

Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Development Plan Document

Monitoring Report (Post Adoption to March 2024)

July 2025

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1. Introduction

The Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Development Plan Document (DPD) was adopted on 28th March 2019. The DPD forms part of the South Lakeland Local Plan and Lancaster City Council Local Plan. Part of the Arnside and Silverdale National Landscape is located within Westmorland and Furness Council area (formerly South Lakeland District Council area) and part of it is located within Lancaster City Council area and this means that both authorities are responsible for preparing the AONB Development Plan Document and for determining planning applications within this area.

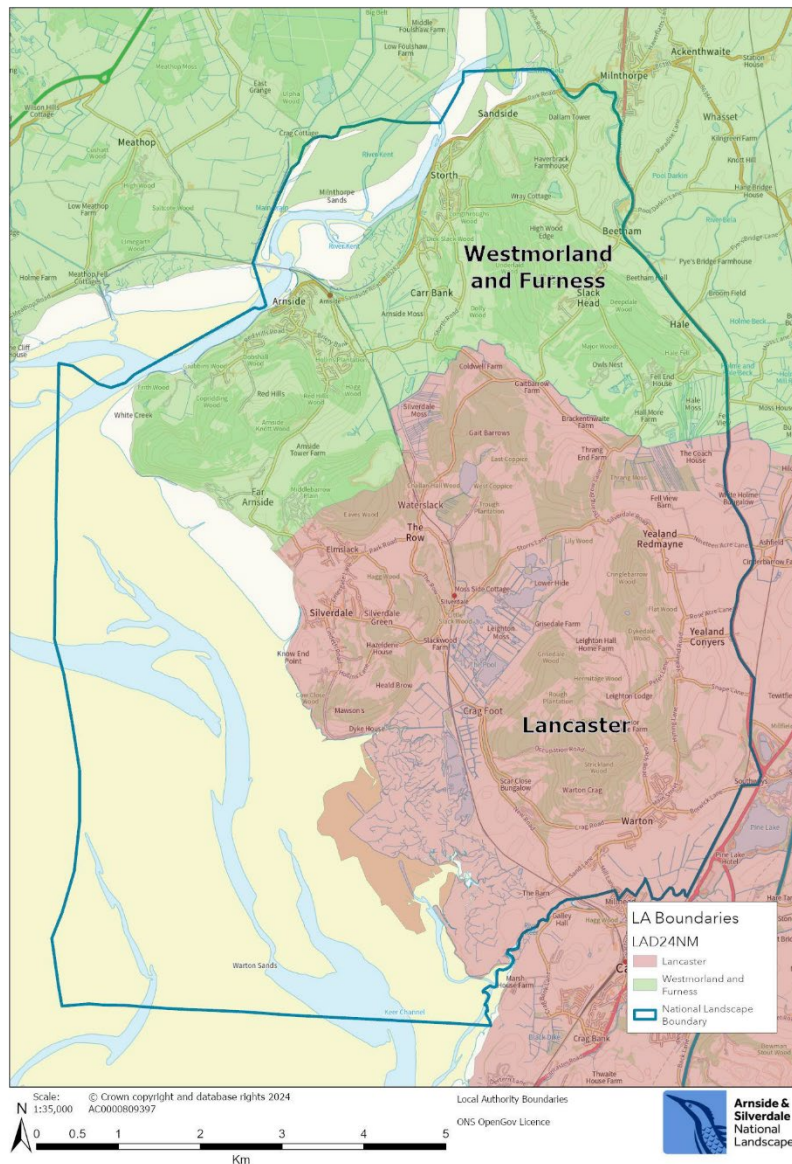


Figure 1 - Map: Location of Arnside and Silverdale National Landscape

Because of the cross-boundary nature of the AONB DPD, a joint Monitoring Report for the AONB DPD has been prepared by the two authorities. This joint report tells you of the progress in implementing specific policies within the DPD and helps address questions such as:

- Are policies achieving their objectives and in particular are they delivering sustainable development?
- Have policies had unintended consequences that were not originally anticipated?
- Are the assumptions and objectives underpinning the policies still relevant and applicable?

Where it becomes evident that policies are not performing as intended, any subsequent monitoring analysis will suggest the actions that need to be taken and help inform future reviews of the DPD.

