into account its location within the Forest of Bowland AONB. The need to conserve and enhance the landscape, natural beauty and rural character of the Parish needs to be fully considered in determining the location and scale of any new housing development. Any proposals, even if they meet the requirements in a 'providing new homes' policy, would still be subject to the provisions in the other policies in the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 4.1.7 Lancaster District Council has undertaken a District wide housing needs assessment which provides up-to-date evidence about local housing need.
- 4.1.8 A key type of new housing is affordable housing. The Council has adopted policies designed to increase affordable housing provision. Policy DM6 in the emerging Development Management DPD sets out the requirement for 50% affordable housing on sites of six or more, with developments of two or more making a financial contribution. NEED to check against the rural housing needs survey results
- 4.1.9 The 1992 parish survey showed a stable (74% living in the Parish > 15yrs) but slightly older population with a balanced age structure (that has aged slightly to the 2011 census). 96 (15%) of households were looking for alternative accommodation. 56% wanted to move within the Parish and 24% to within 10 miles of the Parish.
- 4.1.10 In 2002 the REAL survey asked (Q 13) about the kinds of housing the local community needs. Housing for young people (93), for the elderly (61), and affordable housing for local people (180) were favoured over large family (14) and executive (8) homes, whilst 88 said no housing was needed.
- 4.1.11 In the 2016 – 17 Residents' Survey for Adults, Q24 & 25 clearly show greater need for smaller homes built in a variety of types suitable for both the young and elderly and with a variety of tenures especially affordable for sale and rent, 50% also wanting rented accommodation reserved for local people. Larger executive homes are not wanted as much. Putting this into a personal context, 203 / 296 replied to Q27: "If you would like to stay in the village but move to a different house, which would you choose?" Again smaller, starter home, bungalow or sheltered / retirement home when taken together exceed larger homes in 2016 – 17, although more than one answer was possible.
- 4.1.12 In broad terms this accords with LCC local housing needs predictions (2012) for the District population to 2031: "The most significant feature is the projected growth of the 65+ age group by 61.8% over the forecast period, (amounting to) 15,200 more people, over 79% of the total growth" and "Within the 65+ age group, the 85+ group shows a large increase of 138.2%, 4,700 people by 2033". It accords with 2011 local census data on age and housing stock (Section 3: 3.30 & 3.31), with "post-it note" spontaneous feedback from NDP meetings and with comments made in the 2016-17 Residents' Survey, namely that:
- There is an un-met need for smaller houses of various sorts
 - Some of this is for starter homes, however
 - A lot is for older people wanting to down-size, avoid staircases, have access to shops or have sheltered / retirement homes where their social roots are (see survey quotes below).

- This last need is likely to increase over the next 15 years for demographic reasons.
- 4.1.13 The feedback comments illustrate the following: *“This village does not need more large (3+ bedroom) houses. It needs 1–2 bedroom houses that can be bought”; “the trend to extending small dwellings has depleted the stock.....It is almost impossible to find a small home with a decent garden”; “I would like to emphasise the need for 2 bedroom houses to purchase at full price (not ‘affordable housing’ which is shared ownership housing); “would like some over 55 housing to buy like a McCarthy and Stone development”; “I think sheltered flats for the elderly would be really helpful”; “Why do you not develop more apartment buildings such as on Station Road for older residents in order to release existing houses for families?”.*
- 4.1.14 Clearly more smaller homes of different types (including those suitable for the elderly) are needed in new developments to redress the imbalance seen in the Parish (Section 3: 3.30 & 3.31), rather than the current planning application requests for executive style 4 bedroom properties with some affordable/intermediate small homes only.
- 4.1.15 Affordable homes are widely requested and needed despite the high proportion of home ownership in the Parish. Part of the reason lies in the increased cost of rural housing in the District (*LCC Meeting Housing Needs SPD 2013, Ch 5*) which is exacerbated in Caton-with-Littledale because of its AONB status, transport links and falling in the catchment of so many good secondary schools. Thus, more affordable and starter homes are needed for the local community, as witnessed by answers to Q24 and 28, including 27 written comments to Q28: *“Do you know anyone who has left the village because they could not afford to live here? Or anyone who is living with family or friends when they would prefer a place of their own in the village?”* in the 2016-17 Residents’ Survey. Also, there were many answers to Q29: *“Anything you would like to add on housing in the village?”* asking for affordable housing for children and grandchildren. Older residents also need help though: One answer mentions critical problems with the “bedroom tax”, another states *“I am unsure if I will be able to afford to live in the village once my child reaches 18 as the council tax will increase by 25% and also the child tax credits will stop – so I am dreading next year – how can people survive in the village with only 1% pay rises – we are a one parent family and it can be very daunting.”* There are common calls to keep houses for local people / born in the village and to keep the price / rent of larger properties low for those needing to move for a growing family. E.g.: *“Why are there so few rentals available in Caton? Is the village becoming gentrified?”* and *“We are hoping to move to a family home, there aren’t many in our price bracket”.* (answers to Q 28 & 29, Residents’ Survey 2016 – 17).
- 4.1.16 All of this shows there is a current strain on keeping the community together and therefore truly sustainable. The 1992 Housing Section Q B4 also shows a need for agricultural people referring to “County farm” and “Tied” accommodation as well as other tenure types.
- 4.1.17 The balance of house type built needs shifting to produce a greater proportion of smaller, more varied homes. If not, this will encourage more in-coming families whilst losing local community members elsewhere thereby degrading the meaning of sustainability and the purpose of the AONB. Maintaining a strong sense of Community is important as shown in Q5 of 2016 – 17 survey: *“What do you like about your village?”*
- 4.1.18 With regard to the siting of new housing development, the following comments have been made by residents (taken from Parish surveys and consultations):

1. Feedback from consultations, surveys and discussions within the Parish did not define any clear area(s) to investigate for development. A very small number of responses at meetings suggested the land separating Brookhouse from Caton on Brookhouse Road, and separately land off Quernmore Road. However, significantly more were opposed to these sites being developed. (See also preservation of Green Spaces.
2. There is strong support for using brown field sites (as evidenced by recent support for building houses on the Bargh TNT garage site adjacent to the A683, which helped over-turn the original planning decision). When specifically asked where development should go (Q22) 86% selected "*Within the village on previously developed land (brownfield sites).*" If the Highways Depot became available, this has been suggested in several surveys for houses and/or light businesses in keeping with local trades. It is on level ground close to the shops, busses and doctors' surgery, so would be an ideal site for elderly or less mobile residents.
3. Only a few written comments (Q 26 & 29, 2016 - 17) support dispersed building through the villages which may be part of the solution, although this would potentially change housing density and character of the villages, alter the green space balance (which residents strongly want to preserve), and lose the ability to include affordable housing in developments because of scale. This is not a clear view. When specifically asked where development should go (Q22), only about 15% selected "*within existing gardens.*" More than one answer was possible.
4. In contrast, green spaces within the villages are strongly defended (See paragraphs 4.10 to 4.13) to preserve the village character, well-being and wildlife. The continued separation of Brookhouse and Caton is also strongly favoured with only 3 responses suggesting building there compared to 6 against.
5. There is strong support (Survey Responses) for preserving the green fields around the villages, and that ribbon development should certainly be avoided to preserve village/landscape character. When specifically asked (Q22) "*Our village will have to find space for more housing. Where should it go?*" only about 13% ticked "*on green field land on the edge of the village.*" (More than one answer was allowed).
6. From the AONB perspective, visibility, sky-line and scale of developments are all important aspects of siting as well.
7. Q B4 in the Housing Section of the 1992 survey suggested possible need for agricultural/rural workers. In the 2016-17 Residents' Survey, Q11 and Q12 for farms showed 9% wanted to diversify, 49% unsure whilst 14% need to change the use of farm buildings with 60% unsure. This might include conversion to housing or business premises. Q22 (for everyone) showed 73% were in favour of conversion of redundant agricultural buildings for development. Discussions in the NDP Steering Group also support appropriate sympathetic conversion of unused barns on farmyards for other purposes if this is necessary for maintaining security or sustainability of the farm. This needs exploration to see if planning can/should be eased. There is one written comment to this effect.

4.1.19 In the informal consultation carried out in March 2017, it was put to the community that the Neighbourhood Development Plan the approach to managing future housing growth would be through a criteria-based policy without defining fixed settlement boundaries for the plan period. 91% of respondents agreed with this approach. However, there was one significant response from an agent on behalf of a landowner that was concerned that in taking this approach, the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not fully address the future growth of the villages.

4.2 Natural Environment

- 4.2.1 Biodiversity and geodiversity are key environmental significances in the Forest of Bowland AONB. There are sites which are subject to high levels of protection in national or international law which include Calf Hill and Cragg Woods Special Area of Conservation and Bowland Fells Special Protection Area, with a further 6 European designated sites within a 15km radius of the boundary. Lancaster District Council has comprehensive policies on biodiversity and geodiversity with clear implications for their protection and enhancement. This policy clarifies and expands on these to better ensure that new development supports the AONB's natural environment, primary purpose and Special Qualities.

