

## Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy pre-publication

### 1 Summary

- 1.1. Members agreed on 4 February 2025 the content and the commencement of a six-week consultation of the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This paper seeks Member's agreement for Westmorland and Furness Council to publish the final version of the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

<b>Recommendation that a you:</b>	<b>agree the contents of the pre-publication final version of the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Annex 1)</b>
	<b>b are content for the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy to be published by Westmorland and Furness Council</b>

### 2. Background

- 2.1. Cumbria is one of 48 strategy areas in England that are required by the Environment Act (2021) to prepare a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for their area, in line with The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023 and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Statutory Guidance. Westmorland and Furness Council were appointed the Responsible Authority for Cumbria's Local Nature Recovery Strategy by Defra and have led the work on developing the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). They are supported by the LDNPA as a Supporting Authority, together with Cumberland Council, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Natural England.
- 2.2. LNRSs are an England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits for people, nature, climate adaptation and mitigation. LNRSs are a statutory requirement designed as tools to drive more coordinated, practical, and focussed action to help drive nature recovery. The LNRS area for Cumbria covers the administrative boundaries of Westmorland and Furness Council and Cumberland Council.
- 2.3. The final draft of the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and local habitat map have been produced for pre-publication approval by the Cumbria LNRS's supporting authorities. Given that Members have reviewed the substantive consultation document, this paper presents, in Annex 1, a tracked changed version for the purposes of only the public consultation amendments. This paper seeks Member's agreement that they are content for the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy to be published.

### 3. Policy Context

- 3.1. Established by the Environment Act 2021, each local nature recovery strategy will underpin an England Nature Recovery Network, a commitment set out in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. The LNRS will:
- agree priorities for nature's recovery
  - map the most valuable existing areas for nature

- map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals
- 3.2. Once published, the Cumbria LNRS will have many uses for a whole range of stakeholders interested in nature recovery such as landowners, local planning authorities, developers, organisations, investors and the public. It will be delivered through a variety of mechanisms:
- A new Biodiversity Duty (set out in the Environment Act 2021) on all public authorities to have regard to relevant local nature recovery strategies.
  - Integration of local nature recovery strategies into the planning system, so that areas of greatest potential for nature recovery can be better reflected in planning decisions.
  - An incentive in how biodiversity net gain is calculated to encourage taking action where the local nature recovery strategy identifies it as being most beneficial.
  - Funding for specific activities that local nature recovery strategies are expected to propose locations for that will assist with delivery of the actions in the Lake District National Park Partnership Plan.
- 3.3 Supporting the production of the Cumbria LNRS is a Business Plan priority #5 'Contribute to finalising the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy'.

#### **4. Options**

- 4.1. a) Members agree the contents of the pre-publication version of the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- b) Members propose an alternative approach.

#### **5. Proposals**

- 5.1. Option a) is recommended to ensure compliance with the Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023 and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Statutory Guidance.

#### **6. Stakeholder Consultation**

- 6.1. To ensure that the Cumbria LNRS is locally-led and evidence based, it has been comprehensively developed with a wide range of organisations and over 700 stakeholders and specifically with all local planning authorities and Natural England (as Supporting Authorities). This process prepared the draft Cumbria LNRS for public consultation, which Members agreed subject to their feedback, at the 4 February 2025 Park Strategy and Vision Committee.
- 6.2. The public consultation received 82 individual responses. Including feedback and amendments from the LDNPA. A scoring and assessment process was developed and implemented, that was overseen by the Cumbria LNRS Core Group and Steering Group. Westmorland and Furness Council's response to the consultation, which includes detailed information on all changes and amendments to the draft strategy, was published online before the pre-publication period. These changes were endorsed by both the Cumbria LNRS Steering Group and the Project Board to create the pre-publication presented

in Annex 1.

## 7. Demonstrating Best Value

- a) Challenged – ensure compliance with the Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023 and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Statutory Guidance
- b) Compared – this approach is consistent with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Statutory Guidance that all Responsible Authorities are asking Supporting Authorities to undertake
- c) Consulted – comprehensive consultation has been undertaken
- d) Compete – not relevant

## 8. Finance Considerations

8.1. There are no significant financial issues arising from this report.

## 9. Risk

	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Controls Required</b>
R1	Members do not agree the contents of the pre-publication Cumbria LNRS and wish to provide further feedback	An alternative approach will need to be agreed with Westmorland Furness Council and delay created to the publication of the LNRS	Preparation of realistic and achievable Cumbria LNRS that can be agreed

## 10. Legal Considerations

10.1. The preparation of the pre-publication version of the Cumbria LNRS complies with the Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023 (13 to17) and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Statutory Guidance. As such, there are no further legal considerations of relevance to this report and pre-publication document.

## 11. Human Resources

11.1. The Cumbria LNRS will provide the strategy for nature recovery, of which planned staff resources are aligned to. The recommendation will not have a significant impact on staff resources.

## 12. Diversity Implications

12.1. There are no diversity implications arising from this report.

## 13. Sustainability

13.1. In itself, there are no significant environmental, economic and social effect arising from agreeing the Cumbria LNRS. The Cumbria LNRS is designed to

be used by everyone, from individuals and community groups to landowners, developers, local authorities, government organisations, businesses, and conservation charities. It aims to drive collaborative action for nature and the investment in the natural environment to provide services to society and underpin a thriving economy.

Background Papers	Annex 1: Pre-publication Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy (annotated changes)
Author/Post	Tim Duckmanton, Team Leader Strategy and Environment
Responsible Director	Steve Ratcliffe, Director of Sustainable Development
Date Written	20 August 2025

**Annex 1: Pre-publication Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy (annotated changes)**

(attached PDF)

And [Local Habitat Map](#)