The new 'National Landscape' title supersedes the former 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' title across UK countries. The statutory purposes of designation remains the same. Currently, within a planning and development context the two titles 'National Landscape' and 'AONB' can be used interchangeable.

2. Monitoring Framework

2.1 The primary purpose for the development of the AONB DPD was to put the conservation and enhancement of the AONB at the heart of the planning decision-making process and to apply a landscape capacity-led approach to development, thereby delivering their statutory duty to have regard to the AONB purpose. This is reflected in the key objectives of the AONB DPD which are as follows:

- (I) To conserve and enhance the landscape, and the natural beauty of the AONB, including landscape character and visual amenity, wildlife, geology, heritage and settlement character;
- (II) To ensure that all development is appropriate and sustainable in its location and design and is of high quality;
- (III) To ensure that planning policy is shaped by effective community engagement;
- (IV) To provide sufficient supply and mix of high-quality housing to contribute to meeting the needs of the AONB's communities, with an emphasis on affordable housing and without adverse impact on the landscape character of the AONB;
- (V) To support rural employment and livelihoods, and sustainable tourism;
- (VI) To provide the necessary services and infrastructure to support both existing and new development;
- (VII) To support the development of a safe and sustainable transport network, including paths and cycleways, to improve connectivity, reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable forms of transport.

2.2 Section 7 of the AONB DPD sets out a monitoring and implementation framework and the approach is very much to monitor progress against the objectives of the plan. An outline monitoring framework is also identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Report which accompanied the DPD. A range of indicators has been chosen based on the recommendations of the SA to reflect the objectives set out above. These are:

- Total number of application decisions and development types
- Progress against sites allocated in the DPD

2.3 An assessment of new residential development includes an assessment of whether the DPD objective of meeting local housing need is being met, through analysis of the type of housing development that has been permitted and built.

2.4 The above provides a quantitative assessment of applications within the National Landscape. However, the primary purpose of the National Landscape is for the conservation and enhancement of the National Landscape, and this is difficult to assess against a set of indicators. The monitoring report also includes a qualitative assessment which considers in more detail specific applications and notable decisions where the DPDs key policies have been applied. This includes but is not limited to the following policies: -

- AS01 Development Strategy
- AS02 Landscape
- AS04 Natural Environment
- AS06 Key Settlement Landscape

- AS07 Historic Environment
- AS08 Design

3. Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

3.1 Section 15 of the NPPF relates to designated landscape area including National Landscapes. The wording has changed little since the 2012 version that applied to the submission version of the AONB DPD. The only substantive change relates to the following paragraph: -

‘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 landscape and natural beauty.’

3.2 This has been changed to: -

Para 189

‘Great weight should be given to conserving **and enhancing** landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.’

3.3 The change in effect raises the bar in terms of determining planning decisions within National Landscapes. Policy AS01 reflects the 2012 wording while policies AS02 Landscape and Policy AS04 Natural Environment both state development should ‘conserve and enhance’. It is considered that read as a whole the AONB DPD reflects the current NPPF.

Glover Review

3.4 Prior to the adoption of the DPD in 2019 the Government commissioned an independent review of the National Park and AONB designations. It was carried out by Julian Glover and known as the Glover Review. It was wide ranging and sought to strengthen the two designations and it made a number of recommendations to Government. These included altering the statutory purposes of AONBs and making AONB partnerships statutory consultees in planning applications. The Government considered the recommendations but kept the purpose of the designation unchanged and made no substantive changes from a planning policy point of view.

3.5 There were some other significant changes however, most notably the name change from AONB to ‘National Landscape’ (NL) which was introduced in November 2023. The change was carried out in order to clarify and help promote the designation.

3.6 The following changes to legislation were made in relation to local authorities under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023: -

- The new Act amends S85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000), replacing a duty on public bodies and statutory undertakers to ‘have regard to’ the purpose of AONB designation in the discharging of their functions with a new duty: **‘To seek to further the purpose’** of AONB designation.