Policy CL4: Natural Environment

The high quality of the natural environment is a key feature of the parish within the Forest of Bowland AONB. New development will conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity, avoid the fragmentation and isolation of or disturbance to wildlife, habitats and species. It will also help to create and reinforce green corridors and ecological networks and deliver ecosystem services⁷ as a means of maximising wider public benefits and in reinforcing the local area's identity and sense of place.

To protect and enhance the robustness, function and value of the natural environment, development proposals must protect and contribute to the appropriate enhancement of the extent, value and/or integrity of:

- (I) any site or habitat protected for its biodiversity or geodiversity value, at an international, national or local level;
- (II) any priority habitat or species;
- (III) ecosystem services;
- (IV) ecological networks and their connectivity, including 'stepping stones', buffer zones, functionally linked land, corridors and other linkages;
- (V) the mosaic pattern of habitats and species and the mosaic approach to their management and protection⁸;
- (VI) any other natural features or assets of significance and value in the AONB or characteristic of the AONB, including those that do not enjoy formal protected status.

Exceptions will only be made where:

- (VII) there is an overriding public need for the development; and
- (VIII) the development cannot be located elsewhere; and
- (IX) mitigation is provided, or, where mitigation is not possible, compensatory measures are provided before the development's completion that result in enhancement (net gain) of the habitat's extent and value.

Before works to traditional buildings or features take place, appropriate species surveys should be undertaken and an appropriate plan for their protection, mitigation and enhancement put in place.

⁷ Ecosystem services are the benefits provided to us by the natural environment when it is allowed to function healthily, including clean air and water, climate and disease regulation, crop pollination and cultural, health and recreational benefits.

⁸ The Mosaic Approach integrates the requirements of species into habitat management, ensuring that plants and wildlife have the places they need to live and reproduce.

New buildings and conversions will be required to incorporate measures to support biodiversity as part of their fabric as is appropriate based on site specific and other local biodiversity evidence. These should include measures such as swift bricks, hedgehog highways, bat boxes, access tiles, living roofs or walls, and special consideration for species that are dependent on the built environment.

Development should restore and enhance water bodies, prevent deterioration, promote recovery, reduce flood risk and conserve habitats and species that depend directly on water. Where relevant, this should involve the opening up of culverts.

Proposals that enable or facilitate specifically tailored or targeted action to restore or enhance rare or priority species or habitats will be particularly supported.

Trees and woodland

New development should protect and enhance existing trees unless there are clear and demonstrable reasons why their removal would aid delivery of a better development overall and positively incorporate new trees.

Proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of trees that are subject to Tree Preservation Orders, are Ancient, Veteran or located within Conservation Areas, or that are otherwise significant, will not be permitted unless:

- (X) an overriding need for the development and its benefits in that location clearly outweigh the loss or harm; and
- (XI) compensatory planting is provided.

New or replacement planting in proposals for development should:

- be at appropriate ratio and of appropriate species to conserve and enhance the special character of the area and to reflect the purpose of the planting; and
- promote a wider diversity of species, including diversity of height; and
- reinforce adjacent habitats and reflect historic planting patterns in the locality; and
- be supported by an appropriate management regime; and
- support the need to manage mature or over-mature trees.

Landscaping in new development should remove invasive species. Account should be taken of the needs of particular species dependent on the retention of dead wood and mature trees within woodland.

Development proposals will be accompanied by a proportionate ecological survey including an assessment of the role the site plays in the local ecological network, taking into account connectivity and activity at different times of year. There should be clear links between the survey outcomes and any protection, mitigation and enhancement measures proposed.

- 4.2.2 The Parish has important wildlife and geology, with some sites protected at the highest level in national and international law, a number of locally protected sites and priority habitats, as well as a wider environment rich in wildlife. Lancaster District Council has adopted comprehensive policies on biodiversity and geodiversity, which have clear implications for the protection of sites within the Parish. However, there is

scope in the Neighbourhood Development Plan to expand on some of the detail for example to ensure biodiversity can be enhanced by creating or restoring habitats and including measures to help urban wildlife e.g. swifts bricks and bat boxes. Particular measures, species, habitats, connectivity, geological features can be referenced.

- 4.2.3 The need to protect the natural environment and develop robust ecological networks is now well established. At the time of publication, the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 109 and 113) requires Local Planning Authorities to set criteria-based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites will be judged.
- 4.2.4 Effective conservation and enhancement of biodiversity means taking action at a landscape scale across local authority boundaries to develop robust ecological networks. Policies should protect and enhance the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity and also wildlife habitat corridors and stepping stones that buffer and connect them.
- 4.2.5 Single trees, tree groups, woodland and hedgerows are all features of the natural environment of the AONB; in-field and boundary trees, fruit trees, mature and notable trees are particularly characteristic of the area. Ancient trees and woodland and veteran trees are an irreplaceable resource.
- 4.2.6 Habitats and species are sensitive to and can be harmed by new development, for example through degradation or absolute loss or through impacts caused by development, such as increased activity and light spillage. However, if approached imaginatively in a way that is appropriate to the context, there is scope for new development to enhance biodiversity.
- 4.2.7 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 (part of which is located in the south of the Parish) support rare and endangered species associated with a very rare mosaic of upland habitats. 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. 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.
- 4.2.8 The Forest of Bowland is, in fact, an internationally important area for conservation, as nearly one fifth of the AONB is designated as a Special Protection Area under the European Birds Directive, with a proportion being within the parish of Caton-with-Littledale.
- 4.2.9 There is a Special Area of Conservation within the parish a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) designated under UK legislation. In addition, there are a number of other wildlife sites in the Parish, which form part of a national network of non-statutory sites that are recognised for their ecological value. These are called Biological Heritage Sites (BHS). This valuable habitat is a big attraction for visitors to the AONB – many keen birdwatchers visit Bowland just to catch a glimpse of the hen harrier, the area's iconic bird of prey, which breeds in very few other places in England. A draw too are wading birds such as lapwing, snipe, curlew and redshank, which arrive in spring to nest and rear their young on the open farmland and moors of Bowland.

4.2.10 Rivers, streams, woodland, trees and natural planting and landscaping play an important role in the local natural environment and contribute to the biodiversity of the Parish. Multi-functional Green Infrastructure (GI) is important to underpin the overall sustainability of development by performing a range of functions. This means encouraging developers to incorporate landscaping, open space, enhancements for local wildlife into new developments, respond to climate change and provide suitable opportunities for recreation, all at the same time.

4.2.11 The Informal consultation carried out in February/March 2017 included a draft policy for protecting the landscape and included measures to conserve and enhance the natural environment. Of the respondents 94.6% agreed with the proposed approach for protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

4.3 Local Green Space and Area of Separation

4.3.1 Open spaces are important to the health and wellbeing of a local community because of their contribution to a high-quality environment and opportunities for play, recreation and social activities, as well as maintaining an attractive environment for tourism.

4.3.2 Open spaces, green gaps and corridors are an important part of the landscape and the rural character of the Parish, provide views from, into and within the settlements and help keep individual settlements distinct. Open greenspace is also important to the health and wellbeing of the local community because of its contribution to a high-quality environment and opportunities for play, recreation and social activities, as well as maintaining an attractive environment for tourism. The preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is an opportunity to look at designating both public and private important open spaces to protect them from development. This can include:

- sites that do not have public access but which make a substantial and important contribution to the landscape and the look, feel and rural character of the Parish, for example the green gap which separate Caton and Brookhouse; and
- sites that do have public access and offer one or more types of recreational benefit, such as parks, gardens, children's play areas, general amenity space, civic space or outdoor sports pitches/facilities/grounds.

4.3.3 The Parish Council in consultation with the community of the Parish have identified a number of important areas of Local Green Space across the villages. These are areas that hold a particular importance to the community and have been designated within this Neighbourhood Plan to be protected from inappropriate development.

4.3.4 This is a new area of planning, it offers members of the public the opportunity to identify areas of green space that are demonstrably special to their local community to them.

4.3.5 Whilst areas of open space and land of environmental value have always been identified (and will continue to be identified) in the Lancaster Local Plan, this designation as local green space provides an additional level of protection. Introduced by the Government in 2012, the designation focusses on the local community importance of identified areas. Importantly national planning policy makes clear that this designation should be consistent with wider planning policy for an area and should look to complement investment in the provision of new homes and employment opportunities and other essential services. It should not be seen as a means to stop these wider development needs being met.

