



Historic Environment Strategy

Summary

- 1 This report presents our Historic Environment Strategy 2026-2031, setting out our commitment to a clear and resourced set of prioritised actions for the historic environment and asks Members to adopt the Strategy.

Recommendation:

- a **It is recommended that Members agree the 2026-2031 Historic Environment Strategy, as attached in Annex 1.**

Background

- 2 The Strategy Meeting discussed a draft of the Historic Environment Strategy and made no changes to the draft:

Previous Committee	Main points discussed	Changes made
Strategy Meeting, 22 April 2026	A draft Historic Environment Strategy was presented for discussion	Members made no changes to the draft

- 3 The Lake District's historic environment is an integral part of the Special Qualities of the National Park and the Attributes of Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.
- 4 The Historic Environment Strategy sets out our ambition for the historic environment, which is "the historic environment is the context and setting for everything we do, providing a sense of place and distinctive character which makes the Lake District special. The historic environment to be at the heart of

communities and decision making, underpinning initiatives that contribute to social and economic well-being, climate resilience and nature recovery, so that the historic environment will be better understood, appreciated, experienced and looked after”.

- 5 The Historic Environment Strategy outlines how we will deliver our ambition over the next five years. It summarises the relevant background and the policy and strategic context, including how we will deliver the historic environment ambition and objectives in our Partnership Plan 2026-2031. It celebrates our achievements to date and where we want to be in 2031. The Action Plan details how our ambition and objectives will be delivered and how we will work with partners. It is presented in Annex 1 of this report.

Policy context

Links to Vision and Management Plan

- 6 The Historic Environment Strategy complements the delivery of the Vision, specifically contributing to the Lake District being heritage rich.
- 7 The Historic Environment Strategy aligns with the Partnership Plan 2026-2031 by supporting and delivering the ambition for the historic environment: “The distinctive historic environment of the Lake District is conserved and enhanced, ensuring it is better understood and looked after for future generations”.

Links to Business Plan

- 8 The Historic Environment is one of the priorities in the Business Plan 2026-2027. It says we will, “improve management of the historic environment by decreasing heritage at risk assets, improving non-designated heritage assets, increasing understanding of heritage condition, retaining traditional skills and practices and growing the number of skilled crafts people”. The Historic Environment Strategy sets out how we will do this over the next five years.

Links to other strategic plans

- 9 Local Plan Policy 01 'National and International significance of the Lake District' states that the extraordinary harmony and beauty of the Lake District landscape and its Special Qualities, including the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value, will be conserved and enhanced.
- 10 Local Plan Policy 07 'Historic Environment' seeks to conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets, including the character, authenticity, integrity, setting and views of the historic environment.
- 11 Historic England published their new Strategic Plan 2026-2031 on 11 May 2026. Their vision is to bring new life to heritage to build a better future for every place and everyone. Centred on three priorities, Growth, Place and Sector, it charts an ambitious, proactive and collaborative course to ensure heritage is not only protected and championed but acts as a solution. Our Strategy and Vision complement their priorities of heritage as a powerful engine for economic growth, creating places where people feel proud to live, work and belong and that everyone involved in caring for heritage can play their part with confidence.

Options

- 12 Members are presented with the following options:
 - a) agree the Historic Environment Strategy 2026-2031 for adoption;
 - b) do not agree the Historic Environment Strategy 2026-2031 for adoption and propose an alternative approach.

Proposals

- 13 It is recommended that you select option a). This draft Historic Environment Strategy demonstrates how the Authority will contribute to delivering the Partnership Plan 2026-2031 and has been subject to engagement with Members at the Strategy Meeting in April.

Stakeholder consultation

- 14 The Historic Environment Strategy is an internal document which has been discussed and agreed at the Historic Environment Programme Board.

Demonstrating best value

- 15 **Challenged** – the Historic Environment Strategy sets out how we will deliver our historic environment objectives outlined in the Partnership Plan 2026-2031 and Business Plan 2026-2027 and how we will work with our partners to do this.
- 16 **Compared** – the Historic Environment Strategy will deliver our priorities to agreed measures of success as outlined in the Partnership Plan 2026-2031 and Business Plan 2026-2027.
- 17 **Consulted** – this is an internal document which has been agreed at the Historic Environment Programme Board.
- 18 **Compete** – There are no procurement proposals contained within the recommendations of this report.

Finance considerations

- 19 There are no immediate financial implications from the adoption of the Historic Environment Strategy.

Risk

- 20 The Historic Environment Strategy provides a prioritised structure to deliver our objectives. If we do not adopt the Historic Environment Strategy, it will be unclear how we meet our priorities and deliver on our historic environment ambition and objectives. No other risks are identified.

Legal considerations

- 21 There are no legal considerations arising from this report.

Diversity implications

22 There are no diversity implications arising from this report.

Sustainability

23 There are no sustainability issues arising from this report.

Background papers	Annex 1: Historic Environment Strategy 2026-2031
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Annex 1: Historic Environment Strategy 2026-2031