- In relation to NL Management Plans, the duty under the CROW Act (2000) S.89 on local authorities was previously to produce a management plan for NLs within their boundaries, acting jointly with other authorities where NLs cross multiple boundaries. This function has been discharged through AONB Partnerships such as that for Arnsdale & Silverdale. The new Act amends S.89 of CROW to place a new duty on relevant authorities to **‘contribute to the preparation, implementation or review of a plan** under Section 89 relating to an area of outstanding natural beauty in England.’

3.7 In both cases the change in wording require Local Authorities to take a more proactive role in the support of National Landscapes. Guidance published by DEFRA (Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes, December 2024) emphasises the role of planning in terms of when the new duty should be applied. This relates to the preparation of Development Plans and in decision making by the Local Planning Authority. More generally relevant authorities should be able to demonstrate how they are meeting the new duty through the publication of reports, policies and strategies. Consideration of what is reasonable and proportionate in the context of fulfilling the duty is decided by the relevant authority and should take account of the context of the specific function being exercised.

3.8 Policies in the current Lancaster City Local Plan and in the South Lakeland Local Plan apply to the Lancaster and the Westmorland and Furness parts of the National Landscape respectively. Both these plans are the subject of current review. The Lancaster City Council Local Plan is currently being reviewed anticipated to be adopted in 2028. The South Lakeland Local Plan will be replaced by the Westmorland and Furness Local Plan which will replace policies in the Eden District Local Plan, Barrow Borough Local Plan and South Lakeland Local Plan. The Westmorland and Furness Local Plan is anticipated to be adopted some time in 2028 under the new local plan making system introduced by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. These timescales are subject to change.

4. Planning Application Decisions

4.1 In total 465 (Lancaster County Council (LCC) 234 + South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) / Westmorland and Furness Council (WFC) 231) decisions were made on planning applications between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2024. The table below provides an indication of the number and types of applications decided within the National Landscape for each of the five years since adoption.

Planning Decisions within National Landscape (2019/20 – 2023/24)

Application type	2019/20 SLDC	2019/20 LCC	2020/21 SLDC	2020/21 LCC	2021/22 SLDC	2021/22 LCC	2022/23 WFC	2022/23 LCC	2023/24 WFC	2023/24 LCC
Householder	45	38	22	38	43	30	43	30	30	38
Other development	3	2	1	3	5	7	2	0	3	1
New residential	8	5	2	3	6	5	1	3	3	3
Tourism and business (including agriculture & forestry)	0	3	2	1	1	6	9	7	0	8
Equestrian	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
Total	57	49	27	45	56	49	55	40	36	51

Table 1: Planning Decisions within NL (2019/20 – 2023/24)

Householder and minor development

4.2 The large majority of applications within the National Landscape relate to residential extensions and other householder development. Although relatively small in scale these can have significant impacts on the landscape of the Arncliffe and Silverdale National Landscape and applications require consideration against the relevant DPD policies.

South Lakeland District Council/Westmorland and Furness Notable Decisions (sample)

4.3 An application for a first-floor extension over existing orangery was refused on grounds it would result in a dominant development which would cause harm to the settlement character of Storth and would be contrary to Policy AS01, AS04 and AS08 (SL/2019/0308).

4.4 An application (SL/2020/0318) for a single storey rear sun room extension over existing raised terrace was refused on grounds of its design, external materials and elevated position being harmful to the local built environment and the wider setting of the AONB. Specific reference was made to Policy AS08 and the need for proposals to avoid using existing development that is harmful to landscape and settlement character, instead proposals are expected to reinforce what is special and locally distinctive.

4.5 An application (SL/2022/0887) for a new access driveway was refused as it failed to conserve or enhance the locally distinctive landscape settlement character and would be contrary to Policy AS02. There was an appeal, but the inspector dismissed it, agreeing with the officer, and stating that it would be contrary to Policy AS02 and AS04.

4.6 An application (SL/2022/0864) for two single garages was refused due to the size, isolation away from the dwelling and the adverse impact it may have on the character of the Arnside and Silverdale AONB. It was believed to be contrary to policies AS02 and AS08 of the Development Plan. There was an appeal, which the applicant won. The inspector stated that the development was well screened and of a similar design and scale to the other garages in the area.

Lancaster CC Notable Decisions

4.7 An application for the extension of a garden into agricultural land was refused and subsequently dismissed at appeal on the grounds of the impact on the AONB designation (20/01167/FUL). The Inspector drew on the AONB DPD and reinforced the landscape capacity led approach set out in Policy AS01.