4.3.6 The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that this designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or areas of open space and should only be used in the following circumstances:

- Where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community which it serves;
- Where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

- 4.3.7 The villages of Caton and Brookhouse are separated by Artle Beck and an adjacent swathe of grazed farmland, which provides an attractive rural setting to the two villages, which is characteristic of the wider Forest of Bowland AONB.
- 4.3.8 This 'Area of Separation' reflects the historic character of the settlements and creates a visual separation which is considered essential to maintaining the distinct identities of the two villages.
- 4.3.9 There is a strong visual link between Brookhouse Road and Hornby Road with far-reaching views stretching both across the valley towards Aughton Woods and up to the rising land towards Littledale. The area of separation is also distinct in views from elsewhere in the parish.
- 4.3.10 The area consists of small irregular fields bounded by mature hedgerows and trees with Artle Beck to the west, forming an important green habitat corridor between the settlements and a direct link to surrounding open countryside. This area contributes strongly to creating a pastoral feel highly characteristic of the rural nature of the settlements. The field pattern is recognised to be ancient enclosure.

Policy CL5: Area of Separation

In order to maintain the established pattern of development and conserve the character of the Forest of Bowland AONB and its distinctive villages, all future development should minimise the impact on the open character of the Area of Separation identified on Map XXX. Development which would result in the further coalescence of Brookhouse and Caton will not be permitted. Development will be assessed in terms of its impact upon the Area of Separation, including any harm to the effectiveness of the gap between settlements, and, in particular, the degree to which the development proposed would compromise the function of the Area of Separation in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements.

Justification for the proposed boundaries

Northern Boundary.

- 4.3.11 The field adjoining the the A683 is essential to visual amenity and the separation between the settlements especially when travelling from the East. The A643 therefore forms the Northern boundary.

Western Boundary.

- 4.3.12 The western Boundary follows the path of the Artle Beck from the A683 to most southern and westerly piece of woodland labelled Bridge End on the Map.

Southern Boundary.

- 4.3.13 Extends from the Point of the woodland where the Track moves from an East to West direction to a Southerly one. The line following the natural field boundaries and hedge lines carries on in westerly direction until it meets the field boundary of what is designated Site 39 in the LCC SHEELA.

4.3.14 We believe that extending the boundary to include the edge of site 39 is of great importance. There is a real possibility that Site 39 will come forward as a suitable site for development and the area to the east of the site therefore assumes greater importance in acting as a buffer between Brookhouse and Caton.

Eastern Boundary.

4.3.15 The eastern boundary follows the natural field boundaries and hedge lines from the A683 turning in a westerly direction before moving southwards at Lane House Farm to follow the contours of the residential properties on both sides of Brookhouse Road and then forming the western boundary of Site 39 with the importance already highlighted in the previous paragraph.

4.3.16 It should be noted that that this area of separation is highly visible from viewing points along the Lune Valley and from Halton Park on the other side of the River Lune.

4.3.17 It is also the site of the main water pipe from the Thirlemere Reservoir supplying water to the Southern areas of Brookhouse and parts of Caton.

4.3.18 Photographic evidence will be available in the document library at <https://www.catonvillage.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan>

Policy CL6: Protecting Local Green Space

The following local green spaces (identified on Map **XX** and individual maps in **XXX**) are designated in accordance with paragraphs 76 and 77 of the NPPF:

- 1) **Beckside**
- 2) **Caton Bowling Green**
- 3) **Caton Community School Field**
- 4) **Fell View**
- 5) **Millennium Path – Crook o’ Lune to end**
- 6) **Parish Woodland Station Field Sports Ground**

New development which impacts adversely on the openness and visual amenity of these sites will not be permitted, except in very special circumstances.

Very special circumstances will only exist where the potential harm caused by any new development is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Each of the land parcels listed in this policy have been assessed for eligibility for designation as Local Green Spaces. The assessment may be found on the Caton-with-Littledale Parish Council website - <https://www.catonvillage.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan>

4.3.19 **Green spaces** in and around the villages are all consistently strongly valued. Past reports and surveys showed:

- 67% of 1287 responders (Village Appraisal 1992) wanted “*special nature reserves in the village/Parish for wild flowers and animals.*”

- IN 2002 (REAL report) had no specific questions, but young people liked the cricket pitch (Station Field), lots of space, Big field for football, the park, big trees to climb, the beck, wildlife and pets. Adults in the wish tree and stick a star approaches wanted a village pond.
- In a petition (> 500 signatures, door to door visits) to save the grounds of Moor Platt when it was for sale, more than 95% of respondents wanted the grounds preserved as a village green (*personal communication*).

4.3.20 Current information shows:

- Spontaneous “post-it note” ideas from the two NP meetings clearly value green spaces and in some cases wanted additional ones creating, including allotments. Feedback examples include where building should and should not occur as well as more specific reference to green spaces in environment, leisure, views etc. An early controversial suggestion to consider house building between Caton and Brookhouse was specifically clarified in the 2016-17 survey and the March 2017 informal consultation as well as in earlier discussions at displays. There was an over-whelming desire to keep the area either side of Brookhouse Road as an undeveloped Area of Separation in order to maintain the distinct identities of the two villages in their rural setting.
- The November 2016 – January 2017 Residents’ Survey asked (Q 14) for free text answers to “Which green spaces in Caton-with-Littledale matter to you and your family?” and over 90% responded. About 25% valued “all of them” with or without specifying favourite(s). The next top four sites were the Gala field / Station field; open space / fields along the Artle Beck separating Caton and Brookhouse; Fell View /Caton Playground; and the Cycle path (*River Lune Millennium Park*). Other sites: See survey results, link in Appendix 2.

4.3.21 Where given, reasons for keeping green spaces include sports and leisure especially for children, well-being and enjoyment of residents and visitors, and wildlife / wildlife corridors.

4.3.22 Results from the March 2017 informal consultation clearly show that 94.6% of respondents who answered the question agreed that the landscape character and natural environment of the area should be protected. In addition, many identified the specific Local Green Spaces which are included in this plan.

4.3.23 During the February/March 2017 Drop-In events, a star count was carried out in relation to the Green Spaces identified for inclusion in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The star count for the Green Spaces was as follows:

Station Field	36
River Lune Millennium Park	43
Area of Separation	33
Caton County School	33
Fell View	30
Caton St Pauls Playing Field	30
Other	3

4.3.24 In addition, everyone spoken to at the drop-in sessions wanted the Green Spaces preserved.

4.4 Dark Skies

- 4.4.1 Over the last century large parts of Britain have rapidly lost access to naturally dark skies. Light in the wrong place, or obtrusive lighting, is one of the major unaddressed sources of pollution in this country and it affects people, wildlife and our landscapes. In 2009 the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution published its report on Artificial Light in the Environment and recommended that those responsible for the management of existing National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the equivalent National Scenic Areas in Scotland seek to eliminate unnecessary outdoor light and to better design and manage that which cannot be eliminated.
- 4.4.2 In the Forest of Bowland AONB our relative isolation means that there are areas of land still largely unaffected by light pollution, however where lighting is obtrusive this can seriously affect the quality of the landscape which was designated partly because of its tranquility and its value to heritage and biodiversity. In the words of the Royal Commission: *'we believe that access to the natural beauty of the night sky is every bit as important as the preservation of other aspects of natural beauty which society routinely seeks to protect for the enjoyment of its citizens and for posterity.'*
- 4.4.3 The Forest of Bowland is an area recognised for its dark night skies and visibility of the stars. A policy approach can ensure that any new development does not compromise this status by incorporating measures to minimise light spillage and avoid any intrusive lighting, reflecting the Forest of Bowland AONB position statement.
(http://forestofbowland.com/files/uploads/pdfs/aonb_ob_lighting_pos_stmt.pdf)

Policy CL7 Dark Skies

To minimise light pollution and to maintain the views of our night time skies, planning proposals that include external lighting and significant openings that would allow internal lighting to be seen externally will have to demonstrate the following:

- I. They have undertaken an assessment of the need for lighting and can demonstrate need; and**
- II. The proposed lighting is the minimum required and only appropriate to its purpose, so as to protect the area's natural surroundings and intrinsic darkness; and**
- III. The nature of the proposed lighting is appropriate for its use and location. The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) has provided guidance on acceptable levels of illumination for specific areas. Applicants will be required to assess the need for lighting, whether the benefits of the lighting outweigh any harm caused, and any alternative measures available; and**
- IV. There is not a significantly adverse effect either individually or cumulatively on:**
 - a) the character of the area; and**
 - b) the visibility of the night sky; and**
 - c) biodiversity (including bats and other light sensitive species; and**
 - d) residents, pedestrians or drivers.**

It is recognised that many traditional buildings may have 'significant openings' where internal lighting will be a natural consequence.

4.5 Historic Environment

- 4.5.1 The Parish contains a wide range of significant historic landscapes, a conservation area, and historic buildings and features. Lancaster District Council has policies on the historic environment, which include Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and their settings. In addition, there is a policy in relation to development affecting non-designated heritage assets and their settings.
- 4.5.2 This policy sets out additional measures to better ensure that new development supports the heritage assets and historic character of the parish within the Forest of Bowland AONB and reflects the AONB's primary purpose and Special Qualities

Historic landscape and settlement character

- 4.5.3 The rich cultural history of the Parish is reflected in the landscape and settlement character, layout, form and pattern and numerous heritage features. Unlisted features, buildings, archaeology and parts of settlement character such as field patterns may well be locally important through their contribution to the local landscape and heritage but are vulnerable to adverse effects from insensitive development. Gradual incremental erosion of historic character over time is also an issue to consider. Lancaster District Council is in the process of preparing a Local Heritage List which will identify any such buildings and features.
- 4.5.4 The Neighbourhood Development Plan offers an opportunity to provide greater detail in planning policy to ensure local heritage is conserved and enhanced. Design of new development and alterations/extensions is critical to ensure that any new buildings are in keeping with the historic landscape and built environment.

Brookhouse Conservation Area

- 4.5.5 Brookhouse is a small rural village with medieval origins. The Brookhouse Conservation Area, focused on St Paul's Church, abuts open countryside to north, south and east although the village has expanded westwards (almost merging with the larger settlement of Caton).
- 4.5.6 The Conservation Area comprises well over 50 dwellings, the majority of which date from c.1650-1900. These historic stone-built dwellings (detached, semi-detached and in short rows) combine with a church partly dating from Norman times and restored in the 19th Century, a school and a chapel to create a place of special historic interest with a strong local identity. In order to delineate a clear boundary, the Conservation Area also includes some 20th century development that does not form part of the area's special historic interest.
- 4.5.7 The Brookhouse Conservation Area was first designated in 1981 by Lancashire County Council under provisions that are now contained in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This defines a Conservation Area as 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.
- 4.5.8 The Brookhouse Conservation Area Appraisal available on Lancaster District Council's website (www.lancaster.gov.uk) identifies negative features and issues in the Conservation Area. The above policy is included in the Neighbourhood Development Plan to ensure future development conserves and enhances the special characteristics of the Brookhouse Conservation Area.

Policy CL8: Historic Environment

All development proposals in the parish, because of its location within the Forest of Bowland AONB, must take into account the unique heritage assets and historic character of the area, including built, natural, historic and cultural heritage features, and protect, conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets (including any contribution made by their setting) historic landscape character and the distinctiveness of settlements.

Before works to historic assets take place, surveys should be undertaken proportionate to the asset's importance, to record its historical interest and to understand the nature and scale of impact on its significance.

Development proposals affecting designated heritage assets or affecting non-designated heritage assets that are identified on any Local List or in the Historic Environment Record, or discovered during the application process, will be supported provided that they:

- (I) conserve and enhance the significance of the asset, including its contribution to the wider historic character and landscape of the AONB. This may include schemes that specifically aim to (or include measures to) protect, restore, enhance, reveal, interpret, sensitively and imaginatively incorporate or record historic assets or features;
- (II) reflect local vernacular and the distinctive historic and settlement character;
- (III) conserve and enhance the character and setting of the asset; and
- (IV) promote enjoyment, understanding and interpretation of the asset(s), as a means of maximising wider public benefits and reinforcing the AONB's identity and sense of place.

Development proposals will not be permitted where they are unjustified or where public benefits do not offset any harm that would occur to the significance of heritage assets including the area's historic landscape character, including cumulative impacts.

Proposals affecting ancient/historic field patterns should reinforce and reflect the pattern.

Within the Brookhouse Conservation Area, all new development will be expected to satisfy the relevant Lancaster District Council policies and ensue that satisfies the following criteria:

- does not have a detrimental effect on key views identified in the Brookhouse Conservation Area Appraisal; and
- does not have a detrimental effect on buildings of special character identified in the Brookhouse Conservation Area Appraisal.

4.5.9 This topic was not directly addressed in any of the reports or surveys until the informal consultation (March 2017), and therefore was inferred from other commentary to that point. These all show the heritage is valued and developments should be in keeping with it:

- In 1992, there was a call for parts of Caton to be made a Conservation Area as occurred for Brookhouse in 1981 (943 / 1295 responses, 73%).
- There are widespread calls disliking modern developments (such as Moor Platt) and design uniformity that does not fit the character of the villages expressed through Parish Council meetings, verbal and “post-it note” responses at NDP public meetings and in free text answers to the November 2016 – January 2017 survey. Similarly, some of the comments on recent new build planning applications where a non-designated heritage asset is affected by development proposals, there will be a presumption in favour of its retention. Any loss of the whole or part of such an asset will require clear and convincing justification. No loss will be permitted without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
- Any special features which contribute to an asset’s significance should be retained and reinstated, where possible, in accordance with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Any extensions or alterations should be designed sympathetically, without detracting from or competing with the heritage asset. Proposals should relate appropriately in terms of siting, style, scale, massing, height and materials.
- Proposals within the setting of a non-designated heritage asset will be required to give due consideration to its significance and ensure that this is protected or enhanced where possible.
- New buildings and any associated landscaping within the curtilage of a non-designated heritage asset, or in close proximity to, should ensure that the setting is not compromised. Positive settings should be protected, preserved and where possible enhanced by new development which assist in better revealing the significance of the asset. The LCC Planning Office have reflected this e.g.: both the Moor Platt and more recently Bargh site developments. A greater desire for vernacular design is noted.
- The same sources and the favourite views like the local fields, boundaries and the farms in the Parish, as well as wanting to keep the character of the villages as they are.
- Favourite views requested as part of the NDP process include many historic features within older parts of Brookhouse, Caton, Low Mill, and wider views encompassing them. Some quotes from the 2016-2017 survey encapsulate the values attached to them: *“all are important, that’s why I came to live in Caton. If it becomes more developed and loses its village feel I will likely move.”* and *“I love the view in all directions, it’s a beautiful part of the country and the buildings are picturesque too, so fit in well with the backdrop of the countryside.”*
- The March 2017 informal consultation supported the approach of the draft NDP, some responses that disagreed with it doing so because it was not worded strongly enough rather than because of its direction. Some emphasised that conservation should *“not prevent thoughtful and well-planned development”*, but that this should include: *“Where buildings are adjacent to stone built properties, then an appropriate match of re-constituted stone or real stone should be used to reflect the local existing stone buildings. Recent new builds such as Moor Platt have not been close enough and do not match the area.”*

4.6 Design

- 4.6.1 The quality of design and the character of the settlements within the parish is strongly linked to the surrounding landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB. Settlement character is not only shaped by the landscape, through use of local materials and topography, but also contributes to the landscape through influences of style, construction methods, form, scale, layout and pattern. This policy ensures that new development throughout the parish continues and reinforces this mutual relationship, ensuring that the design of new development contributes fully to conserving and enhancing the landscape and settlement character and better supports the AONB's primary purpose and Special Qualities.

Policy CL9: Design

For development proposals within the AONB the highest standards of design and construction will be required to conserve and enhance the landscape, built environment, distinctive settlement character and historic, cultural and architectural features.

In addition to the design requirements set out in the relevant District policies, the design of development proposals should:

- (I) respond to the *character of the landscape and local built environment* including buildings, boundary treatments, open spaces, trees, roofscapes, historic village layouts and have particular regard to local vernacular traditions, building to plot/green space ratios and to the quality, integrity, character and settings of natural, built and historic features; and**
- (II) reinforce what is *special and locally distinctive* about design in the AONB through careful consideration of visual amenity, layout, views, scale, height, solid form, massing, proportions, alignment, design detailing, lighting, materials, colours, finishes and the nature of the development; and**
- (III) provide well designed *landscape schemes* that retain distinctive trees and include new structural planting that contributes to the character and amenity value of the area; and**
- (IV) ensure that *boundary treatments, screening and entranceways* reflect local character and context including through retention (or appropriate replacement where necessary) of existing features of value such as hedgerows, trees, verges and traditional stone walls and through the careful consideration of materials and heights for gates, gateposts and fencing and of appropriate species for planting; and**
- (V) avoid using *existing development that is harmful* to landscape and settlement character to inform the design of new development or proximity to it as justification for further poor quality or harmful development.**

- 4.6.2 High quality design is fundamental to conserving and enhancing the character of the Parish into the future and ensuring any new development reflects local traditional character wherever possible including using local stone.