New Residential Applications

4.8 Within Westmorland and Furness there have been 18 applications determined for new houses over the 2019/24 period with 4 refusals and 14 approvals. Within Lancaster district there have been 19 applications determined over the 2019/24 period with 10 refusals and 9 approvals. This would indicate that the bar is set high for new development within the National Landscape and closer inspection of the reasons for refusal shows that AONB DPD policies relating to landscape, design, heritage and ecology featured strongly.

SLDC/WFC Notable Decisions

4.9 An application for the subdivision of a dwelling to two-self-contained dwellings (SL-2022-0008) was approved, it was considered to be an enhancement – demolition of a glazed lean-to extension and concluded the alterations would be a sustainable high quality design that would preserve the significance of the non-designated heritage asset, the protected landscapes and designated heritage asset.

4.10 An application (SL/2019/0265) for the demolition of an existing stable block and erection of detached 3-bedroom dwelling at Slack Head was refused as it fails to reinforce what is special and locally distinctive about this area of AONB settlement landscape and Beetham Conservation Area. It was also contrary to the development strategy (AS01) as it

did not make use of previously developed land, propose use of existing buildings or help sustain an existing business, or reflect demonstrable local needs within the AONB. A proposal for a detached dwelling at Slackhead (SL/2019/0265) was refused on grounds of its visually prominent location and loss of important green space including priority orchard habitat as well as adverse effect on the character and appearance of Beetham Conservation Area.

4.11 An application for a detached 2 bed, 2 storey dwelling (SL/2019/0184) was refused due the scale and design running contrary to policies AS01, AS04 and AS08. The proposed site was set within the garden curtilage of another property on Storth Road, where the dwelling would have appeared out of place. The proposal failed to take into consideration the visual character of the village (Storth) and would have had a detrimental impact on the wider AONB.

4.12 An application (SL/2022/0501) for a replacement dwelling in Arnside was refused largely due to the design and because it would harm the character and appearance of the area and would conflict with policy AS08. The applicants resubmitted (application SL/2023/0256) and the improved design of the dwelling meant that it was then approved.

4.13 An outline application (SL/2023/0780) for a single dwelling in Arnside was refused as it failed to demonstrate acceptable arboricultural, highways, drainage and biodiversity impacts. The application would have resulted in the loss of a significant amount of planting and would put pressure on the adjacent woodland, conflicting with Policy AS04 of the Arnside and Silverdale AONB Development Plan.

4.14 An application (SL/2023/0654) for a replacement dwelling in Slack Head was approved as it was deemed not to have an adverse effect on the visual amenity of the landscape settlement character. The application was consistent with policies AS01, AS02 and AS08 of the Arnside and Silverdale AONB Development Plan.

Lancaster CC Notable Decisions

4.15 An application was made for an agricultural worker's dwelling at Yealand Redmayne and was subsequently refused due to its unsustainable location and potential impacts on the AONB (19/01197/OUT). Policies AS01, AS02, AS04, AS08 and AS12 were referenced in the decision. An appeal was made to the secretary of state which was subsequently dismissed. The Inspector gave great weight to landscape impacts and Policy AS02.

4.16 Although determined prior to the formal adoption of the DPD another notable decision (18/00213/FUL) relates to the erection of a 2-storey dwelling in Silverdale. The site was located within a 'Key Settlement Landscape' (KSL) identified in Policy AS06 of the AONB DPD and was subsequently refused. The decision was challenged at appeal but was dismissed, with the Planning Inspector relying strongly on the KSL designation.

Housing Delivery

4.17 A key objective of the AONB DPD is to provide a sufficient supply and mix of high-quality housing to contribute to meeting the needs of the National Landscape's communities, with an emphasis on affordable housing and without adverse impact on the landscape character of the NL. Current housing need evidence is contained in the 2014 Housing Needs Survey for the AONB that indicated 72 affordable homes required within the AONB (split between Local Authorities (LA): Lancaster City Council 39, WFC 33).

4.18 The 2014 study identified, aside from the affordable housing need, a need for single storey 2/3 bed dwellings across most parishes. Policy AS03 specifies proposals for new

housing development of two or more properties will be supported where they deliver no less than 50% affordable housing. The table below provides a breakdown of the number of affordable homes permitted and delivered between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2024. It also provides an indication of the types of housing developments permitted and built.

Type of housing permitted / built April 2019 – March 2024	Lancaster	Westmorland and Furness
Total number of dwellings - Permitted	12+12	17
Total number of dwellings - Built	38	11
No. Affordable Homes - Permitted	0	0
No. Affordable Homes - Built	9	0
No. Single Detached Houses (market housing including self-build) - Permitted	9	5
No. Single Detached Houses (market housing including self-build) - Built	7	3
No. of dwellings by size (affordable and market housing) - Permitted	1 bed – 0 2 bed – 8 3 bed – 12 4 bed – 4 5 bed - 0	1 bed – 4 2 bed – 5 3 bed – 7 4 bed – 1 5 bed - 0
No. of dwellings by size (affordable and market housing) - Built	1 bed – 3 2 bed – 13 3 bed – 9 4 bed – 13 5 bed - 0	1 bed – 1 2 bed – 4 3 bed – 4 4 bed – 2 5 bed - 0

Table 2: Housing Delivery April 2019 – March 2024

4.20 The Lancaster data for completions is relatively high and is accounted for by the development at Warton Grange for 25 dwellings. This site also provided the only delivery of affordable housing. The table above shows there are limited affordable houses being delivered or being approved across the National Landscape. The data also shows, particularly in Lancaster, that when unallocated sites become available the preference is often for single detached dwellings which do not necessarily meet the housing need. In such cases, the housing needs survey is an important part of the evidence base in determining such applications and can help encourage smaller sized units. Of note, although outside the monitoring period, is a recent application for a large single dwelling at Townsfield, Silverdale. This was refused on a number of grounds including a lack of need for the type of dwelling being proposed (21/00412/FUL).

Tourism and business-related development (caravan, holiday, pod, yurt, hut, camping, accommodation)

4.21 The National Landscape is a popular tourist and visitor destination, however, over many years there has been an expansion of the area's many caravan sites and this has had an increasing impact on the area's landscape. In response Policy AS11 of the DPD is restrictive

towards the expansion or creation of new static caravan sites, chalets, cabins or lodges. The policy does however allow for the development of low impact accommodation on existing sites or for the conversion of existing buildings if they are unsuitable as a permanent dwelling. Over the monitoring period one application has been submitted for the expansion of a caravan site and there have been limited applications for other types of tourism development.

SLDC/WFC Notable Decisions

4.22 Application SL/2022/1044 was approved at Lakeland Wildlife Oasis at Hale. The application was for internal alterations and extensions to the existing reception building, change of use of agricultural land to create a car parking area and a nature reserve, change of use of the existing car park to create additional animal enclosures and exhibits, children's play area and a toilet building. A similar application (SL/2021/0647) was refused in 2022, but the new application was considered appropriate in this location, connected to the existing business and would not result in unacceptable detrimental impacts of the landscape character of the AONB, residential amenity, biodiversity or highway safety.

4.23 An application (SL/2022/1102) was refused at Holgates Carvan Park at Silverdale. This application was for new staff accommodation and the change of use of existing accommodation to office space and was a resubmission of refused application SL/2021/0990. The proposal involves the construction of two, unjustified dwellings in the countryside and is in conflict with Policy AS01 of the Arnside and Silverdale AONB DPD. The development is outside of a settlement so would erode the countryside edge, and conflict with policies AS02 and AS11. Furthermore, the proposal fails to provide any affordable housing, so is in conflict with Policy AS03 also.

Lancaster Notable Decisions

4.24 An application for the retention of yurts at Moss Lane, Silverdale was submitted just prior to the adoption of the AONB DPD (18/00295/FUL). The proposal was located within woodland close to the Gait Barrows National Nature Reserve. The application was refused on a number of grounds including impacts on landscape, ecology and drainage. Enforcement action was then taken by the Council in order to remove the yurts and a subsequent appeal made by the applicant was turned down. Policy AS11 featured in the reason for the appeals dismissal which clearly restricts new tourism development outside existing sites.