- 4.6.3 Modern development has led to a wide diversity of different building styles in the Parish but the Neighbourhood Development Plan offers an opportunity to promote high quality design, including contemporary designs, in any new development as long as this does not harm the landscape or historic environment. Local distinctiveness and a sense of place should be promoted in contrast with the very generic house designs often promoted by commercial housebuilders across the country. Climate change is an issue that affects us all and sustainable, energy and water efficient design could also be promoted.
- 4.6.4 Local distinctiveness and visual harmony between buildings and the surrounding landscape is important within the parish due to its location in the Forest of Bowland AONB. This is very important in the visual appeal of the landscape and built environment and is valued by the public – both residents and visitors to the AONB.
- 4.6.5 Gradual erosion of local distinctiveness, character and visual harmony has occurred within parts of Caton and has seen the addition of some modern development, often with little respect for the historic settlement pattern, character or materials. Harmful modern development should not be taken to set the character or provide a reference point for new development. Similarly, being in close proximity to existing development that is harmful to the landscape or settlement character of the AONB should not be used to justify further poor quality or harmful development.
- 4.6.6 The control of design, materials and cumulative impacts is crucial. Use of local and appropriate materials is essential to ensure that new development is in keeping with the local surroundings and avoids the gradual, incremental erosion of character.
- 4.6.7 The grouping of buildings, use of local building materials, road and footway surfaces, signs and lighting apparatus, all affect settlement character and the quality of the street scene.
- 4.6.8 To sustain character and quality, development should reflect traditional materials, styles and proportions. For proposals affecting the street scene and local landscape and settlement character, the following factors are important:
- (I) retaining traditional surfaces and layouts, or reintroducing them;
 - (II) ensuring that the scale, texture, colour, finish and patterns of new materials are sympathetic to the area's character and appearance;
 - (III) avoiding the creation of dominant or incongruous extensions and alterations to existing buildings;
 - (IV) ensuring that road layouts, construction materials, signs, lighting and markings are of appropriate scale, appearance and quality, with no unnecessary duplication. Signs should be fixed, where possible and appropriate, to buildings or existing street furniture. Every effort should be made to avoid or minimise clutter;
 - (V) minimising the use of lighting equipment as much as possible, confining it to built up areas and locations where it is essential for safety. Lighting should be low intensity and appropriate in colour and design to minimise light spillage and disturbance to wildlife and to conserve landscape tranquillity and dark skies.
- 4.6.9 AONB status requires a higher standard of design in character with the vernacular buildings and landscape. Views expressed throughout all surveys are very strongly in favour of this, wishing to preserve the character of the Parish and AONB from the many uniform / standard housing designs so often found elsewhere in the country. Points particularly supporting this are:
- The call (73%) for the centre of Caton to be a Conservation Area in 1992.

- Field boundary character (above: Landscape and Natural environment) could be reflected in villages too.
- The choices and comments on “favourite views” within the villages almost confined to traditionally built sites.
- In a petition (> 500 signatures, door to door visits) to save the grounds of Moor Platt organised when it was put for sale, a surprisingly large number called for the original building stone to be re-used for the new building(s) (personal communication).
- A very high proportion of questionnaires in the 2016 – 17 survey had replies to Q26: “*People often have strong feelings about the design of new homes, Please tell us your views on what new homes should look like.*” Many gave additional views on this topic in Q29: “*Anything you would like to add on housing in the village?*” These should be read, but (expressed in various ways) there was an almost uniform request for a vernacular style, many adding using local building materials; facing or building in stone; limiting to 2 storeys without steep sloping roofs or “not too high”; having variety or avoiding “bland estate houses”. Others suggested: matching colours to the area of building; not too crowded with adequate gardens and or lots of green space to keep the open village feel; enforcing AONB standards; avoid diluting standards; being ecologically sound and insulated; be low density; not contribute to flood risk; allow “creativity that is responsive to the environment”; and decent size rooms / storage space in cupboards; and with enough parking space. Three suggested specific examples of good practice (one of the new build in Arkholme, another the houses opposite the bus stop at the end of Quernmore Road, another the new terraced houses in Dunsop Bridge). Two other suggestions of building style were cited: one suggesting a modular approach to 2/3 room properties being erected on prepared sites suitable for the rental market; another suggested they “should fit in *and some of the larger village houses in Brookhouse should be converted into flats or demolished and changed in to terraced houses as locals won't be able to afford them*”. Others asked for terraced housing. One suggested that houses should be built in stone (if the new homes are located alongside old stone properties), or something completely modern without trying to fit in as happened at Moor Platt. Indeed, many cited Moor Platt as a poor example of design for the village for various reasons. Uniform blocks of reconstituted stone are not popular. One thought Moor Platt was fine. Renewable energy (solar panels, ground heating) were mentioned, as was low stone (boundary walls) commonly seen round gardens to reflect fields nearby.

4.6.10 The informal consultation (February – March 2017) confirmed these points, and it was stated that the policy approach to this section would involve the preparation of a policy to encourage high quality design and sustainable development in any new development. 96.87% of respondents agrees with this approach with several citing developments they associated with as being of poor design, and added that the colour of any new or reconstituted stone should be much closer to local stone colour seen in the village than recent builds had used, and should be less uniform.

4.7 Economic Development

- 4.7.1 This policy seeks to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan provides a positive approach towards the promotion of economic growth and rural diversification within the Parish.
- 4.7.2 Lancaster District Council has policies that protect existing employment, promote small business generation and the rural economy. It is important that new employment opportunities within the Parish are addressed and this policy seeks to promote small scale employment opportunities within the context of the Forest of Bowland AONB. This policy clarifies and expands on these to better ensure that new development supports the AONB's natural environment, primary purpose and Special Qualities.

Policy CL10 Economic Development

The development of new small-scale employment opportunities within the settlements of Caton and Brookhouse will be supported where they bring economic benefits to the AONB and the development:

- I. Relates well to the existing built form of the village; and**
- II. Is appropriate to the village and AONB landscape setting in terms of scale, location, design and materials**
- III. Demonstrates consideration of impact on infrastructure and incorporates mitigation measures to minimise any adverse impacts**
- IV. Provides adequate car parking for employees and visitors;**
- V. Consists of a small-scale business / start up units or facilities which support local services and the visitor economy linked to the enjoyment of the countryside;**
- VI. Includes business signage which is of appropriate design and scale, in keeping with the AONB landscape and village setting;**

Proposals for employment uses in the wider rural area will be assessed against the relevant Lancaster District Council policies and will encourage developments that help secure the viability of local farms.

- 4.7.3 The following policy seeks to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan provides a positive approach towards maintaining the vitality of local shopping and business areas in the parish.
- 4.7.4 Lancaster District Council has policies that, promote small business generation, the rural economy and Local Centres and retail development outside of defined centres. It is important that the services within the parish and specifically within Caton and Brookhouse are retained for existing and future residents. This policy clarifies and expands on the overarching policies to better ensure that new development supports the AONB's natural environment, primary purpose and Special Qualities.
- 4.7.5 Lancaster District Council provide additional guidance on the design of advertisements and shopfront within the *Shopfronts and Advertisements Supplementary Planning Document*.

Policy CL11 Maintaining the Vitality of Local Shopping/ Business Areas

Within existing shopping/business areas in Caton village centre, Brookhouse shopping area, and Willow Mill business centre, development for uses including retail, leisure, office, commercial, cultural and tourism could be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a. **retail development is located in one of the existing shopping areas; and**
- b. **new shop frontages are of high quality design and enhance local distinctiveness by ensuring that corporate branding is subordinate to the site and local surroundings and appropriate materials are used; and**
- c. **distinctive and detailed features of buildings are retained and enhanced; and**
- d. **secure areas for refuse and recycling are included; and**
- e. **cycle parking is included where possible.**

The shared and flexible service and facility uses of buildings in Caton and Brookhouse centres will be supported where this will help the continued operation of key services.

Where planning permission is required, within the existing shopping / business areas, proposals which lead to the permanent loss of commercial units will only be supported where robust evidence demonstrates that their continued commercial use is no longer viable, or that an alternative use would positively enhance the viability and vitality of the village centre and it is in accordance with relevant Lancaster District Policies.

- 4.7.6 The future sustainability of the Parish is dependent upon maintaining a buoyant local economy and services or there is a risk that Caton and Brookhouse could become solely satellite, commuter settlements.
- 4.7.7 The Neighbourhood Development Plan offers an opportunity to support existing local businesses and encourage appropriate new employment development within the Parish. Provision of small business units, live/work units, farm diversification e.g. farm shops and sustainable tourism could be encouraged for example. Businesses which themselves contribute to the management of the landscape such as farming, forestry and countryside businesses should be especially supported.
- 4.7.8 The type, location and scale of new employment opportunities should be balanced against the need to protect and value the distinctiveness of the rural character, landscapes and villagescapes which are essential for sustainable tourism. Any development would be required to meet the requirements in other policies and no major development would be permitted.
- 4.7.9 The local economy is essential to sustainability. This is examined under the following categories: employment; maintaining existing businesses; enabling local business expansion and start-ups; and attracting new businesses in.
- 4.7.10 **Employment:** The employment status of residents from the 2002 REAL and Q7 in the 2016-17 NDP Survey respondents showed that the largest group is retired people followed by working in full time paid employment. Self-employment and part-time

paid employment have both risen slightly since 2002. Unemployed and available for work remains stable at less than 1% detected (which accords with 10/1219 “household reference persons” in the 2011 census) and whilst important, does not appear to be a major community issue.