4.25 An application for the erection of two holiday lodges in Silverdale was refused on the grounds of its impact on the AONB, with AS11 being a key policy driver (21/01089/FUL). The application proposed that the 4 existing caravans at the site were to be replaced by holiday lodges together with two additional lodges. There were also concerns over drainage and the impact on trees. A subsequent appeal was dismissed with policies AS01, AS02, AS08, as well as AS11, being referenced by the Inspector.

4.26 An application to erect a bunkhouse and extend existing facilities was submitted at the Silver Sapling Camp Site adjacent to eaves Wood (23/01069/FUL). The proposal would have intensified the existing use at the site and in effect replaced the existing camping use with a purpose-built development for self-catering holiday use and was considered contrary to Policy AS11.

Equestrian development (horse menage, stable, paddock, equine, equestrian)

SLDC/WFC Notable decisions

4.27 An application for a fenced equine menage (SL-2019-0924) was considered contrary to Policy AS01, AS02 and DM10, this was resubmitted (SL/2020/0933) and refused again. It involves the construction of fenced equine menage, near Fell End, Hale Moss and includes the provision of external lighting, considered to have an unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape and natural beauty of the area. It is also in an open countryside location, and there is no evidence included to explain essential need for such a location.

4.28 There were no applications for equestrian developments between April 2022 and March 2024.

Lancaster Notable Decisions

4.29 An application for the construction of a menage (19/01389/FUL) was approved in Yealand Redmayne but there were concerns in terms of landscape impacts. Further details were requested, and conditions were imposed relating to the management of the hedgerows around the proposed menage and also to the colour of the surfacing. The proposal did not involve the use of floodlighting.

4.30 Application 20/01428/FUL for a proposed ménage at a separate site at Yealand Redmayne included the installation of lighting. The impacts of floodlighting can be significant and in this case the application was withdrawn.

5. Site Allocations

Housing sites – Policy AS15

5.1 There are 5 sites solely allocated for residential use in the DPD. Progress on the implementation of these is summarised below. The monitoring data in the table below covers the position as at the end of March 2024.

Allocation Site	Estimated no. of dwellings (Gross)	Status at end March 2024
Land off Queen's Drive, Arnside	6	No proposals for the site. No planning permission, no application submitted
Land on Hollin's Lane, Arnside	6	No proposals for the site. No planning permission, no application submitted
Land on Briery Bank, Arnside	8	Application SL/2022/0062 (outline) for 8 dwellings including 4 affordable dwellings which was approved on 26/04/2024. It is understood a revised scheme is being prepared for the site, this involves an 8 dwelling all-affordable development, being led by South Lakes Housing Association in partnership with Arnside Parish Council. The project is currently in a development phase.
Land North West of Sand Lane, Warton	12	20/00358/OUT approved for 12 dwellings.
Land North of 17 Main Street, Warton	10	22/00235/REM application approved for 9 dwellings

Table 3. Progress at Allocated Housing Sites

Warton sites

5.2 Although the outline application at Sand Lane is reserved for access only, the applicant took into account other matters as part of the proposal as the access arrangements have been influenced by landscape and topographical constraints of the site. The mini brief has proven to be valuable in guiding the applicant and DM colleagues in terms of boundary treatments, flood risk, design and layout. In terms of affordable housing, *up to* 50% is being required within the planning agreement for the site rather than the *minimum of* 50% set out in Policy AS03. This is disappointing but the applicant has argued the site would be unviable if it were to be policy compliant.

5.3 A more recent reserved matters application was refused in July 2024, on the grounds of poor design and layout as well as on matters relating to flood risk and highways design.

5.4 An application on the second allocated site on Main Street has subsequently been determined (22/00235/REM). Again, the sites mini brief and Policy AS08 Design helped in securing amendments to the scheme and provide a more appropriate design. A low level of affordable housing was secured in the previously approved outline application. This was determined prior to the adoption of the AONB DPD and consequently the planning authority was unable to secure a higher level at the reserved matters stage.