4.7.11 There is little information on the need for more local (paid employment) opportunities in the community. A small number of written comments were made in the 2016-17 Residents’ Survey covering the following topics: work needs to be available for young people /children/grand-children to stay in the village; 8 complaints about cost and frequency of busses making it difficult to work elsewhere (some young people reported to have left the village for these reasons). This is supported by 19 calls for better bus services at the public meeting in October 2015 and suggests there may be a hidden need for employment in those unable to drive. One stated “*Not enough employment opportunities*” and another “*there is a desperate need to attract new employment to Caton and Brookhouse and more shops or even a market!*”.

4.7.12 **Maintaining existing businesses:**

- Comments decried the loss of some businesses (banks, butchers and especially the near loss of the Post Office) and others stated no more should be lost.
- The predominant request in this context from businesses and residents was for high speed broadband, specifically B4RN, to be rapidly introduced (see infrastructure).
- One wanted somewhere to store materials, another a safe lock up for tools, and a third wanted a garage to rent.
- Some wanted re-instatement of the bus service timetables.
- Parking was not mentioned in this setting, though measures to increase trade were not specifically addressed. Neither were there any identified comments relating to the schools or farms here.

4.7.13 **Enabling local business expansion and start-ups:** Two sets of questions in the 2016-17 Residents’ Survey were offered: one to people who had a business in the village (Q 8 – 10), the other to farms Q 11 – 12). A further question for any other comments open to all followed (Q 13). However, numbers show that Q9 on the position of new premises was answered by a lot more people than those involved in business and should be interpreted accordingly. See also some comments in 4.46-4.47 “Attracting New Business”.

- Just under 10% of business responses want to expand their business in to another property. A similar number of farm responses are looking to diversify. Just under 40% and 50% respectively are unsure, the rest do not want to.
- For new employment/business premises in the village, around 7% wanted units within a residential development and another 7% construction of new buildings with 85% wanting conversion of redundant buildings, 11% uncertain. However, this result is likely to have been skewed (see response rate above).
- On farms 14% are likely to need to change the use of buildings, 60% are unsure and 25% do not want to do so.

4.7.14 This demonstrates there is a planning/development need for existing small local businesses to thrive in the village and may be part of the solution to increasing employment (not assessed). Similarly, farms may need support for their developments. These are the businesses most likely to be appropriate to the Parish and its sustainability.

Attracting new businesses:

4.7.15 First some context: As long ago as 1992, the Highways Depot was perceived as a location suitable for light workshop development should it become available. The site

due to its central location would ideally be suitable for small business units and specialist housing for the elderly.

- 4.7.16 A similar site on the A683 (Bargh's TNT garage) became available, and although an application for planning permission for redevelopment for residential was refused by Lancaster District Council, it was later granted on appeal.
- 4.7.17 Currently, feedback suggests that there is no local demand for such a moderate sized site, although there may be for either smaller units or for new businesses (appropriate to the AONB). Secondly, the Forest of Bowland AONB has policies (and structures) to ensure "resilient and sustainable communities" appropriate to the area and this includes businesses.

Local Economy and Rural Services

- Support the retention of services (e.g. health centres, post offices, schools, shops, public transport, public toilets and car parking) within local communities of the AONB and resist developments which would result in their loss
- Support affordable housing and workspace initiatives within the area, where development meets local housing, employment and business need and will also conserve and enhance the AONB landscape
- Support landscape-sensitive delivery of super-fast broadband and mobile telecommunication networks throughout the AONB
- Review and remain up-to-date with current rural growth and development funding mechanisms, particularly government and European Union funding programmes.
- Promote local businesses, products and services

Sustainable Tourism

- Provide one-to-one support and advice on sustainable tourism for businesses in and around the AONB
- Actively recruit and support sustainable tourism partners, Bowland Experience members and green tourism accredited businesses

The emphasis is on sustainable, appropriate and local businesses that will conserve and enhance the AONB.

Local Needs:

The 2016-17 NDP Residents Survey and meetings expressed several views in comments:

- A significant number advocating the village was large enough, does not need any more businesses – "it's not an industrial estate!", prevent urbanisation, and similar.
- At the other end of the scale, a medium-sized super market was requested by one responder in the survey and two "perhaps an Aldi or Lidl" in the post-it note feedback from the October 2015 meeting. This clearly contradicts the AONB Management Plan policy.
- In the middle (and see employment) were calls for smaller local businesses in the right area such as "*build on Parish strengths and small business types proportionate to the Parish and not become an out of town development for Lancaster.*" Specific suggestions were several for cafes / tea rooms (10 ticks in Nov 2016 public meeting alone), a Bed and Breakfast, more shops and even a market, a studio in a craft centre, and conversion of un-used farm barns. One called for home offices in gardens. Another wants to work from home but thought the rules on Council House tenants needed changing.

- 4.7.18 It is unclear what external influences might evolve to affect this, but tourism and the internet appear to provide some opportunity for local development.

4.8 Community and Recreational Facilities

- 4.8.1 A vibrant and resilient local community requires services and facilities to function in a sustainable way. Services and facilities make a major contribution to the health and wellbeing of local residents and their quality of life.
- 4.8.2 Caton-with-Littledale has a good range of services and facilities, which serve not only residents of the Parish but also large areas of the Lune Valley. Consultation carried out so far shows they are highly valued by local residents. As more development takes place across this whole area, demand for services and facilities is likely to increase.
- 4.8.3 Examples include schools, community centres, health centre, shops and services (e.g. convenience stores, other shops, post office, chemist, garage, pubs etc.) and places of worship.
- 4.8.4 Play, sport and recreation areas and facilities, both formal and informal, outdoor and indoor, enable local residents to lead healthy active lifestyles and are vital to the wellbeing of the community. These include play areas, playing fields, green spaces, footpaths and cycleways. Outdoor play areas and playing fields are of particular importance for the health of children and young people growing up in the village. Currently there are no allotments in the Parish.

Policy CL12 Community and Recreational Facilities

1. Existing Facilities

Existing Community and Recreational Facilities as identified on the Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map and listed below will be protected in accordance with relevant Policies of the Lancaster District Council Development Management DPD

The facilities are listed as follows:

- **Station Field sports ground**
- **Fell View Children's playground and field**
- **School grounds and playing fields**
- **Bowling green**
- **Tennis Courts**
- **Memorial gardens**
- **River Lune Millennium Way**
- **Places of worship**
- **Victoria Institute**
- **Scout Hut**
- **Church Halls**

2. New Facilities

The Neighbourhood Development Plan will support proposals for new community facilities, and improvements to existing community facilities. Development will be permitted where it is in accordance with the following criteria:

- a) the site is located in or adjacent to the existing villages;**
- b) the site is accessible by walking and cycling;**

- c) there are opportunities to integrate services;**
- d) detrimental impacts on road safety or traffic flow can be satisfactorily mitigated in the interests of both road users and users of the proposed development; and**
- e) the proposal would not have an adverse effect on residential amenity.**
- f) The proposal is in accordance with all other relevant policies.**

- 4.8.5 The following important Parish facilities and services also provide local employment:
- Caton Health Centre (branch of Queen Square Surgery)
 - Hillcroft Nursing Home at Caton Green
 - A residential centre for addiction treatment at Littledale Hall
 - 2 Primary Schools – both with pre-school facilities
 - A thriving village hall (The Victoria Institute) with community IT facilities and small community library
 - 5 churches (one Church of England, one Baptist, two Methodist and one Roman Catholic)
- 4.8.6 Children travel to a wide range of secondary schools in Kirkby Lonsdale, Lancaster Carnforth and Milnthorpe. There is a church hall and scout hut (for Cubs, Beavers, Rainbows, Brownies, Scouts and Guides) close to St Paul's Church and a popular Scout and Guide camp for visiting troupes in Littledale.
- 4.8.7 A mobile library visits Caton and then Brookhouse every 3 weeks.
- 4.8.8 Regarding recreation, facilities include:
- bowling green and a large sports field (also used for the Village Gala) behind The Station public house in the centre of Caton;
 - small sports hall and playing fields with 2 junior football pitches hosted at Caton Community Primary School;
 - outdoor public play and activity area for children aged up to 14 years on Fell View green, Caton;
 - activities including badminton, dance and keep fit groups and a range of social groups for all ages at the Village Institute, which has a sprung floor
 - tennis club
 - extensive network of Public Rights of Way (Map 8).
 - concessionary footpaths, cycle and bridle ways, some introduced as part of the wind-farm with parking at the top of Quarry Road. Open Access Land is mainly at the top of Littledale on Clough.
 - the River Lune Millennium Park along the disused railway track from Lancaster to Bull Beck car park, a real asset for walkers, horse riders and cyclists both within the Parish and from outside.
 - the North Lancashire Cycleway and North Lancashire Bridleway also use part of this route and some minor roads through the Parish, encouraging visitors to the village.
- 4.8.9 The village has been twinned with the French community of Socx, near Dunkirk, since 2008.
- 4.8.10 The informal consultation carried out in March 2017, identifies the approach that the Neighbourhood Development Plan would be taking in respect of community and recreational facilities in the parish. 100% of respondents agreed with the approach that existing facilities should be protected and enhanced.

4.9 Supporting Infrastructure for New Development

- 4.9.1 It is recognized that Caton and Brookhouse have been designated as Sustainable Settlements therefore new development will occur to provide homes and jobs for the current residents of the Parish and to encourage new people to move into the Parish.
- 4.9.2 This policy seeks to ensure that new development is supported by infrastructure that is appropriate to both the character and needs of the AONB and that in turn supports the AONB's primary purpose and Special Qualities.

Policy CL13 Supporting Infrastructure for New Development

Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, new development will contribute towards new infrastructure or improve the capacity of existing infrastructure in a way that reflects the primary purpose of the Forest of Bowland AONB designation **and conserves and enhances its landscape character and visual amenity.**

Compliance with Development Management DPD Policies DM20: Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages, DM21: Walking and Cycling, DM22: Vehicle Parking Provision, and DM35: Key Design Principles and their successor policies in the emerging Local Plan is essential to ensure that the issues raised for the area of Caton with Littledale Parish in the District of Lancaster Highways and Transport Master Plan have been fully addressed and any necessary mitigation measures identified.

High Priority should **be given** to supporting active travel and enhancing sustainable travel networks, including infrastructure investment to benefit walking, cycling and public transport.

The Neighbourhood Plan priorities for spending any monies derived from Planning Agreements (Section 106) and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or successor mechanisms such as Local Infrastructure Tariff (LIT) from development within the parish will be as follows:

- public transport links to local towns and facilities
- car parking
- expansion of local routes and networks for walking, cycling and horse riding
- accessibility for disabled people and those with limited mobility in relation to local routes and footpaths
- provision of green infrastructure
- wildlife enhancements

Opportunities will be taken to fund such improvements through planning applications. Proposals by developers or other authorities which provide improvements to sustainable modes of transport will be supported

- 4.9.3 A strong community requires services and facilities that contribute to its quality of life, vibrancy and vitality. Lancaster City Council has adopted policies to ensure that there are opportunities to develop and maintain features including recreation facilities, health services, allotments, shops, places of worship, pubs and village halls. There are also locally specific needs such as new pedestrian or cycle routes. In some

cases, it will be possible for new development to contribute towards the provision or maintenance of these facilities, through the use of planning obligations, which may be sought where they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

- 4.9.4 In the Lancaster Local Plan the following infrastructure needs have been identified:
- I. To investigate sustainable and innovative options for rural public transport provision in accordance with Lancaster District Highways and Transport Masterplan (2016). (This may be moved to Library Document)
 - II. Extension to the Lune Valley Cycle Network To deliver improvements and extensions to the Lune Valley Cycle Network in accordance with Lancashire Cycle and Walking Strategy (2016) & Lancaster District Highways and Transport Masterplan (2016)
 - III. Flood Risk Prevention Surface Water Run-Off Mitigation within new development, by the creation of permeable surfaces and other related design measures to ensure that surface water run-off is reduced to greenfield levels.
 - IV. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) must be provided within new development to address matters of Climate Change and Flood Risk.
- 4.9.5 New development places a burden on existing infrastructure such as utility provision, highway capacity and school places. Planning obligations are designed to help mitigate the impact of development in a way that benefits local communities and supports the provision of local infrastructure. In addition to providing the minimum services and utilities necessary to support development proposals, it is expected that Lancaster District Council will negotiate a suitable package of supporting infrastructure to ensure proposals are self-supporting and do not harm the Special Qualities of the AONB.
- 4.9.6 Critical service and utility infrastructure can include access, clean water provision, wastewater and sewerage, power supplies and telecommunications connectivity. Whilst the Council has cited better broadband speeds as one of the infrastructure needs it is expected the within the duration of this plan much of the Parish will have access to hyperfast broadband via the fibre optic broadband network provided by B4RN (Broadband for the Rural North). This was a service mentioned frequently in the consultation within the Parish and was something that many people requested.

4.10 Managing flood risk and water quality

- 4.10.1 Flood Risk: Storm Desmond caused extensive flooding in the Parish affecting a number of houses, farms and businesses on the flood plain of the River Lune and along the Artle Beck and Bull Beck. In addition, many areas were affected by surface water run-off, particularly buildings at Low Mill, Forge Mill, and Copy Lane. This demonstrates that water flow and drainage needs careful attention and improvement.

Policy CL14 Managing flood risk and water quality

New development should be designed to maximise the retention of surface water on the development site and to minimise runoff. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be implemented wherever possible.

The design of new buildings and infrastructure should take account of existing topography to manage the flow of water along specific flow routes away from property and into appropriate storage facilities and or “slow the flow” systems.

Water attenuation facilities such as lagoons, ponds and swales should be provided within development sites.

Sustainable design of buildings which support rain water harvesting are supported. Storage of rain water for non-drinking water purposes such as watering gardens and flushing toilets is encouraged.

Areas of hard standing such as driveways and parking areas should be minimised and porous materials used where possible, with associated soakaway facilities.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan will support initiatives that rationalise or improve the provision of waste water treatment in areas not connected to mains drainage, including installing new treatment works.

New development should avoid overloading existing septic tank infrastructure. Any development proposed to make use of already overloaded, leaking or out-of-date septic tank infrastructure will be required to make provision for appropriate upgrading of the infrastructure.

For new development in locations where there are vulnerable aquifers, applicants will need to provide an assessment that demonstrates that surface and foul water will be kept out of the aquifer, and how.

Proposals for new development should reflect the specific circumstances and Special Qualities of the AONB and relevant current evidence in relation to likely impacts on and potential benefits for water quality, sewerage infrastructure and sustainable drainage.

- 4.10.2 Policy DM39 of the Lancaster District Development Management DPD relates to surface water runoff and sustainable drainage and states that *new development, which qualifies as ‘major’ development proposals under The Town and Country Planning (Development Management) (England) Order 2010, must incorporate a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) which will be subject to approval, conditions and/or legal agreement(s) by the SuDS Approval Body (SAB). New Development, which qualifies as ‘minor’ development under The Town and Country Planning*

(Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 should give due consideration to whether there is a requirement to gain SAB approval over the issue of sustainable drainage.

Local Evidence

- 4.10.3 Managing risk is an issue of great concern for local residents, particularly after the effects of Storm Desmond in 2015. Lancaster District Council has adopted policies to ensure that development is directed away from areas of highest risk from flooding. Some areas are not served by mains drainage or do not have mains sewerage systems. There are also areas that can be susceptible to surface water run-off, which can lead to flooding. Through their role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), Lancashire County Councils now lead on flooding and drainage issues. As such, these issues are likely to be covered at County and District levels. Lancaster District's Development Management DPD contains a policy (DM39), which deals with the new requirements for surface water and sustainable drainage, following the enactment of The Floods and Water Management Act 2010.
- 4.10.4 The Neighbourhood Development Plan does offer an opportunity to provide more specific detail to encourage sustainable drainage systems, natural flood risk management schemes and projects to improve water quality.

4.11 Energy and Communications

4.11.1 Renewable energy is a more sustainable use of natural capital than burning fossil fuels. National planning guidance challenges all communities to respond to the need for sustainable energy generation, including through the use of renewable and low carbon technologies. Technological developments also heighten demand for telecommunications infrastructure. In practice this includes the delivery of faster broadband connections and scope for small-scale renewable and low-carbon energy schemes to be introduced in the AONB. This policy seeks to ensure that the communities of the AONB can make a contribution to and benefit from renewable and low carbon energy and up-to-date communications infrastructure in a way that supports the AONB's primary purpose and Special Qualities.

Policy CL15 Energy and Communications

Medium to large scale energy or communications infrastructure, including single stand-alone, pairs or groups¹² of wind turbines, are likely to be major development contrary to national policy and will not be permitted in the parish due to its location in the Forest of Bowland AONB.

Small-scale low carbon energy, renewable energy or communications infrastructure schemes in the parish will be encouraged providing that:

- (I) the siting, scale, design and appearance will not have an adverse impact upon landscape or settlement character or views into, out of and across the AONB, including from Public Rights of Way;**
- (II) they do not compromise heritage assets and their settings, historic character, biodiversity or geodiversity assets;**
- (III) noise, disturbance, vibration, stroboscopic effect, glint, glare or electromagnetic interference will not have an adverse impact on adjoining uses, visual and residential amenity, tranquillity or the quiet enjoyment of the AONB;**
- (IV) existing public access is not impeded; and**
- (V) they give careful consideration to cumulative impacts, the technology used, site location and decommissioning.**

Development proposals that promote the AONB as a low carbon landscape will be particularly encouraged. This includes provision of low carbon, energy efficiency and renewable energy systems within new developments and through the retrofitting of existing buildings.

New development will include superfast broadband infrastructure. Opportunities to share communications infrastructure in order to enhance services whilst avoiding or minimising landscape impacts should be fully explored and the results evidenced before additional infrastructure is considered. Sensitive developments that enhance mobile 'phone coverage will be supported.