Arnside sites

5.5 The land on Briery Bank allocation site has outline planning permission for 8 dwellings, 4 of which are affordable meeting the requirements of Policy AS03. It is understood a revised scheme is being prepared for the site for a 100% affordable housing scheme. The Land on Sandside Road and Quarry Lane allocation site in Sandside is currently subject to a planning application submitted in 2022 for 160 dwellings in the form of apartments and houses (of which only 5% are proposed as affordable) along with a cafe and live/work units. Part of the allocation site is excluded from the application. No decision has been made yet about the application.

Mixed Sites – Policy AS16

5.6 There are three sites allocated for mixed residential and employment use, or a mix of other uses including an employment element. Progress is detailed in the table below.

Allocation Site	Number of dwellings (indicative) and employment (hectares)	Status at end March 2024
Station Yard, Arnside	No specific area given in allocating policy for employment uses. Whole developable area 0.65 ha Car Parking, employment, community/visitor facilities and rail access. Possible residential or live work	Allocated ¹ for mixed uses including employment (business use) employment use limited to B1a, b and c. No applications submitted.

Table 4: Progress at Allocated Mixed Use Sites

Allocation Site	Number of dwellings (indicative) and employment (hectares)	Status at end March 2024
Land on Sandside Road and Quarry Lane, Sandside	<p>No specific area given in allocating policy for employment uses. Whole developable area 3.10 ha</p> <p>Employment, residential, community facilities and access</p>	<p>Allocated² for mixed uses including employment (business use) employment use limited to B1a, b and c and B8. Planning permission SL/2018/0129 approved April 2018 on part of site for 3 portacabins and 4 containers (prior to allocation) interim use has not been implemented, continued use as a builder's merchants – storage of building and landscaping materials.</p> <p>An application has been submitted SL-2022-1177 for 160 dwellings (of which 5% are proposed as affordable), café and live/work units</p>
Railway Goods Yard, Silverdale	<p>No specific area given in allocating policy for employment uses. Whole developable area 0.26 ha.</p> <p>Employment and car parking</p>	No planning application submitted to date

Table 4: Progress at Mixed Use and Employment Allocated Sites

6. National Landscape Partnership Planning Responses

6.1 The National Landscape Partnership is a non-statutory consultee on planning matters and provide independent landscape-related planning advice relevant to the National Landscape Management Plan, to local planning authorities, to assist with the formal decision-making process.

6.2 The Partnership submits a formal response to the relevant planning authority when:

- the local planning authority has formally consulted the Partnership;
- a policy document or application is considered likely to have an adverse effect or impact on the National Landscape and its special qualities, in order to object or raise concerns; or
- a policy document or application is considered to be particularly relevant to the National Landscape Management Plan, in order to provide advice.

6.3 The table below indicated the number of applications reviewed and responded to 2019-2025 by National Landscape Partnership.

Period (April – March)	Applications reviewed	Responses sent
2019 - 2020	162	74
2020 - 2021	175	68
2021 - 2022	186	64
2022 - 2023	203	86
2023 - 2024	115	44
2024 – 2025	117	36

Table 5: Number of applications reviewed and responded to 2019-2025 by National Landscape Partnership

6.4 It is the National Landscape Partnership's view that, overall, the adoption of the AONB DPD has had a significant positive impact on planning decision-making in relation to the statutory purpose, resulting in improved outcomes in terms of conserving and enhancing the AONB's special qualities in relation to development. The AONB DPD has achieved consistency in policy approach across the designated area for the first time and represents a detailed approach giving clear guidance to applicants. The adoption of the DPD was generally welcomed by local communities and has the strong support of the National Landscape Executive Committee, which includes representatives of local stakeholders including partner local authorities and the six parish councils. The AONB DPD was recognised in the RTPI Awards for Planning Excellence, being awarded Spatial Planning category and Overall Winner for the North West and becoming a national finalist, with the judges describing the AONB DPD as 'a pioneering and innovative approach to plan making'.

6.5 While there are numerous examples of where appropriate materials have been utilised in development resulting in positive outcomes, one issue that concerns the National Landscape Team and Executive Committee is the growing use of timber cladding in domestic extensions and new dwellings and the application of Policy AS08 - Design. It is considered that it is not a traditional material in the AONB and out of character, the preference being either limestone or a rendered finish. The Committee has carried out some analysis of applications where the National Landscape Team have submitted comments to the relevant planning authorities. This shows that in around half of cases the

LPA has not upheld the views of the National Landscape Team, highlighting a difference of opinion in terms of design and the use of timber cladding materials.