Up-to-date evidence relating to low carbon energy, renewable energy and vertical infrastructure and its impacts should be used to inform planning applications and decisions.

Definitions within this policy are provided within the Forest of Bowland AONB Renewable Energy Position Statement⁹

⁹ <https://www.forestofbowland.com/Renewable-Energy-Position-Statement>

4.1.1.2 The character of the AONB landscape is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of energy and telecommunications development. Turbines, masts and power lines can detract from important open skylines that are otherwise free of vertical structures and can intrude into key views. Overhead cables and service poles can add visual clutter to the rural landscape. Also, turbines, buildings and other structures related to energy projects along with masts and other communications infrastructure can have an 'industrial' character, which would be out of keeping with the rural landscape of the AONB. Such development can also detract from the character or setting of Listed Buildings, scheduled monuments or conservation areas.

4.1.1.3 Renewable or low-carbon energy schemes in the parish will be supported where the nature, type, scale, design and location of the installation does not adversely affect the Special Qualities. Whereas, for much of the country, permitted development rights apply to solar PV and solar thermal technologies, these do not apply in designated landscapes including AONBs. There are also more specific restrictions that apply to the installation of renewable technologies in Listed Buildings or conservation areas. Potential applicants should seek guidance from the Lancaster District Council on the nature of these restrictions and the best way of accommodating renewable or low-carbon energy schemes, making use of relevant preapplication advice.

4.1.1.4 In the parish, renewable energy potential is diverse and appropriate schemes could include:

- (I) wood fuel or wood chip boilers;
- (II) domestic scale solar energy;
- (III) anaerobic digestion plants that are fuelled by agricultural feed stocks;
- (IV) ground, air and water source heat pumps;
- (V) micro hydro-electric power;
- (VI) other microgeneration schemes.

4.1.1.5 Policy CL16 draws on the approach to energy and communications infrastructure set out in the Forest of Bowland AONB Renewable Energy Position Statement 2014. The policy aims to ensure that new energy and communications infrastructure that supports the AONB objectives and Special Qualities is encouraged whilst protecting the AONB from the types, sizes and scales of this infrastructure that would be inappropriate and harmful to the AONB.

4.1.1.6 It is important to remember that this policy sits alongside other policies in this document, national policy and other locally applicable policies set out in the Local Plan for Lancaster. This includes protecting the setting of the AONB.

5. Proposed Development Allocations

5.1 Site Assessment and Selection

5.1.1 This section of the Caton Neighbourhood Development Plan identifies the sites that are allocated for residential development. The selection of these sites has been conducted in line with the Development Strategy set out in Policy CL1 and has been informed by a considerable number of assessments, evidence-base studies, site visits and information gathering.

5.1.2 Each site has been subject to a detailed screening process, including specialist landscape, and biodiversity and assessments. The main evidence-base documents for housing are the Lancaster Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Part II) February 2018 Report undertaken by ARC⁴, and the relevant sections of the that Lancaster Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments (SHELAAs).

Sites Proposed for allocation for development

5.1.3 This policy identifies the sites that are allocated for development in the parish

Policy CL16 Housing Allocations

Site Ref/Policy No	Name	Gross <u>h5.3a</u>	Development Platform Area	Estimated No of dwellings

When finalised include the site assessment procedure

All sites allocated for development are shown on the Policies Map

5.2 Site Mini Briefs

5.2.1 This section sets out policies detailing key expectations for the development of each of the allocated sites. In most cases these will inform pre-application discussions between developers and Lancaster District Council. The mini briefs are accompanied by indicative plans for each site. The mini-briefs and indicative plans are intended to guide development; development is expected to closely reflect these, but it is accepted that alternative proposals may be equally acceptable where they meet policy requirements.

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6. Planning commitments

6.1 Below is a table showing the planning applications for dwellings granted within the Lancaster Development Plan period.

Table will need updating. It was correct as at 29th July 2019

19/0566/FUL	Ball Lane, Caton	Erection of a 2 storey dwelling with attached garage, creation of a vehicular access point and installation of surface water drainage infrastructure	Pending	1 dwelling
19/00292/OUT	Bank House Fly Fishery Car Park Lancaster Road Caton	Outline application for the erection of 1 dwelling	Application permitted	1 dwelling
19/00124/FUL	Woodfield House Moorside Road Brookhouse	Erection of a two storey dwelling with detached garage, creation of a new access and installation of a package treatment plant	Application permitted	1 dwelling
18/01419/FUL	Hill Farm Littledale Road Brookhouse	Change of use of barn to two dwellings (C3), demolition of existing modern barns and erection of two new dwellings (C3), creation of passing place and erection of bin store	Application permitted	2 dwellings
18/01348/FUL	Land West Of Littledale Road Brookhouse	Erection of a detached dwelling (C3) with associated access	Application permitted	1 dwelling
18/01114/OUT	Ball Lane, Caton	Outline application for the erection of a dwellinghouse (C3) with associated access	Application permitted	1 dwelling
16/00932/FUL	Neville House Moorside Road Brookhouse	Demolition of domestic store/workshop and erection of a 2-storey dwelling with associated landscaping	Application Permitted	1 dwelling
16/00104/CU	28 - 29 Low Mill Mill Lane Caton	Change of use of one 2-bed apartment to two 1-bed apartments	Application Permitted	1 dwelling

14/00964/CU	Former Caton Youth Club Copy Lane Caton	Change of use of office (B1) to funeral directors (A1) and one 2-bed flat (C3) and erection a garage to the front elevation	Application Permitted	1 dwelling
14/00270/OUT	Land Off Sycamore Road Brookhouse	Outline application for the demolition of existing bungalow and erection of up to 31 dwellings with associated access	Application Permitted	31 dwellings – RM – 22 dwellings
14/00459/OUT	Land To The Rear 71 Hornby Road Caton	Outline application for the erection of a detached residential dwelling	Application Permitted	1 dwelling
14/00768/OUT	TNT Garage Hornby Road Caton	Outline application for the erection of up to 30 dwellings	Appeal Allowed	30 dwellings
13/01183/CU	Land Adjacent No 8 The Croft Caton	Change of use of redundant barn to a one-bed dwelling (C3) with a single storey extension	Application Permitted	1 dwelling
13/00668/FUL	Moor Platt Lancaster Road Caton	Demolition of the existing 2 storey disused care home and the erection of 6 two-bed houses, 15 three-bed houses and 12 four-bed houses including internal road layout and associated parking and landscaping	Application Permitted	33 dwellings
13/00021/CU	27 - 31 Brookhouse Road Caton	Change of use from one 4 bed dwelling to one 1 bed dwelling and one 3 bed dwelling	Application Permitted	1 dwelling
13/00017/CU	Lancashire County Constabulary 37 Hornby Road Caton	Change of use from police office and community meeting house into residential dwelling	Application Permitted	1 dwelling
Total dwellings approved since 2011				99 dwellings

7. Next Steps

- 7.1** This Draft Plan has been prepared by the Caton-with-Littledale Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group on behalf of Caton-with-Littledale Parish Council, supported by planning consultants Kirkwells.
- 7.2** The results of this formal consultation will be considered very carefully and used to finalise and amend the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. A Consultation Statement will be published alongside the amended version of the Draft Plan setting out how the representations received at this stage, together with the Screening Report for Strategic Environmental Assessment have been considered, and used to influence and inform the content of the Draft Plan.
- 7.3** Following this, it is proposed that the amended (“Submission”) Neighbourhood Development Plan, together with all supporting documentation will be submitted to Lancaster District Council in 2017. Following this, the Plan will be subjected to an Independent Examination by a jointly appointed Examiner, to consider whether the Plan meets the basic conditions, and also any outstanding objections.
- 7.4** It is likely that the Examiner will recommend further (hopefully minor) changes, before the Plan is subjected to a local Referendum. A straight majority vote (50% of turnout +1) of those on the Electoral Register will be required, before the District Council may “make” the Plan. The Neighbourhood Development Plan will then be used to help determine planning decisions in the Parish alongside Local and National Planning Policies.
- 7.5** Where a policy topic is not included in the Caton with Littledale Neighbourhood Plan, it is covered adequately elsewhere in the Development Plan for Lancaster District and/or through National Policies.
- 7.6** Many policy topics and issues that apply to the Forest of Bowland AONB are covered adequately by National Policy or International or National Legislation or are covered by policies in other Local Plan documents. These policies and requirements all still apply to the parish of Caton, and the Caton with Littledale Neighbourhood Plan is an extra layer of policy for the parish rather than a replacement for these, and all the relevant documents must be read in conjunction in order to provide the full picture of planning policy covering the parish within the Forest of Bowland AONB.

7. Appendices

INSERT MAPS

OUR PARISH – OUR FUTURE – OUR PLAN



**THE CATON-with-LITLEDALE
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN
(2019 to 2031)**