6.6 Light pollution is recognised as a planning issue in terms of impacts on wildlife, quality of life and wellbeing and also climate change. New development and planning have a role to play in addressing light pollution and protecting dark skies. It is an issue regularly raised within National Landscape Team comments on planning applications. Cumbrian planning authorities have adopted specific planning guidance (Technical Advice Note) on this matter. In order to maintain consistency across the landscape, Lancaster Local Planning Authority has approved use of the guidance in the form of a Planning Advisory Note which are used to help inform the determination of planning applications.

7. Summary

7.1 From the above data and analysis the policies within the AONB DPD have had a positive impact in terms of the main purposes of the National Landscape. It is apparent that applications have been focussed on the allocated sites or to small speculative sites. Historically there have been development proposals, primarily for tourism and residential uses, that have had a detrimental impact on the NL landscape and it would appear that these have been curtailed.

7.2 Whilst national policy and district wide Local Plan policies provide a clear policy framework to conserve the NL, the DPD has provided clarity, detail and consistency across a number of policy areas such as landscape, ecology and built heritage. This has given a greater level of confidence for decision makers when assessing proposals. The DPD has also ensured a consistent approach across the two planning authorities.

7.3 Positives:

- There have been no large-scale proposals outside the allocated sites identified under Policies AS17 – AS25. The DPD appears to have restricted speculative tourism and residential development that could be harmful to the National Landscape.
- The use of Mini-briefs and indicative site plans within relevant site allocation policies have provided clarity and certainty for both the applicant and planning authority.
- No applications have been approved within the Key Settlement Landscape designation and furthermore the designation has been supported at appeal.
- Analysis of applications and reasons for refusal has shown that the AONB DPD policies have provided an additional level of detail above and beyond those within district wide Local Plan policies.

7.4 However, the pursuit of conserving the landscape within the NL shouldn't necessarily result in a lack of appropriate development coming forward. The DPD vision and objectives are very much about creating vibrant, diverse and sustainable communities and a thriving local economy. This can be achieved through the delivery of high-quality mixed housing that meets local needs. The delivery of low cost and affordable housing is a key element of ensuring vibrant and cohesive communities in the future. There has been limited delivery of affordable housing so far, especially within the Westmorland and Furness part of the NL.

7.5 Development within Warton has provided the most significant new housing in the National Landscape and the award-winning development at Warton Grange Farm has provided a number of small dwellings on the open market and a small number of affordable units. Overall, however, it is clear that affordable homes are not being approved or delivered in any significant numbers across the NL. This is in part due to the size of speculative sites driven by the 'landscape led' approach, which means that sites predominantly fall below the '2 or more dwelling' threshold in Policy AS03, and partly through the lack of delivery at the allocated sites. This presents challenges during the plan period in terms of meeting local needs.

7.6 Continued limited delivery may have the consequence of increasing demand for affordable housing in the National Landscape. This may increase the reliance for local housing needs to be met outside of the NL. In turn this may therefore contribute to a less balanced supply of available housing in the NL for people in local need to occupy. A review of housing needs will enable a picture to be established of current and future needs.

7.7 The National Landscape Team review and comment on a significant number of planning applications. Their comments refer to the policies contained within the DPD as well as the NL Management Plan which is also a material consideration. Comments are wide ranging but in many cases design matters are a significant issue. Design is, to some extent, a subjective matter, and there can be different interpretations of how Policy AS08 should be applied.

8. Looking Ahead

8.1 The NPPF states that policies in Local Plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and no later than five years from the adoption date of the plan and should then be updated as necessary. The need to review the AONB DPD is therefore due. Reviews should take into account the effectiveness of policies, changing circumstances affecting the area, changes in local housing need, or any relevant changes in national policy.

8.2 This document covers the first five years of implementation of the AONB DPD since its adoption and covers the period March 2019 to March 2024. The monitoring to date has provided an insight into the effectiveness of the plan and its policies and has informed ongoing discussions between the two planning authorities.

8.3 These discussions and any further monitoring and analysis will help identify the need to update the existing evidence base and whether policies within the DPD itself need to be amended as part of the review process.